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Job Satisfaction, Organizational Stress and Use of Force Attitudes Among Patrol Officers in North Carolina

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by
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Approval Page

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Abstract

Job Satisfaction, Organizational Stress and Use of Force Attitudes Among Patrol Officers in North Carolina. Zachary James Lechette, 2018: Applied Dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education, School of Criminal Justice. Keywords: police, use of force, organizational police stress, job satisfaction, law enforcement

This applied dissertation was designed to examine whether relationships existed between self-reported job satisfaction, organizational police stress and attitudes toward the use of force among urban non-supervisory local law enforcement patrol officers in North Carolina. A quantitative study of patrol officers ($N = 137$) from across North Carolina was conducted over a one-month period in the summer of 2018.

The researcher administered a combined survey instrument measuring job satisfaction, organizational police stress and use of force attitudes to local law enforcement patrol officers in North Carolina. The researcher administered the survey to participants at six different local law enforcement agencies across the state. Only non-supervisory patrol officers from local municipalities within the state were included.

The survey instrument utilized in this study was a combination of the *Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)*, the *Organizational Police Questionnaire (PSQ-Org)*, and items examining use of force attitudes obtained from previous research studies.

The results indicated a strong relationship existed between job satisfaction and organizational stress. Additionally, a weak relationship existed between job satisfaction and use of force attitudes. No statistically significant relationship existed between use of force attitudes and organizational stress among the study's sample. A discussion of the findings as they relate to police agencies was included.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The use of force by law enforcement has seen increased public scrutiny and debate (Thompson & Lee, 2004). Some law enforcement critics believe police officers are out of control and need better training and management (Worden, 1996). Several studies have found factors which are believed to influence the severity and frequency of an officer's use of force (Albert & Smith, 1994; Klahm & Tillyer, 2010; Kop & Euwema, 2001; Thompson & Lee, 2004; Worden, 1996). One void with use of force research, however, is that few studies exist which have simultaneously examined an officer's attitude toward the use of force, organizational stress and job satisfaction. Specifically, no study is believed to have examined these factors among patrol officers in North Carolina.

Deficiencies in the Evidence

The researcher found several studies which examined organizational stress and job satisfaction in a law enforcement context but did not locate many studies which examined use of force attitudes in relation to an officer's self-reported job satisfaction and organizational stress level. However, the researcher did discover several common themes between these variables and believed further research was warranted on this topic.

Specifically, more research was needed to examine whether organizational stress and job satisfaction had a relationship with an officer's attitude toward the use of force. The researcher believed policy and procedure implications were likely if relationships between these variables could be found.

The Research Problem

Uses of force are inevitable in law enforcement. Officers should only use force when it is in conformance with their agency policies and governing law. The inappropriate application of force can be detrimental to police agencies, strain community relations and result in ineffective policing (Albert & Smith, 1994). Thus, the researcher believed this study was warranted to examine if relationships existed between the variables of job satisfaction, organizational stress and use of force attitudes.

Background and Justification

Every use of force application has a consequence. Citizens submit themselves to the government's rule in exchange for protection, goods and services. This exchange is commonly referred to as the social contract (Walker & Katz, 2013). The government is responsible for balancing the needs of society against those of personal choice and freedom. The overall goal of this system is to forge peace among all citizens (Worden, 1996). Thus, the abuse of law enforcement authority, which is granted to police officers from the government and its citizens, is of concern to all.

The law enforcement profession has been subjected to increased media coverage and public scrutiny. Many people believe the criminal justice system is inherently biased and that uses of force are disproportionately applied between racial groups (Klahm & Tillyer, 2010). Furthermore, highly-publicized events have ignited social movements and complaints about police uses of force—especially deadly force.

Because of the current climate in law enforcement, the identification and mitigation of factors which influence a favorable attitude toward the use of force necessitated further research.

Thus, this study explored this topic by examining an officer's attitude toward the use of force in relation to self-reported job satisfaction and organizational stress levels.

Audience

This study attempted to fill a void in the research of use of force attitudes held by North Carolina patrol officers. This study is believed to be the first of its type in North Carolina which examined job satisfaction, organizational stress and use of force attitudes among patrol officers. The researcher believed the results of this study will provide the basis for further research and for the development of a predictive model to be used in police officer recruitment and management. Such a model, if later constructed, may allow predictions of an officer's use of force attitude through the examination of their organizational stress and job satisfaction levels. The results of this study should be of interest to law enforcement leaders in North Carolina as well as scholars examining use of force attitudes.

Barriers and Issues

The initial feasibility of this study was thought to be high, considering the researcher worked as a law enforcement officer at the time this study was conducted, and believed he could easily gain access to research participants within North Carolina. However, the lack of participation from law enforcement agencies and the inability to gain access to participant-volunteers were two major barriers the researcher encountered. The researcher initially attempted to mitigate these barriers in two ways. First, the participating agencies were informed of the purpose and methodology of this study. Second, participants were assured that their answers would remain confidential and anonymous.

Setting of the Study

Data collection for this study took place over a one-month period in the summer of 2018. Local law enforcement non-supervisory patrol officers from six different agencies within North Carolina participated.

Researcher's Role

The researcher was the primary investigator for this study. The researcher obtained permission from various local law enforcement agencies in North Carolina and administered the survey instrument in accordance with the established guidelines. The researcher completed the data analysis of the collected surveys and examined for relationships between the variables.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine for relationships between a police officer's self-reported job satisfaction, organizational stress and attitude toward the use of force.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined to ensure the clarity and context of the study:

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was defined as the subjective report of satisfaction or fulfillment an officer had with their current law enforcement employing agency.

Organizational Stress

Organizational stress was defined as the subjective report of the stress level an officer had with their current law enforcement employing agency. While stress and stressors can come from a multitude of things, this study was concerned with stress caused by the law enforcement organization itself.

Favorable Use of Force Attitude

A favorable attitude toward the use of force, in the context of this study, was an officer's acceptance of statements regarding the appropriateness of the use of force. A favorable attitude toward the use of force was defined as the overall willingness, likelihood and occurrence of any type of use of force, on a standard use of force continuum, on any member of the public, which may, or may not, coincide with the officer's training, departmental policies or the law. A favorable use of force attitude reflects an acceptance of force. This study was concerned with the feelings and attitudes toward the favorable use of force and not the frequency or type of force application used by an officer.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to examine whether relationships existed between an officer's self-reported job satisfaction, organizational stress level and attitude toward the use of force.

A literature review on the topics of job satisfaction, organizational stress and use of force was conducted. The review was limited to publications which examined these variables within a law enforcement construct. Few research studies were located which simultaneously analyzed organizational stress, job satisfaction and police use of force attitudes.

A review of the literature regarding job satisfaction and organizational stress showed people are unhappy in their jobs when their stress is high. The question this study attempted to answer then, is whether these two variables related to a law enforcement officer's attitude toward the use of force. The researcher believed a void existed in this area of officer use of force analysis. Thus, the researcher believed this study was warranted to examine potential relationships between these variables.

Review Methodology

The researcher noted that use of force research methodology varied widely among publications (Taylor & Benell, 2010). Some studies referenced the review of departmental use of force reports, the analysis of citizen complaints regarding uses of force by officers or surveys of officers to ascertain their perceptions and views on use of force policies within their agencies. Job satisfaction, organizational stress and use of force research was located in empirical journals such as: *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, Journal of Social Behavior and Personality, Journal of Criminal Justice, Police Quarterly, Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Journal of Managerial Psychology, and Journal of Police Science and*

Administration.

The literature review methodology included searching electronic databases, such as ProQuest and HeinOnline. Only peer-reviewed journals believed to be appropriate for this study were included. Many journals and articles with empirical research on job satisfaction, organizational stress and the use of force by law enforcement were reviewed. Additional data was also gathered from governmental research sites.

The following review presents what the researcher believed to be the most relevant literature on job satisfaction, organizational stress and the use of force at the time this study was conducted. Ultimately, the researcher wished to discover whether a relationship existed between job satisfaction, organizational stress and an officer's attitude toward the use of force.

Job Satisfaction

Hopkins (1983) defined job satisfaction as "…the fulfillment or gratification of certain needs that are associated with one's work." It is assumed most people work in law enforcement because they desire to help others. Helping people and giving back to one's community may provide a feeling of accomplishment, fulfillment and satisfaction for police officers. Hopkins (1983) proposed job satisfaction was the result of obtaining personal and organizational goals. He concluded job dissatisfaction resulted primarily from poor working conditions.

Hopkins' (1983) explanation of job satisfaction contradicts Locke (1976), who argued job satisfaction was the result of the differences in one's expectations of the job and the realities of the job itself. Locke's (1976) definition of job satisfaction helped explain burnout within the law enforcement profession. That is, many people become law enforcement officers to help others. However, if officers felt they made little, if any, difference in the lives of those whom they served, they became dissatisfied with their profession (Weiss, 2002). This can be especially true

for officers who view the criminal justice system as a revolving door, where they are forced to deal repeatedly with recidivists (Johnson, 2012).

Several studies have examined the effects of stress on police turnover, with many concluding stress encourages resignation, absenteeism and burnout. Stress, however, is an often-unavoidable aspect of the law enforcement profession and simply identifying the relationship does not help to avoid the subsequent turnover.

A study of South Korean police officers examined the association between various job stressors and turnover and whether the relationship was mediated by job satisfaction and burnout. The researchers proposed that if these factors reduced the effects of stress on turnover, then police administrators could influence these mediators to reduce the negative effects of stress.

Among a range of police stressors, work-family conflict emerged as a significant predictor of turnover. Burnout mediated the association between the stressor and turnover intent, while job satisfaction did not (Cheong & Yun, 2011). This study interested the researcher because it presented empirical data which was slightly different from western countries. This study gave credence to historical, cultural and geographical considerations which impacted stress and turnover among officers (Cheong & Yun, 2011).

Hackman and Oldham (1976) proposed a model of job satisfaction which included five main elements: variety, autonomy, identity, significance and feedback. These elements, together, have a psychological influence on job satisfaction. For employees to have a high-level of job satisfaction, Hackman and Oldham (1976) argued opportunities must exist for individuals to be gainfully employed and stimulated. Hackman and Oldham (1976) found employees were happiest when they had autonomy and the ability to work independently of immediate and constant supervision. Additionally, job significance and feedback played an important role

because they allowed employees to grow and excel within their position (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Hackman and Oldham (1976) also noted that identity is important, especially for police officers, because law enforcement tends to be more than a job for these individuals; it is a way of life and part of who they are as a person. Many police officers view their role as a "crime fighter" as part of their personal identity.

A more recent definition of job satisfaction provided by Weiss (2002) defined it as the attitude one held toward their job, resulting from the combined sum of one's positive and negative feelings and experiences toward work. It is important for people to feel satisfied with their jobs because happy and fulfilled employees often produced a better product and provided a better service (Weiss, 2002). Low job satisfaction impacted an officer's ability to perform essential duties and contributed to unprofessional or discourteous interactions with the public (Lester, 1987).

There are many variables and aspects of one's job which influenced job satisfaction. Factors which influenced job satisfaction, much like stress, were internal or external (Kop, Euwema, & Schaufeli, 1999). Internal influencers of job satisfaction included management and personnel issues (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet, 2005). Thus, it was important for managers to play an active role in ensuring an organization's atmosphere remained positive and free from hostility and low morale. Police officers, like most public service employees, often felt they were poorly compensated and unappreciated. This attitude created a toxic environment and contributed to low job satisfaction among employees—especially front-line officers—who engaged and interacted with the public (Lester, 1987).

A study of 114 police officers from sixteen different municipal police departments in Alabama found officers had moderate-high overall job satisfaction. These researchers found

(25%) of job satisfaction came from six variables: social contribution, pay, adventure/excitement, autonomy, peer respect and job security (Carlan, 2007). This study interested the researcher because it revealed community respect, assigned partner and operational assignments were not as impactful to one's overall job satisfaction as some other studies have indicated. The researchers of this study concluded most police satisfaction came from achieving work expectations. Thus, police agencies should employ policies and practices which allow officers the ability to enhance their fulfillment and achieve their personal aspirations (Carlan, 2007).

Additionally, a study encompassing 150 officers from six different law enforcement agencies in Florida revealed that supervisor support, group cohesiveness and promotional opportunities were the best predictors of organizational commitment. This study revealed job satisfaction, in and of itself, was not the sole factor in developing high organizational commitment among officers. High organizational commitment created stability within the law enforcement agency and had positive impacts on job satisfaction among employees, while simultaneously reducing burnout and employee turnover (Jaramillo, Nixon, & Sams, 2005).

One source of low job satisfaction unique to law enforcement extended from repeated interactions with criminals. Interactions with recidivists created an indifferent attitude among officers. This type of negative attitude tended to contribute to low job satisfaction and erode the feeling an officer was making a difference within their community (Miller, Mire, & Kim, 2009). This was an example of an external stress variable which affected job satisfaction that occurred during the police-citizen interaction (Lester, 1987).

Previous research studies have found an overlap between stress and job satisfaction in relation to law enforcement. Lester (1987) found officers who reported an increase in their

amount of stress also reported low job satisfaction. The main issues which contributed to low job satisfaction were found to be the type of work performed, immediate supervisors and low pay (Miller et al., 2009). These influencers were often identified and corrected through training and increased resources.

Outside sources of stress, such as problems at home, impacted an officer's overall level of job satisfaction. A study conducted by Singn and Nayak (2015) examined the effect of work-family conflicts on job stress and its subsequent impact on job satisfaction among law enforcement officers. The study reviewed whether social support from outside organizations mediated the effect between work-family conflicts and job stress. The findings concluded stress was mediated by job satisfaction among law enforcement officers (Singh & Nayak, 2015). Additionally, social support proved to be a moderator between officer stress and job satisfaction.

A study conducted in Britain found police officers were among six occupations, out of an examined 26 at the time, which scored low on job satisfaction, physical health and emotional well-being (Johnson et al., 2005). Researchers have discovered relationships between burnout, job dissatisfaction and the desire to leave law enforcement (Burke, 1994; Pines & Keinan, 2005).

Job satisfaction was often discussed in terms of one's motivations for performing their work. A survey of NYPD recruits during their academy, and then six years after graduation, found white males were more likely to report having low job satisfaction when they had unfulfilled motivations (White, Cooper, Saunders, & Raganella, 2010). This occurred when one failed to reach the goals they set for themselves when they first became a law enforcement officer (White et al., 2010). This was an important finding which had implications for both the retention and recruitment of police officers. Early researchers of job satisfaction and fulfillment found job satisfaction cannot be obtained strictly through the job environment. Rather,

motivation fulfillment and self-actualization resulted in improved job satisfaction (Maslow, 1943). Another study revealed public professionals were found to have job satisfaction and motivations tied to their intrinsic needs and not solely their job duties (Emmert & Taher, 1992).

Most research on law enforcement job satisfaction has focused primarily on individual characteristics and not on specific job tasks and responsibilities (Johnson, 2012). In the study conducted by Johnson (2012), an examination of job satisfaction based on organizational characteristics was performed. The analysis of this study found patrol officers from 11 different agencies reported their job tasks where an essential part of their job satisfaction. Additionally, organizational characteristics played a role, abet weaker, in the forming of an officer's job satisfaction. The data analysis by Johnson (2012) further revealed low job satisfaction among officers contributed to a higher rate of employee turnover and absenteeism. Additionally, the study by Miller, Mire and Kim (2009) found "New officers reported the highest levels of job satisfaction, whereas officers with more years of experience reported lower levels of job satisfaction".

A study by Bouranta, Siskos, & Tsotsolas (2015) compared satisfaction relationships between police officers and citizens. The study's results indicated police officers seemed to be unhappy with their jobs even when citizens were relatively happy with the performance of law enforcement. This was an interesting finding that indicated exterior criterion of performance, citizen satisfaction with police, was not the best indicator of overall police job satisfaction. Internal stressors and bureaucratic issues played a larger role in overall job satisfaction among officers than did external contacts and support from the public (Bouranta et al., 2015).

Job satisfaction played a major role in how police officers performed their duties. Low job satisfaction contributed to poor work ethic and negative feelings toward one's co-workers

and members of the public. Thus, the researcher believed job satisfaction could play a part in the manifestation of favorable attitudes toward the use of force among officers as well.

Organizational Stress

Working and interacting with the public can be challenging, especially for police officers. A job description for a law enforcement officer includes everything from driving a vehicle, handling disputes, taking reports, shooting a firearm, arresting people who commit crimes, providing first aid, directing traffic and much more. Law enforcement officers wear many "hats". Law enforcement officers are expected to be there for the public when needed and to provide services in a timely and professional manner. Law enforcement officers often act as law enforcers, marriage counselors, social workers, psychologists, mechanics and other professionals rolled into one. Thus, a major stressor for police officers is the organization and the duties required of the job itself (Martelli, T., Waters, & Martelli, J., 1989).

According to Patterson, Chung, & Swan (2012), law enforcement agencies began to examine officer stress factors during the late 1970s. However, the researchers found more rigorous studies were needed to evaluate the efficacy of stress management interventions among police officers and police recruits. Previous research suggested the administrative and organizational aspects of police work were more stressful than the dangerous situations law enforcement officers faced (Kroes, Margolis, & Hurrell, 1974). Webster (2014) proposed an original model of stress and coping for police officers which did not provide definitive conclusions as to the personal or job characteristics which shaped stress perceptions among officers. The researcher concluded the variables which influenced and shaped police stress were complex, dynamic and often difficult to qualify.

One study, of 100 police officers in Cincinnati, found most officers identified their major sources of stress as administrative in nature, (lack of support, poor equipment, court systems, policies and procedures, etc.) while only one respondent identified a critical-incident as being the source of his or her stress (Kroes et al., 1974).

A study conducted by He, Zhao, & Archbold (2002), at a large police department in the New England area, examined gender and police stress. This study was interesting because it found female officers had statistically higher levels of depression when compared to their male counterparts. The researchers believed their findings provided a basis for several key policy implications relating to police stress and gender. First, police administrators needed to be more aware of stressors occurring outside of the working environment. Specifically, stressors involving work-family conflicts. This study found work-family conflicts and negative coping techniques were common among male and female officers. Second, the researchers suggested police administrators should develop and institute policies which contribute to greater flexibility in an officer's professional, personal and family life. One suggestion given was to include the officer's significant other in police-stress training and descalation techniques. Additionally, the researchers suggested the use of a three-prong approach to helping officers improve coping skills and stress management: 1) assessing police officers for both physical and psychological stressors, 2) monitoring officer's adaptive and maladaptive coping skills, and, 3) utilizing intervention strategies such as peer-counseling (He et al., 2002).

Law enforcement officers have a lot of responsibility and discretion. Because of this, we require our law enforcement officers to be held to a higher standard than the average citizen and to act as an example for others to follow. Law enforcement requires interaction with the public, often during difficult times. Police officers are respected by the majority of the public but

remain loathed by some. Law enforcement is tough, ever-changing, fast paced and often—dangerous. It is for these reasons, and many others, law enforcement officers are often submitted to a great deal of stress—especially organizational stress (Crank & Caldero, 1991).

Police officers are first-responders who are exposed to traumatic events. Research has shown police officers, like members of the military, experience Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and the lasting effects from repeated exposures to violence and critical incidents (Liberman et al., 2002). Research on police suicidal ideation has revealed traumatic work experiences can translate into PTSD. This, coupled with excessive alcohol use, increases the risk of suicidal ideation among police officers. These are important factors which are currently being explored in the fields of job satisfaction and organizational stress and need to be considered when examining the overall wellbeing and health of police officers (Violanti, 2004).

Suicidal ideation among police officers can be acerbated by stress. A study of national police suicide rates found police suicides were four times higher than that of fire fighters (Violanti, 2010). In addition, minority officers had 4.5 times, and policewomen 12 times, the number of suicides than fire fighters. Nationally, police suicides outnumbered homicides by 2.36 times (Violanti, 2010). Thus, administrators and healthcare professionals should be cognizant of officer stress and institute programs that increase suicide awareness and mental health services.

Researchers have also discovered shift-work plays a role in officer stress levels. Ma et al., 2011, found "…police officers working afternoon and night shifts reported a higher number of work-related stressors compared to those working on day shift." Policing is a 24-hour job that has demanding schedules which impact officers and their families. Adding to this stress is the

likelihood an officer could be placed in a situation which results in their injury or death, when compared to other less-dangerous professions.

Burnout has been studied extensively in public service professions, namely healthcare and teaching, but research has suggested police officers are susceptible to experiencing the effects of burnout from stress as well (Burke, 1993; Kop et al., 1999). Burke and Mikklesen discovered job burnout is a typical result of chronic work-stress through their examination of Norwegian police officers. They concluded burnout included three key components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization or cynicism and a decrease in professional efficiency or sense of accomplishment (Burke and Mikkelsen, 2005). Additionally, Masalch and Leiter listed six key components of organizations which contributed to burnout: workload, the amount of control someone has in their job, rewards and recognition, respect and the conflict between individual and organizational values (Masalch and Leiter, 1997).

A comprehensive review of police stress studies found prevention and treatment programs have not been sufficiently studied or utilized in law enforcement due to the general attitude and culture of police officers. The study revealed many law enforcement officers start their careers in excellent physical health but experience early retirement or death from cumulative job-related stressors (Waters & Ussery, 2007). Many of the documented symptoms of stress during the review included: digestive disorders, cardiovascular disease, domestic violence, alcoholism, PTSD, depression and suicide. The results of this research revealed cumulative stress had a detrimental effect on the physical wellbeing of police officers. Internal and external organizational stressors were important variables which can be limited and managed (Waters & Ussery, 2007).

The stress law enforcement officers face is often thought of in the context of public interactions. This is because law enforcement officers must interact with all members of a community. Officers are expected to present themselves in a professional and welcoming manner. Police officers must have excellent customer service skills to be able to interact with all members of a community. However, this can be difficult at times because law enforcement officers often interact with people who are unreasonable, have committed crimes, are under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs and who may be a danger to themselves or others. These interactions contribute to increased stressors on law enforcement officers (Storch & Panzarella, 1996).

Enforcement operations are further complicated by the increased scrutiny from the public and media. Law enforcement officers must act within the confines of the law and departmental policies. Deviations from these laws or policies can result in case dismissals as well as civil and criminal liabilities. Police officers must be an expert on all things law enforcement, which may cause a great deal of stress and anxiety to some officers (Terry, 1981). Police officers may feel they are becoming "handcuffed" by the criminal justice system and are not supported or equipped properly to deal with all the demands society places on them. Media reports often portray officers as over-zealous and out of control. This can lead to a decrease in confidence and respect for law enforcement agencies by the public. These beliefs and events can also contribute to an "us versus them" mentality and may also increase stress (Burke, 1994).

Contrary to popular belief, not all stress in external to the law enforcement agency. Conflicts and inefficiencies within an agency can also contribute to increased stress (Taylor & Benell, 2010). Poor management and leadership often equated to low morale and a feeling of isolation between line-officers and managers. Storch and Panzerella (1996) and Newman and

Rucker-Reed (2004) identified that organizational stressors, like poor management and bad working conditions, were frequently linked to stressors more so, than exposure to violence.

Additionally, a survey of more than 2,000 Virginia and Maryland officers rated their administration as their greatest source of stress among different stress categories, with danger being fifth, in the nine categories of stressors examined in the survey (Brooks & Piquero, 1998). Also, staffing shortages may require officers to participate in mandatory overtime which can also cause stress and create a hardship on the officer and family (Burke, 1994).

One study, of 167 officers across the midwestern United States, found more than two-thirds of the sample reported their police organization was their source of greatest stress, compared with only six respondents who stated danger, or potentially dangerous situations, was their greatest cause of stress (Crank and Caldero, 1991).

Stress is an important variable to explore when examining attitudes toward the use of force. Stress can cause physical and mental exhaustion and result in the inability to think clearly and effectively—something which is required of officers who may have to make a life or death decision when engaging in the use of force (Kop & Euwema, 2001). Previous studies found stress had physiological and psychological implications on officers. Those under increased stress lost their ability to think critically and calmly in situations which were rapidly evolving and dangerous. Thus, stress on law enforcement officers was dangerous because it added to the already demanding job they had.

A study by Brooks and Piquero (1998) found "…large police departments may experience higher stress levels relating to administrative stress…but less stress from exposure to suffering, than do those from smaller police agencies." This was an interesting finding because

it suggests a department's size may contribute to the overall level of organizational stress felt by the officers who work for the agency.

Research has been conducted which explored the routine aspects of police duties and the effect on stress, however, few studies attempted to separate routine stress factors from traumatic stressors (Kroes et al., 1974). A study by Liberman et al., (2002) found "…routine occupational stressors predicts psychological distress among urban police officers. Moreover, exposure to routine occupational stressors was a stronger predictor than cumulative exposure to critical incidents."

It is important for law enforcement officers to recognize and control stress to prevent job performance implications (Burke, 1994). Many law enforcement agencies across the country have instituted programs and policies to help deal with stress. These programs include: Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and critical-incident stress debriefings. EAPs are confidential counselor programs available to officers. Critical-incident stress debriefings are usually available to officers and other public service employees shortly after physically, mentally and traumatic calls. A debriefing session allows officers who experienced the same event the opportunity to come together and discuss it. This approach works to prevent compounding stress and can help identify those individuals who may need more one-on-one counseling sessions (Liberman et al., 2002).

Furthermore, it is well known law enforcement agencies try and screen for pre-existing psychological issues and illnesses during hiring processes. This is usually accomplished by having applicants take psychological examinations and talk to licensed psychiatrists. However, some make the argument that these types of examinations should be continued throughout an officer's career (Weisburd, Greenspan, Hamilton, & Bryant, 2000).

Bishopp, Worrall, & Piquero (2016) found the type of strain encountered by police officer's influenced police misconduct. Police deviance depended on the strain encountered. Anger was found to play a major role in overall organizational strain (Bishopp et al., 2016). Thus, the researchers argued police administrators should try to reduce strains within the organization to minimize the risk of police misconduct.

Use of Force

Law enforcement agencies have a large liability when it comes to their use of force policies. When officers use force, it exposes them to civil and criminal liabilities if the force they used is judged to be unnecessary or unreasonable. However, police officers have the duty to "protect and serve" the members of their community, and sometimes uses of force become necessary and, thus, the use of force is inevitable in law enforcement. Often, police-citizen interactions are corrigible and result in little or no injury to the officer or citizen. These common and mundane interactions far outnumber the few instances in which an officer must use force to gain compliance, ensure the safety of themselves or others or affect lawful arrests (Liberman et al., 2002). Many routine activities result in no uses of force being used by law enforcement. Situations which usually result in the application of force are those in which an arrest is being made or the subject is under the influence of drugs or alcohol (Terry, 1981). A study conducted in the upper-Midwest revealed officers resorted to physical force in only (18%) of their *arrest* encounters (Terrill, Leinfelt, & Dae-Hoon, Kwak, 2008).

Additionally, uses of force were more likely to occur when a subject had a weapon or threatened the use of a weapon (Klahm & Tillyer, 2010). These types of situations were often the ones which became debated in the media and political circles. The term "use of force", in

and of itself, has a negative connation. It implies cruel, harsh or brutal treatment (Thompson & Lee, 2004). Therefore, any use of force by the police is apt to be scrutinized.

The use of force by law enforcement officers is so controversial, U.S. Supreme Court cases have examined this issue. A landmark case, which is often referenced by law enforcement officers, is *Graham v. Connor* (1989). In the case of *Graham v. Connor*, the Court held uses of force by law enforcement officers must be judged with the "objective reasonableness" standard. That is, a use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, who has equivalent training and experience and must take into consideration the allowance of the fact police officers make split-second decisions in fast-paced and rapidly-evolving situations. This analysis should not include the value of hindsight and must be judged on what a reasonable officer would have done in the same situation.

When most people think of police using force, they think of deadly force, or other aggravated force, which results in the death or injury of the subject or officer. However, law enforcement officers are taught to use a use of force continuum. The use of force continuum includes everything from the mere presence of the officer, all the way to deadly physical force.

A review of use of force policies from 160 police agencies in Florida, out of a total of 323 agencies, found (74%) of the agencies referenced a use of force continuum, including (90%) of sheriff's offices and (70%) of police departments. This was an interesting finding, specific to Florida, which revealed most agencies continue to employ the adaptation of a use of force continuum. The use of force continuum serves as a guide to the type and level of force employed by an officer to counteract a subject's resistance. A clear use of force policy can help limit liabilities for an organization and ensure effective training and accountability (Hough & Tatum, 2012).

This study was not concerned with specific uses of force, but rather, the favorable attitude toward the use of force held by North Carolina patrol officers.

An article in the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) noted, "Relatively few surveys of police attitudes toward abuse of authority have been conducted, and these have focused primarily on specific police agencies..." (Weisburd et al., 2000).

A favorable attitude toward the use of force is problematic for several reasons. First, it may result in an increased frequency of force being utilized. Second, it puts the officer and law enforcement agency at risk of civil and criminal penalties. Third, increased scrutiny of police uses of force have made it difficult for some law enforcement agencies and officers to adequately perform essential job functions out of fear of public or criminal prosecution. Fourth, highly-publicized uses of force contribute to strained community-police relationships. (Thompson & Lee, 2004) "One of the critical issues of police-citizen interaction, including the use of force, is the officer's and suspect's attitude toward one other…Similarly, the attitude of the suspect can affect the probability of the police having to use force" (Alpert and Smith, 1994). Additionally, increased use of force applications contributed to an increase in excessive use of force occurrences and complaints (Thompson & Lee, 2004).

Chapman (2009) found age and experience were better predictors of the use of force by law enforcement than an officer's educational achievement. Prior studies have suggested higher educational achievement by an officer results in lower instances of uses of force or lower instances of force deemed to be excessive. Chapman (2009) found age and experience had stronger relationships and were better predictors than educational achievement. However, Chapman suggested further research was needed in this area to explain and explore the differences in research findings between studies.

A study of urban, suburban and rural police officers in New Jersey revealed attitudes toward the use of force appeared to have demographic and geographic influences in how officers responded to hypothetical use of force scenarios (Barrett, Haberfield, & Walker, 2008). The researchers found police agencies typically had different training, procedural and environmental factors which impacted an officer's use of force decision. The researchers believed their findings were generalizable to other parts of the country, as law enforcement agencies lacked standardization across the country in recruitment, training and educational requirements for officers.

Uses of force, and attitudes toward the use of force, impact all members of a community. Citizens may feel like they are underrepresented in the community or that they are being over-policed. Citizens of the community are impacted the most because they are the ones who submit themselves to the police in exchange for protection and security. Law enforcement agencies and police officers are also impacted because they are the ones who must exercise force only when it is both reasonable and necessary and do so in often rapidly-evolving and dynamic situations. This leaves little room for error on the part of the police officer. Also, members of the media tend to call attention to rare instances where uses of force involve deadly encounters between citizens and police. The public and media oppose excessive uses of force and often demand police officers use social skills in place of physical force, when at all possible (Worden, 1996).

A study conducted by Manzoni & Eisner (2006) examined an officer's perceived work-related stress, job satisfaction, organizational commitment and burnout regarding their uses of force. The researchers found significant relationships between an officer's use of force and work-related stress. The researchers further discovered that an officer's job profile was the only reliable

predictor of police use of force, however, officer victimization correlated strongly with the use of force (Manzoni & Eisner, 2006).

Previous studies have found a favorable attitude toward the use of force contributes to citizen-police distrust and increased instances of police misconduct (Barrett et al., 2008; Burke & Mikkelsen, 2005; Weisburd et al., 2000; White et al., 2010).

A major debate in the media and law enforcement is how the police should deal with subjects experiencing mental crises. A study in Maricopa County, Arizona, in 2010, utilized interviews from 942 recently arrested subjects from more than 12 law enforcement agencies, to review if suspect resistance was more likely to occur in suspects who were having mental health problems. The study found a statistically significant link between mental illness and increased resistance against the police, and thus, the uses of force (Mulvey & White, 2014).

High-profile use of force cases have also been the subject of prosecutorial conflict of interest claims. Many argue prosecutors who work closely with police agencies are unable to remain impartial and should not investigate and prosecute local cases (Joy & McMunigal, 2015). Several advocates have called for the use of a grand jury and/or special investigator to examine excessive use of force claims against officers—especially deadly force encounters.

Practitioners and academics have an interest in the growing debate over police uses of force. One recent innovation, the police body-worn camera, has been the subject of many high-profile use of force cases. Most research and analysis on police body-worn camera programs have shown decreases in the number of citizen complaints on officers and excessive uses of force (Ariel, Farrar, & Southerland, 2015).

In the first of its kind study, Smykla, Crow, Crichlow, & Snyder (2016) investigated the perceptions police agency leaders had about police body-worn cameras (BWCs). The findings

revealed law enforcement leadership believed BWCs would impact an officer's decision to use force, perhaps using less force than what is tactically sufficient or required for the officer's personal safety. Additional findings were leaders believed BWCs were supported by the public mainly because the public did not trust law enforcement. This was furthered by the belief the media would use BWC video to embarrass police agencies and fuel the atmosphere of police-citizen distrust (Smykla et al., 2016).

The Violent Crime Control & Law Enforcement Act of 1994 gave the Department of Justice (DOJ) a powerful tool for correcting unconstitutional practices in police agencies. Since its inception, the DOJ has investigated, sued, and entered into contractual agreements with police agencies as a means of reforming unconstitutional police practices, such as excessive use of force, racial profiling, and unconstitutional stop-and-frisk practices. However, these agreements often failed because they lacked effective enforcement mechanisms (Schatmeier, 2013).

However, the Cincinnati Police Department achieved progress in reducing use of force incidents, officer injuries and improving citizen satisfaction while under an agreement with the DOJ and various private parties. The unique design of its agreement, which stressed the principles of democratic experimentalism - including a flexible and goal-oriented approach, stakeholder deliberation, regulatory transparency and enforcement mechanisms governing the implementation of the agreement's terms likely contributed to its success (Schatmeier, 2013).

Several studies have been conducted which look at the frequency of use of force applications. Researchers have found most police interactions do not result in uses of force (Terry, 1981). The use of force by police officers is rare and is estimated to occur in only (1-2%) of all police-citizen interactions, and when force is used it is usual minor and does not result in serious injury or death (Walker & Katz, 2013). A March 1991 Gallop Poll asked citizens if they

had been abused or mistreated by police. "Incredibly, (5%) of all respondent and (9%) of non-whites said they had been mistreated or abused by the police. When asked if the respondent knew anyone who had been physically mistreated by the police, (20%) said they did" (Alpert & Smith, 1994).

The U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, conducted a national survey of police attitudes toward the abuses of authority. This survey included questions about law enforcement officer's attitudes toward the use of force (National Institute of Justice, 1999) and are part of this study's survey instrument.

The findings published in the NIJ were interesting because almost (25%) of officers responded they "Agree" they were not allowed to use enough force when making arrests. This was surprising because some people tended to believe police officers used too much force and engaged in excessive uses of force. This study showed a large disconnect existed between what law enforcement officers viewed as acceptable uses of force and what citizens viewed as acceptable uses of force. Furthermore, (21%) of police officer respondents believed it was sometimes acceptable to use more force than necessary when a person had physically assaulted an officer. This reflected the "eye for an eye" mentality. The findings above are intriguing and relevant to the exploration of favorable attitudes toward the use of force because they show officers have conflicting views regarding the acceptableness of the uses of force they employ.

The NIJ findings also found the prevalence and attitudes of the use of force varied among individual departments and officers. The survey found law enforcement officers had differing attitudes toward their department's uses of force. Robert E. Worden has studied police brutality in-depth and found an officer's attitude toward citizens had a direct correlation to the use of force and the use of unnecessary force. He found "…officers with more negative attitudes toward

citizens were more likely to use either kind of force [reasonable and improper force]" (Worden, 1996).

Burke & Mikkelsen (2005) found Norwegian police officers who had higher job demands and higher levels of cynicism reported more favorable attitudes toward the use of force. Of interest was the finding less experienced officers had higher levels of favorable attitudes toward the use of force than did more experienced officers (Burke & Mikkelsen, 2005). Kop and Euwema found those with more experience had less favorable attitudes toward the use of force when compared to those with less experience and years of service (Kop & Euwema, 2001). This begged the question as to what variables impact an officer's favorable attitude toward the use of force.

Relationships have been established between job satisfaction and organizational stress. Research has shown that job satisfaction tends to lower as stress increases (McCreary & Thompson, 2006).

What the researcher wanted to uncover, however, was whether these variables shared a relationship with use of force attitudes, specifically, favorable attitudes toward the use of force. Thus, the research questions for this study looked at these potential relationships.

Research Questions

RQ #1: Does a relationship exist between the job satisfaction total score (JSS) and the organizational stress (PSQ-Org) total score?

RQ #2: Does a relationship exist between the job satisfaction total score (JSS) and the use of force attitude (UFA) total score?

RQ #3: Does a relationship exist between the mean organizational stress (PSQ-Org) total score and the use of force attitude (UFA) total score?

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to examine whether relationships existed between self-reported job satisfaction, organizational stress and attitudes toward the use of force among urban law enforcement patrol officers in North Carolina.

This study took a quantitative approach and original data was collected, coded and subjected to statistical analysis. The research questions for this study focused on job satisfaction, organizational stress and the use of force attitudes held by local law enforcement patrol officers in North Carolina. The results of this study should help aid police agencies in formulating policies that address use of force issues within departments. For the relationships which were discovered, police administrators can utilize this knowledge when implementing and examining programs that attempt to lower organizational stress and increase job satisfaction among their officers. These variables, when addressed individually, have already been shown to impact employee turnover, burnout and absenteeism. Thus, this study has implications for police administrators in the areas of recruitment, retention and the reduction of civil liabilities.

The study's design was purposeful in many ways. First, the location of the departments was considered before an invitation to participate was extended. The researcher sought departments which required the least amount of travel. This helped minimize the expenses and time associated with data collection.

Barrett, Haberfield, and Walker (2008) found attitudes regarding uses of force differed between urban and suburban officers. Thus, this study focused solely on urban local law enforcement officers. Additionally, relationships between reported uses of force by officers and violent crime rates in urban areas have been previously established (Kaminski, Jefferis and Gu, 2003). These types of encounters were likely to impact an officer's perception and attitude

regarding the need to use force. Thus, the researcher attempted to control for this influence by ensuring similar community crime characteristics between participating law enforcement agencies, to a reasonable extent.

The two independent variables of this study, an officer's self-reported job satisfaction and organizational stress level, were examined for relationships with the dependent variable, the favorable attitude toward the use of force. The researcher predicted statistically significant relationships would be found between these variables.

Participants

Research participants were patrol officers from different local police departments within North Carolina. According to the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics' 2008 *Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies*, North Carolina had 350 local law enforcement agencies employing 11,933 full-time sworn police officers. There are approximately 129 sworn law enforcement officers for every 100,000 people in this state with a total state population of 9,535,483 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The number of full-time sworn local law enforcement personnel in this state accounted for approximately (.001%) of the state's total population.

This study utilized a cluster-sampling approach to gather representative views of patrol officers from across North Carolina. This was accomplished by dividing the state of North Carolina into three geographical regions: mountain, piedmont and coastal (see Appendix D). The researcher determined that of the 350 local law enforcement agencies in North Carolina, approximately 60 of them were in the mountain region, 150 were in the piedmont region and 140 were in the coastal region. The researcher estimated that of the almost 12,000 sworn local law enforcement officers in the state of North Carolina, approximately 2,100 were employed in the mountain region, 5,100 were in the piedmont region, and 4,800 were in the coastal region.

The researcher attempted to obtain 167 surveys from the mountain region, 421 surveys from the piedmont region and 392 surveys from the coastal region. If successful, this would have given the researcher 980 completed survey instruments from local law enforcement patrol officers from across North Carolina. The number of surveys desired from each region was determined by taking the total number of local law enforcement agencies in the state in proportion to the number of estimated local agencies in a region. For example, the mountain region had an estimated 60 local law enforcement agencies (60/350 = .17) which accounted for approximately (17%) of the state's local law enforcement agencies. Thus, (17%) of the desired 980 participants resulted in 167 desired participant volunteers from the mountain region (see Table 3-1).

Table 3-1: Agencies, Officers & Surveys by Region

North Carolina Region	Estimated # of local police agencies	Estimated # of sworn local police officers	# of survey responses desired from region
Mountain	60	2,100	167
Piedmont	150	5,100	421
Coastal	140	4,800	392

The number of participant volunteers sought for this research study was 980, which was slightly more than 13 times the number of survey items on the survey instrument. If the researcher was able to obtain 980 participants, slightly more than (8%) of the state's sworn local law enforcement population would have been represented. A sample size of 980 patrol officers would have reflected a (95%) confidence level with an expected (3%) margin of error with a given population of 11,933 sworn local law enforcement officers.

The research participants were sworn law enforcement patrol officers in North Carolina. Supervisors and officers assigned to specialized units were purposefully excluded. There was not a disqualifier to participation if the above criteria were met.

The researcher selected several local police departments from each region of the state (mountain, piedmont and coastal), based on the convenience to the researcher's location and the willingness of police agencies to participate. The researcher utilized a purposeful and convenience method in selecting agencies from each region of the state to try and obtain the desired number of participant surveys for each of the respective regions. The agencies involved in this study were from local municipalities, thus, state, federal and county agencies were purposefully excluded. The researcher requested the voluntary participation of patrol officers by ensuring them of the survey's anonymity and confidentiality. The researcher sought the participation of every patrol officer from each of the participating police agencies. This was accomplished over numerous days, covering all the different shifts of the department, at each shift's briefing.

The researcher attempted to get complete participation from all eligible patrol officers at each of the participating agencies.

Instruments

Three instruments were combined by the researcher to examine the areas of concern in this study: officer's self-reported job-satisfaction, organizational stress level and attitude toward the use of force (see Appendix C). The survey instruments were: *The Job Satisfaction Survey (1994)*, developed by Paul E. Spector, the *Organizational Police Stress Questionnaire (2013)*, developed by McCreary and Thompson, and questions regarding attitudes toward the use of force derived from the work of Weisburd, Greenspan, Hamilton, Williams, and Bryant's (2000) national study and Kop and Euwema's study of Dutch officers' attitudes toward use of force (2001).

The researcher conducted a small pilot study of the instrument from a few local police officers to ensure clarity of the directions and the phrasing of the survey items. Data was not collected as part of this process.

Job Satisfaction Survey

The *Job Satisfaction Survey* (JSS) was developed by Paul Spector, Department of Psychology, University of South Florida. The instrument contained 36 items measuring nine aspects of job satisfaction (sub-scales): Pay, Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards (performance-based rewards), Operating Procedures (required rules and procedures), Coworkers, Nature of Work and Communication. Each of the nine aspects of job satisfaction were measured with four items. A six-point Likert scale was used with choices ranging from (1) "Disagree Very Strongly" to (6) "Agree Very Much". The JSS was developed over several years and has been utilized in research studies across several disciplines (Spector, 1997). Reliability data indicates the total scales and subscales have reasonable internal consistencies. Additionally, test-retest data has indicated good reliability over time. During the initial development of the JSS, a sample of 2,780 revealed all subscales to have an alpha greater than .50, with seven of the nine subscales having an alpha greater than .70. The total scale had an alpha of .91 (Spector, 1985).

The JSS included items written in both the positive and negative format. Scores on the individual nine subscales, based on 4 items each, ranged from 4 to 24; while scores for total job satisfaction, based on the sum of all 36 items, ranged from 36 to 216. Each item was scored from 1 to 6. High scores on the scale represented job satisfaction, so the scores on the negatively-worded items had to be reverse scored before summing them with the positively-worded subscales or total scores. Thus, a score of 6 representing the strongest agreement with a

negatively-worded item was considered equivalent to a score of 1, representing the strongest disagreement on a positively-worded item, allowing them to be combined meaningfully (Spector, 1997). The scoring procedures for the JSS, as provided by Paul Spector, are summarized as follows:

1) The researcher should ensure there are responses to all items. A score of 1 represents strongest disagreement for the item, while a score of 6 represents strongest agreement with the item
2) The negatively worded items need to be reverse scored (the reversals are: 1=6, 2=5, 3=4, 4=3, 5=2, and 6=1). Negatively worded survey items are: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 31, 32, 34, 36.
3) The responses for each of the nine subscales must be summed. Items relating to the corresponding subscales are listed below (see Table 3-2).

Table 3-2: JSS Subscales and Item Numbers

Subscale	Item numbers
Pay	1, 10, 19, 28
Promotion	2, 11, 20, 33
Supervision	3, 12, 21, 30
Fringe Benefits	4, 13, 22, 29
Contingent rewards	5, 14, 23, 32
Operating conditions	6, 15, 24, 31
Coworkers	7, 16, 25, 34
Nature of work	8, 17, 27, 35
Communication	9, 18, 26, 36
Total satisfaction	1-36

4) Finally, adjustments must be made for any items which are missing. These adjustments help avoid a score which is too low. According to Paul Spector, the best procedure to account for missing items is to compute the mean score per item for the individual and substitute that mean for the missing items.

The JSS was scored by assessing one's job satisfaction on a continuum from low (dissatisfied) to high (satisfied). Paul Spector acknowledged there were no specific scores which determine whether an individual is satisfied or dissatisfied; as a score distinguishing satisfaction and dissatisfaction has not yet been established. However, two reasonable approaches to interpreting the JSS have been provided when there is a need to draw conclusions about satisfaction versus dissatisfaction for samples of individuals.

The first approach to interpreting the JSS involves comparing the target sample norms to the norms of their respective population. Paul Spector has compiled norms for several different groups and maintains them on his website as part of the agreement for utilizing his instrument. This information is provided and updated by other researchers who utilize this instrument and submit their results back to Paul Spector. The researcher can reference the published norms for the analyzed population, one of which includes police, and describe the sample as being more satisfied, dissatisfied or about the same as the population norm. The published norms, however, are limited. First, there are few occupations and organizations presented. Second, the published norms are not representative samples, but rather convenience samples. Third, the norms are mainly from North American populations—the U.S. and Canada. This study was based on a convenience sampling method, occurring in the United States, and comparable to the published norms of police job satisfaction provided by Paul Spector, thus, the limitations discussed above should not affect the data analysis of this instrument in this regard.

Paul Spector provides a second approach to interpreting the JSS data which involves logical, though arbitrary, cut scores to represent dissatisfaction versus satisfaction. Because the JSS utilizes 6-point agree-disagree response choices, one can assume agreement with positively-worded items and disagreement with negatively-worded items represents satisfaction. Conversely, disagreement with positively-worded items and agreement with negatively-worded items represents dissatisfaction. "For the 4-item subscales, as well as the 36-item total score, this means that scores with a mean item response (after reverse scoring the negatively-worded items) of 4 or more represents satisfaction, whereas mean responses of 3 or less represents dissatisfaction. Mean scores between 3 and 4 are ambivalence. Translated into the summed scores, for the 4-item subscales with a range from 4 to 24, scores of 4 to 12 are dissatisfied, 16 to 24 are satisfied, and between 12 and 16 are ambivalent. For the 36-item total where possible scores range from 36 to 216, the ranges are 36 to 108 for dissatisfaction, 144 to 216 for satisfaction, and between 108 and 144 for ambivalent" (Spector, 1997). This part of the questionnaire included items Q1-Q36.

Organizational Police Questionnaire

The *Organizational Police Questionnaire* (PSQ-Org) (2013) was developed by Donald McCreary and Megan Thompson. The PSQ-Org is a 20-item measure created to examine policing. The PSQ-Org measures police stress and psychometrically measures other stressors associated with policing. These include associations among one's physical health, stress and psychological well-being.

Each item of the PSQ-Org instrument is a statement which the respondent must rate on a seven-point Likert scale. The scale goes from (1) No Stress At All to (7) A Lot Of Stress. Additionally, (4) indicates Moderate Stress. The maximum score on this survey was 140 while

the minimum score was 20. The PSQ-Org is scored by averaging the 20 items into a single score. The higher the score, the higher the stress. This part of the survey encompassed items Q37-Q56.

The instrument was developed after the authors were awarded a grant from the Canadian government to develop and validate the *Operational Police Stress Questionnaire* (PSQ-Op) and the *Organizational Police Stress Questionnaire* (PSQ-Org), two measures originally tailored to the Canadian context. This process of development and validation was completed over a series of four studies. In the first study, a series of focus groups were used to elicit the stressors associated with policing. This study revealed officers separated their stressors into two general categories: operational stress and organizational stress. The reliability of the PSQ-Op and PSQ-Org were assessed for reliability, validity, and readability during the three subsequent studies.

The findings from these studies showed both instruments were highly reliable and demonstrated discriminant and concurrent validity. After the four studies, the PSQ-Org demonstrated high reliability with a Cronbach alpha of .92. The authors of the PSQ-Org concluded the instrument had excellent internal consistency and can be used with confidence by other researchers. They further advised the items on the PSQ-Op and PSQ-Org are not specific to the Ontario or Canadian policing culture, and have generalizability to police stress researchers in other countries.

This study was only concerned with the PSQ-Org instrument. This instrument was of interest to the researcher because it had been previously used with the JSS in prior studies. The authors of the PSQ-Org found higher scores on the PSQ-Org were correlated with lower scores on the JSS and its subscales. The authors of the PSQ-Op and PSQ-Org have made them freely available for use by other researchers.

Use of Force Attitudes

This part of the questionnaire was developed by combining items from two previous studies: Weisburd, Greenspan, Hamilton, Williams, and Bryant's (2000) national study and Kop and Euwema's study of Dutch officers' attitudes toward use of force (2001). These questions are intended to explore whether officers view the appropriateness of force applications differently and whether they believe departmental policies and legal restrictions help or hinder them when encountering potentially dangerous and dynamic situations. A Likert scale was used to measure an officer's level of agreement with statements pertaining to use of force attitudes. The scale ranged from (1) to (5), for items Q57-Q65, and from (1) to (4), for items Q66-Q72. The higher the score reported by the respondent, the stronger their agreement with the statement and their positive attitude toward the use of force. This part of the survey encompassed items Q57-Q72.

Survey items Q57-Q65 were scored on a scale of (1) to (5). A score of (5) indicated the respondent *strongly agrees* with the statement, while a score of (1) indicated the respondent *strongly disagrees* with the statement. Survey items Q66-Q72 were scored on a scale of (1) to (4). A score of (1) indicated *never*, while a score of (4) indicated *always*. Items Q67-Q70, however, were reverse scored. Thus, a score of (4) indicated *never* and a score of (1) indicated *always*. Use of force items were summed to determine the raw score for questions relevant to a respondent's attitude toward the use of force. The higher the score, the more positive attitude the respondent had toward the use of force. The lower the summed score, the less favorable attitude the respondent had toward the use of force.

Procedures

Design

This study gathered non-experimental descriptive research using a cross-sectional survey design. A prepared memorandum was sent to multiple law enforcement agencies across North Carolina in each of the three geographic regions: mountain, piedmont and coastal. The memorandum requested the voluntary participation of the police agency to allow the researcher access to patrol officers during their roll call meetings.

The memorandum explained the study's purpose, methodology and advised the study had been approved by Nova Southeastern University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The memorandum explained participation was voluntary and survey instruments would be kept confidential and anonymous. This memorandum explained the purpose of the study was to gather data on patrol officer attitudes across North Carolina. For the agencies which agreed to participate, the agency leader was requested to share the Memorandum to Sergeants/Shift Supervisors (Appendix A). The researcher, in advance, obtained the information needed from the agency regarding the number of sworn patrol officers and their shift schedules. This memorandum described the study's purpose and advised the supervisor of the researcher's presence at their roll-call at the predetermined date and time.

Data Collection

The research protocol was standardized to ensure the same procedures and processes at each site. During the shift's roll-call, and at the appropriate time, the researcher read the Statement to Participants (Appendix B) and reviewed the Participation Letter (Appendix C). After, participants were given the opportunity to ask questions. The participants were advised the questionnaire would take approximately 15 minutes to complete. The researcher then

passed-out the questionnaire and explained a consent form was not required to be signed. This approach helped ensure participant anonymity and confidentiality were maintained. Participants were advised the completion of the questionnaire implied their voluntary participation in the study. There was no demographic information collected and no agency-level identifier placed on any of the survey instruments.

Completed questionnaires were collected by the researcher after the roll-call, or as participants completed them. The researcher secured the questionnaires until they were needed for data analysis. This helped maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of each participant.

Extensive steps were taken to ensure participant anonymity. For example, the researcher did not handle the instruments until it was time to code and analyze the responses. Likewise, the researcher was the only individual to see the completed questionnaires. Additionally, no identifying marks were on the questionnaires. The questionnaire had also been formatted in a way to help ensure officers completed them in roughly the same amount of time.

Data Analysis

The completed questionnaires gathered from the research participants were coded and entered into SPSS. A Likert scale was utilized to measure questions relating to an officer's level of job satisfaction. These items were Q1-Q36 on the questionnaire and had a scale of (1) to (6). The higher the value, the more the respondent agreed with the statement (higher satisfaction). The researcher reverse coded the items necessary as set forth above.

Similarly, a Likert scale was used for the PSQ-Org assessment, which included survey items Q37-Q56. A scale of (1) to (7) was used, with higher values indicating more stress. Finally, a Likert scale was used to examine an officer's use of force attitude. These items were

Q57-Q72 on the questionnaire. These survey items composed two different scales which had to be combined to form a new total score.

Items examining an officer's use of force attitude included in the statistical analysis were extrapolated from Q57-Q72. The items designated as clearly loading on the respondent's use of force attitude were identified as Q58, Q61, Q62, Q63, Q65, Q70, Q71, and Q72. Survey items Q57, Q59, Q60, Q64, Q66, Q67, Q68, and Q69 were determined to be more related to how the respondent viewed their department, policies and procedures or other things related to the use of force. After further review, only 8 of the 16 use of force survey items directly related to a respondent's attitude or feelings toward the use of force. Thus, the items which did not directly relate to use of force attitudes were excluded in the data analysis.

For survey items Q58, Q61, Q62, Q63, and Q65 a use of force total raw score was calculated. These items had a minimum score of 5 and a maximum score of 25. For survey items Q70, Q71, and Q72 a use of force raw score was calculated. It is important to note Q70 was reverse scored. These three survey items comprised a minimum score of 3 and a maximum score of 12. The combined raw scores from the two above listed scales were combined to form a new scale, *use of force attitude*, which ranged from a minimum of 8 to a maximum of 37. A high score on the new scale indicated the respondent had a more positive attitude toward the use of force. Conversely, a lower score on the new scale indicated the respondent had a less favorable, or less positive, attitude toward the use force.

Analysis was conducted in SPSS to check for relationships between the attitude toward the use of force scale and the other variables: organizational stress, job satisfaction and its subscales.

The survey instrument data was collected and coded as follows (see Table 3-3):

Table 3-3: Scales and Coding for Survey Items

Q1-Q36: Disagree Very Much (1); Disagree Moderately (2); Disagree Slightly (3); Agree Slightly (4); Agree Moderately (5); Agree Very Much (6);
Note: Q1-Q36 comprise the Job Satisfaction Score (JSS). Items 2,4,6,8,10,12,14,16,18,19,21,23,24,26,29,31,32,34, and 36 were reverse scored.

Q37-Q56: Scores range from (1) to (7) based on the respondent's indication of their level of stress
Note: Q37-Q56 comprise the Operational Police Stress Questionnaire (PSQ-Org)

Q57-Q65: Strongly Agree= 5; Agree= 4; Neither Agree/Disagree= 3; Disagree= 2; Strongly Disagree= 1

Q66: Never = 1; Seldom = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4

Q67: Never = 4; Seldom = 3; Often = 2; Always = 1

Q68: Never = 4; Seldom = 3; Often = 2; Always = 1

Q69: Never = 4; Seldom = 3; Often = 2; Always = 1

Q70: Never = 4; Seldom = 3; Often = 2; Always = 1

Q71: Never = 1; Seldom = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4

Q72: Never = 1; Seldom = 2; Often = 3; Always = 4
Note: Q57-Q72 comprise the use of force attitude score. For the purposes of this study and the subsequent data analysis, only Q58, Q61, Q62, Q63, Q65, Q70, Q71, and Q72 were used to compute a raw score for the respondent's total use of force attitude score.

The compiled data was entered into a database using the *Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).* Total raw scores for the primary dependent variable (use of force attitude) and the independent variables (job satisfaction and organizational stress) were calculated. Additionally, subscale scores were computed for each of the nine subscale categories examined by the JSS. Higher composite raw scores reflected the presence of the variable. Pearson's *r* correlation was used to examine relationships between the variables and any associated sub-scales. It should be noted that a comparison between individual police agencies involved in the study was not possible, as the instruments did not include an agency-level identifier. This was to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants and was included in the IRB protocol and research design.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to examine whether relationships existed between self-reported job satisfaction, organizational stress levels and attitudes toward the use of force among urban law enforcement patrol officers in North Carolina.

Several local law enforcement agencies from across North Carolina were contacted to obtain their participation in this study. Overall, six local law enforcement agencies participated. The six agencies included: four from the piedmont region, one from the coastal region and one from the mountain region of North Carolina (see Appendix D).

Demographic Characteristics

The researcher was able to obtain 137 ($N = 137$) completed surveys. The distribution of survey participants included: 80 from the piedmont region, 25 from the coastal region and 32 from the mountain region. Survey respondents included only those officers who self-identified as non-supervisory patrol officers.

The researcher had a response rate of (99%), as only one officer declined to participate in the survey. Because respondent demographic information was not collected, the researcher was unable to ascertain more descriptive characteristics of the sample. The expected survey sample size of 980 was not able to be obtained, in part, due to the lack of interest from agencies to participate as well as the limited time and resources of the researcher to travel and continue data collection.

Data Analysis

The JSS raw total score was identified as JSSTotal. The JSS was composed of nine subscales comprised of four questions each. The scores on the individual nine subscales, based on four items each, ranged from (4) to (24); while the scores for total job satisfaction, based on

the sum of all 36 items, ranged from (36) to (216). The sample, based on Paul Spector's scoring methodology, was ambivalent in their job satisfaction (M = 143.76, SD = 21.41).

The PSQ-Org raw total score was identified as OPQTotal. Each item of the PSQ-Org was a statement which the respondent had to rate on a seven-point Likert scale. The scale went from (1) No Stress At All to (7) A Lot of Stress. Additionally, (4) indicated Moderate Stress. The maximum score for this part of the survey was (140), while the minimum score was (20). The PSQ-Org was scored by summing the 20-items into a single raw score, with higher raw scores indicating higher levels of stress and lower raw scores indicating lower levels of stress. The sample had scores more closely consistent with Moderate Stress (M = 73.47, SD = 24.44).

The use of force raw total score was comprised of questions 58, 61, 62, 63, 65, 70, 71, and 72. These items were identified as questions which more closely related to the respondent's attitude toward the use of force. Thus, the remaining survey items were not included in the statistical analysis and the use of force attitude raw total score. The disregarded items were determined to be more closely related to how the respondent viewed their department or other things related to the use of force and were not loaded on the respondent's attitude or feeling toward the use of force. Survey items 58, 61, 62, 63, and 65 were measured on a 5-point Likert scale where SA/Strongly Agree = 5, A/Agree = 4, NAD/Neither Agree Nor Disagree = 3, D/Disagree = 2, and SD/Strongly Disagree = 1. The minimum score for these questions was (5) while the maximum score was (25). A lower score reflected a less favorable attitude toward the use of force, while a higher score reflected a more favorable attitude toward the use of force.

Items 70, 71, and 72 were measured on a 4-point Likert scale where 1 = Never, 2 = Seldom, 3 = Often, and 4 = Always. It should be noted, however, item 70 was reverse scored. Thus, these items had a minimum possible score of (3) and maximum possible score of (12).

The use of force attitude (UFA) raw total score was identified as UFATotal. This total score was obtained by combining both scales identified above, giving the UFATotal raw score a range with a minimum score of (8) and a maximum score of (37). The sample had mean scores toward the higher range of the scale, indicating a more favorable attitude held by the respondents toward the use of force (M = 21.36, SD = 2.93) (see Table 4-1).

Table 4-1
Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
JSSTotal	143.76	21.412	137
OPQTotal	73.47	24.447	137
UFATotal	21.36	2.938	137

Research Question 1

Research question one was: "Does a relationship exist between the job satisfaction total score and the organizational stress total score?"

This research question was examined by utilizing Pearson's r to investigate a relationship between the total raw score of job satisfaction (JSSTotal) and the total raw score of police organizational stress (OPQTotal).

The first research question showed a strong relationship between the two variables (r = -.62, p = .01). A measure of covariance between these variables explained (38%) of the variance. The resulting analysis indicated these variables were inversely related. For example, as job satisfaction increased, organizational stress decreased. Conversely, as job satisfaction decreased, organizational stress increased. Additional analysis between the JSS subscales and the police organizational stress questionnaire (PSQ-Org) all showed statistically significant relationships except for the subscale, "Supervision".

Research Question 2

The second research question was: "Does a relationship exist between the job satisfaction total score and the use of force total score?"

This research question was examined by utilizing Pearson's *r* to investigate a relationship between the total raw score of job satisfaction (JSSTotal) and the use of force attitude total score (UFATotal).

The JSSTotal score and the UFATotal score had a weak relationship with another (r = -.23, p = .01). A measure of covariance between these variables explained (5%) of the variance. The analysis revealed an inverse relationship between the two variables. For example, as job satisfaction increased, favorable use of force attitudes decreased. Conversely, as job satisfaction decreased, favorable use of force attitudes increased. Additional subsequent analysis between the nine JSS subscales and UFATotal scores were statistically non-significant except for the statistically significant relationships between JSSContRTotal (r = -.33, p = .01) and JSSCoworkTotal (r = -.27, p = .01), which are the subscales "Contingent Rewards" and "Coworkers", respectively.

Research Question 3

The third research question was: "Does a relationship exist between the mean organizational stress total score and the use of force attitude total score?"

The last research question was examined by utilizing Pearson's *r* to check for a relationship between the mean organizational stress raw score (OPQTotal) and the use of force attitude total score (UFATotal).

The analysis of research question three failed to show a significant relationship between the variables of use of force attitudes (UFATotal) and organizational police stress (OPQTotal).

Thus, given the sample and the instrument used, use of force attitudes and organizational police stress do not seem to be clearly related among this study's sample (see Table 4-2).

Table 4-2

Correlations

		JSSTotal	OPQTotal	UFATotal
JSSTotal	Pearson Correlation	1	-.620**	-.239**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.005
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	62355.051	-44117.343	-2041.956
	Covariance	458.493	-324.392	-15.014
	N	137	137	137
OPQTotal	Pearson Correlation	-.620**	1	.126
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.142
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	-44117.343	81282.161	1232.277
	Covariance	-324.392	597.663	9.061
	N	137	137	137
UFATotal	Pearson Correlation	-.239**	.126	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.142	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	-2041.956	1232.277	1173.752
	Covariance	-15.014	9.061	8.631
	N	137	137	137

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine if relationships existed among an officer's self-reported job satisfaction, self-reported organizational stress level and use of force attitude.

This was an important endeavor because of the current climate of strained community-police relations. This was especially applicable as many police actions are becoming the subject of political and racial debates (Thompson & Lee, 2004). Several previous studies have examined factors which are believed to influence the severity and frequency of an officer's use of force, but far fewer have attempted to examine job satisfaction, stress and use of force attitude simultaneously. This was especially true for North Carolina, where no study was believed to have been conducted which examined these variables among its local law enforcement patrol officer population.

Summary of Findings

In the context of this present study, the researcher was able to identify two distinctly important findings among local law enforcement patrol officers in North Carolina: First, a relationship existed between an officer's self-reported job satisfaction and self-reported police organizational stress. Second, a relationship existed between an officer's self-reported job satisfaction and the officer's use of force attitude. Although there was no significant relationship between an officer's self-reported organizational stress level and the officer's use of force attitude, the researcher believed the information gained from this study could be useful for police administrators and for others for use in future research.

Context of Findings

Research Question 1

The researcher discovered a strong relationship existed between job satisfaction total scores and organizational stress total scores among the sample (r = -.62, p = .01). This was not a surprising finding to the researcher as this same relationship has been found in previous studies. Lester (1987) previously found officers who reported increases in their amounts of stress also reported lower levels of job satisfaction. Additionally, McCreary & Thompson (2006) found that job satisfaction tends to lower as stress increases.

Of interest to the researcher was the comparison of this sample's job satisfaction mean total score to that of the published norms of police officers provided by Paul Spector, the developer of the JSS instrument. North Carolina patrol officers in this study were *ambivalent* in their job satisfaction (M = 143.76). However, based on the scoring methodology provided by Paul Spector, North Carolina patrol officers were on the high-end of this range, with job *satisfaction* being a range of 144 to 216 for the JSS total score (Spector, 1997).

The published norms, as provided by Paul Spector with four samples and a total sample size of 852, show the mean total job satisfaction of police officers to be *ambivalent* in their job satisfaction (M = 129, SD = 13.2). This may indicate, perhaps among this study's sample, North Carolina patrol officers have more job satisfaction than other officers.

What was most interesting to the researcher was the inverse relationship between these two variables. That is, if job satisfaction increased, organizational stress decreased. Conversely, if job satisfaction decreased, organizational stress increased. This is an important research finding because it has direct implications on police management and factors which may influence the retention and recruitment of officers. There also exists policy implications for

administrators to consider about screening officers for potential burnout and high organizational stress-levels throughout their career. If stress can be mitigated and controlled, the research findings indicate job satisfaction should increase or remain constant among patrol officers.

The relationship between organizational stress and job satisfaction is a significant finding for administrators. One, it confirms the findings of previous studies examining stress and job satisfaction among police officers. Two, it gives police administrators and managers insightful information about their officers and factors which impact their job stress and satisfaction levels. If an agency can reduce stress among their officers, the data suggests the officers will be happier. Likewise, if job satisfaction increases the data suggests officers will be less stressed.

Because stress and burnout are strongly correlated, a law enforcement agency which can reduce stress among its officers may see increased retention and recruitment. Additionally, a reduction in stress is correlated to improved health among employees. The research also shows use of force attitudes to be related to an officer's job satisfaction level. If stress is reduced, job satisfaction improves. If job satisfaction is higher, favorable use of force attitudes are lower.

When comparing the nine sub-scales of the JSS to the OPQTotal scores, all had a statistically significant relationship with one another except for the sub-scale, 'Supervision". This was another interesting finding to the researcher because it seemed to indicate, at least among the sample, one's supervisor had no relationship to one's organizational stress level. While this may be a true finding, it could also reveal the desire of the respondent to answer questions in a way which would be acceptable if their responses where to be revealed to their supervisor.

Thus, officers may have responded more positively to items about their supervisor to appear more likeable or out of fear of a lack of confidentiality, thus, underreporting their true

feelings. Miller et al. (2009) found one of the main issues which contributed to low job satisfaction was the type of work performed, immediate supervision and low pay. However, Hackman & Oldham (1976) found employees were happiest when they had autonomy and the ability to work independently of immediate and constant supervision. The current study contradicted the findings of Hackman & Oldham (1976) that supervision played a major part in an officer's level of job satisfaction, at least in this sample.

Research Question 2

Research question two revealed a weak relationship between an officer's job satisfaction and use of force attitude (r = -.23, p = .01). The researcher was not surprised to discover this weak relationship, as other studies have indicated external variables to the police organization tend to have less of an impact on job satisfaction than does the police organization itself. The study by Bouranta et al. (2015) found exterior criterion of performance, citizen satisfaction with the police, was not the best indicator of an officer's overall job level of job satisfaction. Rather, internal stressors and bureaucratic issues seemed to play a larger part in the role of job satisfaction among officers than did the support from the public or community contacts. This would be consistent with previous finding of the much stronger relationship between an officer's level of job satisfaction and level of organizational stress. Thus, the factors impacting use of force attitudes among officers may not play as much of a role in an officer's level of job satisfaction as previously thought.

The researcher believed the finding of a weak relationship between an officer's level of job satisfaction and use of force attitude was consistent with the current literature, as job satisfaction has been shown to have higher correlation with organizational police stress than it does use of force attitudes. Likewise, officers are less likely to engage in uses of force than they

are to deal with members and stressors of the police organization, which occurs daily. This is consistent with literature indicating the use of force by police officers is rare and only estimated to occur in (1-2%) of all police-citizen interactions (Walker & Katz, 2013).

What was interesting to the researcher, was the statistically significant relationship discovered between two of the JSS subscales and an officer's use of force attitude. The subscales "Contingent Rewards" (r = -.33, p = .01) and "Coworkers" (r = -.27, p = .01), both had a statistically significant relationship. Both subscales had a weak relationship with an officer's use of force attitude. This may indicate that contingent rewards, such as being recognized for a job well done, and positive relationships with one's coworkers are potentially mediating variables against the formation of favorable use of force attitudes. Because they are both inversely related to the officer's level of job satisfaction, being motivated and recognized for good work and having good relationships with one's coworkers may mitigate positive feelings toward the uses of force among officers. Conversely, if officers feel their work goes unrecognized and that they lack peer support and meaningful work relationships, a more positive use of force attitude could develop.

The subscales "Contingent Rewards" and "Coworkers" are potential variables to explore in future research endeavors. Because a relationship existed between these two variables and an officer's use of force attitude, these variables may act as mediator to such views and the formation of favorable use of force attitudes.

Research Question 3

The analysis of research question three revealed no significant relationship existed between an officer's self-reported police organizational stress level and their use of force attitude. This was a surprising finding to the researcher. Previous studies have found links

between negative attitudes towards citizens and increased uses of forces (Worden, 1996). Likewise, studies have found relationships existed between high levels of cynicism and favorable attitudes toward the use of force (Burke & Mikkelsen, 2005). Kop & Euwema (2001) also found relationships existed between an officer's level of experience and a favorable attitude toward the use of force. The researcher hypothesized a significant relationship would result between an officer's self-reported level of police organizational stress, like the variables above, and their use of force attitude. However, no significant relationship resulted.

The researcher believed the use of force attitude scale (UFA) could have been impacted by several factors. One, the nature of the scale might have made it difficult to adequately examine an officer's true attitude toward the use of force. The survey instrument initially consisted of 16 items related to the use of force. However, only 8 of the items were ultimately considered and used for statistical analysis. The remaining items did not clearly relate to one's feelings about the use of force, but rather, their departmental view or other factors related to the use of force. The selection of the items ultimately used for analysis may have impacted the results of this study, as the items may not have had robust psychometric properties.

The researcher believed narrowing the focus of the use of force items to questions which obviously focused on an officer's attitude toward the use of force was more applicable to the research questions being explored. Thus, the remaining items were excluded. The initial pilot study, which did not collect data and focused solely on the format and wording of the survey, did not disclose the issues regarding the use of force items until data collection was already completed. The researcher also failed to recognize the use of force items consisted of two slightly different scales which had to be combined for the subsequent data analysis. The researcher acknowledges the inherent problems associated with combining scales and excluding

items from analysis, however, the researcher tried to analyze the data in the most appropriate and meaningful manner regarding the research questions.

Another issue with the UFA items could have been the combination of two Likert scales into a single raw total score. This could have resulted in a measurement issue and impacted results. Furthermore, the nature of the use of force items asked may have been affected by what is socially desirable. That is, officers may have wanted to answer items in a way which makes them appear to be more likeable by underreporting their true feelings. A fear of a lack of confidentiality by respondents may have also impacted reporting, as career implications for those who exhibit positive feelings toward the use of force is undesirable by police agencies, for obvious reasons.

Implications

The analysis and study of use of force attitudes is a complex phenomenon that is not easily understood.

What was evident by this study, was the revelation that an officer's job satisfaction may act as a potential protective measure against the formation of favorable use of force attitudes. This finding was consistent with the current literature and reiterates the impact one's satisfaction in their job has in relation to the formation of favorable use of force attitudes. While the researcher cannot say police organizational stress levels impact use of force attitudes, the researcher believes the three variables could all be somewhat impacted.

Job satisfaction and organizational stress relationships should be an important measure of overall employee wellbeing for police agencies. This relationship should be further studied in relation to programs which can be implemented to measure and manage job stress and satisfaction among police officers. Programs which can increase job satisfaction, coworker

relationships and contingent rewards are especially interesting given their relationship to use of force attitudes.

The identification of "Contingent Rewards" and "Coworkers" as potential mediating variables was an important finding with implications for law enforcement agencies. If favorable use of force attitudes is related to contingent rewards, agencies should implement programs which recognize the work of its employees. This could include the participation in formal reward programs and employee recognition events. These types of programs are usually low-cost and easy to implement. Additionally, meaningful work relationships with coworkers should be encouraged for the same reasons. Programs and policies which encourage employee interaction both on and off-duty should be explored for the same reasons.

Agencies wishing to implement programs which focus on contingent rewards and employee-employer relationships should first start by analyzing the culture of the organization itself. Police administrators should attempt to obtain a baseline measure of job satisfaction and organizational job stress within their department before attempting to implement new programs. Administrators can then look to see if the implementation of such programs (reward programs, employee recognition events, keeping officers on the same shift, partnering officers in the same vehicles, etc.) has changed the job satisfaction and organizational stress levels within the department. Then, administrators should examine if uses of force or other measures of police-citizen interactions have improved or deteriorated.

Limitations

Several factors may have impacted the validity of this study. First, the researcher had no control over events which may have transpired prior to the administration of the survey. It is possible previous events before the survey administration may have impacted an officer's level

of job satisfaction, organizational stress level or general feeling about the use of force. Second, the location of the study was in the southern United States and was supported by UCR data showing officers were more likely to be assaulted or killed in the line of duty in this region of the country (Uniform Crime Reports, 2013). This factor may have impacted an officer's attitude regarding the use of force, especially in urban environments, and made the region the study was being conducted a confounding variable.

The researcher believed a respondent's view or perception of the topic could have changed depending on the point-in-time in which the survey was administered (one's level of stress and/or satisfaction may have changed). Thus, the time in which the survey was administered may not have adequately considered recent changes in the department which could have impacted their opinions or responses to the survey items. The researcher tried to account for this by asking the participants to only consider the last six months when answering the questions associated with police organizational stress (Q37 – Q56). Furthermore, researcher selection bias, statistical miscalculation and coding errors were threats to validity and reliability.

The way in which the questionnaires were being administered could be another limitation. Administering the survey in-person gave the researcher the opportunity to assure officers the total anonymity of their responses. However, this approach significantly impacted the sample size. That is, limited resources and time restraints prohibited the researcher from traveling to additional cities, as opposed to a survey instrument which could have been mailed or sent electronically. Likewise, the researcher was unable to obtain the participation from several requested law enforcement agencies. This is believed to be attributed to the nature of the survey (asking about their culture and atmosphere) and the pre-conceived notions of the ethical and legal implications the department could be exposed to, especially if the findings were negative

and were to be later revealed. Some of the agencies initially contacted by the researcher requested to view the survey instrument before deciding whether to participate. The agencies (department head or designee) which reviewed the survey instrument beforehand all ultimately declined to participate in the study.

The researcher was able to get a high response rate (99%) by attending each shift's roll-call over several days. However, the researcher was not able to survey those who may have been off work for training, vacation or an emergency.

A delimitation in the research design was the purposeful exclusion of both middle and upper command staff (supervisory personnel). Additionally, specialized units were purposefully excluded, and only non-supervisory patrol officers were sought for inclusion in the study. While it may be important in future research to include all sworn personnel in this type of study, the researcher focused solely on patrol officers. This approach was supported by literature and previous studies indicating line officers assigned to urban areas were most likely to engage in uses of force. Thus, the decision was made by the researcher to focus solely on officers assigned to patrol functions.

Also, the research design purposefully excluded the collection of respondent demographic information to keep the anonymity and confidentiality of participants. However, this information could be useful in future research endeavors and could result in additional information or compounding variables not otherwise known or accounted for in this study. Such as: age, years of experience, level of education, etc.

Another limitation is the generalizability of the results across the North Carolina, and to other states, as only urban patrol officers in North Carolina were surveyed ($N = 137$). The researcher contends the results of this study are still beneficial but realizes the generalizability of

the results is severely hampered by the final sample obtained. This study was further limited to law enforcement officers employed in a handful of agencies from each respective region within the state and may not represent all officers, or, consider all possible confounding variables. Only six local law enforcement agencies out of 350 within North Carolina ultimately participated.

The researcher initially believed he would be able to easily gain access to the desired study participants, because he himself is a law enforcement officer. However, the researcher found it difficult to gain the cooperation of agencies even with this fact being presented. This further cemented the researcher's belief that this study's target population, patrol officers (or any law enforcement officer for that matter), are relatively secretive and a difficult population to examine in social science research.

Because the original sample size of 980 was not able to be obtained, the expected margin of error for this survey research ($N = 137$) is (8%) with a population of 11,933 at a (95%) confidence level. This exceeded the desired margin of error the researcher wished to maintain, however, the limited resources of the researcher, lack of participating agencies and time restrictions greatly impacted the number of completed surveys wish could be obtained. The researcher acknowledges this as a limitation to the generalizability of the study to the population of local law enforcement officers in the state of North Carolina. Nonetheless, the researcher believes this study provides insightful information into job satisfaction, organizational stress and use of force attitudes held by this population and that further research in this area is warranted, perhaps, with a greater sample.

Future Research Directions

Police administrators and managers should take into consideration their officer's level of job satisfaction when making recruitment and retention policies, procedures and programs.

Officers who are less stressed in their jobs will likely remain happier. Likewise, happier employees may be less likely to formulate more favorable attitudes toward the use of force, as seen in this study's sample. This may indicate the need for law enforcement agencies to develop measures of job satisfaction and organizational stress within their department to be utilized throughout an officer's career. Officers are often subjected to psychological screening during their hiring process. The researcher proposes psychological screening should be conducted throughout an officer's career and not just during recruitment. This would, perhaps, allow for measures of job satisfaction and organizational stress throughout the career of the officer.

The results of such a measure, or its implementation, may later lead to the development of a predictive model to be used in the analysis of use of force attitudes. That is, predict which officers may be more likely to engage in uses of force because they have a more favorable use of force attitude. This has the potential for the reduction in the civil and criminal liabilities for the agency and officer.

Additionally, future studies should attempt to obtain an increased sample size, so the results can be more generalizable across a given geographic area. The addition of demographic data such as: age, race, education level, years of service, etc., would also be potentially important variables to explore in the context of this study. The use of a different research design (mixed methods or quasi-experimental) may also be more appropriate to evaluate these and other potentially associated variables in the future. Future research studies should also consider the use of other survey instruments with more robust psychometric properties or the development of a completely new survey instrument to study these variables in the law enforcement context.

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Appendix A

Memorandum to Sergeants/Shift Supervisors

MEMORANDUM

DATE: _____

TO: _____**, Supervisor**

FROM: **Chief** _____

RE: **Research Participation**

Our department has been asked to participate in a study of patrol officers' perceptions of encounters on the street, which is being conducted as part of a doctoral dissertation. The researcher will report to roll call at _____ on _____ . Please attend to necessary business at the beginning of roll call, then permit him to read his introduction and request the voluntary participation from the officers reporting for duty. It is requested that all supervisors leave the room during the administration of the study.

Appendix B

Statement to Study Participants

Thank you for giving me this time. My name is Zachary Lechette, and I am working on my doctorate in criminal justice. I am a current police officer, military veteran and EMT. I am collecting data for my dissertation, and I appreciate the opportunity to include you in the study. The study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board at Nova Southeastern University. The purpose of the study is to examine experiences and attitudes of local law enforcement patrol officers in North Carolina. In a moment, I will distribute a form for you to review, and confirm that you understand your participation is voluntary. If you agree to participate, you may begin the survey. Your voluntary consent is implied. You will not be asked to sign your name to indicate consent or provide any personal identifiers. If you decide you do not want to complete the questionnaire, which should take approximately fifteen (15) minutes, you can leave the room whenever you feel comfortable to do so. Just place the questionnaire in the box. This study is completely confidential and private. Multiple agencies are participating in this study, and I have placed no identifiers, personal or agency-level, on the questionnaires or in the return box. As a current police officer, I understand better than most the importance of maintaining strict anonymity and privacy if I'm going to be successful in securing solid data, so I'm asking you to trust me in this regard. I will be the only person who will see these completed questionnaires. I must provide access to my dissertation chair and the IRB at Nova Southeastern University, if requested, but no member of any of the participating agencies will have access to these completed questionnaires at any time. The participating agencies will receive a final report on the study, but again, there will be no agency-level comparisons. Further, the participating agencies will not be identified beyond "local law enforcement agencies in North Carolina". Since I will be administering surveys throughout the department over the next several days, I ask that you not discuss the contents with officers who have not yet participated. I now ask that all supervisors leave the room. When you have completed the questionnaire, please return it to me. Are there any questions?

Appendix C

Participation Letter & Survey Instrument

Participant Letter for Anonymous Surveys
NSU Consent to be in a Research Study Entitled
Title of Study*: Experiences of Local Law Enforcement Officers in North Carolina*

Who is doing this research study?

This person doing this study is Zachary Lechette with the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education, School of Criminal Justice, at Nova Southeastern University. He is being helped by Dr. Marcelo Castro, Ph.D.

Why are you asking me to be in this research study?

You are being asked to take part in this research study because you are a non-supervisory law enforcement officer, currently assigned to patrol duties, working at a local law enforcement agency within North Carolina.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this study is to examine experiences and attitudes of local law enforcement patrol officers within North Carolina.

What will I be doing if I agree to be in this research study?

You will be taking a one-time, anonymous survey. The survey will take approximately 15-minutes to complete.

Are there possible risks and discomforts to me?

This research study involves minimal risk to you. To the best of our knowledge, the things you will be doing have no more risk of harm than you would have in everyday life.

What happens if I do not want to be in this research study?

You can decide not to participate in this research and it will not be held against you. You can exit the survey at any time.

Will it cost me anything? Will I get paid for being in the study?

There is no cost for participation in this study. Participation is voluntary and no payment will be provided.

How will you keep my information private?

Your responses are anonymous. Information we learn about you in this research study will be handled in a confidential manner, within the limits of the law. Completed surveys will be collected and stored in a locked box. The surveys have no individual or agency-level identifier on them that would allow them to be traced back to an individual law enforcement agency or participant. This data will be available to the researcher, the Institutional Review Board and other representatives of this institution, and any granting agencies (if applicable). All confidential data will be kept securely in a locked file cabinet within the researcher's possession. All data

will be kept for 36 months and destroyed after that time by shredding the survey instruments and disposing of them in the trash.

Who can I talk to about the study?

If you have questions, you can contact Zachary Lechette at [redacted]. You may also contact Dr. Marcelo Castro, Ph.D., at [redacted].

If you have questions about the study but want to talk to someone else who is not a part of the study, you can call the Nova Southeastern University Institutional Review Board (IRB) at (954) 262-5369 or toll free at 1-866-499-0790 or email at IRB@nova.edu.

Do you understand and do you want to be in the study?

If you have read the above information and voluntarily wish to participate in this research study, please begin the survey that has been provided to you by the researcher.

YOU MAY BEGIN THE SURVEY

Thank you for your participation in this study. Your responses are completely anonymous and private. Please identify the best response for each statement/question.

	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.	Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	I like the people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Raises are too few and far between.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16	I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	I have too much to do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.	Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
26	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30	I like my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	I have too much paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Below is a list of items that describe different aspects of being a police officer. After each item, please circle how much stress it has caused you over the past 6 months, using a 7-point scale (see below) that ranges from “No Stress At All” to “A Lot Of Stress”:

No Stress At All			**Moderate Stress**			**A Lot Of Stress**
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**

37. Shift work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. Working alone at night	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. Over-time demands	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. Risk of being injured on the job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. Work related activities on days off (e.g. court, community events)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. Traumatic events (e.g. MVA, domestics, death, injury)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43. Managing your social life outside of work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
44. Not enough time available to spend with friends and family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. Paperwork	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. Eating healthy at work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. Finding time to stay in good physical condition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. Fatigue (e.g. shift work, over-time)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. Occupation-related health issues (e.g. back pain)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. Lack of understanding from family and friends about your work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. Making friends outside the job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. Upholding a "higher image" in public	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. Negative comments from the public	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. Limitations to your social life (e.g. who your friends are, where you socialize)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. Feeling like you are always on the job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. Friends / family feel the effects of the stigma associated with your job	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

For each statement, please circle a response to indicate whether you…

SA/Strongly Agree **A**/Agree **NAD**/Neither Agree Nor Disagree **D**/Disagree **SD**/Strongly Disagree

57. Police are not permitted to use as much force as is often necessary in making arrests.

SA A NAD D SD

58. It is sometimes acceptable to use more force than is legally permissible to control someone who physically assaults an officer.

SA A NAD D SD

59. Our department's use of force policy is too restrictive.

SA A NAD D SD

60. A police officer is more likely to arrest a person who displays what the officer considers to be a bad attitude.

SA A NAD D SD

61. A police officer is justified in using force against a person who is passively resisting arrest.

SA A NAD D SD

62. A police officer is justified in using force against a person who is actively resisting arrest.

SA A NAD D SD

63. An officer's mood on a particular day may influence the level of force used in an encounter with a suspect.

SA A NAD D SD

64. A tough, physical approach should be used less on the street.

SA A NAD D SD

65. Forceful police actions are highly educational for civilians.

SA A NAD D SD

For each statement, please circle the response that best identifies your thoughts…

66. Following the rules is not compatible with getting the job done.

Never Seldom Often Always

67. Disengaging during an encounter with a verbally-abusive citizen can sometimes be a necessary/appropriate response.

Never Seldom Often Always

68. Disengaging during an encounter with a passively-resisting citizen can sometimes be a necessary/appropriate response.

Never Seldom Often Always

69. Disengaging during an encounter with an actively-resisting suspect can sometimes be a necessary/appropriate response.

Never Seldom Often Always

70. Line supervisors in your department generally support the officer when he/she feels justified in using force during an encounter.

Never Seldom Often Always

71. Police officers in your department use more force than is necessary to make an arrest.

Never Seldom Often Always

72. Police officers in your department respond to verbal abuse with physical force.

Never Seldom Often Always

Is there any information you would like to add that might help inform this research?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your time.

Appendix D

North Carolina Region Map

North Carolina Regions