

Police Personality and Domestic Violence

Victoria Hargan

MA Forensic Psychology

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Abstract

Domestic violence by police officers is a complex phenomenon and remains a problem to members of law enforcement, the criminal justice system and to the medical and mental health communities. This paper reviews a historical look at police culture, police training, and dynamics of domestic violence as they relate to police personality and domestic violence. This paper compares personality traits and characteristics of domestic abusers to the police personality in an attempt to determine whether police officers are predisposed to domestic violence. It is suggested that police personality traits and characteristics resemble those of domestic abusers. It is further suggested that these traits make effective police officers. The lack of policies in place in addition to the absence of enforcement of laws and policies within the police agency has made domestic violence among law enforcement difficult to challenge, treat, and resolve. This paper offers suggestions to reduce and eliminate domestic violence by police officers.

Police Personality and Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a complex and multifaceted problem and remains a global issue that continues to be reported in epidemic proportion. Researchers have been exploring the causation, dynamics of domestic violence, scope of the problem, the cycle of violence, the power imbalance between victim and batterer, the impact that domestic violence has on society as a whole; including statistics, cost of health care from injuries sustained by the victim (including mental health services), rehabilitation for the offender, among other penalties; and still after decades of research on the topic of domestic violence, domestic violence remains a global issue.

Police perpetrated domestic violence (PPDV) is defined as domestic violence perpetrated by a law enforcement officer. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) defines domestic violence by police officers as follows: "Domestic violence" refers to an act or pattern of violence perpetrated by a police officer upon his or her intimate partner not done in defense of self or others, including but not limited to the following: Bodily injury or threat of imminent bodily injury, Sexual battery, Physical restraint, Property crime directed at the victim, Stalking, Violation of a court order of protection or similar injunction, Death threats or death " (IACP 2002). The IACP defines an intimate partner as "An "intimate partner" of a police officer is any person who meets one or more of the following criteria: Is or was legally married to the police officer, Has a child in common with the police officer, Has or had a dating relationship with the police officer, Is specified as an intimate partner by state law, Is cohabitating or has cohabitated romantically with the police officer . Domestic violence perpetrated by law enforcement is considered a sub-population of domestic abusers which contains cultural factors with the police culture.

Statistics

Domestic violence by police officers remains a health issue among police families, victims and a problem within the law enforcement community. The psychology profession and research arena have struggled to provide interventions and strategies due to lack of cooperation by law enforcement agencies, and lack of evidenced based practice and empirical studies related to the police culture as it relates to domestic violence. “Researchers have established that law enforcement officers consistently report using violence with their intimate partners, although the reported rates have varied. Klein and Klein (2000) found rates lower than that the general population – around 5% – while other studies found much higher rates, up to 40% (Neidig, Russell, & Seng, 1992). Feder found 24% in 1997; Ryan found 10% in 2000; Gershon found 9% in 2000; and Johnson found 40% in 1991. While no precise rate of officer-involved domestic violence has been formally established, it is clear that officer-involved domestic violence exists and deserves careful attention (IACP, 2003b)” (Oehme & Martin, 2011).

Research has revealed that domestic violence by the general population is underreported and domestic violence by police officers is believed to lack sufficient statistical data partially due to the police policing themselves. When a police officer is charged with domestic violence, the administration of the police department and Internal Affairs investigate the incident. Other variables such as a threat to the officer’s job are considered when charging the officer. The Lautenberg Amendment to the control gun control act (1968), family violence act states that anyone convicted of domestic violence cannot carry a firearm. This puts the police officer in a precarious position since part of the officer’s tools includes a firearm.

Domestic Violence a Historical View

Police personality has been an interest to psychologists for decades; however police psychology was not recognized as a formal discipline until the 1980's; with police brutality at the forefront of interest to psychologists. Psychologists were interested in why some police officers abused citizens whereas other officers did not. Another interest to psychologists was how police work affected the police officer's overall well-being, including physical and mental health and family conflict.

There was very little interest in domestic violence within the police family during that era since domestic violence was considered "a private family matter" and was expected to be kept a secret and was commonplace among families. The old adage "The rule of thumb" was a rule followed centuries previous that a man could use a switch on his wife no bigger than his thumb; and was a way to protect the wife. It wasn't until the feminine movement began to emerge during the 1970's that caught the attention to the criminal justice system, medical and mental health fields. In fact "Until 1976, rape laws in all 50 states contained a Marital Rape Exemption specifically to prevent husbands who raped their wives from being charged with a crime" (RAINN, 2009). In addition it wasn't until 1996 that marital rape was abolished as even being a crime. This meant that a man could legally rape his wife and it was considered to be a wife's marital responsibility to have sex with him when and if he wanted to engage in sexual activity. This is disturbing and reveals how very little domestic violence; including marital rape has evolved over the years. Police family violence is considered a sub-population of abuse where culture changes the outcome for the victim.

Domestic violence perpetrated by law enforcement is a foreign area of study for the scholarly arena. The limited research available on this topic has revealed that police officers

possess many of the same personality traits that domestic abusers possess such as authoritarianism, coercion, manipulation, psychological tactics, isolation, high rates of substance abuse, relationship issues, and a sense of entitlement are examples. Police training adds to the complexity, power imbalance and overall dynamics within the individual officer's relationship. Police officers are trained to control and subdue crowds and individuals. It is suggested that police training, tactics, techniques, in addition to police personality traits further enhance domestic violence within the police family. Police officers learn to control situations during training and it takes a firm, assertive, authoritative demeanor to gain control over a person or situation. Police training skills used on the streets are often carried over into the home causing conflict and arguments, potentially resulting in domestic violence. "The competitive and controlling nature of many police officers leads them to want to win arguments rather than resolve problems" (Nicoletti & Spencer-Thomas, 2000).

Thesis: Police Personality: Are Police Personality Traits and characteristics responsible for the high rate of domestic violence within the police the family?

Hypothesis: Domestic violence committed by police officers is a result of multifaceted dynamics; police personality, police culture, training, exposure to violence on the job, sense of entitlement, and influence of the administration of the police department which may encourage or predispose police officers to domestic violence.

Personality Theory and Development

Research has shown that personality development is a result of multiple factors and one theory is neither right or wrong in identifying how and why people develop certain personality traits. Foundational theorists such as Piaget, known for cognitive development; Freud's psychosocial development theory, in addition to Freud's Structural Model of Personality;

Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development and Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development; and Nature versus Nurture debate all provide well-formulated theories of personality development; however it is an integrated theory that possess a better explanation for one's personality and behavioral traits.

Integrated theoretical causes include a person's biopsychosocial makeup and development to be responsible for personality development. This includes individual life circumstances, experiences, genetics, environment, socioeconomic status, educational status, physical health, mental health, disability, cultural influence, race, gender, creed, religion, and occupational influence that are responsible for the way people think, decisions they make, how they feel and perceive the world and choice of lifestyle. "Occupational environments can influence and shape perceptions and interpretations of events and situations" (Skolnick). It is suggested that individual personality traits along with police training constitutes the "Police Personality." "Insight into the occupational environment of police officers can help to provide a more complete understanding of officer behavior and decision-making" (Skolnick).

Police Personality

Personality structure among police officers is better understood when applying an integrated theoretical approach to personality. Personality has been described to varying degrees in the literature. I have provided definitions of personality defined: "Personality is the entire mental organization of a human being at any stage of his development. It embraces every phase of human character: intellect, temperament, skill, morality, and every attitude that has been built up in the course of one's life" (Warren & Carmichael, 1930, p. 333). A second definition of personality is described as: "An individual's pattern of psychological processes arising from motives, feelings, thoughts, and other major areas of psychological function. Personality is

expressed through its influences on the body, in conscious mental life, and through the individual's social behavior." (Mayer, 2005)

Personality includes a person's thoughts, feelings and behaviors to which make an individual unique. There are components of personality that pertain to all populations which include consistency, behaviors, thoughts feelings stimulated by psychological and physiological processes. For example, individuals possess consistent behaviors and traits across most situations. Additionally, it is suggested that our personality is a psychological phenomenon that occurs psychologically; and this phenomenon is influenced by a physiological response that effects how we respond to environmental stimuli. Furthermore, personality is not only seen in behavior, it is also evident in how we think, what we feel and how we engage in our personal and professional relationships and socialization.

Police Personality Traits

Understanding basic concepts relating to personality will help to identify police personality and whether certain personality traits are responsible for the high rate of domestic violence within law enforcement. Typical personality traits possessed by police officers include authoritative, suspiciousness, aggressive, assertive, dominance, conservative, isolation, entitlement, manipulative, deception, risk taking, thrill seeking, controlling, solidarity and cohesion among the profession to be among the most common. Skolnick has labeled the police personality as a "working personality" of police that is influenced by police culture and environment. "The working personality of police is shaped by the need to establish one's authority, the ever-present threat of danger, and the need for efficiency. The working personality influences the behavioral responses of police officers, providing a unique way to study and

understand police behavior. The isolation police experience from the public serves to strengthen police solidarity and the working personality of officers” (Skolnick).

Skolnick describes the working personality as comprising of two principal variables, danger and authority resulting in a third personality variable trait suspiciousness (Skolnick). Police officers are trained to recognize “normal” in order to be able to discern situations or suspects who may be suspicious or dangerous. For example, police officers are trained to take notice of their neighborhoods where they patrol in order to identify and spot things that are out of the ordinary for that particular neighborhood. In addition, constantly scanning surroundings for danger and suspicious activity helps the officer to identify the potential for danger; however constant hyper-vigilance can affect the police officer’s overall mental well-being. Hyper-vigilance becomes habit on duty and off duty.

Another personality trait of police officers is conservative traits. Police officers feel safe and secure with consistent behaviors and acts because unpredictable behavior or acts can cost them their life. Without consistency and what the officer perceives as “normal” puts the officer on edge and heightens their threat of safety and security. Moreover, Skolnick describes the fine line between friendships and isolation that often develops between police officers and ordinary citizens “A policeman’s work makes him less desirable as a friend, since norms of friendship implicate others in his work. Accordingly, the element of danger isolates the policeman socially from that segment of the population which he regards as symbolically dangerous and also from the conventional population with whom he identifies” (Skolnick). This belief and identification builds the solidarity among law enforcement.

Additionally, authority reinforces the isolation between officer and ordinary citizens. The paradoxical personality traits of police officers may be responsible for being accused of

hypocrisy due to their own risky thrill seeking behaviors. It is suggested that the kind of person who responds well to danger is also a person who does not always uphold a high moral code. Responding to danger requires risk, aggressiveness, assertiveness, deception and creativity. Living by a high moral code does not always allow for these behaviors. Additionally, police officers are skilled at manipulation and utilizing coercion to elicit information. This may require the officer to lie to a suspect to elicit a confession for example, and lying is not a trait of someone who holds a high moral standard resulting in further isolation and encourages solidarity among law enforcement.

Police Hiring Process and Method Selection

Police training tactics begin as early as the pre-employment phase. The hiring and selection process is lengthy and rigorous. This process includes several steps. Initially candidates must possess 60 credits hours of college classes preferably in criminal justice or Associate degree in law enforcement; a relatively clean criminal background, and should be in reasonably good physical condition. The next step is applying to a police department. The candidate is scheduled for a testing day which includes a multiple choice exam and a physical agility test (PAT) in addition to an oral board interview. If the police candidate passes the initial multiple choice exam and the PAT the police department will perform the background check, a psychological exam (most departments), a physical exam, a polygraph exam and voice stress analysis. Once the police candidate passes all of the required tests the candidate will go on to have an oral interview with an oral interview board. It is suggested that this is the most difficult part of the selection process and has a high rate of failure of all tests combined.

Police candidates are “schooled” on the selection process and how to pass the oral interview with countless books, websites and videos available offering tips, tricks and secret to

guarantee a top score on the police pre-employment exam, evaluation and selection process. Topics such as how to dress, what to say and not say during the Oral Board Interview, how to pass the polygraph test, and what to say and what not to say the psychologist conducting a pre-employment evaluation are examples. A question arises as to how accurate the psychological assessment is if candidates are being coached on what to say and what not to say during the selection process. This is unethical and dangerous; potentially resulting in hiring psychopaths to protect and serve society.

Characteristics of a psychopath that are similar to the police personality include the ability to manipulate, the need for stimulation, pathological lying, sense of entitlement, and a high rate of substance abuse. "Police officers suffer unusually high rates of alcoholism, being twice as likely as the general public to become problem drinkers (Constant, 1991)" (Boyce, 2006). Substance abuse is also a contributing factor to domestic violence and is seen in people with Antisocial Personality Disorder. A question arises to whether substance abuse among law enforcement is possibly related to the job as suggested in the literature, or if it is a symptom of another disorder such as Antisocial Personality Disorder or Psychopathy. Since police officers are coached and schooled on the psychological testing also remains in question since the answers are programmed responses by the evaluatee rather than a genuine elicited response. Furthermore, it is easy for the psychopath to lie through the test and completely skew the results. Another question arises as to whether it is the coaching of police candidates or the police candidate already possesses psychopathological traits that enable them to pass the psychological instruments remains. On the other hand there are many well balanced police officers who are well suited for the position; however, it is those who engage in maladaptive behaviors such as domestic violence that this paper will examine.

Psychological Test Instruments used in Police Selection

The following tests are used to determine personality traits and psychopathology among police candidates.

The MMPI-2

The MMPI-2 is a restandardized test from the original MMPI and is a common personality test instrument used in the selection process of police officers. The main objective of the MMPI-2 is to detect psychopathology. “The MMPI-2 uses standard (T) scores, which have a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10 and a T score greater than 65 on the MMPI-2 is considered clinically significant and therefore noteworthy” (Flieshman et. al., 2011). Psychological testing among police candidates is to rule out candidates who would not otherwise make effective officers. In fact, “a T score greater than 65 on any of the MMPI-2 Basic Scales can be justifiably removed from the applicant pool” (Flieshman et. al, 2011).

The Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI)

The Personality Assessment Inventory, or PAI (Morey, 2007) is another psychological instrument used to measure psychopathology. “The PAI is composed of 344 questions as opposed to 567 items in the MMPI-2 and it is easier to read. Another feature of the PAI includes a 4-point scale for each item as opposed to a forced-choice true/false format as seen in the MMPI-2” (Fleischer et. al., 2011). Researchers have found that the Negative Impression (NIM) and Positive Impression (PIM) to be relevant to the police selection process. “Elevated NIM scores are modestly correlated with problem performance as a police officer after hire. These studies discovered that high NIM officers engaged in neglect of duty, made conduct mistakes, and were more likely than other officers to receive reprimands from supervisors” (Fleischer et.al., 2011); thus justifying the exclusion from the applicant pool.

Additionally, the PAI clinical scales offer additional purposes for law enforcement selection. The PAI provides a scale to predict officer performance. This scale is called “The Antisocial (ANT) scale.” “The Weiss et al. (2004) and Weiss et al. (2005) studies showed that the ANT full scale and its subscales (ANT-A/Antisocial Behaviors, ANT-E/Egocentricity, ANT-S/Stimulus Seeking) were associated with problem behaviors such as insubordination, excessive citizen complaints, neglect of duty, conduct mistakes, and termination for cause” (Fleischer et. al., 2011); thus eliminating individuals with high T scores or >70.

Validity of the PAI

It is noteworthy to reveal that the prediction of personality disorders, substance abuse, and other maladaptive behaviors used in the selection process from scales and measures do not provide peer-reviewed research to support the criterion of the PAI scales that measure of psychopathology. “Weiss, Hitchcock, et al. state that law enforcement candidates tend to produce profiles on self-report tests of psychopathology that have lower means than those found in normative samples, and very few individuals produce scale elevations” (Fleischer et. al., 2011). Self-reporting symptoms are biased and individuals with narcissistic psychopathy are convincing and have the ability to captivate others. They have the ability to distort reality, and offer plausible alternative scenarios. This quality is attractive in the selection of law enforcement since thinking on their feet is a qualification of the job; thus potentially skewing the results.

The California Psychological Inventory (CPI)

The California Psychological Inventory (CPI) is the second most widely used psychological instrument used in the pre-employment screening for police officers. The CPI offers 434 items and measures with 20 dimensions of personality over four major areas of personality: measures of poise, measures of normative orientation and values, measures of

cognitive and intellectual functioning, and measures of role and interpersonal style” (Fliescher et al., 2011). It is interesting to note that the CPI is popular within the law enforcement selection process and is not an instrument to be used to identify psychopathology but rather used for pre-employment purposes only. However, the CPI is used in collaboration with other tests that do identify psychopathology such as the PAI and MMPI-2 (Fleischer et. al., 2011).

The Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI)

“The Inwald Personality Inventory (Inwald, 1982) contains 310-item true/false self-report inventory that focuses mainly on admitted past behavior patterns in an attempt to predict future job-related behaviors (Inwald, 2008)” (Fliescher et al., 2011). The test addresses the admission of past antisocial behaviors to which the evaluatee will answer either true or false. “The IPI continues to be the most popular of the Inwald–Hilson measures for police psychological assessment (see, for example, Super, 2006)” (Fliescher et. al., 2011). Self-reporting of symptoms or past behaviors can be easily denied by the test taker; thus skewing the results.

The Matrix-Predictive Uniform Law Enforcement

Selection Evaluation Inventory (M-PULSE)

“The Matrix-Predictive Uniform Law Enforcement Selection Evaluation Inventory, commonly known as the M-PULSE (Davis & Rostow, 2008) is a 455-item inventory scored on a four-point scale that focuses primarily on identifying law enforcement officer candidates at risk for specific liabilities most frequently associated with performance problems as a law enforcement officer; such as criminal conduct” (Fliescher et. al, 2011). Additionally, the M-PULSE) assesses for attitudes and other personality characteristics that may negatively impact police work; “Variables include Negative Self-Issues, Negative Perceptions Related to Law Enforcement, Unethical Behavior, and Unpredictability” (Fliescher et. al., 2011).

Procedural Methods used across the United States in the Selection of Police officers

A study performed by Cochrane et al revealed procedural methods that were used by police departments across the United States to determine the selection process of police officers. “Participants included personnel departments of municipal police agencies throughout the United States (Cochrane et al, 2008). “Municipal police departments were chosen because they are the most widely recognized law enforcement agencies and they represent the largest number of police or safety personnel in the United States” (Cochrane et al, 2008). The researchers in this study randomly selected 355 municipal police agencies across the country out the 1200 current municipal police agencies in the United States and sent them a survey containing 20 questions regarding the selection procedures used by each individual agency. The random sample was selected based on geography and population size” (Cochran et al, 2008). Out of the 355 randomly selected agencies, 43% or 155 agencies completed and returned the surveys (Cochran et al, 2008). Agencies were further broken down into groups by size based on the population size served by the agency. “Departments were considered large if population size served was greater than 100,000, medium if between 25,000 and 100,000, and small if less than 25,000. The source used to select departments and determine population size was The National Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators and correctional Agencies (National Police Chiefs and Sheriffs Information Bureau, 1996)” (Cochran et al., 2008).

Table 1.1

“Types of Selection Procedures used in Police Departments before hiring a police officer by percentage” (Cochrane et al 2009).

| Municipal Police Agency Size | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|--------------|
| Procedure Type | Small =35 | Medium =53 | Large =67 | Combined 155 |
| Background Investigation | 100.0 | 98.1 | 100.0 | 99.4 |
| Medical exam | 97.0 | 98.1 | 100.0 | 98.7 |
| Interview | 100.0 | 98.1 | 97.0 | 98.1 |
| Application blank | 97.0 | 90.5 | 98.5 | 95.5 |
| Psychological assessment | 73.5 | 94.3 | 98.5 | 91.6 |
| Drug testing | 70.5 | 90.5 | 95.5 | 88.4 |
| Physical fitness | 64.7 | 81.1 | 86.5 | 80.0 |
| Polygraph | 26.4 | 69.8 | 82.0 | 65.8 |
| Civil Service Exam | 32.3 | 50.9 | 56.7 | 49.7 |
| Recommendation letters | 50.0 | 35.8 | 53.7 | 46.5 |
| Knowledge, skills, abilities | 47.0 | 49.0 | 44.7 | 46.5 |
| Other | 26.4 | 31.3 | 27.7 | 20.5 |

Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity appeared skewed in some studies as a result of suggesting that the studies revealed a high reliability and validity rate; however, at the same time, research also suggests that domestic violence is often under reported in the general population. The potential for the loss of the officer’s job along with the Lautenberg Amendment provides additional barriers in reporting abuse and/or taking action against the officer. Therefore, it is suggested that

the complex dynamics involved in police perpetrated domestic violence is underreported and may occur more frequently than what is actually reported.

“In a study by Aamodt et al revealed a metanalytic technique to determine whether law enforcement personal that engage in domestic violence and men in the general population batter have similar personality traits or disorders” (Aamodt et al, 2000). “The study revealed MMPI mean profiles of police officers and the batterer groups have almost no overlap. On the validity scales with the exception of the L scale, and all of the clinical scales, the mean score of the batterers falls significantly higher than the mean score of the police officers” (Aamodt et al, 2000). “Additionally, validity scales revealed that men in the general population admitted to have more deviant attitudes and behaviors than the police officers” (Aamodt et al, 2000). “It is interesting to note that on the K scale, batterers scored in the average range, whereas police officers scored much higher. This score may occur in truly well-adjusted persons with good ego strength. On the other hand, it may also occur in persons with some adjustment difficulties trying to present themselves more favorably, in employment situations” (Aamodt et al, 2000). The results in this study are interesting since one of the first questions that arise when an officer is charged with domestic violence is how did the officer fared on the pre-employment evaluation, which contains a battery of tests. Individuals who are masters at manipulators and deception may pass these tests. Furthermore, police officers who are skilled at manipulation and deception not only make effective officers, but utilize these tactics to abuse, coerce, intimidate, harass, hurt, manipulate their intimate partners and the criminal justice system.

Another study by Bergen et al stated “The probability of IPV-intimate partner violence in the police population can be applied to the national rates if the male police group constitutes a random sample of the larger population of adult males” (Bergen et al, 2000). Since police

officers who batter are within a sub-population of males who engage in domestic abuse; in addition to different variables that do not apply to both samples, along with different variables measured between the general population of males versus that of the sub-population of police officers who batter potentially refutes the statement by Bergen et al could prove false.

Furthermore, the pre-employment process, screening, measures of psychological instruments, background checks, overall intellectual functioning, police training and other tactics are carefully employed before the hiring process, in addition to ongoing training on the job. These batterers work within the very system where domestic violence laws are enforced; whereas domestic abusers within the general population many times have previous histories of violence, and criminal histories that are not found within the police population.

A question arises as to whether the police profession, mental illness or personality disorder is responsible for the ability to manipulate and charm their way through the pre-screening process, in addition to having a higher intelligence than that of males within the general public which may account for the difference in why police domestic violence is under reported. Or are these variables and traits similar?

MMPI MEAN T-SCORES FOR POLICE OFFICERS AND BATTERERS

A study performed by Aamodt et al set out to determine whether police officers as a group possessed personality characteristics that may predispose them to domestic violence. The researchers obtained data from two groups; police officers and batterers who were convicted of domestic violence. The information was obtained from individuals in these two comparison groups who had taken the MMPI. “The data was used to create the “police personality” and the “batterer personality” (Aamodt et al 2000).

The chart reveals that there are no overlaps. “On all of the validity scales with the exception of the L scale, and all of the clinical scales, the men score of the batterers falls significantly higher than the mean score of the police officers: (Aamodt et al, 2000).

Validity Scales and Interpretation

L Scale

Both groups scored within an average range.

F Scale

Batterers scored significantly higher and admitted to having more deviant attitudes and behaviors than of the police group. “In a valid profile, higher F scale scores correlate with increased psychopathology and also serve as a rough measure of the severity of the psychological distress experienced by the individual”(Aamodt et al., 2000).

Police officers scored within average range on the F scale. “People who score within this range are less likely to experience disabling psychopathology.

K Scale

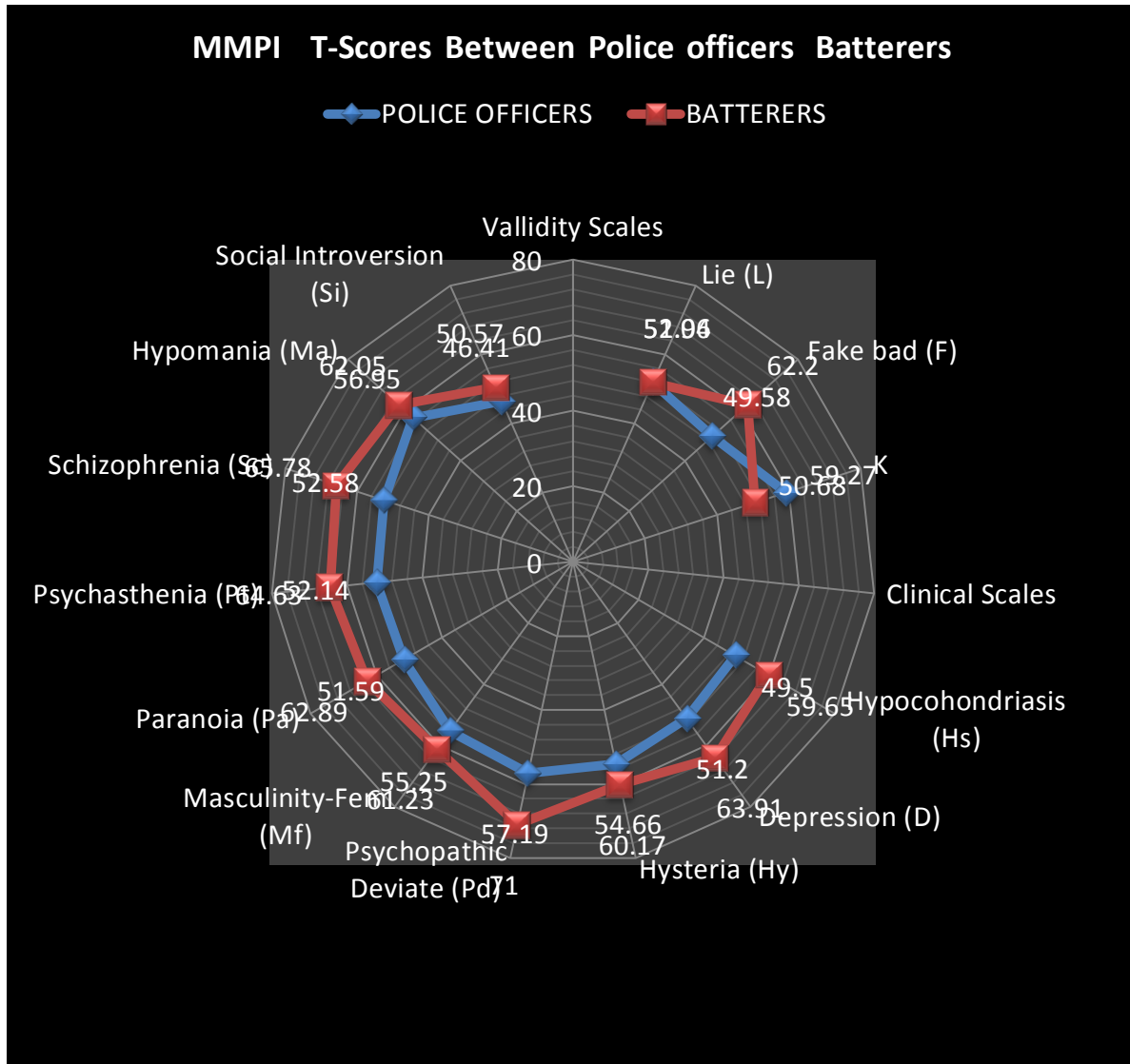
Batterers scored within average range; suggesting opens in their self-description” (Aamodt et al, 2000).

Police officers scored within the average range; however their score fell significantly higher than that of the batterer’s group. “This may suggest that the officers did not report as many symptoms as that of the batter group. In addition this score may reveal that the officer is truly well rounded or that the police group was attempting present themselves more favorably” (Aamodt, 2000).

Clinical Scales Interpretation

On the clinical scales, police officers scored within average ranges; whereas the batter group scored significantly higher than that of the police officer group. In theory, “police officers

may have scored within average range and did not exhibit any serious psychopathology. However, police officers may have had more motivation than batterers did to present themselves as “favorably”. This theory is corroborated by the many coaching and training courses that officers engage prior to any pre-employment testing, interviews and so forth. These classes are designed so that the police officer will pass the pre-employment testing” (Aamodt et al, 2000).



Police Culture and Training

Research has suggested that police culture plays a significant role in domestic violence perpetrated by police officers. Police culture has been in existence since its establishment in

1829 by Sir Robert Peel who launched the first paramilitary modeled police organization in London, establishing the London Police Department (Uchida 2010; Stevens 2008)” (Cochrane, 2008). “The paramilitary hierarchical chain of command intended to promote respect for authority, building camaraderie among those in uniform, and emphasizing ethical behavior from all officers would establish the foundation of police culture and influence that is still in existence today” (Uchida 2010; Black 1991) (Cochrane, 2011). Solidarity among law enforcement has come to be known as “The Blue Wall” and is not only commonplace among law enforcement, but expected among the profession. The solidarity and strong sense of loyalty, lack of monitoring within the law enforcement culture; ultimately results in the police policing themselves. The lack of policies in place in addition to the absence of enforcement of laws and policies within law enforcement has made domestic violence among law enforcement difficult to challenge, treat, and resolve among law enforcement.

Research reveals the level of lethality involved in domestic violence by police officers as the most lethal form of domestic violence. This may be due to the accessibility of weapons and training. Additionally, police officers work within the very system where the victim will report the abuse and attempt to seek justice. The solidarity reaches far beyond the police department. It reaches into the judicial system where judges often side with the police officer. Judicial bias is common among police officers who engage in domestic violence and charged with the crime. It is suggested that working within the same system, the criminal justice arena, members of that system also feel the same sense of loyalty, preventing victims from seeking necessary actions to protect themselves from the abuse; such as obtaining a personal protection order. Personal protection orders are often denied by judges as a result of a federal law, The Lautenberg Amendment to the gun control act and family violence act (1968). This law prohibits any person

convicted of domestic violence from possessing firearms, including a police officer. “A law enforcement officer with such a conviction cannot carry a gun”(Allen, Hibler, & Miller 2000). This poses a significant threat to the officer’s position since carrying a gun is part of the tools of the trade of police work. Other professions do not have the same threat of a potential loss of employment when charged with domestic violence.

Police culture also influences victim assistance and response to the domestic violence complaint. It is suggested that as a result of the officer’s position and working within the criminal justice system where domestic violence is charged as a crime within the general population; is voided when the batterer is a police officer. A lack of cooperation by the police department in prosecuting the police batterer, in addition to domestic violence that is often covered up due to police cultural influence, judicial bias, fear of liability within the police department and the Lautenberg amendment to the gun control act are all factors that are considered when charging a police officer with domestic violence. “In one study by Sgambelluri it is suggested that policing encourages and attracts individuals with characteristics associated with authoritarianism. Although policing may enhance or influence attitudes and behaviors to abuse, in itself policing does not cause domestic violence. It is the attitudes, behaviors and police training that can further enhance an abusers tactics on the victim” (Sgambelluri 2000).

Police Training and Tactics

Police training and tactics begin early on, as early as the pre-employment phase. Police officers are trained to tell the evaluating psychologist and the Oral Review Board exactly what they want to hear, and not what they would actually say if they were telling the truth. This poses a question as to whether police departments across the country are hiring genuine well-adjusted police officers who are suited for the police profession. With appropriate coaching and training

individuals are being passed off as “Competent” or fit for duty when these individuals may not be psychologically fit. “In studying domestic violence by police officers it is important to determine whether there increased levels among law enforcement are due to characteristics of the individual officer; such as personality, background; conditions of the job itself or an interaction between the two” (Aamodt, 1998). Alternatively, research suggests that it is both individual personality traits along with police culture and training that constitute the police personality.

Police training tactics used in domestic violence include utilizing departmental assets to harass, stalk, abuse, coerce or intimidate the victim; such as driving by the victim’s house to let her/him know that they are watching them; utilizing databases to obtain information on the victim and the victim’s friends and family; or putting taps on the phone of the victim. Other tactics include using physical control maneuvers that will not leave marks on the victim, arresting the victim, and twisting the truth to make the victim look like the problem. Police officers are responsible for writing police reports and they know what will make the charges “stick.”

One of the most disturbing tactics among domestic violence by police officers is psychiatrically evaluating the victim. This is done when the abuser, a police officer, states that the victim, his significant other has threatened to commit suicide or harm him. “The jurisprudential basis of criminal law is the “police power,” which authorizes the state to protect the community and to “ensure domestic tranquility” (Melton et. al., 2007). Additionally, “civil commitment states the terms describing the grounds for intervention such as “mental disorder,” a “need for treatment”, or is dangerous”. Police offices can and do write in their reports that their victim meets one of the criteria mentioned as an abusive tactic to control, humiliate, abuse or

cover up the abuse that the perpetrator inflicted by making it appear as if it is the victim who is “mentally ill” or “mentally unstable.”

Psychopathology and Domestic Violence

Personality traits among domestic abusers include male privilege and sense of entitlement, a controlling and demanding demeanor, manipulative, deception, and authoritarianism, many of the same traits seen in the police personality. “Psychopathy has been one of the most powerful, if not the single most powerful predictor of continued violence across a variety of different samples including general criminal offenders, sex offenders, substance abusers, psychiatric patients, men and women, adolescents, and in various countries throughout the world” (Huss & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2006). In a study performed by Huss & Langhinrichsen-Rohling revealed three typologies of batterers LLA: Low Level Antisocial, GVA: Generally Violent/Antisocial, BD: Borderline/Dysphoric, and FO: Family Only. “The study revealed a great deal of overlap between the Generally Violent, Antisocial (GVA) classification of batterers and many dimensions of psychopathy” (2006). “Research has suggested that The generally violent/antisocial batterers (GVA) are characterized by general antisocial features and greater substance abuse, the most severe partner violence, and the commission of violence both against the partner and against others” (Huss & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2006). This is an interesting finding and may be applied to police officers who batter. Police officer’s as a whole have a high rate of domestic violence, divorce and substance abuse. Past research has suggested that police related work and stressors may contribute to these findings. However, if this were the case, why do some officers engage in domestic violence whereas others do not? There appears to be a strong link to domestic violence and psychopathy and assessment for psychopathy should be at the forefront of the police selection process.

A psychological instrument, The Hare Psychopathy Checklist (PCL-R) relies on the truthfulness of responses. Psychopaths and notorious liars, in addition to bias statements from third party information from families or witnesses close to the psychopaths will provide unreliable results. "Several studies assessing domestic violence perpetrators have relied on a self-report measure to assess psychopathy in their samples of male batterers; Yet, the use of a self-report measure to assess psychopathy has been routinely criticized because a central feature of psychopaths is their ability to con and manipulate (Rogers, Vitacco, & Jackson, 2002)" (Huss & Langhinrichsen-Rohling, 2006).

"A study performed by and published by Campbell (1995) was based on a woman's belief that her partner might kill her. Certain terrorist tactics, such as choking to the point of the woman losing consciousness contribute to this belief" (Dutton & Kerry). "However, this belief notwithstanding, the personality disorder most likely to actually kill his spouse is dependent and passive-aggressive, not the profile predicted by these scales" (Dutton & A study by Showalter, Bonnie & Roddy (1980) concluded that, "especially significant was the fact that spousal killers lacked recorded histories of assaultive or other socially disturbing behavior" (Dutton & Kerry). This is interesting in that police officers and psychopaths alike do not always have past histories of abuse. For police officers, this may be due to departmental bias and cover up and with psychopaths they have the ability to charm and con others.

Police officers have the privilege and ability to take a life or liberty from individuals and when a psychopath has this authority and powerful privilege can be easily turned into misuse of power or abuses of authority in the hands of unethical, immoral individuals who do not regard the rights of others; a similar definition of Antisocial Personality Disorder; or Psychopathy. These are traits and issues seen in police officers who batter and abuse their power.

Themes

Common themes emerged from the collected data included occupational stress related to police work as the most common cited material. Additionally, many of the studies performed included studies comparing large police departments versus smaller or rural police departments. These studies revealed that larger police departments had more exposure to critical incidents such as shootings and more action or negative stressors on the job as a potential for carrying over job related stress into the officers family life, resulting in domestic violence. On the other hand, other studies revealed a much different view of the problem to include individual personality traits of the officer, substance abuse, police training and tactics as variables responsible for domestic violence within the police population. Both studies identified negative stressors related to police work as potential risk factors to domestic violence within this population.

“Another recurrent theme noted in research relates to the effect that occupation has an impact on a person’s perception and view of the world. Doctors, janitors, lawyers, and industrial workers develop distinctive ways of perceiving and responding to their environment and elements in the police milieu, danger, authority, and efficiency, as they combine to generate distinctive cognitive and behavioral responses in police: a “working personality” would be no different” (Skolnick). It is also suggested that occupation tends to lead to lifestyle habits. For example, medical personal tend to be more health oriented due to their training and from what they see every day in the health care area. Police work becomes a life style and carried over into the home by overprotection of family members, suspicion and looking out for danger.

Patterns

Patterns in research included potential causes and risk factors for domestic violence to include police culture, police training and tactics learned in the profession, and individual

personality traits to be the most commonly discussed among the literature. Additionally, lack of policy, policing amongst themselves, and threat to the loss of job as a result of the Lautenberg Amendment to the family violence act are components to protecting police officers who engage in domestic violence. Other classifications included demographic characteristics of the sample population including gender, rank of the officers, total years as a police officer, years on the job and how long the officer has been at present police department, age, marital status, surveys of victims and officers.

Gaps and Contradictions

Gaps and contradictions in the literature include a lack of empirical studies by the psychology profession, with a vast majority of the articles being published between 1990 through 1998. The decade long gap of articles relating to this sensitive topic ranges from 2000 to 2011 and my research has provided for very few articles on the topic. Limitations of scholarly sources, empirical data, research and findings are significantly scarce during this time period. This may potentially be due to the emergence of police psychology becoming more recognized as an official discipline in the early 1990's during the same time when domestic violence and child sexual abuse were still in their infancy. Domestic violence by police officers is a special population of abuse and the dynamics of police culture, training, traits, and influence on family violence was addressed only within the law enforcement community during this time period; and still remains the constant today.

The explanations and theories of police officers who batter are vast and vary from context to context; including police stress and family spill over to be the most common theory. Additionally, research found that job burnout, constant negative stressors related to police work, emotional stress related to the job, critical incidences such as shootings, and substance abuse

among the law enforcement community to be the most common variables and potential risk factors for committing domestic violence within the police family.

Other contradictions in research were broad. For example authoritarianism and the need for power and control were common among police batterers. These traits are found in men who batter in the general public. Other abusive behaviors found in police officers and the general public includes economic abuse, sexual abuse, threats, intimidation, isolation, emotional abuse, using male privilege, and using the children. Other studies provide a look into the individual officer's personality traits through psychometric instruments that are used to recruit police officers and screen for the potential for "poor or weak" police officers. It is suggested that personality traits that make effective officers are also traits seen in men who batter in the general public. For example, a study by Kraft states "The Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI) had slightly better predictive validity than the MMPI for forecasting and screening out potentially poor police recruits" (Kraft 2000). Police recruits are "weeded out" if they do not possess qualities that the department is looking for, such as a strong authoritative presence, strong ego, the ability to think quickly on their feet. Psychopaths have these same overlapping traits. Narcissistic psychopaths have the ability to captivate judges, juries and audiences with the ability to offer plausible alternative scenarios no matter what the situation is. They have the ability to think on their feet and provide believable explanations. It is difficult to break a narcissist as it is difficult to break a "good cop." Is this skill, training, or pathology? "Furthermore, White and Honig (1995) report a high incidence of domestic violence within law enforcement families, indicating that job characteristics such as "habituation to force, seeing force as a viable solution, rigid chain of command, expectation of compliance and the absence of outside input due to police solidarity enhance the risk for domestic violence even more" (p. 200)" (Kraft, 2000).

Additionally, “the MMPI reveals new content scales, Butcher (1989) describes certain subscales capturing External Aggressive Tendencies including anger (measure of loss of control influenced by frustration or stress), high scores on a cynicism scale, antisocial practices and type-A behavior correlating with overbearingness aggressiveness, and overt directness” (Kraft, 2000) that may contribute to domestic violence by police officers.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues and dilemmas are vast in the area of police psychology as it relates to domestic violence within the police family. Ethical challenges may include identifying the client, Competence, adequate training, Confidentiality, Dual relationships, role conflict, boundary issues, and Dealing with organizational demands.

Identifying the client

Identifying the client is one of the most challenging ethical issues for any psychology professional; yet it is even more challenging for the police psychologist or psychology professional who works with police officers who engage in domestic violence. Dual Relationships, Role Conflict and Boundary Issues are the most common ethical issues and pose a risk for the development of other ethical dilemmas. Depending on the role that the forensic psychology professional is working will help in identifying the role that they will engage. For example, a psychologist who works for the police department on a regular basis may confer with investigators on a case; perform Fitness for Duty Evaluations (FFDE); in addition to administering in-service training to law enforcement personal within the department. Furthermore, the psychologist working for a police department may be responsible for providing psychological services to all members of the police department including officers who may have attended or were engaged in previous services as mentioned above (Zelig, 1988). Working as

consultant, evaluator, and therapist within a police agency may cause conflict and boundary issues if the psychology professional is not cognizant of their role for each individual interaction.

A study performed by Zelig provided: “The ethical problems most often reported as ethical issues working as a police psychologist within a police department included confidentiality, dual relationships, and conflicts between the ethical standards of the psychologist and needs of the agency as the most commonly reported issues” (Zelig, 1988). “Principle 6 of the *Ethical Principles* addresses many of the concerns raised in this discussion: Psychologists respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the people and groups with whom they work. When conflicts of interest arise between clients and psychologists' employing institutions, psychologists clarify the nature and direction of their loyalties and responsibilities and keep all parties informed of their commitments” (APA, 1981).

Competence

Another issue found to contribute to ethical issues in police personality, police psychology and domestic violence includes the scarce amount of evidenced based practice regarding this topic. Competence is not only required to do any job, but it is also an ethical obligation of the psychology professional. “According to the APA Code of Ethics “Psychologists undertake ongoing efforts to develop and maintain their competence. 2.04 *Bases for Scientific and Professional Judgments* Psychologists’ work is based on established scientific and professional knowledge of the discipline” (APA, 1981). The lack of scientific evidenced based practice and lack of information and training puts the psychologist and the client in a precarious position; potentially resulting in harming the client. The psychologist may turn to the police agency for information to better understand the nature of the problem. Asking for guidance from the police organization to obtain information and knowledge about police topics, such as

domestic violence by police officers in order to help the psychology professional to perform their job may potentially result in bias on behalf of the department and individual officer inquired about. This act could potentially harm the victim, individual officer, or department.

According to the Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychology 4.01 Scope of Competence states “ Forensic psychologists provide competent services to clients and other recipients of forensic services in a manner consistent with the profession. Competent provision of services includes the psychological and legal knowledge, skill, thoroughness and preparation reasonably necessary for the provision of those services” (APA, 1991). “In addition the scope of competence encourages forensic psychologists to consult with other psychology professionals to establish competence in the area in question” (APA, 1991).

Adequate training

Adequate training and competence go hand in hand. Information on domestic violence by police officers is scarce. It is vital for the psychology professional to familiarize themselves in the area of police issues, culture, dynamics of domestic violence and how it relates to the individual person or situation to provide an accurate assessment. The psychologist should always follow ethical guidelines provided by the APA, be aware of research in the field, be knowledgeable about applicable laws, including jurisdictional, federal, state, and case law that may impact Practice”(McCutheon, 2000). Furthermore, it is important for the psychologist to use the most up to date information in the field.

A key component in addressing the issue of maladaptive police behaviors, including police officers who engage in domestic violence begins with understanding the cultural influences involved. Additionally, another key component comprises of lack of departmental policy when an officer engages in domestic violence. Only three states in the country have

approved a law to mandate that all police departments within the state have a department policy on domestic violence by police officers. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) has developed a model policy for departments to utilize in helping them to design such policy; however, it should be noted that it is only a model policy. It requires laws to be passed to force departments to design an internal police for their department.

This poses yet another problem; the police are designing individual departmental policies to police their own. This causes great bias and issues for victims and the community; in addition to putting the psychologist in a precarious position with no laws to guide them on the issue. The internal departmental policies are typically designed to protect the individual officer and the police agency to which the officer works. Domestic violence by police officer's is still considered to be in its infancy making it challenging for the psychology professional to prevent role confusion. The agency may ask the psychologist to write a report to favor the officer and/or department to prevent criminal or civil litigation. The psychologist will need additional resources, time and research to accommodate ways to deal with issues of domestic violence within the police family. Equally important includes utilizing up to date assessment instruments. "The psychologist that uses outdated assessment are not competent to perform at their current level of professional measures or measures not development typically used in assessment of public safety populations and/or disregards public safety" (McCucheon, 2008).

Confidentiality

Confidentiality and identification of the client is paramount when working as a forensic psychology professional. Depending on the psycholegal question will help in identifying who the client is. According to Zelig "This problem is often embedded in the context of mandatory referrals in which a police officer is required to see a psychologist for treatment and/or

evaluation. These occasions usually occur when an officer's fitness for duty is questioned, when the officer is involved in a traumatic or critical incident; such as shooting a criminal suspect or being shot themselves; or when the police administration desires information about an officer's psychological status so that the most appropriate disciplinary action can be taken in cases of misconduct" (Zelig, 1988). Since domestic violence affects the officer, the victim, and the community, ethical obligations can easily become blurred. When a police officer commits domestic violence the community loses trust in the officer. Additionally the community as a whole may lose trust in the police department if the department does not handle the incident appropriately. There are many factors as to the ethical obligations of the agency, the officer, and the psychology professional which will be discussed in this literature review. "In all these instances, confidentiality between the officer and the psychologist is at most limited and often nonexistent. Therefore, it may not be in the officer's best interest to reveal certain information. At the same time, this information may be valuable to the police administration (and the community secondarily) in making a decision of whether to retain, suspend, terminate, or change the work assignment of an impaired or traumatized officer" (Zelig, 1988).

Another issue arising from confidentiality and ethical issues is duty to warn and dangerousness. "These concerns arise in police populations, not as the result of high rates of psychopathology, but because of an officer's high exposure to what Monahan (1981) described as environmental correlates of violent behavior such as the immediate availability of weapons and potential victims. Many officers of course, frequently encounter antagonistic and violent citizens who could provoke an inappropriate response from an officer whose controls and inhibitions are compromised" (Zelig, 1988).

Dealing with Organizational Demands

Organizational demands are another issue faced by police and forensic psychologists. “There are times when the administration asked the psychologist to perform psychological evaluations on officers and to change the results if the police administration did not like the outcome. Presumably, this was done so that the psychological evaluation could support the police administration's desire regarding the officer’s position; either to protect or remove the officer from their duties” (Zelig, 1988). Other issues include asking the psychologist to perform psychological evaluations as a result of learning that an officer is taking medication such as Prozac for depression. The Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychologist 9.02 Conflicts with Organizational Demands states “If the demands of an organization with which a forensic psychologist is affiliated or for whom they are working conflict with the Guidelines, the forensic psychologist clarifies the nature of the conflict, makes known the recommendations of the Guidelines, and to the extent feasible, resolves the conflict in a way consistent with the Guidelines” (APA, 1991).

Ethical principles are put in place as a guideline to protect both the client and psychology professional from harm, and to guide them in delivering non-partisan, culturally sensitive care with clarity and objectivity. The research has identified all of ethical principles as potential dilemmas. The ethical principles of beneficence, nonmaleficence, autonomy and justice are identified throughout the literature. According to the Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychologists 2.01.01 Impartiality states “When offering expert opinion to be relied upon by a decision maker, teaching, or conducting research, the forensic psychologist embraces nonpartisanship and demonstrates commitment to the goals of accuracy, objectivity, fairness, and independence. The forensic psychologist treats all participants and weighs all data, opinion, and rival hypotheses impartially” (APA, 1991).

Beneficence and Nonmaleficence

Beneficence and Nonmaleficence go hand in hand. Beneficence is the promotion of good. This principle reinforces promoting actions to clients that will benefit them in making the best decision for them by weighing all available options. The option with the least possible harm should be taken (APA 2010). It should be noted that the client to which the forensic psychology professional serves is not the only persons or entities that the psychology professional is responsible to. Integrity is a foundational responsibility of the psychology professional. “Forensic psychologists hold trust relationships with clients, legal representatives, courts, all other participants in forensic matters, professional bodies, and society. These trust relationships can be put at risk by lack of integrity, lack of responsibility, lack of respect, or conflicts of interest that may compromise independence, objectivity, or other professional responsibilities” (APA, 1991).

An example of beneficence in domestic violence by police officers as it relates to police personality may result in a bias opinion by the psychology professional. For example, if the psychology professional is performing a fitness for duty evaluation on a police officer and the psychologist has been a victim of domestic violence; in addition to understanding that police officers as a whole tend to be authoritative by nature and “stick to together”, the opinion of the psychologist may become skewed as a result of personal and professional experience and bias.

The psychology professional should always treat every individual as a new case and not fall into generalizing the police population. For example, a police officer may have PTSD as a result of a critical incident on the job, such as a shooting (being shot or shooting a suspect) and is exhibiting difficulty coping that resulted in domestic violence. The officer may engage in substance abuse and aggression both on and off the job (common among the PTSD population).

If the psychologist is not objective and assumes that the officer is a batterer and does not consider the cause or motive behind the officer's maladaptive behaviors the psychologist may recommend that the officer is not fit for duty as a result of battering traits. This would cause harm to the officer, potentially losing their position as a police officer. If the officer engages in family violence as a symptom of aggression as a result of PTSD symptoms and inability to cope; then the officer should be offered an opportunity for rehabilitation. A diagnosis of PTSD is not an excuse for family violence; however research has revealed a high rate of aggression and family conflict within the PTSD population of clients.

Nonmaleficence is the bioethical principle promoting "to do no harm". This is a fundamental principle in psychology. In order to avoid potential ethical conflicts or violations, the forensic psychologist should weigh potential outcomes when evaluating risks versus benefits in each individual client. "Because psychologists' scientific and professional judgments and actions may affect the lives of others, they are alert to and guard against personal, financial, social, organizational, or political factors that might lead to misuse of their influence. Psychologists strive to be aware of the possible effect of their own physical and mental health on their ability to help those with whom they work" (APA, 2010).

The criminal justice system is an adversarial arena and working with law enforcement takes on a whole new set of potential ethical issues. Police officers are often considered "To be the law"; they represent the law. Many individuals are intimidated by the mere presence of a police officer and society as a whole is conditioned to respect authority and the police profession. Police officers are trained to elicit the response they want to hear. They are trained in twisting the truth to elicit confessions and this training technique is often spilled over into other areas of their lives. It is essential that the forensic psychologist to remain objective and not get caught up in

the partisanship of doing what an individual officer or agency expects from them if it is not within the scope of professional standards and practice. Police officers are trained to manipulate outcomes, elicit information in a way that the psychologist is agreeing with the officer. The psychologist should be vigilant to interrogation and interview techniques used by police officers to avoid falling into this trap. The psychologist could potentially be viewed as a “Gun for hire” if they do not remain objective. This would not only hurt the client, but the reputation of the forensic psychologist that may also include sanctions from the state board. (APA 2010).

Autonomy

It is important for the psychologist to allow the officer to exercise their autonomy; however it is suggested that police culture, training, along with police personality traits changes a police officer’s overall persona, individuality and sense of autonomy. Autonomy is one of the bioethical principal’s that promotes the sense of “self” when making independent, individual choices and decisions regarding their care. The issue of role conflict and confidentiality are concerns. For example, a police officer who is undergoing an FFDE will most likely be resistant to telling the truth in fear of losing their job. Additionally, police officers are trained to skillfully deceive suspects to elicit confessions and this tactic is carried over into psychiatric evaluations with the psychologist. The psychologist can help the officer in attain their individual autonomy by offering honest, clear, detailed information regarding evaluation, care, treatment planning and legal situation.

Justice

Finally, the research reveals that the ethical principle “Justice” refers to Justice is the principle that promotes the moral rightness, fairness, or equity of the client. The psychology professional can promote this principle by affording the client resources and opportunity to

receive medical and mental health services. Each client is unique and will require a unique treatment plan designed around their individual needs. An ethical issue that arises in the research of domestic violence by police officers is a legal factor concerns a federal law; the 1997 Lautenberg amendment to the Gun Control Act of 1968 (Family Violence act) prohibits any person convicted of domestic violence from possessing firearms. A law enforcement officer with such a conviction cannot carry a gun”(Allen, Hibler, & Miller 2000). This poses a significant problem for the officer because carrying and using firearms are part of the tools needed to do the job of a police officer. The officer’s personal life and professional life collide making it difficult to treat the problem of domestic violence by law enforcement. The psychologist may fall into the same trap as other members of the judicial system, such as the judge when determining fitness for duty, or other decisions that may impact the officer. The psychologist may feel guilty about the officer potentially losing their job and livelihood threatened. They may fear retaliation by the individual officer or other members of law enforcement due to the solidarity of the force and the emotions of the psychologist may guide their decision. This would be a great injustice to all who the psychologist is responsible.

Appreciation of individual differences is another responsibility of the psychology professional. “When Interpreting assessment results, including clinical and automated interpretations, the psychologist takes into account the purpose of the assessment of the person being assessed, including situational, personal, linguistic, and cultural differences, that might affect the psychologist’s judgments or reduce the accuracy of their interpretations, and they identify any significant strengths and limitations of their procedures and interpretations” (APA, 1991). This ethical obligation may reinforce the potential fear of confusion on behalf of the psychologist due to taking cultural influence into consideration. The Psychologist must

remember that they are not taking away the police officers position if they are ultimately convicted of domestic violence; but rather it is the act of the police officer who engaged in the act.

Further Research

When domestic violence is committed by a law enforcement officer, unique challenges and barriers to reporting the abuse and seeking safety become a central theme for victims. Rehabilitation for the perpetrator is limited when the police officer is constantly guarded by police department and lack of accountability for the officer's actions as a result of enforcement of laws by the department and judicial bias. Further research and available forensic services are needed in this area of study. The gaps, contradictions and limitations can be filled by further researching previous authors who have written on the topic who may have new and updated work. In addition, monitoring police officers both on and off the job to identify whether there is a link between police work and family spillover can also be done through new research and research design for future researchers on the topic. Due to the lack of information on the psychology behind police officers who batter provides a disadvantage to the mental health community in providing potential solutions to addressing the scope of the problem and providing interventions and prevention strategies.

Collaboration among law enforcement, the mental health and health care system, the criminal justice system and the community need to work in concert with one another to address domestic violence within the police family. Evaluations, psychological instruments, providing fitness for duty exams regularly, and monitoring officers for job related stress is suggested in both identifying problem officers and those who may be affected by police work where by their perception becomes skewed potentially resulting in family violence. Finally, lack of current

information, lack of disciplinary action by the department taken when an officer abuses his intimate partner, lack of resources for victims of police perpetrated domestic violence (PPDV), and bringing awareness on this very sensitive topic should be at the forefront in this relatively new area of study.

The lack of available scholarly sources and deficiencies impact the research when the researcher is building on historical research. Unless the information is a new idea and the researcher is a pioneer in the field or area of study, then virtually all research is built upon previous theories and research; and with limited access to information; such as the availability of compilation of papers stored at the FBI Behavioral Science Unit makes it difficult to access the most up to date information on this area of study. This compilation of papers was taken out of circulation for the general public. With the information age and advances in technology, this excellent source was taken out of circulation potentially to avoid chaos within society due to the absence of mandated policies on domestic violence by police officers that were never set in place. Still today, each department is responsible in policing their own officers causing abuses of power, individual discretion within the department causes inconsistent delivery of sanctions against officers and lack of resources and safety for victims. However, with the increase in community awareness and activists and society are holding officers accountable more now than ever before has led four states to develop model policies on domestic violence that have been developed only over the past couple of years.

Moreover, gaps in research and other deficiencies in the availability of data can have a significant impact on the researcher, victim assistant providers, medical and mental health providers in providing interventions and prevention strategies to combat the problem and accommodate the needs of both police officers and victim. "More than 80 years ago a man by the

name of August Vollmer advocated for policy development within the police agency designed to allow only the most qualified, ethically grounded individuals to serve as police officers. Vollmer was the first to introduce the use of psychological and intelligence testing into the recruitment process, Vollmer (Vollmer 1921:571)" (Cochrane et al, 2008). Additionally, policy reform will be limited without further research. The research topic influences society, victims, liability for police departments, and restricts further researcher for future scholars. Without quality scholarly sources and availability of research on this topic, we are allowing a problem to continue without resolve.

Interventions

Safety First

Regardless of cultural influence or threat to the officer's job, a victim's safety is the first intervention in domestic violence. Research has revealed a high rate of homicide-suicide involving domestic violence among the police profession. This may be due to the accessibility to weapons within law enforcement. Although the solidarity among police has been evident since its existence, the law enforcement community should be enforcing solidarity and integrity as one. Protecting fellow officers who engage in domestic violence not only tarnishes the reputation for the law enforcement community as a whole, but fellow officers are ending their lives and the lives of their loved ones through homicide/suicide. In the end, the officers are not protecting their fellow officer, but helping them to commit a crime and potentially ending the life of the victim and the fellow officer.

Zero Tolerance Policy

A zero tolerance policy should be enacted by all police departments. In addition the development of domestic violence policy within the police department is needed to guide

officers in handling domestic calls, understanding procedures and protocols when one of their own is charged with domestic violence. Many times officers do not know what to do if an officer within their department has engaged in domestic violence; leaving it up to each individual officer's discretion on whether to arrest the officer or look the other way.

Education

Domestic violence calls within the general public are among the most dangerous for police officers. For this reason, police officers are educated in the dynamics of domestic violence, psychology of the victim and perpetrator to increase safety for the officer. The police officer who batters takes advantage of this knowledge and uses it against the victim to further intimidate, harass, coerce, and terrorize. Educating law enforcement personnel on domestic violence by a police officer will have the same potential outcomes; however, education on this topic is an obligation. In fact, one of the questions on the oral review board during the pre-employment exam includes this question "If your partner was caught doing.....How would you respond?" and the police candidate gives the obvious answer.... "I would report it to my supervisor." But, in the real world this does not always happen.

It is also important to understand how the stressors of police work can affect police officers. Police officers without psychopathological personality traits may engage in domestic violence as a result of negative stressors as seen in police work; therefore it is vital for officers to understand their "triggers" or when they are exhibiting signs of stress that begin to affect their overall well-being, sleep pattern, eating pattern, anxiety level, and relationships. This does not excuse the officer's actions, but it can shed light on the officers behavior if they self-evaluate their feelings and behaviors.

Healthy Lifestyles

Another suggestion in the prevention of domestic violence among law enforcement is monitoring officers for occupational stress, offering family assistance, and providing routine psychiatric evaluations. Police work is not only stressful and can be dangerous, but it can also result in Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) due to critical incidents or constant negative stressors. PTSD is linked to anger outbursts, aggression and substance use.

Healthy lifestyles should be part of law enforcement education. Understanding individual limitations and stress levels will help to prevent anger outbursts directed at citizens and in the officers personal life. Promoting a healthy diet, exercise, and overall balance for well-being is recommended. A healthy balance includes physical, emotional/psychological, occupational, social, spiritual, and intellectual well-being in promoting healthy lifestyles.



Breaking the Silence

Probably one of the most difficult suggestions is to ask a police officer to break the silence among what is known as “The Blue Wall”. The blue wall is a result of the solidarity among law enforcement. From the very beginning police officers are taught to “have each other’s backs” as a safety measure. Research has found that the unity among law enforcement goes beyond the job and many officers feel obligated to protect their fellow officer even when they are aware of wrong doing. This is an area that needs to be addressed and enforced by the law enforcement community.

Individual Psychotherapy and Monitoring

The criminal justice system has recommended anger management as an intervention measure among domestic batterers. The foundation of domestic violence is not about anger, it is about control. Domestic violence continues to grow in epidemic proportion as a result of a lack of knowledge and interventions on the topic. Anger is a result of a loss of that control and anger management can aid the abuser in alternatives to violence; however it is the underlying psychopathology of the individual officer that should be reviewed. Additionally, everyone is unique and will deal with stress in different ways; therefore individual personality, circumstances, years on the police force, personal coping skills, support systems, the magnitude of the stressful events, overall occupational duties, and uniqueness of the police organization will all have an impact on the individuals overall stress levels and well-being. In addition to these factors, interventions and treating the police batterer should include an individualistic approach to include the individual officers biopsychosocial makeup, physical condition, disability (if applicable), mental health, medications (if any), an understanding of the officers current coping

skills, and cultural beliefs and attitudes (including police culture and attitudes should be examined).

Conclusion

Domestic violence by police officers remains a pervasive problem within society and among the law enforcement community. The literature has revealed that individual personality traits, the lack of empirical evidenced based practice and coaching before and during pre-employment evaluations offers skewed and invalid data to the psychology and law enforcement community. Skewed results and questions remain as to whether police officers are being hired as a result of being among those who have not been “weeded out” among the selection process and are among the truly “good officers” who are victims of occupational stress and hazards; or are psychopaths who have conned their way through the system remains in question.

Dr. Frank Ochberg shares the opinion of many psychology experts. He believes that psychopaths often used interchangeably with Antisocial Personality Disorder (APD) are human predators with absolutely no empathy for others, no desire to conform to social norms. It is suggested that psychopaths have no conscious and psychopathy has nothing to do with being out of touch with reality or being psychotic. These individuals are responsible for their deeds and wrong doings. A well renowned expert in psychology, Dr. Frank Ochberg believes that the only treatment for psychopaths is to catch them and to convict them and to let them age in isolation. He also states that there are psychology professionals who claim that they have been successful in behavioral modification or psychoanalysis; however, Dr. Ochberg believes that applying the usual psychiatric and psychological techniques only makes a psychopath a better psychopath. Psychopaths learn to fool others; how to pretend to have feelings of concern in order to get what they want and to appease the criminal justice system.

Community awareness, breaking the silence among victims, their families, and within the law enforcement community will aid in the reduction and prevalence of domestic violence by police officers. Additionally, individual psychotherapy can support the perpetrator in gaining new behavioral concepts as it relates to their need to control and believe that the world is an unsafe place as a result of the profession can help in the suspicion that police officers are often faced with. Finally, cooperation from the police administration, breaking the code of silence and solidarity among the profession, availability of resources for the victim, and community awareness will serve to reduce and expectantly cease domestic violence by police offices.

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