

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN POLICING: A CONSIDERATION OF CARE ETHICS

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## ABSTRACT

Current research on gender differences in policing is somewhat limited. Research studies that examine the relationship between police officers and ethics of care theory are further limited. This study evaluated gender differences in policing to determine whether ethics of care theories apply to female police officers. For the purposes of this study, approximately 400 sworn officers were sampled via survey. The anticipated results were: female officers are more likely to employ ethics of care in their policing methods as opposed to their male counterparts.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

As a result of the Crime Control Act of 1973, females are allowed to become sworn officers in any police organization that receives federal aid. Prior to the 1970s, females within police organizations were primarily responsible for overseeing female victims, female criminals, juveniles, and the homeless (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009). As women began entering the police organizations as sworn officers, they were warned of their minority status and advised against displaying excessive femininity or masculinity (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009). Currently, American police culture is still a masculine-oriented culture where female officers are the minority and are viewed as weak or incapable (Kakar, 2002). The intention of this study is to examine the differences in victim perception by officer gender. Whether female officers have a greater tendency for displaying caring behaviors towards victims will also be evaluated.

The proceeding review of extant research explores multiple aspects of gender and policing. Police relations with victims and criminals are explored to understand how female officers relate to citizens differently than male officers. This research is important because forty years have passed since legislation enabled females to become sworn officers, yet the amount of current research on female police officers is sparse. The differences between male and female police officers' style of policing will be discussed as well as the differences in the impact they may have on the community and department. The goal is to determine whether the ethics of care theory can be applied to female police officers when they encounter victims.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### **Police Culture**

Police culture impacts officers in both their professional and personal lives. Since its inception, police culture has remained masculine-oriented. Most of the hardships female officers face within the policing occupation are centered around stereotypical beliefs regarding police work, the majority of which stems from the police culture (Martin & Jurik, 2006). Numerous prior research studies have focused their attention on police culture. However, studies have often been limited because they present police culture as a traditional culture acquired through socialization and shared by every police officer in every municipality (Terrill, Paoline, & Manning, 2003). Despite the limitations, the research studies provided insights into what comprises police culture. In the traditional sense, police culture is a set of shared attitudes as well as coping mechanisms (Paoline, Myers, & Worden, 2000). Emphasis is placed on catching criminals as opposed to getting to know the community one serves; becoming unapproachable, suspecting the worst of everyone, and utilizing a little more force than necessary are often coping mechanisms (Terrill, Paoline, & Manning, 2003).

According to Prenzler (1997), studies that compare police and social workers show police as more in favor of disciplinary action instead of rehabilitation as well as more likely to hold stereotypical views of offenders. Prenzler (1997) explains the reason for the differences are because policing is a male-dominated occupation whereas social work is a female-dominated

occupation. The primary reason policing is a male-dominated occupation is that females are still attempting to gain complete acceptance despite the Crime Control Act of 1973 granting them ability to become sworn officers (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009). In the early days of policing, females were typically upper-middle class, had college degrees, were expected to do social service jobs, remain subordinate to men, and were paid lower wages than men with less education (Kakar, 2002). Women who were not accepting of these roles and attempted to challenge them faced isolation, harassment, and being put at risk physically and emotionally (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009). Modern-era police officers, regardless of gender, are typically middle-class and only have a high school education. Nevertheless, women are still underrepresented within police agencies. Prior to the Crime Control Act of 1973 allowing females to become sworn officers, women in police organizations were often assigned social service and clerical duties; now that women are sworn officers, their skills and abilities are questioned (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009). Officers with female partners report higher preferences for male backup; only female officers with no partner report significantly lower preferences for male backup (Carlan, Nored, & Downey, 2011).

Rabe-Hemp (2009) conducted a self-report study on 38 female police officers who ranged in experience from 10 years to 30 years in order to gain a female perspective on police culture. Only 12 of the 38 officers in the study held a rank of corporal or higher. The majority of the officers in the study were line officers – 20 patrol officers and 6 detectives. The female officers indicated beliefs that the symbolic nature of the police uniform and the ways in which law enforcement is depicted in the media has contributed to the influence of citizen perceptions of female police officers as police officers instead of women. The female officers also validated displaying extreme masculinity or femininity as unacceptable within police culture. Those who display extreme masculinity are typically thought of lesbians and hard workers, but are not accepted as females.

However, those who display extreme femininity are thought to be attractive, but unable to work (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009).

As the focus has begun to switch from crime control to community policing, studies indicate that female police officers may not have opposing views from male police officers on community policing (Terrill, Paoline, & Manning, 2003). Where female police officers differ is in the way that they police. Female officers are less likely to be confrontational and more likely to be concerned with the needs of citizens (Terrill, Paoline, & Manning, 2003). As police municipalities increase their hiring of females, the machismo attitude that comprises the stereotypical police culture will likely fade (Terrill, Paoline, & Manning, 2003).

## **Stress**

The policing occupation is an exceedingly stressful occupation by nature that affects the police officers as well as the citizens they serve (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005). The stress that results from the policing occupation is unique due to the work environment. There is a real possibility that police officers' lives will be in jeopardy or they may have to take a life when they are on the job. The bureaucratic and quasi-military nature of the police organization can make for a stressful work environment because individualism is limited, and there may be blocks in the flow of information (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005). Other sources of stress for police officers are lack of peer support and work-family relationships (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005). Therefore, stress management is a crucial component of healthy, effective, and efficient police organizations (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005).

Martin (1990) found the policing profession could often be unwelcoming, if not hostile, for women. In order to accurately evaluate stress among police officers, researchers have identified

two explanatory factors: static and dynamic. Static explanatory factors were the ways in which gender impacted police stress; it has long been hypothesized that female officers may experience more stress than male officers due to adverse conditions within the traditional police culture (Martin, 1990). Dynamic explanatory factors included the various characteristics of the police work environment as well as coping mechanisms officers adopt in response to work-related stress (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005). Although there are more sworn female officers today than there were at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, women are the minority in police organizations. The policing occupation is one of the “most stereotypically masculine occupations in society” (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005, p. 536) and women have consistently struggled to gain acceptance within the police culture.

The two major sources of stress for female officers are gender roles and gender-appropriate behaviors (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005). According to many previous research studies, female officers are at a higher risk for encountering strong harassment, blatant hostility, and other negative social interactions as a result of doing their jobs (Martin, 1980). The adverse treatment of female officers stems from internal organizational culture and external work environment that is generally unfavorable to female officers. Therefore, female officers often experience more stress than male officers (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005). Past research has concluded that female officers are also more compassionate than male officers towards victims, in spite of the workplace stress (He, Zhao, & Ren, 2005).

### **Use of Force**

One of the primary justifications for discrimination against and social isolation of female officers is that they are a liability to the organization. Multiple research studies have suggested

otherwise; in fact, an increase in female officers may significantly decrease the number of excessive force complaints police agencies receive (Rabe-Hemp & Schuck, 2007). The chosen style of policing for female officers may explain the differences in use of force, whereas women are more likely to rely on communication skills rather than use force (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009). In a research study cited by Kakar (2002), female officers are depicted as better at negotiating hostile situations and disputes. Other research studies indicate female officers are less likely than male officers to be in situations where force is needed (Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2006). In the event female officers must use force, they use less force than male officers (Bazley, Lersch, & Mieczkowski, 2007). On average, female officers receive fewer excessive force complaints (Brandi, Stroshine, & Frank, 2001). Suspects arrested by female officers are less likely to be injured (Hoffman, 2005). The risk of violence being used on officers significantly decreases when female officers are the first to initiate contact with citizens (Rabe-Hemp & Schuck, 2007). However, female officers are at a greater risk for violent victimization when they are responding to domestic disturbance calls (Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2006).

Perhaps the biggest difference in citizen interaction between male and female officers is the use of force. Though empirical analyses of female officers and their use of force have shown mixed results, the major conclusion is that female officers use less force than male officers when making arrests (Schuck & Rabe-Hemp, 2006) but similar levels of force throughout daily interactions with citizens (Paoline & Terrill, 2004). These inconsistencies are likely the result of differing units of analyses in the studies (Rabe-Hemp C. , 2008). For both Garner, Maxwell, & Heraux (2002) and Schuck & Rabe-Hep (2006), the unit of analysis was arrest situations; the unit of analysis for the study by Paoline & Terrill (2004) was police-citizen interactions in which police demonstrated any “acts that threaten or inflict physical harm to citizens” (p. 104). Each of the

studies failed to examine lower levels of police control, such as coercion, which ultimately depend on police authority (Rabe-Hemp C. , 2008).

Recently, police departments across the country have been focusing efforts on encouraging the hiring of female officers. This is because many research studies have concluded that officer gender influences officer behavior (Worden, 1995). According to Block and Anderson (1974), female officers instigate fewer police-citizen encounters and have lower felony and misdemeanor arrest rates. Because most instances of excessive use of force transpire during the process of arrest, it is unsurprising that female officers are less likely to be accused of using excessive force.

Paoline & Terril (2004) examined several suspect characteristics to determine the relationship on the use of coercion. The study found every measure showed a significant relationship on the use of coercion except the disrespect measure. Furthermore, the Indianapolis Police Department data showed that the number of officers present as well as officer initiated interactions indicated a stronger likelihood for resulting in higher levels of force. Female officers, however, showed no indications for use of force in any of the officer characteristics or encounter measures, apart from one encounter measure: site. According to the study, indications for use of force were dependent upon where the officer and suspect encountered each other.

### **Communication Differences**

Women have consistently been found to be more likely to dispense supportive and compassionate behaviors (Pillivan & Chang, 1990) as well as more empathetic behaviors than men (Gilligan, 1982). Females have frequently displayed less physical aggression than, but similar or greater indirect aggression males (Eagley & Steffen, 1986). Research studies on marital or intimate aggression are the only studies that have found men and women to demonstrate comparable rates

of physical aggression with women demonstrating slightly higher levels of aggression (Rabe-Hemp C. , 2008).

Many feminist researchers have argued that female police officers are better equipped than male officers for community policing because of their distinct capabilities and strengths as women (Lonsway, Wood, & Spillar, 2002). Female police officers are also proclaimed to have superior communication skills, and therefore, be more comforting to juveniles and women, particularly crime victims (Worden, 1993). Empirical studies have also found female officers to provide more supportive behaviors to citizens (Rabe-Hemp C. , 2008). These studies have argued that female officers are more likely to provide victims of violence with referrals and information (Brandi, Strohshine, & Frank, 2001).

Rabe-Hemp (2008) used logistic regression models to determine the common ramifications of officer gender on police officer behavior “as well as to assess interaction effects of citizen disrespect, officer discretion, other police presence, police mandate, supervisory influence, and officer assignment on the relationship between officer gender and behavior” (Rabe-Hemp C. , 2008, p. 429). The study also controlled for “theoretically important confounding factors” (Rabe-Hemp C. , 2008, p. 429). Rabe-Hemp (2008) found that female officers were over 27 percent less likely to display extreme controlling behaviors such as threats, physical restraint, searches, and arrest in their interactions with citizens. However, there was no statistical difference between male and female officers in their use of lower level controlling behaviors; female and male officers demonstrated similar likelihoods to give commands and advice. Female officers were found significantly less likely to demonstrate supporting behaviors than male officers during police-citizen interactions. During police-citizen interactions that were initiated by citizens, both male and female officers were significantly less likely to utilize extreme controlling measures by

male or female officers. The presence of supervisors showed statistical significance for female officers being more likely to use extreme controlling behaviors and less likely to demonstrate supportive behaviors. The relationship between extreme controlling police behaviors and officer gender did not differ significantly based upon citizen disrespect, discretion, the presence of other officers, or police mandate. Women are greatly underrepresented within policing organizations; thus, interactions between citizens and female officers are rare occurrences (Rabe-Hemp C. , 2008). Displaying extreme controlling or supporting behaviors is a rare occurrence for most police officers (Dejong, 2005).

Many researchers have also stated that female officers have a greater ability to de-escalate violent encounters with citizens, primarily because of their communicative verbal skills ( (Nifong, 1996). Paoline and Terrill (2004) conducted a study on police coercion using two data sets, systematic social observations of patrol officers as well as in-person interviews of those officers, obtained from the Project on Policing Neighborhoods. Two police departments were sampled: Indianapolis, Indiana and St. Petersburg, Florida. Upon examination of the basic relationship between coercion and officer gender, no statistically significant differences were found between male and female officers. Both male and female officers decided not to recourse to their coercive authority at similar rates – 42% for males and 44% for females. Both male and female officers demonstrated a greater tendency to utilize verbal coercion as opposed to physical coercion in situations where coercion was utilized.

## **Domestic Violence**

In 2001, the Bureau of Justice Assistance reported that domestic calls were “the largest single category of calls to local police departments” (Sun, 2007, p. 582). Beginning in the 1980s,

most major police departments adopted mandatory or pro-arrest policies for domestic violence cases. Victim assistance programs gained popularity and officers began fearing civil liability for the way they handled domestic violence cases. Therefore, officers felt a greater need to act more authoritative towards the suspects while acting more compassionate towards the victims (Sun, 2007). On average, male and female officers do not significantly differ in their likelihood to arrest the perpetrator in domestic violence cases (Stalans & Finn, 2000). Furthermore, they do not differ significantly in their perceptions of domestic violence victims as uncooperative or unlikely to prosecute. Male and female officers do not differ significantly in their perceptions regarding arrest, referral to shelter, or marriage counseling as appropriate responses to cases of domestic violence (Stalans & Finn, 2000). Female police officers are less likely to choose arrest or referral to a shelter when the victim was willing to settle the argument (Stalans & Finn, 2000).

### **Sexual Assault**

Alderden & Ullman (2012) concluded female officers display less empathy than male officers towards victims of sexual assault. Previous research studies on sexual assault have provided mixed results. Some research studies argue that police organizations are insensitive to female victims of sexual assault due to a predominantly male representation or the masculine characteristics of the organization (Alderden & Ullman, 2012). As a result, a “hiring mandate” for female officers was enacted, and a purposeful recruitment of women to police organizations resulted (Alderden & Ullman, 2012). Other studies have examined gender differences by analyzing beliefs regarding rape myths; the results often indicated male officers believe rape myths more than female officers (Alderden & Ullman, 2012). Hypothetical case studies suggest female officers are more likely than male officers to believe rape victims and are less likely to place blame on the

rape victims. A study by (Alderden & Ullman, 2012) produced results that indicated female officers may treat victims of sexual assault harsher than male officers. However, other studies have stated there are no statistically significant differences in the ways male and female officers handle sexual assault cases.

### **Victim Perspectives**

Crime victim cooperation is crucial for the police to successfully reduce crime (Cirel, Evans, McGillis, & Whitcomb, 1977). Cooperative victims can provide police with essential details that will aid in investigating and solving crimes (Mayhew, 1993). When victims provide police with detailed information about the possible offenders, crime, and circumstances, the victims are potentially able to assist in getting offenders convicted as well as preventing others from becoming victimized. Due to the importance of crime-victim cooperation, it is important to understand which factors positively or negatively influence crime victims' decisions to cooperate (Koster, Kuijpers, Kunst, & Van der Leun, 2016). Previous studies suggest that there are many factors that contribute to a victim's decision to cooperate; most of them are outside of police officers' ability to control, with the exception of the quality of the experience victims have during their interactions with police (Koster, Kuijpers, Kunst, & Van der Leun, 2016).

Koster et al. (2016) reviewed 15 studies on crime victims' perceptions of legitimacy of the police and their cooperation with the police. The focal point for most of the studies is perceived trust in the police or criminal justice system as a measure of legitimacy. Mixed results are obtained from the conclusions of the studies. Some of the studies found that positive police interactions upon reporting a crime to the police were significantly and positively related to victim cooperation. Other studies found that, contrary to popular belief, there was negative relationship between

positive interactions and victim cooperation. These inconsistencies may partially be accounted for due to the variety in measures of key concepts.

### CHAPTER III

#### THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

The underlying principle of ethics of care is that neither gender is inferior; instead, each gender undergoes moral development differently (Sander-Saudt, n.d.). This study evaluates the gender differences within police officers' policing methods in order to evaluate the likelihood that the differences are best explained using the theoretical framework of care ethics. Previous research studies have frequently found women to be more likely than men to provide supporting behaviors to others (Sun, 2007). Multiple studies have found that male police officers are more prone to physical force whereas female police officers are more prone to verbal force (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009). Studies have also indicated females may be better suited for the new challenges faced by police organizations as the focus shifts from crime control to community policing (Rabe-Hemp C. E., 2009). However, research studies specifically focused on female officers' perspectives of victims have provided mixed results.

Carol Gilligan created the first ethics of care theory (Sander-Saudt, n.d.). Gilligan initially developed her theory as a graduate school dissertation in response to Kohlberg's moral development theory; Kohlberg's theory proclaimed males to be better morally developed than females. Gilligan argued that Kohlberg's theory was gender-biased; she believed men and women expressed the voice of care at different times, but the voice of care would be almost nonexistent without women. Gilligan further argued that men and women have two different ways of approaching situations despite their beliefs that their approach is the same; women tend to look at

the bigger picture when solving a problem, while men are concerned with resolving the most immediate issue (Sander-Saudt, n.d.).

In 1984, Nel Noddings published *Caring* in which she further elaborated on Gilligan's theory, classified it as a feminine ethic, and "applied it to the practice of moral education" (Sander-Saudt, n.d.). She concurred with Gilligan that men and women have the same end goal, but take different approaches to achieve the goal. Noddings described feminine ethics as "a preference for face-to face moral deliberation that occurs in real time, and appreciation of the uniqueness of each caring relationship" (Sander-Saudt, n.d.). Moreover, Noddings stated that caring is between the one-caring and the cared-for; additionally, the cared-for must respond in an appreciative manner to the caring (Sander-Saudt, n.d.).

Previous studies have examined the applicability of the ethics of care theory on male and female officers' treatment of offenders. However, this study sets out to broaden the scope of existing research. The hypothesis of this study is that the ethics of care theory applies to female officers' treatment of victims. If this study supports the hypothesis, it would mean female officers demonstrate a greater amount of compassion and apply a wider range of definitions in identifying and working with victims.

## CHAPTER IV

### METHODOLOGY

During summer 2016, sworn officers of a mid-sized southern police department were sent an email requesting their participation in an electronic survey studying perceptions of victims. The email contained a link to participate in the survey. The survey was a self-report questionnaire which collected data from the sample by means of the secure online tool Qualtrics. All participants received an informed consent making them aware that a study was being conducted to gain officer perceptions of victims, but participation in the survey was voluntary. Those who chose to participate in the survey were guaranteed confidentiality; none of the data from the study was linked directly to participants. The final number of participants was 177, which gave a 44.25% response rate.

#### **Analytic Strategy**

The strategy for this analysis was to first highlight the descriptive characteristics of the sample in order to illustrate the diversity within the sample. Apart from gender, the demographic variables were not pertinent variables for the study; they were, however, later used to outline possible explanations. All victim-perspective variables were measured on a 5-point scale. The next step was to examine the measures of central tendency (means) and measures dispersion (standard deviation) statistics. The final step was to conduct a one-way analysis of variance to detect significant mean difference by gender in relation to the victim perspective questions.

### **Independent Variable**

Information was collected on officers' gender. Initially, *gender* was coded Male, Female, and Other. Due to a lack of respondents choosing other, *gender* was collapsed into a dichotomous variable: female (0) and male (1).

### **Dependent Variable**

For this study, the dependent variable analyzed officers' victim perspectives. Initially, there were multiple, separate questions based on specific circumstances. Respondents were asked to evaluate whether they agreed with each question utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree. Three of the questions, however, were collapsed into a single variable: Adam who refuses to file charges against his partner for domestic violence is a victim, Jane who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against her partner is a victim, and a male who refuses to file charges in a domestic situation is a victim. Because those three questions provided a reliability of .93, they were collapsed and evaluated as opposed to other, more traditional variables. The newly collapsed variable was renamed *nontraditional Scale*

## CHAPTER V

### RESULTS

#### **Descriptive Statistics**

##### *Independent Variable*

For the purposes of this study, gender was the only independent variable utilized for analysis. Respondents' race, age, years of service, education level, and position within the department, however, were also evaluated for the purposes of descriptive statistics and frequency distributions. The average respondent was a white (81.7%) male (93.5%), served in a non-administrative role (86.9%), was between the ages of 36-45 (42.7%), had a college degree (57.7%), and had served between 11-20 years in policing.

##### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable in this study collapsed three victim perspective questions into one variable. Respondents then rated how strongly they agreed or disagreed, utilizing a 5-point Likert scale; 1 was strongly disagree and 5 was strongly agree. The following questions were collapsed into a single variable: Adam who refuses to file charges against his partner for domestic violence is a victim, Jane who refuses to file charges against her partner is a victim, and a male who refuses to file charges in a domestic situation is a victim. For each of the questions, the majority of respondents agreed the person was a victim.

Table 1: Frequency of Major Variables (N=177)

<u>Values and Coding</u>	<u>Frequency Findings</u>	
	N	%*
<b>Gender:</b>		
(0) Female	10	6.5
(1) Male	144	93.5
<b>Race:</b>		
(1) White	125	81.7
(2) Non-white	28	18.3
<b>Age:</b>		
(1) 18-25	4	2.5
(2) 26-35	42	26.8
(3) 36-45	67	42.7
(4) 45 and older	44	28.0
<b>Education Level:</b>		
(1) High school	14	9.0
(2) Some college	52	33.0
(3) College degree	90	57.7
<b>Position:</b>		
(1) Administrative	20	13.1
(2) Other	133	86.9
<b>Years of Service:</b>		
(1) 5 or less	23	14.5
(2) 6-10	36	22.6
(3) 11-20	57	35.8
(4) 20 and higher	43	27.1

\* All percentages are valid ones.

## **Correlational Analysis**

A correlational analysis was conducted on the dependent variables. Variables were deemed traditional or nontraditional based upon the way they were described, or a lack of description, in previous literature. Although both traditional and nontraditional variables were evaluated, only the nontraditional variables provided strong correlations (which can be seen in Table 2). This strong correlation formed the basis for the development of the dependent variable. Although there were many other moderate correlations, they failed to meet the required level of internal validity in order to be used for analysis. Therefore, only three variables were collapsed to form the dependent variable: *Adam who refuses to file charges against his partner, a male who refuses to wife charges against his spouse, and Jane who refuses to file charge against her partner.*

**Table 2: Zero Order Correlations on Traditional and Nontraditional Victim Variables**

	A 16-year-old gang member who is injured in a gang confrontation is a victim.	Adam who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against his partner is a victim.	The person suffering from the most physical injury is the victim.	A male who refuses to file charges in a domestic situation is a victim.	A female who refuses to file a police report for domestic violence is a victim.	A person injured during an attempt to buy drugs is a victim.	Gang members are often victims of crime.	Jane who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against her partner is a victim.
<b>Adam who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against his partner is a victim.</b>	.259**							
The person suffering from the most physical injury is the victim.	.086	.329						
<b>A male who refuses to file charges in a domestic situation is a victim.</b>	.342**	.756**	-.033					
A female who refuses to file a police report for domestic violence is a victim.	.216**	.702**	-.074	.640**				
<b>A person injured during an attempt to buy drugs is a victim.</b>	.636**	.368**	.058**	.379**	.251**			
Gang members are often victims of crime.	.338**	.185*	-.072	.249**	.127	.388**		
<b>Jane who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against her partner is a victim.</b>	.315**	.782**	-.011	.945**	.647**	.381**	.211**	
A person injured in an altercation at a bar is a victim.	.328**	.235**	.083	.252**	.130	.213**	.166*	.193**

## Descriptive Distributions

Next, a descriptive distribution analysis was conducted. The findings were similar to that of the correlational analysis; most officers were likely to agree the nontraditional victims were indeed victims. Each of the nontraditional variables received a mean greater than a 4.0 factor. However, as previously stated, this sample is predominantly white and predominantly male. The lack of diversity may have influenced the results.

Table 3: Descriptive Distribution of Major Variables (N=177)

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Distribution Findings</u>	
	$\bar{X}$	Std.
Deviation		
Adam who refuses to file charges for Domestic violence against his partner Is a victim	4.3101	.73927
Jane who refuses to file charges against her partner is a victim	4.2722	.70167
A male who refuses to file charges in a domestic situation is a victim	4.2229	.75616

## Reliability

Both traditional and nontraditional variables were evaluated for reliability. Only the nontraditional variables provided a high enough alpha rating (.934). The traditional scale had an alpha reliability of less than .50; therefore, the nontraditional provided the best dependent variable for the analysis. Table 4 depicts the three variables that were utilized for the collapsed nontraditional variable; it also includes its measure of internal consistency.

**Table 4: Scale Construction and Reliability**

*Nontraditional Victim's Scale  $\alpha = .934$*

Adam who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against his partner is a victim.

Jane who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against her partner is a victim.

A male who refuses to file charges in a domestic situation is a victim.

Note: *The traditional victim variables failed to reach an alpha reliability of .70*

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## Analysis of Variance

A final statistical test, analysis of variance, was conducted to determine whether there were any statistically significant relationships between the mean rates of the dependent variable and officer gender. As can be seen in Table 5, the variables did not demonstrate any significant differences in means. Therefore, the conclusion is there is no supporting evidence for the initial hypothesis and there are no differences between male and female officers' victim perspectives. However, this conclusion may have been influenced by the lack of diversity (especially with regards to gender) within the sample.

**Table 5: ANOVA Analysis of Differences by Gender of Respondent**

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Nontraditional Victim	Between Groups	.033	1	.033	.007	.931
	Within Groups	654.908	150	4.366		
	Total	654.941	151			

## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION

The goal of this research was to determine whether the ethics of care theories by Gilligan and Noddings could be applied to officers' perspectives of victims. Specifically, this study examined whether officers' gender impacted victim perspectives. In this particular study, no significant relationships were found. The lack of significance may have been impacted by the multiple limitations in the study. More research needs to be done before dismissing the possibility that officers' gender impacts victim perspectives.

Although the ethics of care theory has previously only been applied to officers' perspectives of offenders, it is too early to declare it unfit to apply to officers' perspectives of victims. This study utilized a small sample size ( $n = 177$ ) and an even smaller number of women participants ( $n = 10$ ). Additionally, data was collected by means of a self-report survey. Sixty percent of those sampled chose not to participate in the self-report survey, which is often a frequent barrier in self-report surveys.

Future research may want to sample multiple police departments and perhaps utilize police records as well as self-report surveys. Should significance be found in favor of the ethics of care theory, there is potential to help create more opportunities for females in the police agencies. Females have been allowed to be sworn officers since the 1970s, but they still struggle for complete acceptance.

## **Limitations**

Although this study attempts to examine officers' victim perspectives, it is not without limitations. Perhaps one of the biggest limitations is, this is the first attempt to apply the ethics of care theory to officers' victim perspectives. Previous studies have applied the ethics of care theory towards officers' treatment of criminals or suspects. The study is also limited because it utilized a self-report survey. With self-report surveys, response rate is usually low, some questions on the survey may be left unanswered, and there is a risk of respondents answering the way they think they *should* answer instead of answering truthfully. Although the self-report survey utilized for this study had a decent response rate, the study was still limited by a low sample size; only one police department was sampled, a small number of officers responded, and the number of male respondents far outweighed the number of female respondents.

## **Implications**

The findings of this study appear to reflect the way in which the sampled police department trains all of its officers, regardless of gender, to have the same viewpoints about victims. Recognizing victims and providing them with the services they need is an important part of police work; it helps citizens to have more trust in the officers. It is essential that police departments continue to work with victims' services agencies in order to continue gaining an understanding of the many different types of victims and the services that are available to them. By working together, both the police department and the victims' services agencies are able to ensure they are providing the best possible service for victims.

## **Future Directions**

It is crucial that more research is done evaluating the applicability of the ethics of care theory to officers' victim perspectives before making a conclusive decision. For best results, future research should sample multiple police departments. Police departments of all sizes should also be sampled. The greater the sample size, the better the chances of having a decent female officer response rate. Self-report surveys, open-ended questionnaires, reviewing police departments' files, as well as observational techniques should all be utilized in future studies to gain the maximum amount of insight. The applicability of the ethics of care theory can only be reasonably determined after multiple different studies with various different survey methods are conducted. This is a first attempt to evaluate ethics of care in regards to officers' victim perspectives. Furthermore, research on ethics of care and what it means from a victim's perspective has yet to be fully understood.

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APPENDIX A  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER

**Institutional Review Board**  
Dept. 4915  
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Phone: (423) 425-5867  
Fax: (423) 425-4052  
instrb@utc.edu  
<http://www.utc.edu/irb>

**MEMORANDUM**

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TO: Dr. Vic Bumphus **IRB # 16-036**  
Dr. Kristie Wilder

FROM: Lindsay Pardue, Director of Research Integrity  
Dr. Amy Doolittle, IRB Committee Chair

DATE: May 2, 2016

SUBJECT: IRB #16-036: Assessing Perceptions of Victim Services in Chattanooga

The IRB Committee Chair has reviewed and approved your application and assigned you the IRB number listed above. You must include the following approval statement on research materials seen by participants and used in research reports:

***The Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (FWA00004149) has approved this research project # 16-036.***

Please remember that you must complete a Certification for Changes, Annual Review, or Project Termination/Completion Form when the project is completed or provide an annual report if the project takes over one year to complete. The IRB Committee will make every effort to remind you prior to your anniversary date; however, it is your responsibility to ensure that this additional step is satisfied.

Please remember to contact the IRB Committee immediately and submit a new project proposal for review if significant changes occur in your research design or in any instruments used in conducting the study. You should also contact the IRB Committee immediately if you encounter any adverse effects during your project that pose a risk to your subjects.

For any additional information, please consult our web page <http://www.utc.edu/irb> or email [instrb@utc.edu](mailto:instrb@utc.edu)

APPENDIX B  
POLICE VICTIMS SURVEY

**Police Victims' Survey, 2016**

*Please provide answers to the items below. We are very interested in your perspectives. This is a voluntary survey as addressed in the cover letter. However, this information will be utilized to improve police-victim services in the community. Thanks in advance for taking the time to give us your feedback.*

For each item identified below, circle the number to the right that best fits your agreement level. (5 represents the highest level of agreement).											
1. A 16 year-old gang member who is injured in a gang confrontation is a victim.	1	2	3	4	5	2. A female who refuses to file a police report for domestic violence is a victim.	1	2	3	4	5
3. A prostitute who is assaulted by her client is a victim.	1	2	3	4	5	4. A person injured during an attempt to buy drugs is a victim.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Adam who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against his partner is a victim.	1	2	3	4	5	6. A suspect (while being taken into custody) is assaulted by his/her victim. The suspect is now a victim.	1	2	3	4	5
7. The person suffering from the most physical injury is the victim.	1	2	3	4	5	8. Gang members are often victims of crime.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Victims are generally lower class individuals.	1	2	3	4	5	10. Females are more likely to be victims than males.	1	2	3	4	5
11. If a person is assaulted while walking to her car from a bar, I would inform her of steps to take to minimize her future risk.	1	2	3	4	5	12. Jane who refuses to file charges for domestic violence against her partner is a victim.	1	2	3	4	5
13. A male who refuses to file charges in a domestic situation is a victim.	1	2	3	4	5	14. A person injured in an altercation at a bar is a victim.	1	2	3	4	5
15. The homeless are more likely to be victims as compared to those who are not.	1	2	3	4	5	16. The mentally ill are more likely to be victims as compared to those who are not.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Language barriers cause higher levels of victimization.	1	2	3	4	5	18. Males who are the victims of domestic violence are treated no differently than females.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Whites are more likely to be victims than minorities.	1	2	3	4	5	20. Children are more likely to be seen as victims as compared to adults.	1	2	3	4	5

21. My training on dealing with victims occurred only in the Academy.	1	2	3	4	5	22. I encourage victims to ask questions during initial interactions.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I advise victims of services that might help them deal with their victimization.	1	2	3	4	5	24. I show concern when dealing with victims, regardless of the circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I am aware of services for victims in the Chattanooga area.	1	2	3	4	5	26. I can locate services for victims in the Chattanooga area.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I carry contact information for victim services in the Chattanooga area.	1	2	3	4	5	28. I find that there are an adequate number of services for victims in the Chattanooga area.	1	2	3	4	5
29. I've had training an adequate amount training on victim services.	1	2	3	4	5	30. My training on dealing with victims occurred on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
31. I've taken college classes focusing on victims of crime.	1	2	3	4	5	32. I follow-up with victims of crime.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I follow-up with victims of violent crime.	1	2	3	4	5	34. I follow-up with some victims of violence.	1	2	3	4	5

**Please circle the answer that best reflects your category.**

<p>35. Number of years in policing:  (5) 5 or less  (6) 6-10  (7) 11-20  (8) 20 and higher</p> <p>36. What gender best represents you?  (1) Male  (2) Female  (3) Other</p> <p>37. Sexual Orientation  (1) Hetero  (2) Other</p> <p>38. What is your racial category?  (1) Caucasian  (2) African American  (3) Latino  (4) Asian  (5) Native American  (6) Multi racial  (7) Other</p>	<p>39. Age:  (1) 18-25  (2) 26-35  (3) 36-45  (4) 45 and older</p> <p>40. Education Level:  (1) High school  (2) Some college  (3) College degree</p> <p>41. Position:  (1) Administrative  (2) Other</p> <p>42. Rank:  (1) Patrolmen  (2) Corporal  (3) Sergeant  (4) Lieutenant  (5) Captain  (6) Other Administrative</p> <p>43. Assignment:  (1) Investigations  (2) Patrol  (3) Other</p> <p>44. Investigation assignment that regularly deals with victims  (1) Yes  (2) No</p>
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## VITA

Whitney Harvey was born in the Chattanooga, TN metropolitan area. She moved around throughout her childhood and graduated from Farragut Highschool in Knoxville, Tennessee in 2005. After graduation, she took some time off for reflection and then spent some time studying in community college before transferring to the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. In 2013, she was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Criminal Justice. After graduation, she took time once again for reflection and then began the Master of Science degree program in Criminal Justice at the University of Tennessee of Chattanooga where she is a candidate for graduation in 2017. Upon graduation, she plans to take time for reflection and travel.