

CHALLENGES LAW ENFORCEMENT FACES IN UTILIZING COMMUNITY
POLICING TO COUNTER VIOLENT EXTREMISM

By

Steven Brett Beams

Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

There has been a rise in violent extremist attacks throughout America since the attack on the World Trade Center in 2001. However, law enforcement has been challenged in developing means and methods to combat the rise in terrorist activities. Using and enhancing community policing strategies have shown promising results in identifying terroristic individuals. A literature review shows that community policing strategies have been effective in combating and reducing violence and may be effective in mitigating terrorist activities. Community policing can be a necessary means for identifying radical individuals involved in terrorist activities. This research proposes to discover an effective and accurate method of open communication between law enforcement and the community by building stronger relationships, also known as a core relationship. The core relationship focuses on trust and legitimacy for a common purpose. The data collected from law enforcement officers experienced in community policing and terrorist investigations provide a foundation for engaging and utilizing the community. The critical information found at the local level can be broadened to the state and federal levels. Social media was found to be a catalyst for the radicalization of terrorists who may be implanted into a community setting. The participants made several recommendations to correct problems and deficiencies that hinder the relationship with the community preventing the identification of possible terrorist activities. Data was collected at the ground level of community policing and is readily adaptable to any police jurisdiction.

Keywords: Violent Extremists, Terrorism, Community Policing Stargates, Law Enforcement

Dedication

I dedicate this academic achievement to my parents Joe who passed away in 1999, and La June Beams, who supported me during this journey. I dedicate this work to the law enforcement officers who serve and protect their communities and everyone who seeks to improve the criminal justice system. This journey would not have been successful without your support.

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Table 1: Recurring and Emerging Themes.

List of Abbreviations

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)

Countering Violent Extremists (CVE)

the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)

United Nations (UN)

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)

Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

Building a counterterrorism community program (CTCP)

Community Oriented Policing (COP)

Problem-Oriented Policing (POP)

Religiously Motivated Violent Extremism, (RMVE)

The Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC)

Militia Violent Extremists (MVE)

International Center for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT)

Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

Violent Extremist Organizations (VEOs)

Chicago Alternative Police Program (CAPS)

School Resource Officer (SRO)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, changed the way law enforcement combats terrorist organizations. New legislation was implemented such as the U.S. Patriot Act, Intelligence Reform Act, Enhanced Border Security, Visa Entry Reform and Protect America Act. Policies are intended to help protect American citizens from terrorist organizations. Community relations are vital in reporting criminal activity, but not all communities participate in programs that will assist law enforcement in locating and stopping terrorist activities. The research has shown the focus is not always on terrorist organizations such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or Al Qaida. Hate groups, lone-wolf attacks, and other violent extremist organizations may be the United States' biggest concern where community involvement is vital in utilizing protection strategies. Immigrant communities are a concern due to the lack of trust between law enforcement and community leaders. Research has shown immigration restrictions do not directly affect or reduce terrorist activities. The literature reflects law enforcement agencies believe immigrant communities have valuable information regarding violent extremists (Abbas, 2019; Goldberg & Christopher, 2019; Jiyong, 2021).

Background

Violent extremist attacks take place in local jurisdictions; therefore, it is practical to believe police officers play a front-line role in countering violent extremism. In Oklahoma, it is a pivotal challenge to combat violence within their communities. This study aims to utilize Oklahoma law enforcement officers, and community policing programs to study the relationship between law enforcement and the community. This research is focused on building relationships between community leaders and law enforcement organizations (Packard, 2019).

Homeland security and local law enforcement agencies take particular interest in the radicalization of domestic terrorists. The radicalization process encompasses an extreme worldview of violence and ideology from a political background. Extremists use violence to legitimize their beliefs in infiltrating communities and radicalizing young adults such as John Walker Linda who was a twenty-year old American turned radicalized and charged with conspiring to kill Americans, providing support to terrorist organizations, and using firearms in crimes of violence (Slifkin, 2002).

The literature on community policing countering violent extremists is a valuable tool. The United States has seen a rise in violent extremist attacks, but it is unclear how effective community policing is in the immigrant and non-immigrant communities. The data from the community to law enforcement regarding violent extremists is inadequate. These issues present a problem to law enforcement trying to counter violent extremists. Violent extremists are not limited to one community. It has been argued one of the biggest threats the United States faces is from violent extremists (Blackbourn et al., 2019; Cherney et al., 2018; DeLeeuw & Pridemore, 2018; Goldberg & Christopher, 2019; Pistone et al., 2019; Ruggiero, 2019; Weine et al., 2017).

Community police programs have proven to curb violence, but there is a lack of knowledge and understanding about community policing strategies being utilized in countering violent extremists. It is important to identify the limitations in utilizing community policing in combating violent extremists. Therefore, this research is needed to build the knowledge required to identify the challenges law enforcement need to overcome in utilizing communities to fight against violent extremist. The topic is important in the field of criminal justice because a significant amount of law enforcement agencies use community policing as a tool to reduce violent crime. Research shows there is a need for more studies in expanding community policing

programs. This study aims to look at community policing programs and identify the challenges law enforcement face in combating violent extremism (Cherney & Murphy 2019; Kearnes, 2018; Packard, 2019; Pistone et al., 2019; Younis & Polutunik, 2017).

Community policing is a worldwide concept in finding innovative ways to combat criminal actions. In 2017, the Uganda police organization issued new strategies for developing a Community Policing Program (COP). The idea was to create a strong partnership between the police and their communities. The COP program has been a base model for police departments in other countries to develop a positive community policing program to serve their communities better. The literature has shown that Western countries designed COP programs. The idea was to improve the trust in the community and eliminate any police abuse while decreasing crime. Before law enforcement can build any trust with the community, they must first be engaged in positive core relationships that would enable law enforcement to obtain positive information on criminal activity (Divon, 2020).

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) creates violent extremist symbols guide regarding Militia Violent Extremists (MVE) to identify extremist organizations. The International Center for Counterterrorism (ICCT) describes these individuals as private citizens using violence against the government to counter government overreach, combat tyranny, and maintain order. Violent extremists exist in the United States, and they are a direct threat to communities and concern for law enforcement. The United States tries to create transparency in preventing these violent organizations. The anti-government sentiments and conspiracy theorists help fuel violent organizations (Stenmark, 2022).

How can communities build resistance against violent extremism? It's important to explore strategies that harness assets to help prevent youth from embracing violent extremist

ideology. Social connections through positive intervention within a community will help better prepare communities for disasters. Social connection between communities is vital in curbing the violence from extreme ideology. The research also discusses how communities can coordinate with the government to provide a system of early intervention against violent extremists. A positive connection between the community and law enforcement will only strengthen the bond and create better social networks that will build a community's resilience. Communities have a long history of helping prevent extreme violence. It seems logical that communities form a partnership with law enforcement to create new innovative ways of curbing extreme violence (Ellis, 2017).

There are consequences when individuals go from radicalization to extreme violence where there are political and social ramifications to all involved. How does an individual go from an everyday social context to radicalization? Society is looking for a better understanding of how to protect their communities. The research aims to identify the challenges law enforcement faces in identifying those who become radicalized and commit violence in communities. The typology of hate crimes is an example of identifying offenders and why they may become violent extremists. Some individuals do not have criminal records and their crimes occur publicly. Law enforcement is responsible for protecting the community, and understanding the social ramifications of violent extremists will enhance understanding of their challenges (Ellis et al., 2019).

It is essential to understand the psychological and moral character of a violent extremist. There has been empirical support for understanding the way these individuals think. The research revisits the debates on the psychological appeal to violent extremists. The research revealed that

extremists possess a lower positive emotion and a solid negative behavior than those not partisan to their ideology. If communities are going to combat violent extremists, they need to understand the force that drives the behavior of violent extremists (Alizadeh et al., 2019).

Violent extremist organizations (VEOs) have different ideology types that have remained consistent for several years.

The research looks at what VEO attacks may look like over the next five to ten years. The literature explains new trends that may offer what VEOs may look like in the future. The research is essential in understanding the direction of VEO and any unexpected change that may occur in how they operate in society. There is no definite definition for violent extremist groups; however, research agrees that VEOs are individuals, or groups that kill or harm people to achieve one or more political agendas. Identifying state and non-state actors in violent extremist activities is extremely important. For communities to better prepare for combatting violent extremists, they must understand who the actors are in these organizations (Davis, 2019)

Online presence by terrorist and hate group organizations and far-right political groups have been a recruiting ground for several years. Most organizations turn to the internet to find those with the same ideological views. In responding to violent extremist online presences, countering terrorism campaigns have found innovative ways to fight against those extremist groups. One discussed interference method is implementing redirect methods to target violent extremists using the internet for their propaganda. According to the RAND Corporation, the method is effective, but challenges still exist. It has been a problem in communities combating violent extremists' online presence (Boyle, 2019). Violent extremists have shifted to a large scale that is a threat within the United States. These extremists must be identified within the community to preserve safety and maintain order within communities (Mourad, 2018).

Situation to Self

Over the years, community policing has been a significant asset to law enforcement in combating crimes. Since the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, there has been a paradigm shift in how we use community policing concepts. Having firsthand knowledge of law enforcement front-line issues has driven the phenomenon related to the current community policing problems. The literature has shown how radicalization has occurred with young adults in communities all over America. The literature has also addressed concerns in our current situation utilizing the community to combat violent extremism. It is essential to get a law enforcement officer's perspective on the challenges they face within their communities.

Problem Statement

According to Kaufman & Niner (2019), when radicalization is explained it is thought of as a process that takes place within an individual or organization. Radicalization is a predictable trait that displays an increase in violent behavior when engaging in religious, political, or social activities. The process of becoming radicalized encompasses the extreme worldview which offers legitimacy in the use of their violent activities. Law enforcement faces many challenges and one of the most significant is extremist organizations. The lack of social equality is a component of extremism where there is a need to be predominant over people's need. Violent extremists have deadly aggression toward other people. Their victims are often civilians who may be at the wrong place or time. Significance Quest Theory addresses the need for dominance that incites violent extremism with three fundamental elements: the narrative, network, and the need (Kaufman & Niner, 2019; Kruglanski et al., 2018; Schumpe et al., 2020).

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for dominance that incites violent extremism with three fundamental elements: the narrative, network, and the need (Kaufman & Niner, 2019; Kruglanski et al., 2018; Schumpe et al., 2020). According to Bernard et al., (2016) Southerland's Social Learning Theory may lay the groundwork for an individual becoming radicalized. When a young individual has an internal conflict, the person may seek group memberships or become a supporter of an extremist organization conforming to radical ideology. Charlawi et al., (2020) noted violent extremists are reactions within the framework of social constructs such as ethnicity, religion, and race. Identity represents the construct of intergroup relations centered on cultural identity. Extremist groups will continue to recruit individuals by using symbols and taking advantage of individual oppression in immigrant and non-immigrant communities (Dean, 2017).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this phenomenological study is to understand, describe, and discover the challenges and limitations of utilizing community policing in combating violent extremists. The central phenomenon of the study for the participants in Oklahoma is the issues facing law enforcement in understanding how the community can be utilized to combat extremists. At this stage in the research, the central phenomenon will be generally defined as the issues involving the community and front-line law enforcement officers. A general definition of the central concept is the core relationship between law enforcement and the community. The theory guiding this study is social learning theory, Southerland's differential association theory and Aker's social learning theory (Akers, 2017; Bernard et al., 2016).

It is believed criminal behavior is a learned process by interacting with others in the process of communicating. Over time, through a radicalization process, individual's within a community become radicalized through a learning process from favorable and non-favorable

definitions of terms in an individual's reasoning to commit a crime or not to commit a crime. Individuals become violent extremists from a social learning process that occurs in personal groups. These individuals are influential in radical ideology concepts. When an individual learns criminal behavior, the techniques learned are from criminal behavior where crimes are being committed.

Significance of the Study

The study will add to the existing literature on how community policing concepts may be used to combat violent extremists. The firsthand knowledge from the lived experience of law enforcement officers will expand the understanding of how communities may make a difference in identifying individuals who become radicalized by extreme ideology. There has been limited research on how the community has been utilized to combat extremism. This study will highlight the positive and negative factors of using community policing concepts. It is believed that the information from the survey will ultimately recognize areas of improvement in the relationship between the community and law enforcement in fighting against radicalization and extremism.

Research Questions

Law enforcement faces challenges in combating violent extremism throughout communities across America. The propaganda directed toward individuals in the radicalization process is a danger to the public. According to Karnes (2018), community policing programs have been successful in curtailing violent crime. Local law enforcement agencies are in a good position to work closely with residents, community groups, and business owners in countering terrorist activities. There is a lack of adequate understanding and evidence of the challenges law enforcement face in creating new innovative ways to utilize the community in combating violent extremism. More research is needed in this area to fully understand the challenges police

organizations face when implementing robust community programs that would be effective in countering these extremist organizations (Cherney & Murphy, 2019; Hardy, 2020; Karnes, 2018; Pistone et al., 2019). The questions will identify challenges law enforcement has faced in utilizing community policing to combat violent extremism. Questions such as:

RQ1: What challenges is law enforcement facing when utilizing community policing to counter violent extremism?

RQ2: How do you define violent extremists?

RQ3: What is the difficulty in identifying violent extremists in our communities across the United States?

RQ4: What is a situation that stands out when you used community policing to counter any type of violent extremists?

RQ5: What methods do you recommend when trying to identify violent extremists?

Definitions

Islamic State/Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant: The Islamic state is also identified as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is a doctrine from the Sunni branch of Islam. The violent extremist organization was founded by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in 1999.

Al-Qaeda: The militant extremists group was founded by Osama bin Laden in the 1980s. The organization merged with other extremist groups such as Egypt's Jihad and declared holy war against America. Al-Qaeda was responsible for the attacks in New York City on September 11, 2001.

International Terrorism: A violent criminal action by an individual or a group who was associated with a violent foreign extremist group that is state sponsored.

Domestic Terrorism: A violent criminal action by an individual or a group who are influenced by environmental, political, social, religious, social, and racial.

Lone-Wolf Offenders: A violent criminal action by Individuals who have been radicalize through social media without any affiliation to any extremist group and acts on their own behalf based on their radical ideology.

Violent Extremists: Individuals or organizations who advocate engaging, supporting, and preparing violent acts that are motivated by ideological beliefs justifying violence to push political objectives, social and economic changes.

Community Policing: To engage positive community relations between law enforcement and local communities. To combat citizens mistrust and develop a relationship to prevent crime and build stronger and safer communities

Immigrant Communities: Individuals or a group of people who have moved into a country to which they are not native.

Nonimmigrant Communities: Individuals or a group of people who live in a country they are native to.

Summary

Community policing is characterized by the actions of how law enforcement does their job. Traditionally, community programs have targeted making communities safer through a partnership with law enforcement. The task of solving community problems is a public issue and there may be some downsides to understanding how to utilize communities best to combat radicalization and extreme violence. Researchers have addressed the need for community involvement in identifying criminals who try and condemn those who share reasonability with

law enforcement. Radicalization may affect low and high-demographic areas, causing discontent within the boundaries of all communities in America.

Law enforcement organizations may be looking at a paradigm shift in utilizing community policing in a more robust way to curb the radicalization process that researchers have identified as a pathway to extremism. It is imperative community policing be used to combat violent extremism. Improving community policing may create stronger relationships with law enforcement and curb radical ideology through enhanced policing methods. Research agrees the importance of community policing is a valuable part of crime prevention (Goldberg & Christopher, 2019). It is important to understand the ideology of violent extremists and the impact they have on communities throughout the United States. How law enforcement combats violent extremists will be through community relations and the ability of law enforcement to build core relationships with community leaders (Cherney & Murphy, 2017).

In 1992, Chicago developed a community policing program that was established in all twenty-five districts. Chicago Alternative Police Program (CAPS) helped law enforcement build positive relationships with the community. By 2010, the program started to unravel due to budget cuts causing a lack of enthusiasm. The program was a success during its operations building trust within the community and law enforcement. It is believed the current high crime rate in Chicago is due to a shift in community policing and the lack of building relationships with community leaders (Skogan, 2022).

Community policing officers have an ideology and understanding of policing concepts that are used around the world. Law enforcement devolvement programs help the community combat violence and help build the core relationships needed to be successful. The police are the most visible government organization with individuals intimately involved with their

communities to provide a healthier environment. With human rights issues and the threat of violent extremism community, policing is more prevalent today than it has been in past years. The international community shares programs that may reduce violence such as Poland using community policing models developed in the United States. Other nations, such as the United Nations and European Union, also believe community policing is one of the most valuable ideologies to fight against terrorist organizations and violent extremists (Brogden, 2013).

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Policing in the United States was developed through three types of periods starting in 1800 with the political era. The second was the reform era, and the third was the community policing-problem solving era. The political era occurred in the 1800s and was noted as the rise of modern-day policing. The police departments were the product of a rise in violence in mostly the northern cities. As time passed, these departments fell under political influence, creating an era of corruption and favoritism. The reform era 1920s to the 1970s, was the era of police professionalism and crime control. The reform era attempted to gain control over police behavior and restructure how law enforcement officers are perceived. Due to the high levels of corruption and political influence, law enforcement organizations needed a change. The third era of police culture was the community policing and problem-solving era. The strategy was to build confidence within communities through a coordinated effort between law enforcement officers and community leaders to solve crime problems within their perspective neighborhoods (Goldberg & Christopher, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Extremism contends that the unavoidable part of extremism is the motivational imbalance where the need of an individual or group is predominant over the needs of others (Bernard et al., 2016). This allows extremists to believe their attitudes are emancipated from the constraints of others and violent actions are justifiable and allowed based on their ideologies. The deadly violence extremists show toward civilians is indiscriminate where most victims find themselves in the wrong place at the wrong time. The nature of violent extremists is the need to dominate based on their social beliefs as pointed out by Charkawi et al., (2020), through social identity

theory where an individual generates a positive identity by defining themselves within their group membership. Social Learning Theory, Southerland's Differential Association Theory, Athens's Theory of Violentization, Quest Theory, and the Lucifer Effect are related to how deviant behavior is learned from observation or participation in criminal activities. Zimbardo identified what he believed is the reason good people turn evil. Through his research during the Stanford Prison Experiment, it showed how a group of individuals will change their nature based on the groups they are associated with. According to Dean, (2017) when identifying the theory of radicalization, extremism is found in individuals who are young and educated. There is a change in the person's deprivation and the individual's internal identity changes causing a conflict that is contributed to an individual's social actions (Athens, 2016; Bernard et al., 2016; Charkawi et al., 2020; Holt, 2019; Schumpe et al., 2020).

Charkawi et al., (2020) noted that extremism and terrorism are reactions to the perceptions of disenfranchisement within the context of society such as race and religion. Southerland's Differential Association Theory represents the construct of intergroup relations created around one's identity. As individuals move towards a dark path guided by their symbols of perceived oppression, violent extremism will only grow throughout communities across the United States. Law enforcement organizations understand that community policing has a profound impact on crime. However, there are challenges in how to prevent violent extremism, but the fundamental concepts of community policing strategies may offer a paradigm shift in how law enforcement approaches utilizing the community to combat radicalization (Dean, 2017; Packard, 2019; Slifkin, 2002). My research will contribute to filling the gaps in the existing literature. Pistone et al., (2019) agree more research is needed in this area to better understand how the community can play a vital role in combating violent extremists. Murphy (2019) and

Hardy (2020) noted a strong community policing strategy may bolster the efficiencies of communities to impede radicalization.

One of the reasons the study will be important is to identify the gap between the challenges law enforcement officers face in their daily duties, and how the community may be utilized to change the process of radicalization. The lack of information on why there are any challenges facing law enforcement, in utilizing community policing is a phenomenon that does exist. In the proposed qualitative study, Creswell and Poth (2018) noted to increase the reliability of the research and maintain the credibility of the study a chain of evidence must be aligned with the data collected. The study will demonstrate credibility by maintaining proper data collection procedures. I may also use a member checking process known as a participant or respondent validation, which is a technique for exploring the credibility of results (Candela, 2019).

Related Literature

In the present-day community policing is a part of law enforcement agencies, small or large, with a mission statement addressing problem-solving community relations. Despite the commitment law enforcement organizations show communities, there is little research on street-level law enforcement officers conforming to the philosophy of community policing. However, the literature does not discount combating terrorism by incorporating community policing concepts. Research shows that law enforcement organizations are not the key to community policing but the experienced police officer who has made a difference in community relations. Federal programs such as Countering Violent Extremists (CVE) have been implemented to get communities involved in combating terrorism. The theory behind the program is creating a community-led program centered around Houston, Texas and Columbus, Ohio. The program

allows communities to get involved in community policing focusing on violent extremists (Abbas, 2019; Ambrozik, 2019; Gau & Paul, 2019; Kearns, 2018).

In the professionalization era of law enforcement, there was a resistance to the ideology of community policing. The idea that community policing was a soft way to enforce the law was viewed subjectively and not well accepted. The literature did indicate law enforcement officers that were extremely satisfied with their job were found to have a better outlook towards community policing. Before the 9/11 attacks, police chiefs across the nation began training their law enforcement personnel on community policing ideology. The new concept was the beginning of reforming police organizations to be more involved in community problem-solving skills to solve violent crimes.

Kearns (2018) noted law enforcement organizations have raised questions about the appropriate ways to combat violent extremism. Some scholars believe community policing should not be used in combating violent extremists. According to Kearns (2018), people will evaluate police behaviors making it important for police officers to have a professional demeanor to show legitimacy in their communities. For effective collaboration with the community, law enforcement officers must build trust with community leaders. Without positive collaboration within the community, it will be difficult to create effective counterterrorism measures (Gau & Paul, 2019).

Several years into the fight against terrorism, community policing is increasingly utilized to fight homegrown lone-wolf attacks. In 2014, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) made a legitimate argument that members of the community are a vital part of preventing domestic terrorism. Due to cutbacks in law enforcement funds, the community has become more beneficial in the fight against crime. The basic idea of community policing is leveraging the

abilities of the communities to fight back against violent extremists. Communities will increase police power in safeguarding people's liberties through their involvement in police programs. According to Nguyen (2019) sociologist, Nigel Fielding believed community policing is policing close to the public, so law enforcement officers understand and share community concerns. Law enforcement officers sustain trust from the community and everyday contacts to understand the community's wishes. By taking this approach, community members are collaborating with law enforcement officers to solve local issues. One important aspect of community policing is to create a framework for people to report individuals who are perceived as a risk of extreme radicalization. In support of the community, law enforcement has the tools to evaluate these individuals the community feels are a threat (Gau & Paul, 2019; Kearns, 2018; Nguyen, 2019).

Violent extremism undermines the concept of peace in all communities across the globe. Violent extremism prevents communities from peacebuilding and protection for the youth from radicalization ideology. Violent extremist groups target human rights causing a catastrophic outcome if communities do not build relationships with local law enforcement. Violent extremists target advocates trying to create peace in other countries and the United Nation's (UN) plan is to identify terrorism, and violent extremism as a community problem. The United Nations developed a plan to help protect their peacekeepers entering other countries. To prevent violent extremism, questions need to be asked to identify the right strategic plan to counter the violent extremist group.

Women in other countries have been used to build positive outcomes in countering violent extremists. The research addressed how women may be used in de-radicalization to counter violent extremists in Pakistan (Javaid, 2018; O'Halloran, 2018). Acts of terrorism have

become a challenge worldwide, and undeveloped areas are subject to a complex of threats. The research addresses the problems of spreading extreme ideology through the expansion of the internet. The most vulnerable individual in a community is the youth. The youth are emotional and have adventurous mindsets leading to the penetration of radical ideas. From a global perspective, women as wives and mothers offer the ability to create a positive change within their communities and homes. However, the literature is vague on the role of women in combating violent extremism (Javaid, 2018).

Due to Pakistan's struggles in combating terrorism, a strategy was developed to counter extremism ideology. Other countries are starting to understand enforcement in combating violent extremists requires dealing with inequality and self-governing ideology to ensure women's role in helping communities become more peaceful and safer. The approach to gender and equality at a global level may change the discourse in countering violent extremism. In Pakistan, women are taking a leadership role in combating violent extremism to help understand and change the radicalization process. Social Learning theory has been identified from previous literature understanding the young's individuals internal conflict that may push a young adventurous mind into a radicalization process. The literature identifies the community as a vital part of preventing domestic terrorism. The basic idea is to avoid violent actors from creating a damaging environment for the youth. Developing communities with more women in leadership roles may give a better insight into combating violent extremism at a global level (Charlawi et al., 2020; Dean, 2017; Gau & Paul, 2019; Javaid, 2018; Kearns, 2018; Nguyen, 2019; O'Halloran, 2018).

The events of September 11, 2001, and subsequent attacks from Islamic radical individuals, created global challenges in fighting terrorism. In 2011, recruitment, international and domestic, to terrorist organizations was a growing concern for the U.S. Research showed

there had been approximately thirty-seven plots that were linked to the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) from 2013, with approximately 204 homegrown terrorist plots since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack that occurred in New York City. To prevent individuals from joining these organizations, President Obama initiated a public-private partnership (PPP) focusing on combating violent extremist groups. The concept was to create a plan that would address radicalization and violent extremism in the U.S. According to VonHlatky (2020), in 2015, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and other world governments looked towards building stronger communities to combat violent extremism. A policy in the United Kingdom would focus on individuals' psychological, sociological, and behavioral characteristics that become radicalized. The literature has identified several scholars who have identified Social Learning Theory concepts and the importance of the theoretical perspective in community involvement in combating violent extremism. (Bernard et al., 2016; Melissa, 2020; VonHlatky, 2020).

Between 2014 and 2016, in Minneapolis-Saint Paul, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) identified ISIL recruiting youth in different communities to help them fight in Syria. Since this has occurred, several individuals have traveled to Syria to support ISIL and become radicalized. The Federal government started a community-building program in the Twin Cities to build community resilience to combat violent extremism. The program included youth in communities engaging with after-school programs or mentor-mentee offering opportunities for a bridge between the schools and the communities. The community-driven model created the framework to promote community intervention to fight terrorist organizations from invading their communities. The program was a partnership between the communities and the government to stop the recruitment and radicalization of youth (VonHlatky, 2020).

Terrorism has become more recognized globally over the past decades making it a priority concern among communities. Extremist ideology from lone attackers has been on the rise, and those who intended to do harm are generally from the countries they attack. Several countries have focused on countering terrorism through community policing. Past models in combating terrorism have lacked efficacy in countering extremism. However, a productive approach focuses on preemptive solutions in creating a collaborative relationship between the police and the community. Building a counterterrorism community program (CTCP) to establish a citizen-police partnership is vital in preventing violent extremists. Muslim communities have become fearful due to the security threat perceived by the public. After 9/11, Muslim societies did not believe new policies were conducive and were excluded from preventive programs (Spasic & Radovanovic, 2019). The CTCP program will help in identifying potential threats that may rise from their communities and build a bridge between local law enforcement and Muslim communities.

Even though the right-wing extremists were a much higher threat, Muslim neighborhoods still felt under scrutiny over the past decade. In some instances, Muslim communities felt law enforcement was harsh in their enforcement (Spasic & Radovanovic, 2019). Muslim citizens were stopped by police frequently and searched along with extensive surveillance within their communities. According to the literature, these community-related problems are a global concern and do not belong to any country where the community and terrorism are involved. Over the last decade, the literature shows a growth in attacks by white supremacist individuals (Butt & Khalid, 2018).

In Sweden, to prevent radicalization, municipalities focused on schools, social work, and youth workers under the umbrella of cities. The idea was to create a pathway and cooperation

with the police to fight violent extremism and protect their democracy. After 9/11, law enforcement actively over policed Muslim neighborhoods in New York City. However, a paradigm shift occurred over time, identifying community policing concepts in cooperation between Muslim communities and law enforcement to combat terrorist organizations (Christer, 2019; Goetting, 2017; Spasic & Radovanovic, 2019).

According to Scrivens et al. (2019), a study involving individuals who were no longer in violent extremists organizations said they never gave any thought to the process of recruiting into terrorist organizations. The interviewees believed those involved in prevention should pay attention to young people and keep them from aligning themselves with extremist ideology. Seventy percent of the participants in the study felt if they had a more meaningful relationship with their parents, it might have prevented them from entering a violent extremist organization. Many suggestions to disenfranchise youth from joining extremist groups involved more local community help and more robust school responsibilities. Former violent extremists said if they had a better education and learned more about the harmful effects of racism, they may not have joined violent extremists groups. Schools and social media have been identified as areas of concern for the younger generation in the radicalization process. Muslim communities are no different when preventative measures are a significant concern in communities across America. (Christer, 2019; Goetting, 2017; Scrivens et al., 2019; Spasic & Radovanovic, 2019).

In a research study conducted by Muhammad et al., (2019), facility members of public colleges believe inappropriate education may be a significant cause of the spread of violent extremism in America. Facility members in private universities speak of the emotional issues of blackmailing students in religious and cultural issues. It is not believed world powers promote violent extremists ideology to push their political agendas. The Pakistani government believes

better education at the university level will help detour violent extremism. According to Scrivens et al., (2019), also thought education was a fundamental source of learning as stated in his study of individuals who were former violent extremists. Canada and the U.S. have pushed policies to combat violent extremism using a variety of countermeasures. According to Tierney (2017), Canada has used a three-system approach to better understand violent extremists, in community engagement in partnership with local law enforcement. Community programs such as National Security Awareness effectively reach communities and bring better insight into preventing radicalism. The United States has focused on academics, outreach programs, and domestic and international programs on measures that raise interest in preventing terrorist attacks. The literature also reflects critics believe programs have had a negligible impact on combating extremism over the years. The literature questions the targeting of Muslims being a real threat. The literature has identified white supremacy as a significant concern in the United States and globally (Christer, 2019; Goetting, 2017; Spasic & Radovanovic, 2019; Tierney (2017).

The failure of law enforcement agencies to share information was a significant problem after 9/11. A new concept of Intelligence Police concepts has emerged to bring federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies together to combat terrorist activities. The concept of intelligence policing collects vital information related to criminal activity, resulting in actionable information law enforcement may use to respond in a tactical measure to stop a terrorist event. Community programs such as Community Oriented Policing (COP) and Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) are used to get communities involved in preventing crime within their neighborhoods. The COPS program has been used across the world and was established by Congress in 1994. The program awarded \$14 billion in grants to help implement community policing strategies and train law enforcement personnel in advanced community policing

techniques. One of the program's main benefits was gaining the trust of the community and community satisfaction with local police departments in reducing crime. As noted in previous research, community policing is emphasized as a positive bridge between the community's trust and law enforcement to combat violent extremism (Carter & Fox, 2019; Scrivens et al., 2019; Spasic & Radovanovic, 2019).

One of the main concepts of community policing is the cooperation and trust developed between law enforcement and the community. Citizens make a significant impact in recognizing problems and working with law enforcement to reduce crime. Working with citizens is critical to a positive outcome in combating violent extremists. Local businesses, neighborhood organizations, schools and neighborhood watch groups help law enforcement identify and solve complex issues in the community. Community organizations are a significant part of community policing efforts, where law enforcement must work diligently with community leaders. With the rise of violent extremists, homeland security intelligence is crucial in combating terrorism.

Community policing concepts have the same outlook across the globe. In Serbia, police organizations work with communities to engage citizens in combating violent encounters. Communities are a social framework where citizens may participate in different ways of life. Many communities are self-governed with social, economic, and cultural diversity. Citizens play an essential role in the safety of their own families and social structures. Law enforcement is a part of a community's social structure and serves the community in solving problems and protecting the citizens. The cooperation between law enforcement and local communities will enhance the probability of creating a safer environment and protecting youth from becoming radicalized. (Sedwick et al., 2021; Spasić & Radovanović, 2019).

Social Learning Theory

According to Bernard et al., (2016), the learning process is devolved through experience and knowledge of an individual's environment. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) said all learning is done by experience and individuals are not inborn or instinctively grown into a learning process. Aristotle believed in four laws of association, but the most dominant of the laws was an association. Association has been the dominant learning theory over the centuries to date. Philosophers such as Locke & Hobbes would go into more detail about human behaviors while the first experiments on animal learning were carried out by Thorndike conducted experiments regarding learning behaviors, and identified learning was done through association (Bernard et al., 2016).

Classical conditioning is the simplest way individuals learn by association. Ivan Petrovich Pavlov's classical conditioning theory describes how a stimulus will produce a behavior change without any training. The organism of classical conditioning learns what to expect from the environment while operant conditioning is considered active and leans on how to get what it wants from the environment. Staddon (2017) noted B. F. Skinner is a behaviorist psychologist who created the operant conditioning chamber (Skinner Box). The chamber was used to observe and manipulate behavior by using rewards and punishment. Both classical and operant conditioning are associated with social learning theory and may be associated with individuals who become radicalized. Classical and operant conditioning, in theory, may be linked to behavior changes that would lead an individual into becoming an extremist through their learning environment. Even though other theorists focused on crime as learned behavior, Southerland's Differential Association Theory is still the most dominant learning theory today. (Bernard et al., 2016; Staddon, 2017).

Southerland Differential Association Theory

Southerland's theory on criminal behavior which appeared in 1947, has not changed to date and describes how criminal behavior is learned. Southerland believed criminal behavior is a learned process by interacting with others in the process of communicating. When an individual learns criminal behavior, the techniques learned are from criminal behavior where crimes are being committed. The main part of learning occurs in personal groups and the motives are driven by laws that may be accepted or unaccepted. In theory, individuals who commit crimes are generally surrounded by people who violate laws. The principle of differential association is an individual becomes delinquent due to the favorability to violate the laws learned from other observed criminal behavior. When criminal behavior is learned it involves all the other mechanisms that are involved with other learning theories. The expression of criminal behavior is the expression of general needs. While non-criminal behavior may have the same needs, one individual may commit a criminal offense while the other one does not (Bernard et al., 2016).

Southerland believes learning takes place in intimate personal groups; however, Akers believes that positive behavior can also be learned by the same process that deviant behavior is learned. This is found in Akers' Social Learning Social Structure theory. Akers believed social learning is reinforced through social interactions, but nonsocial situations like the environment also reinforce criminality. People do things that may result in rewards without thinking of the consequences. The literature shows how young individuals will be targeted and recruited into violent extremist organizations through an observed learning process where an ideology may be installed into the mind. Where a new set of morals and ideology may be learned based on Sutherland's theory of criminal behavior (Bernard et al., 2016; Kaufman & Niner, 2019; Kruglanski et al., 2018; Schumpe et al., 2020).

Akers Social Learning Theory

Aker's Social Learning Theory corresponds with Sutherland's Differential Association Theory, where criminal behavior becomes a learning process. Akers and Sutherland's criminal behavior theory has become a widely accepted approach to defining criminal behavior however, others have misapplied it when testing social learning theories. Akers proposed a new measure in social learning theory in social structure and group differences in criminal activity to individual conduct. Akers believed Sutherland's idea of learning through differential association was a basic idea of operant theory that their environment defines a particular behavior. There is a balance between those who are favorable and unfavorable to crime. This social interaction is comparable to the Skinnerian concept of differential reinforcement identifying the balance between reward and punishment (Akers, 2017).

Individuals who believe they are owed something may display various behavior patterns. The definitions explained in criminal behavior are identified by the values of the individual's beliefs contributing to their criminal behavior. Individuals develop attributes and aspirations by following other people. Their direct encounters create negative or positive behavior traits. Akers' social learning theory identifies people who have developed the urge to display criminal behavior. These acts and behavior traits are developed through a social process by interacting with peers in their social circle (Nodeland & Morris 2018).

Theory of Violentization

Athens's Theory of Violentization draws from social learning theory regarding symbolic interactionism. The theory addresses, why some individuals become extremely violent committing crimes such as homicides, rape, and aggravated assault. Athens's theory draws from the violence he experienced as a child in an abusive upbringing and almost becoming a violent

criminal himself. Athens's qualitative research was developed from interviewing fifty-eight extremely violent offenders in prison from different penal institutions. From his study, he found how an individual becomes a dangerous violent offender. Violent criminals see things differently than other people. It was from a different behavioral process and from that process they become extremely violent (Athens, 2016; Bernard et al., 2016).

The first stage in the process is brutalization, where members of an organization display direct victimization towards the individual. Where the individual is taught violence is the answer to social situations. Stage two is belligerence, where an individual decides not to be a victim and takes command of his plight. Stage three is violent performance, where an individual tries out his violence when asked or backs away from violent behaviors. Stage four is virulency, after a series of victories people start to see the individual as a violent person. These behaviors are learned from the people in the individual's community that teaches violence, but some individuals within the community may teach a positive effect to non-violent behavior. This theory is like Sutherland's theory regarding differential association. Over the years, Athen's theory has been revised such as belligerence is now considered defiance. The fifth stage that was added "violent predation" is where the individual takes his violence to a new level exceeding the bounds of humanity (Bernard et al., 2016).

The Lucifer Effect

Zimbardo asked why do good people turn evil? Zimbardo demonstrated how in any given situation people will take a true nature in what role they believe they are playing. Zimbardo's definition of evil was a person who intentionally harms others by abusing and dehumanizing them. Destroying the lives of innocent people without remorse. Zimbardo was a social psychologist who believed people did not turn evil from a genetic inheritance perspective,

but from acquired experience people would transgresses depending on their situation or circumstance. Zimbardo focused on ordinary people in communities where individuals would have violent behaviors under certain circumstance such as defending their homeland, or friends and neighbors turning on each other depending on the circumstance, if provoked (Bernard et al., 2016).

The Stanford Prison Experiment defined the power of a situation when the guards degraded the prisoners displaying how easily moral values were thrown out in a simple role-play situation. The results are the fear instilled into people in an attempt to change an individual's morals into a more violent nature. There is a thin line between criminal behavior and noncriminal behavior depending on the events. Power may be a strong influence over a person's insecurities and loyalties may change from institutional pressures. For example, a lone-wolf attack by an individual who focuses on extreme ideology with no criminal record, may causes mass casualties with the characteristics of Zimbardo's theory regarding the Lucifer effect (Bernard et al., 2016; Holt, 2019).

Violent Extremist Organizations

Researchers have developed a typology for classifying both violent extremist and lone wolf' attackers. Some research uses a statical strategy in identifying the cell structure within a terrorist organization. The research that focuses on the behavioral traits of violent extremists may fall within the guidelines that contribute to social learning theory. According to Holt (2019) the social phenomenon regarding why some extremist groups are violent and others are not contributing to their social connections within their communities. Typologies are vital in creating policies against violent extremists. Holt (2019) noted McDevitt's typology includes "thrill-seeking, reactive/defensive, retaliatory mission, and bias peripheral/mixed offenders" (pg. 86).

The thought process by extremists believe they are targeting evil people whereas thrill-seekers usually act alone and methodically choosing their victims (Holt, 2019).

Most of these offenders are juveniles with no criminal record who do not use weapons. There are drugs and alcohol involved and most of the crimes committed are in a public place. According to Sutherland's Theory of Differential Association and Ellis (2017) in recognizing to build a resilient community to protect the youth, coincides with each other by understanding the possibilities of radicalization and building a community that takes away anti-social values. Far-right extremists have generated public concern with the spread of radicalization. Mason (2020) noted individuals become radicalized from destabilized environments. Being exposed to radicalized ideology within a community only reinforces violent tendencies and spreads like a contagion. The radicalization process is complex and requires multiple exposures before one can be pushed to the extreme. Exposure to social media may enhance the spread of radical ideology in poverty-stricken communities. There is a high probability violent extremists identify certain regions that are vulnerable and target those communities for recruitment (Mason, 2020; Winter et al., 2020).

Far-left movements, such as Antifa, were engaging in violence across America by attacking others during demonstrations who did not accept their ideology. More research is needed in understanding the political motivations of these neo-Nazism organizations. According to Mason (2020) from a psychological point of view, there have been more than sixty years of research that focused on right-wing versus left-wing ideology. The literature reveals that an individual's belief corresponds with an individual's political views. Antifa uses violent and non-violent actions to achieve its political goals. Knowing not all Antifa supports engaging in violence, they are recognized as a violent extremist group (Mason, 2020; Penatzer, 2019).

In 2016 and 2017, Antifa was involved in attacks against individuals giving far-right speeches. Some of the group members identified as anti-fascists and most of these extremists protested Donald Trump's election using violence to express their views. When thinking of terrorist organizations there is a leadership and chain of command that is followed. Lafree et al., (2018) does not consider Antifa as a group defined in the aspects of terrorism. Most scholars identified terrorist groups like Al-Qaida, ISIS, or the Irish Republican Army. However, Antifa shows little structure and no chain of command and is considered a movement, but they use violence when confronting those who are against their ideology. The literature has shown it is not always terrorist groups that commit terrorist acts. For example, the Tsarnaev brother's deadly attack during the Boston Marathon and Timothy McVeigh who was responsible for the Oklahoma City Bombing in 1995. These attacks were by individuals who were not associated with a terrorist group, but supported extremists' ideology (Lafree et al., 2018; Mason, 2020; Penatzer, 2019).

The literature showed individuals located in areas who voted for far-right policies were more likely to show signs of radicalization. Mitts (2019) noted the rise of far-right parties showed more support for ISIS groups in other countries such as Europe. The findings of the research supported the understanding of social media being a leading cause of radicalization. Social media was the primary source for most violent extremist groups to reach out to potential recruits. Winter (2020) also agrees online social media is a threat to communities across America. The risk factor is high in the radicalization of youthful offenders through online propaganda that may lead to an individual committing violence based on learned behavior. Radicalization through social media will only continue to be more aggressive with conflicts arising in the Middle East and the United States. The online and offline radicalization process

takes effect causing a hostile nature that consumes radical intent to commit violence (Lafree et al., 2018; Mason, 2020; Peter, 2019; Winter, 2020).

Al-Qaeda and Islamic State (IS) have become unpredictable and resilient in their abilities to attack the United States. They have been able to exploit the internet in recruiting aspiring jihadists from communities all over the world. Overall, these violent extremist groups have created underground terrorist networks such as sleeper cells, and lone wolves, who attack randomly without cause. According to Gunaratna (2018) there has been a decrease in terrorist online activity and an increase in encrypted platforms such as Threema and Telegram in recruiting and propaganda. However, empirical evidence by other scholars such as Lafree et al., (2018); Mason, (2020); Penatzer, (2019) suggests the online threat is highly effective in radicalizing those with similar extremist ideologies. These white supremacists' organizations are extremely violent and focus their recruiting on communities the same as other terrorist organizations (Mason, 2020).

Violent extremists have been a product of the world news for decades and since the attacks of September 11, 2001, far-right extremists have added to the violence that has occurred in the United States. The literature shows how dangerous extremists organizations are and the political ideology that follows their beliefs. The literature also adds an argument presenting the concept of deterrence theory and how it may be used to slow down violent extremists. However, Bernard et al., (2016) noted Sutherland's Differential Association Theory, through interaction with others, may create irrational thoughts. These thoughts may create perceived rational fanatics that lead to targeted attacks such as the Orlando nightclub shooting where lone-wolf attacker, Omar Mateen, killed 49 people and injured 53. Even though deterrence theory is a positive thought process in deterring attacks, it is still unclear how deterrence theory works in combating

violent extremists within a community (Blackbourn et al., 2019; Blount, 2016; Chappell & Gibson, 2009).

For several years law enforcement organizations have adapted to problem-solving skills regarding community policing strategies. However, after the 9/11 incident, policing concepts changed and focused more on homeland security issues. Chappell & Gibson, (2009) noted scholars are asking how is community policing and protecting the homeland compatible? The literature was important to the research because Metcalfe et al., (2016) noted his research if communities were being neglected due to new homeland security policies. The research concluded it was not significant however, Chappell & Gibson, (2009) question is still a question today. Prior research had suggested Police Chief's with college degrees were more likely to integrate community policing and homeland security procedures. Parker et al., (2019) noted there is a need for communities to be involved in combating violent extremists. The need for co-production with communities is vital to a successful outcome in combatting radicalization (Blackbourn et al., 2019; Blount, 2016; Chappell & Gibson, 2009; Parker et al., 2019).

Law enforcement agencies all over the world have been criticized for being biased and racial toward citizens. Communities need to enhance their relationship with law enforcement. It is also important for law enforcement officers to have a professional demeanor with community leaders. When law enforcement officers show positive procedural justice, it brings respect to the community and makes for better cooperation in fighting criminal activities. Muslim communities are important and should have trust in their local police to report suspicious activities. The idea of utilizing the community to combat violent extremism is based on community trust and using intervention techniques that will leverage law enforcement abilities in a more robust community policing strategy (Mourad, 2018; Murphy et al., 2017; Murphy et al., 2019).

The heightened threat of terrorist activities across the United States has given police organizations more power to deal with the violence. Anti-terror policies have opened the door to a more invasive police presence in most everyone's lives. Metcalfe et al., (2016), noted new homeland security policies may have taken away from community policing. There are not any definitive answers immigrant communities such as Muslim communities, have believed government policies has created a more evasive fight against violent extremist. It is important to focus equally on immigrant communities and non-immigrant communities in combating violent extremists. Some immigrant communities may not have a strong trust factor with law enforcement making it a challenge for street-level officers to gather important data daily. Just policing will open the door for social inclusion so the Muslim communities will report the terrorist activity within their perspective areas (Metcalfe et al., 2016; Murphy et al., 2019). More in-depth research is needed to better understand the challenges law enforcement face in utilizing community policing concepts to combat violent extremist organizations.

On January 6, 2021, right-wing terrorists attacked the United States Capitol in Washington DC. The violent assault breached the police barriers, and the violent extremist made their way inside the Congress chambers. In the aftermath of the insurrection, FBI Director Christopher Wray, classified the individuals involved in the capital building attack as violent extremists who dishonored the values of the United States democracy process. In 2021, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) examined important information on highly violent organizations through crowdsourcing. The literature described how the United States' most significant threat is violent domestic extremists. The literature identified how open-source intelligence gathered information on violent extremist groups using public post platforms like Facebook and other violent public protests. The FBI has identified several lone wolf attacks.

However, the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing remains the deadliest domestic terrorist attack in the United States (Newell, 2021).

Right-wing extremist groups and white nationalists have become a concern for the security of Canada. According to Crosby (2021), right-wing extremist groups have increased due to the overwhelming immigrant settlements that have pushed hate crimes and heightened racist activity on social media. After the Capital riots in Washington DC, Canada announced the Proud Boys and other similar organizations as terrorist groups. After the 9/11 attacks Canada linked a new phenomenon to Muslim communities where violence came from Christian extremists, white supremacy, and misogyny. Studies have shown that violent extremists have also targeted Muslim communities.

Crosby (2021) stated that the 2019 CSIS Public Report notes the different motivations and personal worldviews of other mass-casualties stating left-wing and right-wing are subjective and do not describe the complexity of their reasons. Even though new categories emerge about extremism, organizations will always be classified as violent domestic extremism (Crosby, 2021; Newell, 2021). According to Crosby (2021), three new categories are identifying violent extremists "Religiously Motivated Violent Extremism, (RMVE), Politically Motivated Violent Extremism (PMVE), and Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism (IMVE) (pg. 361). Right-wing terrorism is considered racially motivated terrorism with a strong propensity for violence. Other groups are anti-authority-minded organizations. Even though these groups are a form of white supremacy and are racially driven to commit hate crimes, all the different groups are categories associated with right-wing and left-wing ideologies.

According to Newell (2021), the Heritage Foundation reviewed the data by RAND that identified 91 violent extremist attacks were committed in the United States between

2001 and 2009. The Washington Post reported, since 2015, between right-wing and left-wing extremists, there were approximately 330 plots of violent attacks in the United States.

Other countries such as Spain, Canada, China, and Sweden all face homegrown terrorism and believe racially motivated attacks are from a rise in white supremacy ideology. (Crosby, 2021; Millett & Swiffen, 2021; Newell, 2021; Parker, 2021; Rostami & Askanius 2021; Zhao, 2021).

There is a long history of political violence in America. From the 1960s to date, political ideology groups such as the Weather Underground who have carried out attacks against the government and other organizations that disagree with extreme ideology. Most of these far-left organizations were responsible for committing unnecessary violence against several communities, mostly destroying properties. In the 1970s, a shift towards the right created an abundance of white supremacist and military groups. However, property crime may have declined and violent extremist groups changed their focus to government officials' minorities and abortion providers. The literature shows that what is occurring in today's times does not resemble the past. Even though there are some left-wing incidents, political violence is overwhelming from right-wing ideologists. The literature explains that right-wing extremists spend more time planning their crimes than acting spontaneously, belong to community groups and have a higher propensity for violent behavior. Most right-wing terrorists hold regular jobs with families who do not always act as lone wolves but use their influence over a community to spread their beliefs (Kleinfeld, 2021).

Over the last several years, right-wing extremist groups have been motivated by political concepts and committed acts of violence far more than any other violent extremist group. The Washington Post reported data collected on worldwide terrorism showed left-wing violence was decreasing while right-wing attacks were rising while President Barack Obama was in office, and

have increased at a higher rate when President Donald Trump took office. In 2018, a white male attempted to enter a black church before entering a Kroger Grocery in Jeffersontown, KY killing two black shoppers. After President Trump termed a group of central America refugees as an invasion, A gunman entered a synagogue in Pittsburgh, killing 11 people, making the shooting the deadliest anti-Semitic shooting in the U.S. The current political environment may be encouraging violence instead of trying to stop these violent extremist groups with their political rhetoric. Politics have shown to be a creator of violence with the different ideologies between left-wing and right-wing extremist groups. The literature identified right-wing organizations surpassing left-wing extremist groups in committing violent acts within the United States (Lower et al., 2018).

The perceptions of terrorism changed after the bombings in London on July 7, 2005, and the train bombing in Madrid, on March 11, 2004. The British response to these terrorist activities was to apply community policing strategies to counter terrorism within communities abroad. The partnership with immigrant and non-immigrant communities focuses on Muslim communities. The concept was to gain trust within the communities so they have more faith in government agencies to combat terrorism. The idea was to create a bridge between law enforcement and the communities to create effective prevention measures, social and political, in combating terrorist organizations. The literature described the failure to prevent the bombing was the police failing to adjust to the fast growth of violent extremists. There was a concern about the lack of community development in homegrown terrorist threats. A report was issued in November 2005, where there were 64 recommendations and proposals to improve community relations with Muslim communities. Community policing is part of any law enforcement agency worldwide, and the philosophy remains the same across the globe. Research shows law enforcement is the

key to effective crime reduction using community policing concepts. (Abbas, 2019; Ambrozik, 2019; Gau & Paul, 2019; Kearns, 2018; Klausen, 2009).

In Somalia, the African Union has been training in using enhanced community policing to counter violent extremism and radicalization. Approximately twenty-six law enforcement officers from different jurisdictions attended a one-day training in countering terrorism and radicalization by utilizing community police concepts. The training was to help law enforcement officers enhance their collaboration with local communities to target violent extremists. If the Somali police organizations can collaborate with the public, it will help identify problems and the community and law enforcement can work together in finding solutions. Somalia police need to utilize community policing to enhance countermeasure against extremists. Terrorism and radicalization have been an issue not only in Somalia, but globally, and it is the responsibility of law enforcement to implement strategies to combat these violent organizations. It is important to maintain the peace and quickly identify these threats before violence occurs (African Press, 2021).

The literature identifies the United States as the land of multiculturalism and diversity. However, some organizations threaten the fabric of what the U.S. stands for. Far-right organizations have deep roots in American history, such as the Ku Klux Klan, with xenophobia and racist ideology driving them. With the rise of violent far-right extremists during the Trump administration and the globalization of inflation, the white working class's standard of living has changed. The general class of people finds themselves empowered by far-right ideology with Trump's push to empower white people to act in unordinary ways that affect public safety. According to Butt & Khalid (2018); Taylor, (2007), stated far-right ideology consists of "nativism, fascism, racism, xenophobia, and reactionary principles" (p. 108). The Southern

Poverty Law Center (SPLC) reported since 2014, there has been a 14 percent increase in far-right organizations in the United States. The U.S. Constitution allows for freedom of speech, establishing the Black Separatists' rise, anti-Muslim hate groups, and Ku Klux Klan organizations. The literature addresses the concerns regarding the fast-growing far-right organizations. It is believed President Trump brought nationalism into politics, causing a closer look into acts that may go against American values. Butt & Khalid (2018), stated statistics show the far-right may be more of a threat to the United States than Muslims or immigrants involved in other violent acts.

The political drive in the United States has consisted of the far-right wing versus the far-left wing in extremism ideology. Duran (2021), agrees with other scholars that the far-right has been more violent than the far-left over the past three decades, even though the violence has increased over the past five years by the far-left. Domestic terrorism is on the rise and the far-left threat does exist, and during President Trump's time in office, he proceeded to speak out on the dangers the far-left wing ideology posed. The literature points out that Antifa, a far left-wing organization, was responsible for instigating violence-causing domestic terrorism incidents during their protest in Minneapolis. Attorney General William Barr believed the protest triggered the killing of George Floyd, along with other outlets like conservative media, who were following suit and blamed Antifa and other similar left-wing groups for spreading hate (Duran, 2021).

Depending on an individual's beliefs, these violent extremists, far-right or far-left, have many causalities to answer for. According to Duran (2021), far-left extremism supports violence and engages in criminal activities, who believe in Marxist ideology, socialist-driven individuals believe in communism, and the doctrine of Joseph Stalin, an anarchist, supports a class society

and opposes capitalism. Far-left-wing ideologists believe the United States criminal justice system is an institution of systematic racism. Most of these individuals are embedded into our communities, making it extremely difficult for law enforcement to identify these actors. Many of the weapons used in these domestic terrorist attacks causing the death of innocent people and law enforcement personnel across the United States are arson, bombs, blunt instruments, firearms, and knives are all noted in the literature as weapons these extremists use. The motivating factor in these attacks is anti-law enforcement, anti-government, anti-social minorities, and anti-race ideologies. However, most attacks are by those perpetrator's with two-extreme ideology beliefs. However, those with the most robust ideology regarding their cause may be considered the most dangerous to the public and law enforcement (Duran, 2021; Butt & Khalid 2018).

On November 7, 1983, a bomb went off in the United States Capitol on the second floor that caused an estimated \$1 million in damage. In the 1970s and 1980s, homegrown terrorists were prevalent in America. These bands of American-educated individuals had spent most of their lives in political fights against the federal government. They were protesting the conflict in Vietnam, fighting for African American rights, Native American rights, and Imperialism. These far-left extremists believed the United States used politics to dominate and economically exploit third-world countries. The literature describes these individuals as being involved in far-left extremism in the late 1960s, who embraced rock music, sex, drugs, and third-world revolutionary political ideology. The extremist group, The Weather Underground, was one of the most prominent far left-wing organizations inspired by extreme third-world ideology (Rosenau, 2020).

According to the literature, Bill Ayers the leader of The Weather Underground, tried to get society's attention regarding their ideology. The organization was responsible for several

government buildings being bombed to spread their political views against the United States. Over time, The Weather Underground organization began to fade, with many members dropping out of the organization. However, extremists who believed the country was surrounded by violence and the only way to get people's attention was to meet violence with violence. In 1978, other disassociated militants who believed in violent extremism started to emerge into their own group who waged war on the United States against racism, fascism, and imperialism. A communist ideology began to emerge using ideologies from Ho Chi Minh and Malcolm X. Most of these militants were the women of May 19th, who were an extremely violent left-wing organization. The literature describes how the history of left-wing militants waging war against America in the early years will help us understand the context of homegrown terrorists and how they have emerged (Duran, 2021; Rosenau, 2020).

The literature discloses how human violence is centered around people who may have been born violent. The other possibility is individuals become violent through the process of socialization. This correlates with Athens's theory of violence which draws from social learning theory and how individuals may become violent and choose their targets. Individuals' needs may outweigh the consequence of their actions leading to a violent encounter. According to Martin & Edwards (2019), in a study by Dave Grossman regarding soldiers in battle, he argues "men is not by nature a killer" (para 2). Mr. Holmes stated the only way a battle can be sustained is by de-humanizing the enemy. Collins, a sociologist who researches violence, believes those who become violent have expertise in violent actions and can create pathways that allow them to engage in violent activities. Collins's theory of violence is a way for stronger individuals to take advantage of those unable to defend themselves properly (Athens, 2016; Bernard et al., 2016; Martin & Edwards, 2019).

The era of white hoods has changed to business suits and social media platforms to push the Ku Klux Klan and neo-Nazi ideology in a public forum. These actions cause individuals to do lone-wolf attacks in supporting white nationalist ideology. The three most recognized supremacist groups are Ku Klux Klan, neo-Nazis, and Skinheads, who identify their enemies with racial, religious, and Jewish people. White supremacist organizations are other militia groups such as sovereign citizens, patriots, nativists, tea parties, oath keepers, and birthers. These groups are commonly associated with similar ideologies even though they believe they are patriotic in nature (Windisch, 2019).

According to Langman (2019), social factors such as influence, life stresses, and interpersonal conflicts may support violent behavior. Bernard et al. (2016) agree that learning theory is a learning process through experience and knowledge in an individual's environment. Violence by violent extremists has become a public epidemic. However, violence prevention policies may help support and educate the public in combating these organizations. An unstable life and social factors may add to the influence on youth, leading to violent extremists actions. In a study that examined ten perpetrators of mass violence, all the individuals who initiated attacks struggled with psychological challenges in social settings. Other areas were physical challenges, and to compensate for their disabilities they used violence to enhance their status (Langman, 2019).

Violent extremist groups cause adverse effects on political, social, and economic institutions globally. Addressing the violence caused by these organizations will help ensure the rule of law is not forgotten and minimize its damage to communities. Individuals trying to disengage with extremist groups may fear reprisals. Lina & Kotajoki (2019), noted in a study there was a reluctance for individuals to leave these organizations due to the risk factor of violent

repercussions by those who engage in violent extremism. There have been several studies that emphasize the importance of communities to push disengagement from violent extremist organizations. Those individuals who leave extremist groups may play an important role in community improvement. In Northern Ireland, a study was done regarding detained extremists who joined in community-based activities consisting of education and therapeutic counseling. Studies showed these youth projects might stop these youths from engaging in extremist ideology. Individuals reentering a community who have exited from extremists groups may play a vital role in reinforcing the community to help those who want to change. Reintegration into a community may be an answer to building better relationships through conflict resolution regarding those youth who participate in radical ideology (Lina & Kotajoki, 2019). The literature identified social media as a driving factor behind community youth becoming radicalized.

Summary

The early years of police reform, as recognized by Sir Robert Peel, a former Prime Minister of the U.K. from 1841 to 1846, understood the complexity of community policing and how it would shape law enforcement for decades. Goldberg and Christopher (2019) noted the importance of community policing and building a positive relationship with community leaders abroad. In current times, community policing has been an intricate part of law enforcement operations. The U.S. government has taken steps to fund community-led programs to get communities involved in combating violent extremists. Kearns (2018) noted law enforcement had questioned ways to combat violent extremists through community policing concepts. Police officers' behavior is a significant part of developing community relations and building trust. Professionalism must be instilled into law enforcement professionals. Violent extremists undermine the idea of peace and attack communities. While law enforcement may seem to be

dereliction towards communities, it is more important to build positive relationships (Gau & Paul, 2019; Goldberg & Christopher, 2019; Kearns, 2018; Nguyen, 2019).

Social media has become a significant concern in recruiting youth to join radical organizations. The social learning process and classical conditions may explain why youth follow an extreme ideology. According to Bernard et al. (2016), a learning process is devolved through experience, while the classical condition is learning by association. The environment of an individual's social condition may lead to an adverse reaction, pushing youth to radical ideology concepts. Southerland Differential Association Theory believes learning occurs in intimate personal groups such as ISIL or white supremacy where the leering of radical ideology may occur. Akers' theory agreed with Southerland that learning takes place in small groups where operant conditioning occurs. Individuals do things for a reward without thinking of the consequence of their actions. Radicalization is a complex process through learned behavior (Bernard et al., 2016; Kaufman & Niner, 2019; Kruglanski et al., 2018; Schumpe et al., 2020).

Even though the United States is the land of opportunity, the literature describes the United States as a land of multiculturalism. The literature spoke on utilizing immigrant and non-immigrant communities in combating terrorist activities. Muslim communities may not have trust in law enforcement, but it is important to build a bridge with those communities and overcome challenges to create trust. Right-wing extremist groups are on the rise and are a concern to the safety of America and other countries such as Canada. There is a long history of political violence in America and different extremist groups have their own ideologies that focus on hate and discontent for those who do not follow their ideology. Throughout history, these other organizations with extreme viewpoints have been a danger to the social fabric of America (Butt & Khalid, 2018; Crosby, 2021; Newell, 2021; Taylor, 2007).

Communities can help fight against violent extremists with the help of law enforcement. The challenges that exist may differ in different communities across America, but the challenges do exist. The literature points out several studies emphasizing the importance of community policing. Violent extremists cause damage to the economic and social structure without regard to public safety. To minimize the damage caused by these extremist groups, law enforcement and communities must find new ways to educate our youth to prevent radicalization. Those who find their way out of extremist groups and are reintegrated back into the communities may help with conflict resolution for those who fall into a radicalization process. The literature pointed out that main important factor for law enforcement was a relationship with community leaders and parents to help prevent the radicalization process.

CHAPTER III: METHODS

Overview

The proposed qualitative research study will examine the challenges law enforcement officers face in utilizing community policing strategies to combat violent extremism. The qualitative approach was chosen because it focuses on an in-depth understanding of the phenomena of how's and why's of the experience of seasoned police officers. Given the purpose of this study, a phenomenological methodology was selected because it has the best relationship to the data that is collected and will obtain a better understanding of the participant's subjective experience, perceptions, and beliefs related to the research question (Chih-Pei & Yan-Yi, 2017; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021; Creswell, 2013; Tarozzi, 2020).

Design

Given the purpose of this study, five qualitative methodologies were considered before selecting a phenomenological study. The phenomenological study may collect data on the experience of each law enforcement officer on what they experienced and how that experience took place. A phenomenological approach was chosen because it explores the shared experiences of individuals in a phenomenon, e.g., community policing and extremism (Chih-Pei & Yan-Yi, 2017; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021; Creswell, 2013; Tarozzi, 2020).

The study will obtain information on the perspectives of law enforcement officers in Oklahoma who utilize community policing strategies to combat violent offenders. The study focuses on experienced police officers who have lived with the challenges fighting violent extremists while working in their respective communities. The research focuses on community policing and extremism. The gathering of information from the human experience that will explain the phenomenon facing law enforcement officers in using community policing concepts

to combat violent extremism. The phenomenological study will ameliorate the understanding from the experience that law enforcement officers lived and may identify a pattern between participants outlining the core challenges law enforcement face in utilizing the community to combat violent individuals who believe in an extreme ideology. The descriptive approach will utilize face-to-face or telephone interviews as a primary source of data collection. The collected data will be individual interviews with current and retired law enforcement officers, from different jurisdictions in Oklahoma male or female, with a minimum of five years of experience.

According to Creswell (2013), the best approach was first to identify if a phenomenological approach best serves the research. It is essential to understand the common experience of law enforcement officers in this study. The information may bring policy changes or identify a better understanding of how best to work with the community in combating individuals with radical ideology concepts. Shared common experiences can be valuable in law enforcement. After the initial interviews, the participants for a more in-depth interview depending on the collected data. Interview questions will focus on the core of the phenomenon, what influenced or caused it, and what strategies were employed to utilize the community to help combat violent extremists.

According to Creswell (2013) a strategy to reach saturation is discriminant sampling. This type of strategy gathers information from individuals other than the participants. Understanding the central categories from the outcome of a theory is “a central phenomenon, casual conditions, strategies, conditions and context and consequences” (Creswell, 2013, p. 90). Depending on the research and the data collected, there is flexibility in the process of adapting to the right process for the best-desired outcome for the proposed study (Creswell, 2013; Ligita et al., 2020; Tarozzi, 2020).

Research Questions

RQ1: What challenges is law enforcement facing when utilizing community policing to counter violent extremism?

RQ2: How do you define violent extremists?

RQ3: What is the difficulty in identifying violent extremists in our communities across the United States?

RQ4: What is a situation that stands out when you used community policing to counter any type of violent extremists?

RQ5: What methods do you recommend when trying to identify violent extremist?

Setting

The participant who volunteered for the study were law enforcement officers in Oklahoma. The interviews were conducted in a quiet office setting or on the phone where there would not be any disturbance during the interview process. The participants were comfortable and given plenty of time to answer the questions.

Participants

Purposeful sampling is the method used to obtain information from a group of individuals within a specific population. In 2021, there were approximately 665,380 police officers in the United States. Across the nation, 12% were female, about 27% of the local law enforcement officers were members of a racial or ethnic minority, and 61% were white. The purposeful sampling method is widely used when conducting qualitative research to obtain information in a phenomenological study (Palinkas et al., 2015). This is a phenomenological study with a purposeful sampling of a minimum of six police officers in Oklahoma from different

jurisdictions who have worked in community policing programs focused on violent extremists. The study required a qualitative research design in data collection from law enforcement officers in their natural environment. A phenomenological approach is used to study a single individual or several individuals and their lived experiences. The systematic approach to collecting data from participants who share everyday experiences, will better understand the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Procedures

A formal letter was given to each police department's chief of police asking who wants cooperation to acquire participants. Retired law enforcement officers who participate in the study will be given the same letter explaining the following: (1) defining the purpose of the study. (2) request law enforcement officers who have experience in working in community policing programs dealing with violent extremists. All participants were asked to sign a consent form and their information will remain completely confidential. The interviews will be recorded and conducted face-to-face, or by phone, and the participants have the right to cancel the interview at any time.

The Researcher's Role

The study focused on a mixed crime area working in high and low-crime demographics. The study is limited to law enforcement officers in Oklahoma, and different police departments throughout the United States may have different views on utilizing community policing concepts. The participants interviewed may not express the same experience or opinions as other members of the same department. The relationship between the researcher and the participants is a professional relationship and the researcher has no bias or assumptions in this study.

Data Collection

Participants who would best contribute valuable in-depth knowledge in answering the research questions, from their professional and personal experience were recruited for data collection. The researcher will use purposeful sampling to choose the individuals that will be used in the study. This method relies on the judgment of the researcher to choose the best-qualified individuals to participate in the study. Purposeful sampling is widely used in qualitative research studies to identify and find the best and most effective information for a study. The participants who are selected under this method will have the most knowledge and experience with the phenomenon that is being studied, a minimum of five years of police experience, male and female, any ethnicity, retired or currently working in law enforcement. (Leedy & Ormrod, 2019; Palinkas et al., 2015).

After different law enforcement organizations and/or retired individuals are assessed to identify the best agency(s) for the study, the researcher will move toward the minimum sampling size. According to Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological data analysis, 5 to 25 participants are required in this type of study. However, the minimum amount of law enforcement officers to be interviewed is six participants or until saturation is obtained. The recruitment process will be as follows:

- (1) A written request was delivered to the Chief of Police or Sheriff, asking permission to interview police officers/deputies of the department, and participating officers will be protected through anonymity and confidentiality.
- (2) When approval is granted from the department authority, recruitment will begin.

- (3) The researcher will craft a letter explaining the nature of the study and its activities. The study information will be made available to all the prospective participants to review in the main office at all the approved research sites.
- (4) Participants will receive a letter explaining the study and the process for protecting their identity. Participants are assured they may withdraw from the study at any time without cause, and all information and/or statements made by them will be destroyed.
- (5) The police officers who agree to be participants will be given a consent form in accordance with Institutional Review Board (IRB) regulations. The signed documents will be kept in a secured location where only the researcher has access.

The searches will consist of Liberty University library databases including eBooks, EBSCOhost, e-library, Criminal Justice Databases, SAGE Journals, International Security, Counter-Terrorism Reference Center, ProQuest searches, and Google Scholar. The data mining will consist of several different information sites that correlate to the topic studied. Once the participants are selected for the study, they will be contacted, and an arrangement will be made for the personal interviews. This will allow an in-depth, one-on-one interview, face-to-face or via telephone. The questions will be open-ended and not limited to the question guide. The interviews will be conducted in a quiet setting with an introduction before the questions are asked. Based on the answers from the participant, additional questions may be answered based on the interaction between the researcher and the participants. The purpose of open-ended questions is to grant the participants to be more spontaneous so the researcher won't be leading the interview. The questions will focus on the participant's experience, feelings, behaviors, perceptions, and opinions. The questions will identify the individual's experience and awareness of the topic (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam, 2015; Patton, 2015).

Creswell (2013) noted a recorder should be used during the interview process to provide an account of what has transpired during the interview. The researcher will also take notes which will be referenced later during the data analysis. After the interview, the participants will receive a thank-you gift card for their time in participating in the study. Creswell (2018) noted in-depth interviews allow the researcher to get complete details during the data collection and research saturation. A conversation with the participants in their understanding of violent extremists is crucial to the study and its findings.

The data analysis will be conducted by using Colaizzi's 7-Step Method of Analysis. According to Lorelli (2017), the qualitative research that is to be conducted must demonstrate that the data analysis has been conducted in a precise and consistent way. The processing of a thematic analysis will help interpret the data that is collected in a strategic process that will enhance the validity of the data. Colaizzi (1978) phenomenological data analysis will be followed during the analysis process.

1. The audio-reordered data will be transcribed verbatim using a transcribable feature. Once the recorded data is transcribed, the researcher will use MAXQDA software to analyze the data. To protect the participant's information, a coding process will take place until the data received is analyzed. The data is secured in a locked box in a secured office.
2. The second step in the process will be to extract any statements that are related to the phenomenon that is deemed significant. These statements will be numbered and added to the list of other extracted significant statements.

3. In the third step, the researcher will formulate general meanings called coding for each statement. Coding is a process to extract information from the participant's answers
4. The researcher will organize and formulate meanings into a group that is similar. Some statements may relate to violent individuals noted as loan wolfs, and some statements may relate to being a part of a hate group.
5. The research will develop a detailed description regarding the law enforcement experience that was articulated by the participant.
6. The researcher will look for the dense statements that are the important factors deemed essential to the phenomenon. These statements will be important to the structure of the phenomenon.
7. The researcher will validate all the information received from the participants. This will be done by describing the structure of the phenomenon. Returning to the participants to validate the findings is an important process in the research. Changes, if any, will be made at this time.

The researcher will complete all these steps using definitions and names that are identifiable and understandable for other readers. The reader should be able to identify and comprehend the themes. When the themes are identified, a detailed description of the themes will be noted. The final step in the process will be reporting the findings conducted by the researcher. The final report must not only report the data findings but make an argument for the connection between the research questions and the research study. The researcher will apply all ethical

standards in the processes stated above and in the reporting of the research findings (Troncoso-Pantoja, 2017; Braun and Clark, 2013; Carver, 2014; Lainson, 2019). Perry et al., 2015; Nowell, 2017).

Interviews

The data collection strategy is to interview law enforcement officers from different jurisdictions who have a minimum of five years of law enforcement experience. These police officers will have worked in a variety of diversified communities where utilizing the community to fight violent extremism has been challenging. All five of the research questions were answered by all of the participants involved in the study. The research questions have the best relationship with a phenomenological study to obtain the information needed from the participants. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed and thoroughly evaluated. The questions will identify challenges law enforcement has faced in utilizing community policing to combat violent extremism. The following questions will be asked to obtain the data needed for the research (Cherney & Murphy, 2019; Hardy, 2020; Karnes, 2018; Pistone et al., 2019).

1. What challenges is law enforcement facing when utilizing community policing to counter violent extremism
2. How do you define violent extremists?
3. What is the difficulty in identifying violent extremists in our communities across the United States?
4. What is a situation that stands out when you used community policing to counter any type of violent extremists?
5. What methods do you recommend when trying to identify violently extremist in the community?

All five of the research questions are knowledge-based questions with the first question being the focus of the research and the following questions being sub-questions. The questions are straightforward, and the participants will not feel threatened by these questions (Patton 2015). According to Sandy & Dumay (2011), interviewing is one of the most significant data-collection methods. This method is used to obtain valuable information in qualitative research. Interviewing requires very intensive listening and writing skills to be sufficient in collecting the data needed for the research.

It is important to ask questions to help bring awareness to the participant for an honest and straightforward response (Creswell, & Guetterman, 2019). Question two defines what the participants believe are violent extremists and question three identifies the difficulties in how violent extremists are identified. Question 4 will identify which one of the participants has been involved in countering violent extremism. Question five will offer recommendations needed to combat violent extremism within a community. Understanding the experience of these law enforcement officers is valuable to the qualitative research in the data that is collected (Lainson, et al., 2019; Palinkas et al., 2015). There is a lack of adequate understanding and evidence of the challenges law enforcement face in creating new innovative ways to utilize the community in combating violent extremism. More research is needed in this area to fully understand the challenges police organizations face when implementing robust community programs that would be effective in countering these extremist organizations (Cherney & Murphy, 2019; Hardy, 2020; Karnes, 2018; Pistone et al., 2019).

Surveys, Questionnaires, Document analyses, Focus Groups, and Observations

The qualitative research design was a phenomenology approach because it was the best method to answer the research questions. The focus was on individual law enforcement

officers and their experience working in their perspective communities. The interview process was to interview each participant individually to collect data from their personal experience. Surveys, questionnaires, document analyses, focus groups, and observations were not used in the data collection process because they did not support the data that needed to be collected. According to Williamson (2013), each data collection process will have its own specific purpose.

The structured interview questions in a phenomenology study were best answered by individual interviews to collect data on the individual experience of law enforcement officers. Surveys, Questionnaires, Document analyses, Focus Groups, and Observations would not support the data that was needed for this research. According to Neubauer et al., (2019), A phenomenology study is a powerful approach and well-suited to explore problems through an individual's experience. The research questions were the proper alignment for individual interviews to collect the proper data by focusing on each individual's experience.

Data Analysis

Before the interviews, a literature review was conducted that revealed significant findings that applied to the study. The findings, such as the experience of other individuals' personal experiences and work-related issues involving the community, extend to the current research study. The correlation of common meanings, characteristics, and reoccurring information explain Creswell's (2007) meanings and how research findings are assembled into themes and explain the base knowledge in a specific phenomenological study. The participant interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. The transcribed participants interviews were imported into MAXQDA software, where an analysis of the data was conducted by using a coding system to find themes and subthemes relevant to the interview process. The participants were conducted on the phone or in an office setting, where I asked open-ended questions to elicit responses specific

to the research study. The participant's experience as law enforcement officers is vital to the research study.

Trustworthiness

The responses from the participants revealed their experience in various forms while working with their perspective communities. The participants worked in low and high-crime areas where community policing strategies were implemented. The characteristics of the participants in the phenomenological study gave me the ability to view the data from the law enforcement officer's experience (Carlos, 2008). Five related themes emerged from their responses. (a) perception of community relations, (b) violent extremism, (c) identifying violent extremism, (d) situations using the community to combat violent extremists, and (e) recommending methods for identifying violent extremists.

Many of the identified themes were noted in the literature review and accurately identified during the coding process. The positive and negative issues in community policing were identified, and the challenges facing law enforcement were identified during the data collection process. The new themes that were identified may add innovations to the research study. To achieve trustworthiness in a qualitative study, some measures are defined the researcher must adhere to, such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Scandroglio et al., 2007).

Credibility

The credibility was established by recording the interviews and transcribing them successfully. As a current law enforcement officer, I possess the understanding the participants conveyed. However, I am optimistic the participants were comfortable due to my current experience in understanding the challenges law enforcement face in community police strategies

combating violent extremists. Credibility was established from the overlapping related themes and shared experiences of their professional law enforcement career.

Dependability and Confirmability

The study seeks to maintain its focus on specific issues and show the stability of all the participants regarding their experience in law enforcement. The results of the study need to be able to be repeated in other studies. Even though other study results may be similar, this study revealed new information from their shared experiences (Scandroglio et al., 2007). In a qualitative study, it is essential to select participants with distinctive experiences and attributes to be interviewed. Confirmability is developed when other people outside the experience of law enforcement officers can understand the subject matter (Scandroglio et al., 2007). During the interview process, confirmability was established not only by the interview process but by supporting documents, audio recordings, transcription, and past research.

Transferability

Transferability is an imperative section of trustworthiness. According to Scandroglio et al., 2007, transferability is imperative in the context of the environment where the research is based. The current research is based in Oklahoma, and all the participants were current or retired law enforcement officers the worked for metropolitan police departments and state agencies. Regarding any future studies, it is recommended that other studies be in a law enforcement setting to establish transferability.

Ethical Consideration

CITI training was completed with consideration to the research with IRB approval FY-22-23-45. Ethical considerations to be implemented are the proper storage of the data collection where all the participant's interviews were transcribed and sealed in a locked filing cabinet. Any

electronic data collected was protected by password protection to protect the participant's information. The participant's interviews were done in a private setting, and their identity and any other information collected were placed in a locked filing cabinet for the participant's protection.

Summary

Chapter three explained the demographics, data collection, data analysis, and trustworthiness of the data collected from all the participants. The transcribed data was imported into MAXQDA software which assisted in developing the five themes among the interviews. The interviews were conducted with police officers working in low and high-crime areas within their perspective communities.

The interview results explained the challenges law enforcement face when community involvement is used to identify violent extremists. The participants shared a common experience with the negative and positive outcomes of working with the community. During the interview process, it was discovered that the different jurisdictions had a common factor in how the community perceives law enforcement.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

Overview

The phenomenological study examined law enforcement's challenges when utilizing the community to combat violent extremists. Face-to-face and phone interviews were conducted, and the data received was analyzed to discover themes based on the experience of the law enforcement officers. This chapter will present the analysis and results of the research study from the structured interview questions.

Participants

There were six male law enforcement officers interviewed for the study. A strong attempt was made to include female officers. The female officers contacted showed interest but never followed up with me to schedule an interview. Although it was not disadvantageous to the research, it would have been valuable to obtain their insight based on their law enforcement experience. The law enforcement officers participating in the study were assigned to the patrol division. However, some have moved around their department in various roles, such as investigations and narcotic divisions.

All six participants answered all the interview questions. The interviews were conducted over a two-week period. Before each interview, the participants were informed that the interview would be recorded, and the interview process would last up to one hour. The participants agreed to the interview process and were informed that the session would remain confidential. The participants were ensured that all their identifiable data would not be used and would remain confidential. All the participants were given a numerical number for identification (Scandroglio, & Lopez Martinez, 2007).

Participant 1

Participant 1 is a law enforcement officer who has worked in Oklahoma for eight years in the patrol division and has been assigned to community policing programs.

Participant 2

Participant 2 is a law enforcement officer who has worked in Oklahoma for 35 years and presently working as a captain over investigations. During his time as a law enforcement officer, he has worked in patrol, narcotics community relation programs, and special investigations. Participant 2 was on the investigation team who investigated a violent extremist who beheaded a woman because of his political views.

Participant 3

Participant 3 was a retired police officer who worked in Oklahoma for 38 years working in various positions such as patrol, homicide investigations, and different community policing programs and educating the public on crime.

Participant 4

Participant 4 has been in law enforcement for 15 years and spent his career in the patrol division and working in different community policing programs.

Participant 5

Participant 5 has been in law enforcement for 25 years and spent his career in the patrol division and doing community policing projects educating the public on highway safety and crime prevention and violent extremism.

Participant 6

Participant 6 has been in law enforcement for 35 years working in the patrol division and currently serving as a school resources officer. (SOR) He is currently a Lieutenant and works closely with the community in a variety of community policing programs.

Results

The responses from the participants revealed five themes that related to the initial research question. (1) perception of community relations, (2) violent extremism, (3) identifying violent extremists, (4) situations using the community to combat violent extremists, (5) recommending methods in identifying violent extremists. Table 1 shows the recurring and emerging themes of utilizing the community to combat violent extremists.

Table 1 *Recurring and Emerging Themes*

Recurring themes	Emerging themes
Theme 1: Perception of community relations	Theme 1.1 Positive relations Theme 1.2 Negative relations
Theme 2: Violent extremism	Theme 2.1 Ideology Theme 2.2 Political
Theme 3: Identifying violent extremists	Theme 3.1 Culture Theme 3.2 Social Media
Theme 4: Situations using the community to combat violent extremists	Theme 4.1 Individual Ideology Theme 4.2 Radicalization
Theme 5: Recommend methods in identifying violent extremists	Theme 5.1 Culture Relations Theme 5.2 Community Connections Theme 5.3 Demographics

Theme 1: Perception of Community Relations

Theme 1, perception of community relations, related to how law enforcement officer perceives community relations in combating violent extremism. The primary theme is divided into two emerging subthemes: (a) positive relations and (b) hostile relations. All six participants responded to the perception of the community relations theme.

Interview Question

What are the challenges facing law enforcement when utilizing community policing to counter violent extremism?

Subtheme 1.1 Positive Relations. Law enforcement officers initially understand the critical aspect of positive community relations. Cultural awareness, communication, and strong relationships were viewed positively. All six participants indicated that good relationships are needed for a reinforced community that allows law enforcement officers to listen to what the community is saying instead of interrupting their ideologies on community policing. Positive relations with the community give the community a voice in how their communities are policed. By creating trust, strategies will be formed to help identify and decrease violent extremism.

Proactive community policing will forge a stronger bond between the community and law enforcement. It will help understand the community and their safety needs in preventing extreme ideologists from developing. The significant challenge facing law enforcement is changing the concept of reactive community policing to proactive community policing. Good relationships are formed with a proacting approach by law enforcement officers. With better relationships, community policing becomes less complicated.

Subtheme 1.2 Negative Relations. The police culture is known for internalizing community concepts as being less productive due to the current political climate. Communities seem to have a more challenging time trusting law enforcement, and the visual perception of law enforcement changes the dynamics of community policing. The lack of the community wanting to get involved in helping law enforcement creates a negative perception pushing law enforcement into reactive policing. Another concern is the lack of personnel assigned to community policing divisions. With the decrease in law enforcement personnel, law enforcement agencies have become more reactive than proactive in community relations. The reactive approach has caused a negative relationship in community policing strategies.

Theme 2: Violent Extremism

Theme 2, violent extremism, relates to those individuals participating in violent extremist activities. The primary theme is divided into five emerging subthemes: (a) Ideology, (b) Political, (c) Religion, (d) Patriotism, and (E) Individual motivation. All six participants responded to the violent extremism theme.

Interview Question

How do you define violent extremists?

Subtheme 2.1 Ideology. An individual who takes an idea and pushes the meaning to the point that it becomes violent. Exploiting an individual's or group's beliefs will manifest into an ideology forced on other people by fear. All six participants believed there is an emotional imbalance in an individual's views which have become radicalized, leading to violence towards others who do not have the same belief system as the extremists.

Subtheme 2.2 Political. An individual who takes his ideas beyond the meaning of politics to get their ideology across to the public. All six participants believed a politically

motivated ideology drives violent extremists to commit violent acts. One participant spoke of an example, such as sovereign citizens who don't believe in the US government but have their justice system to support their ideology. One participant expressed patriotism to its extreme creates violent extremists. For all six participants, balanced political agendas are the critical factor in extremists within communities across the U.S.

Theme 3: Identifying Violent Extremists

Theme three, identifying violent extremists, is related to the difficulty in identifying violent extremists within a community. The primary theme is divided into two emerging subthemes: (a) culture and (b) social media. All six participants responded to the identifying violent extremist piece.

Interview Question

What is the difficulty in identifying violent extremists in our communities across the United States?

Subtheme 3.1 Culture. The culture is diverse in different communities, and all six participants believe it's challenging to pick out politically motivated individuals to commit violent extremist acts. A lack of relationships within the community makes it difficult to identify those who hide and blend in with others. One participant noted it's challenging to look at an individual and decide if he will commit a violent act.

Subtheme 3.2 Social Media. Two participants believed that social media applications make it difficult to identify politically motivated extremism. Those who hide in their community may express their radical beliefs on social media that may go undetected for long periods. One participant identified social media being a critical factor in an investigation where a violent extremist murdered an individual in Oklahoma City in 2016. The individual went undetected

within his community, and through the investigation, it was found that the suspect went through a radicalization process through social media.

Theme 4: Situations using the community to combat Violent Extremists

Theme four, situations utilizing the community to combat violent extremists, is related to the difficulty in situations law enforcement officers may use the community to fight violent extremists. The primary theme is divided into two emerging subthemes: (a) individual ideology and (b) radicalization. Three out of six participants responded to situations using the community to combat violent extremists.

Interview Question: What situation stands out when you used community policing to counter any type of violent extremists?

Subtheme 4.1 Individual Ideology. Three participants believed that how a person views society and the conception of their perceived ideology profoundly influences their actions. Three out of the six participants had situations where they encountered violent extremist individuals. Everyone they met had a perception of radical views and anti-government sentiment. The participants believed they were not identified before they acted out due to our current times, where communities have shifted their opinions on law enforcement. The opposing views have created a paradigm shift in community policing and how it is perceived. Community relations were identified during a background of individuals who committed violent acts. The community was helpful when approached in a post-investigation; however, the lack of relations maybe the issue for law enforcement in taking preemptive steps to stop these individuals before they act out their violence.

Subtheme 4.2 Radicalization. The three participants who encountered violent extremists believe there was a radicalization process before they acted on the violent tendencies. One participant who met one of these individuals said that during a post-investigation of the extremists who killed a co-worker were found to have an extensive radical view on social media. The individual went on to try and convince others he worked with to join his Islamic radical group and eventually committed violence against those who would not join him. The individual was an American with no Islamic affiliation except for his behavior change when his ideology changed, and it became violent. Based on their experience, the other two participants agreed that most people become violent after a radicalization process occurs. The participants believe that due to the lack of community association with others, these violent individuals change their perception of the people around them, causing the beginning of the radicalization process.

Theme 5: Recommend methods for identifying violent extremists

Theme five, which recommends methods for identifying violent extremists, is related to the difficulty in identifying these individuals within the community. The primary theme is divided into three emerging subthemes: (a) cultural relations, (b) community connections, and (c) demographics. All six participants responded to recommend methods for identifying violent extremists.

Interview Question: What methods do you recommend when trying to identify violent extremists in the community?

Theme 5.1 Culture Relations. The participants believed positive relations with the different cultures within a community would benefit law enforcement in identifying violent extremists. One perceived issue is developing positive relationships with individuals with different cultural backgrounds that may differ in their way of life. One participant articulated that

only some people have the same beliefs. Law enforcement officers must recognize that and build positive relations with those individuals, even if they disagree with their ideas. Community relations are building links with all people in the community for the common good. All six participants believed cultural differences should not prevent a positive relationship with law enforcement.

Theme 5.2 Community Connections. The participants agree that there are several ways to communicate with the community, and the most important way to connect is by listening to what they say. One participant believes there may be times we are face to face with extremists and not know it. This may be due to law enforcement needing to listen to what someone is saying. The same concept goes for making a connection with community leaders. One participant said the lack of new officers being hired due to the current political environment prevents a solid relationship from being formed with the community. When we have fewer officers on the street patrolling, it contributes to reactive law enforcement and not proactive. Departments can put more officers in the community to build that needed connection.

All six participants believe that to build a better connection, law enforcement must first create a trusting relationship before any community members come forward to address those hidden elements unknown to law enforcement. After the trust is built, communities may address those dark areas that keep law enforcement from identifying radicalization within the community. Several communities know the individuals who are a threat but are reluctant to come forward to identify those individuals. All the participants believe law enforcement should get to know their communities better than they currently do. The connection between law enforcement and the community starts with a conversation and an opportunity to understand the thought process of current community policing concepts. All six participants believe law enforcement

should focus on reconnecting with community leaders to develop a better relationship focusing more on community needs.

Theme 5.3 Demographics. One participant believed law enforcement should consider that the rural communities around any city are just as important as the urban communities. All the participants thought there was a disconnect between low-income and immigrant communities compared to high-income and non-immigrant neighborhoods. The trust factor in the low-income and immigrant communities was challenging to overcome to gain the community's trust. One participant believed law enforcement officers should visit churches, community centers, and businesses in questionable areas to show transparency within their police department. Police departments have multiple personnel from different cultures. From a demographic view, these law enforcement officers should be utilized in communities that are considered to be challenging for police departments to connect with that community.

All the participants believed demographics play a role in combating violent extremists, and law enforcement should forge positive relationships in all the communities within their jurisdiction. When relations are formed in these challenging areas, it will open the door for new strategies to be forged and positive ideas to help prevent or decrease violent extremism.

Summary

The research study increased awareness of the importance of utilizing the community to combat violent extremists. The experience from the six law enforcement offices in Oklahoma and past research focused on various concepts of community policing and how important it is in crime prevention. This study aimed to discover law enforcement's challenges when utilizing the community to fight violent extremists. This research study is distinctive because the focus is on

the insight from the perspective of law enforcement officers. The study's results discovered areas of improvement needed to overcome some of the challenges law enforcement faces on their job.

The traditional leadership style of law enforcement organizations needs to evolve with the changes in addressing challenges in utilizing community policing concepts. As the social structure changes within communities, law enforcement agencies must adapt to those changes and better understand community needs. The research questions provided information on law enforcement's challenges in utilizing the community to fight against violent extremists. The law enforcement officers described their experiences in using community policing concepts and the challenges they faced while on patrol. The lived experience working in low and high-crime areas added valuable information for the study.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

The reason for this qualitative phenomenological study was to collect data on the lived experience of six law enforcement officers from different police departments in Oklahoma. The research intent was to discover the challenges law enforcement face when utilizing the community to combat violent extremists. The purpose of the study was to add to the literature that is currently available and provide insight into community policing and violent extremists. Law enforcement officers who have worked in low and high-crime areas acknowledge the challenges they face in utilizing community policing concepts. The interviews revealed several themes from the law enforcement officer's experiences that salified the research.

Five main themes that emerged from the research process, and the themes were analyzed to gain insight into the participant's experiences. The experience obtained from law enforcement officers working in their communities is valuable in understanding the challenges law enforcement face daily. Carter & Fox (2019) explains how valuable community policing is for law enforcement to do their jobs effectively. The law enforcement officers' shared experience showed the challenges they must overcome daily in the performance of their duties. The study found that law enforcement officers face similar situations no matter what jurisdiction they are in. The current challenges in community policing are no different in low or high-crime areas. However, the challenges may differ, but generally, they are the same.

Summary of the Findings

The research findings revealed six themes related to utilizing the community to combat violent extremists. Perception of community relations, violent extremism, identifying violent extremists, situations using the community to combat violent extremists, and recommended methods in

identifying violent extremists. The findings of this study were supported by previous studies on the challenges law enforcement face when utilizing community policing concepts (Melissa Salyk-Virk, 2020; Metcalf et al., 2016; Muhammad, 2019; Nguyen, 2019). The interview responses from the participants exposed the challenges law enforcement face daily. The findings correlate with the data in the literature regarding the importance of community policing and how communities can be utilized to fight violent extremism. The study also added new ideas for law enforcement to establish a better connection with the community.

The research in this study showed how challenging community policing concepts relate to law enforcement. All the law enforcement officers understood the repercussions that exist if law enforcement fails to establish a strong connection with their perspective communities. All the participants believed that engaging with the community is extremely important to law enforcement officers. One participant felt the defunding police movement significantly impacted law enforcement agencies, especially those in Oklahoma. The movement caused budget changes, and that law enforcement officers who could retire did. It is difficult to engage in community policing concepts when law enforcement has become reactive instead of proactive. Fewer officers are on the street when hiring numbers go down, causing a disconnect between the community and law enforcement agencies. According to Goldberg & Christopher (2019), a strong relationship with the community requires building a positive understanding with law enforcement. This is a significant challenge for reactive law enforcement officers.

The law enforcement officers involved in the study felt that communities disliked the police. It's believed that the challenge is gaining communities' trust with adverse feelings towards law enforcement. Due to the crime situation, lower-income communities have challenged law enforcement to gain the community's trust. Families don't trust the police due to

one of their own being put in jail or taught not to trust law enforcement at a young age. All the law enforcement participants agreed that lower-income communities are challenging to obtain information due to the lack of community trust.

To identify violent extremists in communities across America, community help is imperative due to the ability of these individuals to hide in plain sight. According to Nguyen (2019), law enforcement is one with the community and shares the same concerns in promoting safety. However, all the law enforcement participants expressed their concern regarding violent extremists being able to hide in the community, making identifying these individuals very difficult. All the participants believed law enforcement has to be selective about whom they address in building that community relationship. The first step is making the relationship and gaining trust before addressing areas of concern. The better the relationship, the more apt people are willing to help even if the individual belief system is not aligned with the police.

The radicalization process is a concern for law enforcement that is overlooked until the investigation of a post-incident takes place. One participant believed the community impacts the radicalization process with those individuals who become violent. The challenge is getting the community more aligned with identifying these individuals and communicating it to law enforcement. All the participants believed social media is responsible for those individuals who become radicalized. One participant who investigated a violent extremist attack stated that the suspect who killed a co-worker due to his radical Islamic views had expressed his intentions and belief system on social media for several months before acting on his violent behavior leading to several injuries and one death.

One participant said it is challenging for law enforcement where history has shown that demographic, elections and rural areas are concern issues for law enforcement in fighting violent

extremists. All the participants defined violent extremists as individuals with extreme ideologies with political and religious motivations. From all the participants, there was a common bond in identifying radicalization and violent extremism. It was believed that the community has the capabilities to help law enforcement fight against violent extremism. It is the core connection with the community that makes the difference. A core connection goes deeper than a standard connection in community policing. Two participants believed law enforcement is missing the core connection with the community. It is thought that the lack of administrative support from a political standpoint may be the problem outlining the missed connection with communities.

Law enforcement agencies should address challenges that keep patrol officers from developing core relationships with the community. The participants believed law enforcement should be involved in more community policing projects, spend more time listening to the community and address their needs. One participant believed law enforcement would benefit more if there were better one-on-one communications and genuinely admired community leaders. The participants believe the focus in methods used to identify violent extremists within a community is understanding the different cultures and creating relationships with those cultures. There is a lack of transparency from law enforcement bridging a gap with the community. All the participants believed that when relationships are created, and positive trust is built, strategies can be created to combat violent extremists.

Discussion

The study was conducted in Oklahoma, and in law enforcement communities in other geographic areas outside of Oklahoma, the challenges in combating violent extremists may be slightly different. This may cause a general difference in the study results. The transferability may be limited in other research projects if future research is not duplicated in the same setting.

The results of this study are limited to the number of participants interviewed. One of the issues with qualitative research is defined by Creswell (2006), who stated that the low number of participants required for a study might limit its findings. According to Magnusson & Marecek (2015) and Maxwell (2008), based on the analysis, a limited number of participants were accepted when designing a small-scale qualitative research study.

The reflection of the six law enforcement officers' experiences may not reflect the opinions of other law enforcement officers in Oklahoma. The research study only sought the expertise of law enforcement officers working in other geographical areas. Other law enforcement may not reflect the same answers as the six participants. The study focused on the opinions of six law enforcement officers, with all six being male officers. There was a desire to seek the opinion of female law enforcement officers, but ultimately, there were not any who wanted to participate in the study. A female law enforcement officer's input would have been valuable information on how they perceived utilizing the community to combat violent extremists.

The participants for this study were purposefully selected from police departments in Oklahoma. The chosen law enforcement officers work in mixed crime districts from low-crime to high-crime areas. Past research focused on either community policing or violent extremism rather than the opinions of law enforcement officers who work in these communities utilizing community concepts to combat violent extremists.

Implications

This study provided information that would enhance law enforcement's abilities to build core relationships within their communities. Social change begins with the ability of law enforcement officers to understand and adapt to the needs of their communities. Cultural

awareness, communication, and community trust are three critical factors in fighting violent extremists. The law enforcement culture should change by focusing on new, innovative ways to build community trust and understand the different cultures that continue to change at a rapid pace. There should be a change in law enforcement's subculture in how they perceive their communities. For law enforcement officers to change, they need to be indoctrinated through training regularly to understand the culture change and how communities' needs may change over time.

Law enforcement officers rely on leadership to create an environment for them to grow with the criminal justice system's changes. Research studies reveal the importance of understanding a community's current changes and needs. (Ambrozik, 2019, Archer & Flexon, 2021). The research findings in this study revealed that law enforcement officers feel alienated from communities due to the political environment. Low staff and reactive policing have shown to be a challenge for police organizations. Law enforcement leadership must identify these challenges and find innovative ways to address the community's needs.

There is a need to open more lines of communication between patrol officers, leadership, and communities. Law enforcement leadership must recognize the need and change policies that reflect a higher number of community relation officers to build a core relationship that helps both the community and law enforcement organizations. Violent extremists are rising and becoming the greatest threat to the United States (Blackbourn et al., 2019, Butt & Khalid, 2018). A lack of communication with communities will hinder law enforcement's ability to fight against these violent extremists. Law enforcement organizations must understand the value of community policing and restore the communities' faith in combating threats that challenge the police and their perspective communities.

Delimitations and Limitations

The study focused on a mixed crime area working in high and low-crime demographics. The study is limited to law enforcement officers in Oklahoma, and different police departments throughout the United States may have different views on utilizing community policing concepts. The participants interviewed may not express the same experience or opinions as other members of the same department.

The delimitation of this study is limited to the experience and the incidents that have occurred in the jurisdictions where the participants work. The law enforcement officers interviewed may not reflect the law enforcement population. The study is focused on the participants and the communities they work in. Another delimitation is the difference between high and low-crime areas the participants may work in. High-crime demographic community policing may differ from low-crime demographic areas.

Recommendations for Future Research

The phenomenological study reviewed six law enforcement officers who were assigned to patrol high and low-crime areas in Oklahoma. Future research should be conducted in a similar environment to discover law enforcement officers' challenges when utilizing communities to combat violent extremism. The current study focused on the experience of six law enforcement officers to elicit their experience while patrolling in their perspective communities. Past research has shown the significance of community policing and how it is effective in maintaining public safety (Chappell & Gibson, 2009). Future research should focus on the radicalization process and how it affects the relationship between law enforcement and communities.

The transformation from radicalization to violent extremists affects how law enforcement may utilize the community to combat violent extremists. Future research may offer new,

innovative ideas to combat violent extremism and help create a better core relationship with the community. Understanding the radicalization process from an ideology concept to violent extremism would be helpful to law enforcement and their communities. Assessing the challenges law enforcement and communities face when identifying the radicalization process would be extremely useful. The literature review addresses how individuals are radicalized before they become violent extremists and act on their aggressions.

Conclusion

A thorough explanation was given regarding the factors in law enforcement's challenges in their communities. Recommendations were made to help law enforcement reduce the obstacles and build a stronger core relationship with their communities. One of the critical resolutions to a successful relationship was understanding the cultural difference within a community. Law enforcement leadership should include a discussion of community relations strategies with the patrol division to help increase innovative ways to build positive relationships. Past research has acknowledged how influential law enforcement officers are within their community. When law enforcement and communities build a core relationship and work together, newly innovative strategies will emerge, and the community can be maximized in the fight against violent extremism.

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Appendix A: Research Questions

RQ1: What challenges is law enforcement facing when utilizing community policing to counter violent extremism?

RQ2: How do you define violent extremists?

RQ3: What is the difficulty in identifying violent extremists living in our communities across the United States?

RQ4: What is a situation that stands out when you used community policing to counter any type of violent extremists?

RQ5: What methods do you recommend when trying to identify violent extremist in the community?

Appendix B: Table

Recurring themes	Emerging themes
Theme 1: Perception of community relations	Theme 1.1 Positive relations Theme 1.2 Negative relations
Theme 2: Violent extremism	Theme 2.1 Ideology Theme 2.2 Political
Theme 3: Identifying violent extremists	Theme 3.1 Culture Theme 3.2 Social Media
Theme 4: Situations using the community to combat violent extremists	Theme 4.1 Individual Ideology Theme 4.2 Radicalization
Theme 5: Recommend methods in identifying violent extremists	Theme 5.1 Culture Relations Theme 5.2 Community Connections Theme 5.3 Demographics

Appendix C: Consent Form

Consent

Title of the Project: The Challenges Law Enforcement Face in Utilizing Community Policing to Counter Violent Extremists.

Principal Investigator: Steven Beams, Liberty University.

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must be 21 years old or older with a minimum of five years of police experience. The following is the eligibility criteria. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to expand on the literature on community policing in countering violent extremists as a valuable tool. The United States has seen a rise in violent extremist attacks, but it is unclear how effective community policing is in immigrant and non-immigrant communities. There is inadequate data that specifies information on how communities can help law enforcement regarding violent extremists. These issues present a problem to law enforcement trying to counter violent extremists.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask you to do the following things:

1. Participants in a recorded interview that will last approximately one hour. The questions will be related to community policing and violent extremism.
2. Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Benefits to law enforcement include gaining firsthand knowledge from the lived experience of law enforcement officers, which will expand the understanding of how communities may make a difference in identifying individuals who become radicalized by extreme ideology. There has been limited research on how the community has been utilized to combat extremism. This study will highlight the positive and negative factors of using community policing concepts. It is believed the information from the survey will ultimately recognize areas of improvement in the relationship between the community and law enforcement in fighting against radicalization and extremism.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Published reports will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. Data collected from you may be shared for use in future research studies or with other researchers. If data collected from you is shared, any information that could identify you, if applicable, will be removed before the data is shared.

- Participant responses will be kept confidential using a coding system. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researchers will have access to these recordings.

Is study participation voluntary?

Participants in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decided to participate, you are free to not answer any questions or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Steven Beams. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact him at [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor Dr. Larry Anthony, at [REDACTED].

Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subjects research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Your Consent

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

_____ The researcher has my permission to me as part of my participation in this study

By signing this document, you are agreeing to participating in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I agree for the persons named below as part of their participation in this study.

_____ The researcher has my permission to [audio-record/video-record/photograph] the person named below as part of their participation in this study.

Printed Subject name

Printed LAR Name and Relationship to Subject

Appendix D: Letter of Invitation

Date: 07/12/2022

As a graduate student in the Helms School of Government, Criminal Justice program at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to better understand the challenges law enforcement face in utilizing community policing to counter violent extremist. The title of my research project is The Challenges Law Enforcement Face in Utilizing Community Policing to Counter Violent Extremists.

The purpose of my research is to expand on the literature on community policing in countering violent extremists as a valuable tool. The United States has seen a rise in violent extremist attacks, but it is unclear how effective community policing is in immigrant and non-immigrant communities. There is inadequate data that specifies information from the community to law enforcement regarding violent extremists. These issues present a problem to law enforcement trying to counter violent extremists. I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be

1. 21 years of age or older
2. Have five years of experience working as a police officer for a credited law enforcement agency.
3. Be a current or retired law enforcement officers.
4. Have worked in Oklahoma as a law enforcement officer.

Participants, if willing, will be asked to participate in an interview and it should take approximately one hour to complete the procedure. Names and other identifying information will be requested as part of the study, but participant identities will not be disclosed.

To participate, please contact me at [REDACTED] for more information or to schedule an interview. A consent form will be sent or given to you if you choose to participate. The consent document contains additional information about my research. If you choose to participate, you will need to sign the consent document and return it to me at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,

Steven Beams

Steven B. Beams

SUMMARY OF SKILLS

Bachelor's degree, criminal justice, University of Central Oklahoma.

Master's degree, organization management/public administration, Ashford University.

Master's degree, public safety/criminal justice, Capella University.

Doctoral of Philosophy, criminal justice/homeland security, Liberty University. Expected graduation May 2023.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Criminal Justice Instructor, Mid-Del Technology Center, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Center 2022-Current.

Teaching security and investigation classes I-IV for students to receive their certifications.

Develop new courses to be taught in developing individuals through positive training programs.

Criminal Justice Instructor, Remington College, Houston, Texas. 2015-2020.

Criminal justice teacher teaching in the following areas: forensic science, corrections, crime scene management, police community relations, investigations, comparative criminal justice, research for the criminal justice professional, and survey of the criminal justice system. These students were working towards obtaining an associate degree and bachelor's degree. Several times, I received teacher of the month and gave constitutional lectures to all programs yearly.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE PRACTITIONER EXPERIENCE

Police Officer, Oklahoma Baptists University. Provided for public safety by maintaining order, responding to emergency and non-emergency calls. Protecting people and property, enforcing motor vehicle and criminal laws. Promoting good community relations. (Current Position).

Deputy Sheriff, Oklahoma County Sheriff's Department. Worked in the protection division provided for public safety by maintaining order, responding to emergencies, protecting public and property, enforcing motor vehicle and criminal laws, and promoting good community relations. Transporting inmates to court and protecting judges and court personnel.

Private Investigator, Beams Investigation and Protection Service. My investigations included insurance fraud investigations, criminal investigations, infidelity investigations, litigation for the defense, missing persons, child abuse investigations, and surveillance. I also serve process papers in Oklahoma. (Current Position).

Case Manager, Texas Department of Criminal Justice. I worked in the sex offender rehabilitation program interviewing sex offenders to identify service needs. Problem areas, service gaps, and areas that are barriers to services. Develop and implement service plans to meet offenders' needs and participate in diagnostic conferences. Assist in monitoring the activities within the therapeutic community and collaborate with the treatment team to monitor offender progress and make recommendations in treatment planning.

Corrections Officer, GEO GROUP. I worked with US Marshall and Immigration Service at a contracted federal detention center.

- Conducted headcounts to ensure that each prisoner was present.
- Monitor the conduct of prisoners in a housing unit, or during work or recreational activities, according to established policies, regulations, and procedures to prevent escape or violence.
- Inspect conditions of locks, window bars, grills, doors, and gates at Correctional Facility to ensure security and help prevent escapes.
- Record information, such as prisoner identification, charges, and incidences of inmate disturbances, and keep daily logs of prisoner activities.
- Search prisoners and vehicles and conduct shakedowns of cells for valuables and contraband such as weapons or drugs.
- Use weapons, handcuffs, and physical force to maintain discipline and order among prisoners.
- Inspect mail for the presence of contraband.
- Guard facility entrances to screen visitors.
- Maintain records of prisoners identification and charges.

Reserve Deputy Sheriff. Pottawatomie County Sheriff's Department. I would provide for public safety by maintaining order, responding to emergency and non-emergency calls, protecting people and property, enforcing motor vehicle and criminal laws, and promoting good community relations.

Guest Lecture

I have lectured at several events such as Remington College constitution day and Mid-Del Technology Center. I have currently provided law enforcement training and lectured on several different criminal justice topics. I appeared on Fox Houston News regarding safety tips in November of 2019, during the holiday season.

Memberships

Thin Blue Line LEMC.

Omega Nu Lambda National Honor Society, Liberty University, Alpha Chapter.

Certifications

LSU-NCBRT instructor development, CLEET certified law enforcement primary instructor, Oklahoma certified advance police officer, Oklahoma certified private investigator/armed security, over 1000 hours of CLEET police training, NRA firearms instructor, NRA home defense instructor, taser instructor, Oklahoma certified reserve academy coordinator, 1991, Texas police academy, 1994, Oklahoma police academy, 1997, New Mexico police academy.