PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE OFFICERS TOWARDS LAW ENFORCEMENT HIRING

PRACTICES AS THEY PERTAIN TO MINORITY CANDIDATES

WHILE CONTROLLING FOR GENDER

by

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of police officers towards law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates while controlling for gender. A survey instrument was devised and implemented to measure perceptions of hiring practices as they pertain to minorities and females at a police department in northern Texas. Once the data were collected, it was analyzed and examined for any statistically significance.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to examine the perception of police officers towards law enforcement hiring practices as they relate to minority candidates while controlling for gender. In the course of the study, the perceptions of male law enforcement officers and how or if they differ from the perceptions of female law enforcement officers as it pertained to the hiring practices of minority candidates were examined.

Stephen Lawrence was an African American teenager who was murdered in April, 1993 in England. His unsolved death made high profile status in England (Murji, 2007). The citizens in the area in which he lived believed the investigation into his murder was mishandled. His murder was viewed as a hate crime. The Steven Lawrence Inquiry described the institutional racism that was present in the police department (Moore, 2004). Institutional racism is such that it is not individualized, but is throughout the organization (Murji, 2007).

The MacPherson Report was published subsequent to the Steven Lawrence Inquiry. Sir William MacPherson's report made 70 recommendations to make the police force more effective when dealing with race issues (Buchanan, 2006). Officers were assigned within neighborhoods and dedicated hate crime units. A change in the police

department's training curriculum was mandatory Community Race Relations (CRR) Training (Buchanan, 2006). The training was conducted to prepare police officers extend a greater degree of sensitivity to other cultures.

England is not the only country with racism. For the purpose of this study, racism was defined as, "an irrational belief in or advocacy of the superiority of a given group, people, or nation, usually one's own, on the basis of racial differences having no scientific validity" (Funk & Wagnalls, Inc., 1984). Discrimination also happens outside of England. For the purpose of this study, discrimination was defined as, "to act towards someone or something with partiality or prejudice" (Funk & Wagnalls, Inc., 1984).

The United States also has a long history of racism and discrimination. The United States utilized slave labor from the time of the first American colonies in the early 1600's to the abolition of slavery by the 13th Constitutional Amendment in 1865 (Barlow & Barlow, 2000). Although slavery was officially banned in 1865, former slaves "released into an extremely hostile environment, and they met resistance to their every attempt to adjust, assimilate, or simply survive" (Barlow & Barlow, 2000).

Resistance can be met with a person of racial/ethnic minority status attempts to gain employment. The resistance was such that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was written into law and is clear on the rules an entity must abide by while dealing with one's employment. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 states:

> it shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer (1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; or (2) to limit, segregate, or classify his employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect

his status as an employee, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission).

Another way to assist minorities gain employment is Affirmative Action which was implemented in the public sector in 1972. The purpose of Affirmative Action is to address the systemic exclusion of qualified individuals on the basis of their gender, or race from opportunities to develop, perform, achieve, and contribute (About Affirmative Action). Affirmative action is an effort to develop systematic approach to for minorities to participate in education, employment, and business development opportunities (About Affirmative Action).

Law enforcement, just as the United States has a history seeped in racism and discrimination that will be described further. Barlow and Barlow (2000) describe four (4) distinct eras of policing. These eras are the Preindustrial, the Industrial, the Modern Policing Era, and the Postmodern Policing Era. During the Preindustrial Era of policing, the time period before the formation of large industrial urban areas, slave patrols were the first type of law enforcement. Their job was to punish runaway slaves, or slaves outside their plantations without a pass. During the Industrial Era, the time period between the 1790's and the 1820's, the job of law enforcement was to control the poor, which was likely the racial/ethnic minorities. The Modern Policing Era began in 1873 and continued through the 1960's. An economic depression began in 1873 and the economy was suffering. The police were called upon to help control the striking, and out-of-work masses of people. The Postmodern Policing Era began in the 1960's and continues on. The police during this time came into conflict with racial/ethnic minorities who were challenging the social order (p. 19).

In the years following the Civil War, newly freed African Americans were using their power to vote in order to obtain political positions within society (Barlow & Barlow, 2000). They were also forming small segments of police departments that were often used to patrol predominantly African American sections of town. According to Barlow and Barlow, there were distinct reasons to include racially/ethnic marginalized persons into law enforcement during the period after Reconstruction. Marginalized persons wanted to gain entry and eventually full acceptance into agencies of social control. Caucasian authorities also saw a need to include minorities into law enforcement to improve the effectiveness of social control. Minority appointments strengthened the legitimacy of a department. It also improved the department's ability to control or regulate the activities of minority group members by creating a force that was more in tune to their needs (p.223).

The need for a greater representation of minorities in law enforcement did not end with Reconstruction. The 1967 President's Commission and the 1968 Kerner Commission highlighted the need for a more diversified police force (Doerner, 1995). It could be stated that 40 years ago, the need for more minorities in the work place was identified. It was reported that agencies needed to represent the communities which they serve (Hawley III, 1998). In 2002, According to the United States Labor Department, 625,000 people were employed as police officers, making up approximately 0.4% of the workforce (Foley, Guarneri, & Kelly, 2006). In 2001 the United States Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics) states that the proportion of racial/ethnic minority sworn officers in large city police departments has increased from 29.8% in 1990 to 38.1% in 2000 (Ho, 2005). The Bureau of Justice Statistics fails to define which cities

they are referring to and the minority to majority ratio of the residents of these cities. Another source puts the number of minority police officers at 21% nationally (Sloakner, Wendt, & Kemper, 2001).

For the purpose of this study, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) hiring standards shall mean the hiring practices that are in place in accordance with the Texas Administrative Code, Title 37 Chapter 217, Public Safety and Corrections License Requirement, Minimum Standards for Initial Licensure. TCLEOSE is a state agency created by an act of the 59th Legislature. TCLEOSE strives to meet its mission of ensuring a Texas where people are served by highly trained and ethical law enforcement and corrections personnel through screening, developing, monitoring resources, and setting standards (TCLEOSE current rules).

Minority shall be defined as a group that is different is some respect (such as race or religious belief) from the majority and that is sometimes treated differently as a result. (West Group, 1999) As the term is used in the social sciences, this subordinancy is the chief defining characteristic of a minority group. As such, minority status does not necessarily correlate to population. In some cases one or more so-called minority groups may have a population many times the size of the dominating group. In this study, the gender of female will also be considered a minority in law enforcement.

Chapter 2 will include the history of minorities in law enforcement, reasons why people choose a career in law enforcement, and the Texas law enforcement officer hiring process. Also discussed will be barriers that minorities currently face who wish to enter a career in law enforcement and minority perceptions of their treatment by non-minority groups

The methodology as to how the perception data was gathered from the current police officers will be discussed in detail in Chapter 3. The survey will measure the perception of the police officers that believe the TCLEOSE hiring standards and the Burleson Police Department's hiring standards are fair to minority law enforcement officer candidates. The data collected will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2007 student version 16.0 Graduate Pack for Windows program.

In Chapter 4 the author will discuss the statistical manipulations that were used on the surveys and the results of the manipulations. A frequencies test was performed to obtain the percentages of responses in regards to demographics. In the non-demographic responses, gender will be controlled in order to obtain any statistically significant differences between male and female responses. A T-test was performed to obtain the means and the P-value for each response.

Future implications of the study will be examined in Chapter 5. Further studies on other departments with differing size and racial/ethnic make-ups will be recommended. The author will discuss policy implications, the role of police administrators, ramifications to police academies and police departments, and future officer assignment issues.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The author will provide a review of the literature as it relates to the perception of police officers in towards law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates. This chapter will include the history of minorities in law enforcement, reasons why people choose a career in law enforcement, and the Texas law enforcement officer hiring process. Also discussed will be barriers that could present themselves to minorities who desire to enter a career in law enforcement and minority perceptions of their treatment by non-minority groups. The purpose is to demonstrate to the reader the research that has yet to be done in regards to the perceptions of law enforcement officers in Texas towards law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates. A gap in the current literature was highlighted in this chapter.

2.1   **History of Minorities in Law Enforcement**

An examination at the history of minorities in police work may provide insight at the underrepresentation of minorities in law enforcement since the beginning of a formalized police force. Sir Robert Peel in 1829, sought to recruit those in London, England that represented the common man. He did not wish to have the "gentlemen" on the force; rather he chose the working class (Hawley III, 1998). These working class

men were not necessarily minorities, but they were not the political appointees or retired military workers that the public initially assumed would be on the force. The hiring of ordinary people was the first step in having a police department that represented the community.

The United States had its law enforcement beginnings in slave patrols. Slavery on a grand scale was introduced in the early 1600's (Barlow & Barlow, 2000). Slaves were typically brought to the United States from African countries. Soon thereafter, slave patrols were constructed to preserve the social order as well as to maintain slavery (Barlow & Barlow, 2000). The slave patrols were mostly poor whites that would terrorize African slaves that were away from their master's homes past curfew.

The first municipal police department was in Charleston, South Carolina (Barlow & Barlow, 2000). By 1837, the primary function of the Charleston Police Department's 100 officers was the regulation of slaves. The police department monitored the slaves by checking documents, enforcing slave codes, guarding against slave revolts, catching runaway slaves, and to ease the public's fear of slaves (Barlow & Barlow, 2000)

The earliest date found for an African American serving as a police officer was in 1861, in Washington D.C. (Kuykendall & Bums, 1980). African Americans were more readily hired as officers in the 1960s to deal with the civil unrest of the day. It was believed by some that African American officers could best deal with those parties that were involved with the cultural revolution that was taking place at that time (Rafky, 1975). Authorities needed assistance in maintaining social control and it was believed that African Americans could accomplish this more effectively within minority neighborhoods (Barlow & Barlow, 2000).

The United States Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics) states that the proportion of racial/ethnic minority sworn officers in large city police departments was 38.1% in 2000 (Ho, 2005). The growth of the number of African American officers in the rank and file of police departments was a clear reflection of the addition of political power to this group. African American officers were now heading large departments where race is a clear problem between the community and the police force (Barlow & Barlow, 2000).

Law enforcement agencies may have a real or a perceived shortage of minority applicants. The shortage of applicants may exist because of a true lack of a particular race or ethnic minority in a given geographical area (Hoffman, Little, & Perlstein, 1980). According to Ho (1995) states that larger cities may not have a significant number of racial and ethnic minorities from which to choose, nor the means to recruit them. A lack of a minority population from which to choose, minority candidates cannot be hired.

A person seeking a career in law enforcement may do so for a variety of reasons. In the next section, reasons why minorities may choose to seek a career in law enforcement will be examined.

2.2   **Reasons for Choosing a Career in Law Enforcement**

The motivation for choosing a career in law enforcement is very similar for minorities as well as non-minorities. A study conducted by Raganella and White (2004), a sample of 278 academy recruits in New York City were surveyed in 2002. The study surveyed an academy class which contained minority recruits, non-minority recruits, males, and females. Overall, the main reasons for entering into a career in law enforcement were the opportunities to help people, job benefits, and job security.

In the 1980's the appeal for white males to enter police work was the military-like structure of a police force. This study states that with the motivation varying only slightly, recruiting efforts also need to be varied slightly to attract the group the recruiter desired to hire. Hispanic and African American recruits were nearly identical in their motivations. Both listed opportunity to help people as first, job security as second, job benefits as third, and opportunities for career advancement as fourth. White recruits also agreed with the top three reasons, but listed early retirement and excitement of the job as more important than their minority counterparts.

It has been argued that minority candidates have been recruited more aggressively, therefore giving them a greater opportunity for employment. Ho (2005) suggests that minorities do not have a better chance to be recruited in a predominately white neighborhood than a non-minority. His study was conducted at the City of Asheville, North Carolina Police Department. The town's population is 65,000 with 14% of the population being of a racial/ethnic minority group. The researcher collected all recruitment-related data for 417 applicants tested between 1990 and 1996. Recruitment-related paperwork was considered all the testing materials in the hiring process, and not the actual act of seeking potential applicants. The researcher considered the written test, psychological testing, physical testing, and all other testing to be a part of the recruitment process. The majority of candidates were young, non-college graduate, white males. According to the study, race was not a significant factor in the recruitment process. Race did not hinder or help minorities in this particular police department. Minority and non-minority recruitment results were relatively comparable (Ho, 2005).

Minority candidates are entering law enforcement for similar reasons than non-minority candidates, however they do not represent the same percentages in the rank and file as they do in society (Ho, 2005). Potential hindrances to minorities who seek a career in law enforcement will be discussed beginning with initial licensing procedures at they pertain to the TCLEOSE requirements.

2.3   **Initial Licensure Procedures**

The state of Texas has a mandated initial licensing procedure regulated by TCLEOSE. An individual agency can make the process more stringent, but not more lenient. The components of the hiring process are as follows: validated written examination, physical fitness examination, comprehensive background investigation, oral review board (panel interview), medical evaluation, polygraph examination, and psychological testing (TCLEOSE current rules). Each of the phases of the hiring process will be discussed in greater detail in upcoming sections.

2.3.1   Written Examination

Institutional racism as it pertains to a law enforcement agency was introduced in the Steven Lawrence Inquiry (Moore, 2004). Institutional racism is such that it is not intended for an individual target, but rather is racism throughout an organization (Murji, 2007). An example of institutional racism could be an entry level written examination that is written in a way as to exclude certain people. The written examination is constructed in a manner as to provide for open, competitive, and free entrance examinations to provide eligibility lists for beginning positions in the police departments (Texas Local Government Code Title 5 Chapter 143).

In an attempt to prepare potential law enforcement officers taking entrance exams, some departments have opted to provide study guides. Study guides offer the types of questions that can be expected and may facilitate the identifying of potential educational shortcomings (Hoffman, Little, & Perlstein, 1980).

2.3.2   Educational Requirements

The state of Texas requires that a candidate be a high school graduate, or to have passed a general educational development (GED) test indicting high school graduation level, or they must have 12 semester hours of credit from an accredited college or university (Texas Administrative Code, Title 37, Part 7, Chapter 217).

Some law enforcement agencies have set a minimum standard higher than that of TCLEOSE. During the organization of the first police forces, officers were appointed on the basis that they best represented the community in which they served. This was due to the common man not being a highly educated one (Hawley III, 1998).

It could be argued that agencies are striving for professionalism through education; however according to D. H. Worden, (1990), no correlation between job performance and education could be noted. However, in another study by Cohen and Chaiken (1972), it was found that officers who were college graduates, completed their job tasks with a greater level of efficiency than their high school educated counterparts. The study concluded with the belief that higher education should be viewed as a means to professionalism, not a guarantee of it.

2.3.3   Physical Agility Testing

In the state of Texas, physical agility testing is not a requirement of the hiring process. The study, Tearing Down the Walls: Problems with Consistency, Validity, and

Adverse Impact of Physical Agility Testing in Police Selection (Lonsway, 2003), addresses the issue of inconsistent physical agility testing. This study mainly focuses on the adverse action that physical testing has on otherwise qualified applicants. In 1956, 85% of departments surveyed had a height requirement of at least 5 foot 8 inches (Gaines, Falkenberg, & Gambino, 1993). These standards kept a large amount of female applicants from being eligible for positions as police officers. Height and weight requirements were later ruled as discriminatory under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Act stated that in regards to employer practices it shall be unlawful for an employer to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual's race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

After the height and weight requirements were ruled unconstitutional, physical agility tests became a standard measure of screening candidates. Departments with an entry level physical agility test have 31% fewer sworn women than agencies that do not require a physical agility test (Lonsway, 2003).

In the year 1986 it was identified that due to the passing rate of women being below 80% that of men, the police agency had to prove that the physical agility test was indeed job related and not a means of discrimination (Hogan & Quigley, 1986).

2.3.4 Background Investigation

TCLEOSE initial licensing standards outline that a license can only be granted to a candidate who has been subjected to a background investigation and has been interviewed prior to appointment by representatives of the appointing authority (Texas

Administrative Code, Title 37, Part 7, Chapter 217). That is, the hiring agency must ensure that the candidate is not disqualified due to possessing a criminal history. Common criminal history disqualifiers include: has not ever have been on court-ordered community supervision or probation for any criminal offense above the grade of Class B misdemeanor or a Class B misdemeanor within the last ten years from the date of the court order; is not currently charged with any criminal offense for which conviction would be a bar to licensure; has not ever been convicted of an offense above the grade of a Class B misdemeanor or a Class B misdemeanor within the last ten years; has never been convicted of any family violence offense; is not prohibited by state or federal law from operating a motor vehicle; and is not prohibited by state or federal law from possessing firearms or ammunition (Texas Administrative Code, Title 37, Part 7, Chapter 217).

2.3.5   Oral Interview Boards

Agencies also conduct oral interview boards as a part of the hiring process. In the study, Examination of Structured Interview Ratings Across Time: The Effects of Applicant Race, Rater Race, and Panel Composition, it was determined that interview panels can be a means of minimizing bias (McFarland, Ryan, Sacco, & Kriska, 2004). This study was conducted on 1,334 applicants applying for employment as a police officer. The sample was 80% male, 20% female, 19% African American, and 81% white. A three-member interview panel met with each applicant. The panel consisted of a police sergeant, a civil service analyst, and a police officer. All panels contained at least one minority member. The panel had no prior knowledge of the applicant or of their

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background or suitability to be a police officer. Scores were based solely on how the applicant performed on the interview board.

The study concluded that when multiple raters, each of a different race or ethnic background, have an opinion about an applicant, race becomes less of an issue. Each rater decided on a score based upon the responses of the candidate. All the individual scores are added together for an overall score. This overall score is compared to the minimum passing standard and the applicant is either passed or failed.

Based upon the findings of the study, if a rater was inclined to racism, the other raters on the panel should outweigh that bias. Ratings on the panel interview all have to be justified and documented. That is, the rater must articulate reasons the applicant would or would not be an acceptable addition to the law enforcement agency (McFarland, Ryan, Sacco, & Kriska, 2004).

2.3.6   Medical Evaluation

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education has mandated that all law enforcement candidates must have been examined by a physician, selected by the appointing or employing agency, who is licensed by the Texas Medical Board. The physician must be familiar with the duties appropriate to the type of license sought and appointment to be made. The appointee must be declared in writing by that professional within 180 days before the date of appointment by the agency to be physically sound and free from any defect which may adversely affect the performance of duty appropriate to the type of license sought and shows no trace of drug dependency or illegal drug use after a physical examination, blood test, or other medical test (Texas Administrative Code, Title 37, Part 7, Chapter 217).

Mandated medical evaluation has the appearance of being in direct contradiction to Titles I and V of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). A disability is defined as, with respect to an individual, a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. Major bodily functions include but are not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions (Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990).

ADA states that no covered entity shall discriminate against a qualified individual on the basis of disability in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement, or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, and other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. The covered entity cannot limit, segregate, or classify a job applicant or employee in a way that adversely affects the opportunities or status of such applicant or employee because of the disability of such applicant or employee; exclude or otherwise deny equal jobs or benefits to a qualified individuals because of the known disability of an individual with whom the qualified individual is known to have a relationship or association; not making reasonable accommodations to the known physical or mental limitations of an otherwise qualified individual with a disability who is an applicant or employee, unless such covered entity can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the

business of such covered entity; or deny employment opportunities to a job applicant or employee who is an otherwise qualified individual with a disability, if such denial is based on the need of such covered entity to make reasonable accommodation to the physical or mental impairments of the employee or applicant.

ADA also states that employers cannot use qualification standards, employment tests or other selection criteria that screen out or tend to screen out an individual with a disability or a class of individuals with disabilities unless the standard, test or other selection criteria, as used by the covered entity, is shown to be job-related for the position in question and is consistent with business necessity (Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990).

2.3.7   Psychological Testing

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education will not issue a peace officer's license prior to the candidate being examined by a psychologist, selected by the appointing or employing agency, who is licensed by the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists. The psychologist must be familiar with the duties appropriate to the type of license sought and appointment to be made. This examination may also be conducted by a psychiatrist. The appointee must be declared in writing by that professional to be in satisfactory psychological and emotional health to serve as the type of officer for which the license is sought within 180 days before the date of appointment by the agency. The examination must be conducted pursuant to professionally recognized standards and methods (Texas Administrative Code, Title 37, Part 7, Chapter 217).

The Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory is used during psychological testing in the hiring process (Caillouet, Boccaccini, Varela, Davis, & Rostow, 2010). Starke Hathaway, PhD and J.C. McKinley, MD at the University of Minnesota's Hospitals developed the test in the 1930's and 1940's. The test is conducted to measure a candidate's personality and suitability for police work. The test itself has no "pass" or "fail", but measures suitability against what would be considered the norm personality for a law enforcement officer. Gynther stated that differences in responses of whites and blacks could be explained by the differences in the manner in which these groups of people were raised. Varying cultures have an assortment of values, perceptions and expectations (Gynther, 1972).

From the earliest recorded law enforcement agencies, Caucasian males have been the representative police officer (Barlow & Barlow, 2000). Once a person has secured employment as a law enforcement officer, they may choose to leave this line of profession for a variety of reasons. In the next section, those reasons will be further discussed as well as the implications of their vacancy.

2.4 **Reasons for Separating from Law Enforcement**

The resignation of police officers is a concern to police administrators due to the amount of training time a new police officer requires (Haar, 2005). This is time that a department must compensate a field training officer while investing into the career of the new officer. There is also the financial loss the department will incur due to recruiting, selecting, training a new officer, and outfitting. There is a disruption caused to the department while a new officer is selected and trained to the point where they are self-sufficient (Haarr, 2005).

The estimated replacement cost for an officer in the year 1999 was approximately $29,000.00 (Harris & Baldwin, 1999). This dollar amount is taken into consideration the salary of the officer before they separated, the training they received, and the cost of the police academy, the cost of uniforms, the cost of insurance and benefits, and time that was spent training them by a field training officer.

Another barrier that may prevent a career in law enforcement for a minority member is disdain from their own race. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the first law enforcement entities were a means of social control, namely to ensure slavery remained intact (Barlow & Barlow, 2000). As minority officers were allowed to become a part of main stream law enforcement, they were placed in a precarious position between their own race or ethnicity and the law enforcement entity that was tasked with the control of their race or ethnicity (Barlow & Barlow, 2000). The first African-American law enforcement officers were called upon to ensure racially disparate laws were imposed upon on their own race. After the rioting of 1935, much of the Harlem community felt as much hostility towards the African-American officers as they did the white officers (Kuykendall & Bums, 1980). The citizens viewed the African-American officers as much of the enemy as the white officers were.

A study conducted in London in 1997 by Holdaway and Barron revealed that African American and Asian officers were routinely excluded from full participation in the London workforce. In order for these officers to be fully integrated into the department, they had to demonstrate allegiance to the Caucasian occupational culture. Many officers were unable to reconcile their occupation with their race and therefore left

the department. They were only able to be African American or Asian outside their occupation as a police officer.

The study conducted by Hoffman, Little, and Perlstein (1980) suggested that minority leaders may be partiality to blame for the hostility towards minority police officers. In their study on Racial Minorities and Women Workers in a Big City Police Department: A Case Study in the Elusiveness of Affirmative Action , several minority-based companies/social groups were studied. These groups included the Black Student Union at a local university, Urban League, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Indian Support Office at a local university, Committee of Spanish Speaking People, as well as numerous employment agencies. All of the organizations pledged their support, and promised to help in the recruitment of people they interact with in their organization to the police department; however, none of these agencies referred a qualified applicant for the police officer. The researchers suggest that this lack of buy-in from minority leaders appears to be insurmountable, but believes that the real leaders in the minority communities have yet to be identified and their assistance in recruiting fully achieved. The researchers feel that those teachers, ministers and others at the grass roots level should be included in the recruitment effort (Hoffman, Little, & Perlstein, 1980).

Other barriers identified within this study were potential decline in the number of openings an agency has, competition in the selection process, competition between law enforcement and the private sector for qualified minority applicants, hostility or doubt about the agencies sincerity regarding hiring of minorities and women, indecision on the part of the department as to how to utilize the women, negative perceptions on the

agency's selection procedures by women and minorities, and apathy on the part of many members of the department regarding affirmative action. The study concluded that there is an under-representation of minorities and women in positions of power and authority and an over-representation of women in lower status-civilian positions (Hoffman, Little, Perlstein, 1980).

Haarr conducted a study as to why police drop out titled, Factors Affecting the Decision of Police Recruits to "Drop Out" of Police Work (2005). He studied 446 police recruits in the Phoenix Regional Police Basic Training. He kept up with the recruits from the time they entered the academy until one year after completing the academy. He identified four (4) lines of thought for drop out. They are as follows: job satisfaction, "burnout" theory, confluency theory, and cognitive dissonance theory.

Job satisfaction is associated to salary, overtime, insurance, length of workweek, and retirement incentives. Officers expect to be compensated for the job they do. They expect to be compensation to be comparable to agencies around them as well as the private sector.

Burnout can be brought on my job stress, which leads to emotional exhaustion. Veteran officer describe it as occupational frustrations associated with authoritarian management styles, organizational policies, departmental policies, lack of appreciation for their efforts, system of internal discipline, relations with civil officials, court policies, and community expectations (Haarr, 2005).

Confluency theory is associated with people entering into police work not having a full understanding of what police work is about, and not knowing what to expect. These mentioned reasons for officers to drop out mainly address why veteran officers

drop out, not the rookie officers. Cognitive dissonance theory better explains that. The officers that resigned cited dissatisfaction with the job itself, the amount of paperwork involved, the social isolation associated with police work, and the public image of the job (Haarr, 2005).

Policing is heavily influenced by Caucasian masculine males, which can give females a unique set of problems different than racial/ethnic minorities. Historically, females were expected to stay home to raise children and handle household duties. Female officers experience hostility from male co-workers and unsupportive husbands, sexual harassment, gender discrimination from peers/supervisors/and subordinates (Haarr, 2005).

2.5   **Perception**

A perception study was conducted in 1995 by Ruggiero and Taylor that showed how disadvantaged group members perceive the discrimination that confronts them. In this study, one experiment involved a Caucasian evaluator and African American students. The evaluator would give either very positive or very negative feedback to the student. The evaluator was either shielded behind a blind, or the student could see them. In the instances where the student could see the evaluator and the evaluator delivered negative feedback, the student stated that the negative feedback was given due to discriminatory reasons. The reasoning given was that blaming negative feedback on discrimination offers self-protection. That is, a disadvantaged group member can blame the negative feedback on discrimination and therefore bolster self-esteem in light of failure.

Another perception study conducted in 2005 by Camp and Langan focused on minority and female opportunities for job advancement in a federal prison setting. They state that affirmative action programs are strongly opposed when the programs are directed at racial or ethnic minorities as opposed to women or the handicapped. This study asked those employed by an equal opportunity employer to rate their experiences for opportunities to promote as opposed to those of minorities. The results were that Caucasian employees overrated the opportunities of minorities, even though the actual job promotions received by minorities were consistent with the number of minorities employed. Caucasian and African American employees perceived their own opportunity for advancement approximately the same.

As highlighted in the review of the literature, there is a gap in the knowledge regarding the perception of police officers in Texas towards law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates. In Chapter 3, the author will attempt to add to the body of knowledge by gathering perception data from the current police officers in the form of a survey. The survey will measure the perception of the police officers that believe the TCLEOSE hiring standards and the Burleson Police Department's hiring standards are fair to minority law enforcement officer candidates. The data collected will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, 2007 student version 16.0 Graduate Pack for Windows program.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of police officers towards law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates while controlling for gender. The researcher formulated a survey utilizing the survey methodology, which was submitted and approved by the University of Texas Institutional Review Board. Federal regulations require that a committee called the Institutional Review Board (IRB) review, approve and monitor all research involving human subjects. The IRB protects the rights and welfare of human research participants. The University of Texas at Arlington, by action of the President, has established an IRB to review human subject research. This board is supported by Regulatory Services. The IRB reviews research that is conducted or supported by the University of Texas at Arlington faculty, students or staff in order to determine that the rights and welfare of the human subjects are adequately protected. The IRB is guided by the ethical principles described in the 'Belmont Report' and by the regulations of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services found at Title 45 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 46. The University of Texas at Arlington maintains an approved Federalwide Assurance (FWA) of Compliance with the Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP) (UTA Regulatory Services).

The origin of the survey is that it was drafted by the researcher based upon the available literature, or lack thereof. It is the researcher's goal to highlight the lack of information and literature on the perception of police officers in regards to the hiring process as it pertains to minority candidates. The information gained by the researcher will add to the body of knowledge on this particular subject.

The questions were designed in such as way as to gain the perception of police officers regarding the hiring process as they pertain to minority candidates. To accomplish this, the survey was divided into sections. The sections in the survey are: the belief of the officer towards their department being representative of the community, the perception of the fairness and the strictness of the hiring standards of their department and TCLEOSE, the reason why the officer believes they were hired (based upon minority status or gender), the officer's perception as to why minority candidates find it difficult to being a career in law enforcement, and demographic information to gauge the background of the respondent. See Appendix A for a copy of the survey instrument.

Police officers were asked to mark their responses using a 5 point Likert scale: 5=agree strongly, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, and 1=disagree strongly to questions regarding their particular beliefs on a specific question.

The survey was implemented on police officers that currently work for the Burleson Police Department after obtaining written approval from the Chief of Police. It was felt that Burleson, Texas is representative of most law enforcement agencies as it pertains to the population of the city and the number of officers that are employed. The Burleson Police Department and the University of Texas-Arlington have a close relationship which facilitated the implementation of the survey.

Burleson, Texas is located 12 miles south of downtown Fort Worth, and approximately 45 miles west of downtown Dallas. It is situated primarily in Johnson County, but extends somewhat northwards into Tarrant County. According to the Recruitment Action Plan, Revised May, 2009, provided to me by the Burleson Police Department, the City of Burleson covers 26.5 square miles and has an estimated population of 33,250. The police department employs 55 full-time police officers and 21 civilian employees. The race/ethnicity breakdown for sworn personnel is as follows: white males 46; Hispanic males 1; African American males 1, Asian males 1, Causation females 6. Their mission statement is: The Burleson Police Department is committed to protect the lives, property, and rights of all. We will enforce all laws impartially while maintaining the highest degree of ethical behavior and professional conduct. We will strive to be a part of the community that has empowered us to serve. Their core values are: Ethical-service with honesty, integrity, and trust; Committed to Protect-Working to reduce the fear and presence of crime; Professional-Attaining the highest level of training and service; Cooperation through Communication-Listening to one another's concerns and opinions; and Diversity-Reaching out to all members of the community. Their vision statement is "in partnership with the community."

The survey was administered in two instances to ensure that all 55 sworn police officers had ample opportunity to participate by completing a survey. In the first instance, the survey was sent via electronic mail as an attachment to every sworn police officer by the chief's administrative assistant. Also included with the survey was a cover letter from the researcher explaining the purpose of the research, the fact that the surveys would be kept confidential by the researcher, the survey would be completed

anonymously by the participant, the participant could stop completing the survey at any time, or the participant could decline to take the survey. The participant was to print the survey, complete by a certain due date given by a command staff member in the department, and return the completed survey to this command staff member. This command staff member would place the completed surveys in an envelope to later provide them to the researcher. To ensure anonymity the officers were instructed to not write any information that would in any way identify who completed the survey.

In the second instance, the researcher made a personal appearance at the police department on two separate dates. The researcher was allowed time during three (3) patrol division pre-shift briefings to distribute the survey and read the same cover letter as explained earlier. The officers were advised that if they had already taken the survey that they were not to complete it again. The researcher then left the immediate area while the officers finished their survey. All paperwork was then retrieved and immediately placed in an envelope to be kept confidential. The researcher also met with employees in the detective bureau and all other officers she had access to while at the police department. These employees were given an opportunity to complete a survey with the same cover letter attached.

Six personal appearances were made to the police department (three briefings on two days) in order to bolster the number of surveys collected by the command staff member utilizing the e-mail approach. It was a concern of the researcher that the officers may not have fully believed the surveys would be kept confidential and were possibly afraid of retaliation for answers the command staff did not believe to be appropriate. Another reason is that by making a personal appearance, the researcher could present her

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own police department credentials. Police officers are typically cautious about answering questions of a personal or controversial nature with those who are not employed in law enforcement.

The respondent number of 43 followed Cohen's power sample technique. That is, Cohen believed that a certain sample size was needed to achieve a certain power. He believed that a sample size of 44 was required to achieve a power of .80 (Keppel, Saufley, & Tokunaga, 1992).

Upon compiling the completed surveys, all the responses were coded into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), for coding. In Chapter 4 the author will discuss the statistical manipulations that were used on the surveys and the results of the manipulations. A frequencies test was performed to obtain the percentages of responses in regards to demographics. In the non-demographic responses, gender will be controlled in order to obtain any statistically significant differences between male and female responses. A T-test was performed to obtain the means and the P-value for each response.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to examine perceptions of police officers towards law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates while controlling for gender. The current body of knowledge is limited in scope when exploring the difference in perspective between males and females in law enforcement in regards to the law enforcement hiring process as it pertains to minorities. This chapter will make a contribution to the current body of knowledge by controlling for gender while applying appropriate statistical manipulations to the completed, coded surveys from the participating officers from the Burleson Police Department using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Table 1 contains descriptive statistics for the survey respondents. The responses are reported in percentages retrieved from SPSS. A frequencies test was performed to obtain the percentages of responses.

Table 1 Demographic Information

Variable	Response in Percentages
Gender	
Male	81
Female	19
Race/ethnicity	
Caucasian	98
Missing value	2
Age	
21-25	9
26-30	9
31-35	23
36-40	28
41-45	19
46+	12
# of years employed as a law enforcement officer	
1-5	44
6-10	9
11-15	12
16-20	19
21+	16
Experience in recruiting	
Yes	23
No	77
# of years experience in recruiting	
1-5	12
6-10	12
21+	2
Missing value	74
Current rank	
Patrol Officer	65
Corporal/FTO	5
Sergeant	21
Lieutenant	2
Missing value	7
I belong to a Specialized unit	
Yes	44
No	56

Table 2 demonstrates the responses offered by the respondents to the non-demographical questions. In these set of responses, gender is being controlled in order to obtain any statistically significant differences between male and female responses. A T-test was performed to obtain the means and the P-value for each response.   P-values range from 0 to 1. The lower the P-value, the more likely it is that a difference occurred as a result of statistical significance and not by chance alone.

Table 2 T-Test while controlling for gender

Variable	Means/Gender		P-value
	Male	Female	
1. The racial makeup of my police department should closely reflect the racial demographics of the community in which I work.	2.4	2.88	.008**
2. Members of minority groups are productive law enforcement officers.	1.69	1.5	.135
3. The hiring process in my department is fair as it pertains to minorities.	1.26	1.25	.934
4. The hiring process in my department is conducted according to **TCLEOSE** guidelines.	1.2	1.5	.001**
5. The hiring process in my department is conducted according to **departmental** guidelines.	1.11	1.5	.000**
6. I was hired at my department due to my **racial/ethnic makeup**.	4.63	5	.002**
7. I was hired at my department due to my **gender**.	4.69	4.62	.509
8. The Command Staff at my department is committed to diversity in the workplace.	1.97	2	.879
9. The current TCLEOSE hiring standards are very strict in that it makes it difficult for **racial/ethnic** minority candidates to seek a career in law enforcement.	4.48	4.62	.336
10. The current TCLEOSE hiring standards are very strict in that it makes it difficult for **gender** minority candidates to seek a career in law enforcement.	4.49	4.62	.780
11. The current departmental hiring standards are very strict in that it makes it difficult for **racial/ethnic** minority candidates to seek a career in law enforcement.	4.57	4.38	.155
12. The current departmental hiring standards are very strict in that it makes it difficult for **gender** minority candidates to seek a career in law enforcement.	4.66	4.75	.315

With regards to question 1; that is whether or not the respondents believed that the racial makeup of their police department should closely reflect the racial demographics of the community in which I work, the responses offered by males are 2.4. The responses offered by females are 2.88. The P-value of .008 is statistically significant at the .01 level. In regards to question 2; members of minority groups making productive law enforcement officers, the responses offered by males is 1.69. The responses offered by females are 1.58. The P-value of .135 is not statistically significant. In regards to question 3; whether or not the hiring process is fair, the responses offered by males is 1.26. The responses offered by females are 1.25. The P-value of .934 is not statistically significant. In regards to question 4; whether or not the hiring process is conducted according to TCLEOSE guidelines, the responses offered by males is 1.2. The responses offered by females are 1.5. The P-value of .001 is statistically significant at the .01 level. In regards to question 5; whether or not the hiring process is conducted according to departmental guidelines, the responses offered by males is 1.11. The responses offered by females are 1.5. The P-value of .000 is statistically significant at the .01 level. In regards to question 6; if the respondent was his hired because of their racial/ethnic makeup, the responses offered by males is 4.63. The responses offered by females are 5. The P-value of .002 is statistically significant at the .01 level.

In regards to question 7; if the respondent was hired due to their gender, the responses offered by males is 4.69. The responses offered by females are 4.62. The P-value of .509 is not statistically significant. In regards to question 8; The Command Staff is committed to diversity, the responses offered by males is 1.97. The responses offered by females are 2. The P-value of .879 is not statistically significant. In regards to

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question 9; TCLEOSE hiring standards make it difficult for racial/ethnic minority candidates, the responses offered by males is 4.48. The responses offered by females are 4.62. The P-value of .336 is not statistically significant. In regards to question 10; TCLEOSE hiring standards make it difficult for gender minority candidates, the responses offered by males is 4.49. The responses offered by females are 4.62. The P-value of .780 is statistically significant. In regards to question 11; departmental hiring standards make it difficult for racial/ethnic minority candidates, the responses offered by males is 4.57. The responses offered by females are 4.38. The P-value of .155 is not statistically significant. In regards to question 12; departmental hiring standards make it difficult for gender minority candidates, the responses offered by males is 4.66. The responses offered by females are 4.75. The P-value of .315 is not statistically significant.

The third table represents the responses offered by the officers as to their perception of why minorities found it difficult to enter a career in law enforcement. Responses are offered in percentages.

Table 3   Responses to respondent reasoning

I believe that the following represents the most significant reason as to why minority police candidates find it difficult to begin a career in law enforcement. (please select only ONE)	Response in Percentages
Socioeconomics	9
Family pressures	1
Lack of confidence in law enforcement	23
Lack of opportunity	2
Criminal record/prior criminal	6

As it relates to the data presented in Chapter 4, the author will explain the meaning of these findings in Chapter 5. The author will discuss policy implications, the role of police administrators, ramifications to police academies and police departments, and future studies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The findings in Chapter 4 are unique to the body of knowledge as they relate to the perception of police officers towards law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates while controlling for gender. To the best of the author's knowledge, no other study of this kind has been conducted.

Responses to four survey questions solicited responses that were statistically significant to the .005 value when controlled for gender. These survey questions were: the racial makeup of the police department should reflect the community, the hiring process is conducted according to TCLEOSE standards, the hiring process is conducted according to departmental standards, and being hired based upon racial/ethnic makeup. That is, male and female officers have different perceptions as it relates to the hiring practices of minorities. The differences in responses can have far reaching implications.

The entire department can be positively or negatively affected by the values of the administration. If the administration has the propensity to set the tone throughout the entire department if they value diversity, provide training on the advantages of diversity, enact equal opportunities, and have a system of checks and balances in regards to internal and external race relations. One's perception is their

reality. If the belief is that diversity is not valued from the administration, then it could attract like minded employees. The already employed can either share that same value system, or may separate to find a department that shares their values.

Police administrators may choose to modify the manner in which they recruit candidates for employment. The difference in perception responses from males and females indicates that genders may respond differently to recruiting programs as well. This can mean recruiting teams that are chosen based on gender for specific target audiences. The manner in which information is presented can also be tailored for gender. Recruiting brochures can outline employment opportunities that would appeal to both genders.

The police academy can also effect the perception of minority candidates. Police academies in Texas will allow students that are not yet hired by a department to attend classes to become TCLEOSE certified. The manner in which cadets are being taught may need to change based upon gender differences.   Males and females attend the same academies and yet graduate with varied perceptions about law enforcement.

The police academy can only teach the material that is provided to them by TCLEOSE.   The author suggests that TCLEOSE alter their material for the maximum learning benefit of all genders and racial/ethnic minorities. Clearly, more study as to the learning styles of these groups should be done to achieve this goal. It is not suggested that TCLEOSE provide a different manual for every racial/ethnic minority group and gender, merely to be aware of learning differences and perhaps vary portions of the handbook provided to student.

These findings can have an impact on where police personnel are assigned and to which division they are assigned. In a department where officers are on patrol in pairs, it might be beneficial to have male/female partners. It is argued that males and females approach situations and conceptualize solutions in different manners. Having more viable solutions to community issues and crime could mean a reduction in resorting to physical force against violators. It could also mean a reduction in the number of complaints from citizens against officers.

In future studies, the author would survey additional police departments in the same geographic region to ascertain if the findings are comparable to those of the Burleson Police Department. After a regional comparison, the end goal would be to survey all Texas police departments. The author would compare all the findings attempting to locate patterns or similarities/differences of statistical significance in responses by geographical region, population of the city and department, and demographics of the city and department.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Dear Respondent,

My name is Nicole Shaw I am a graduate student at the University of Texas-Arlington. You are invited to participate in a research project that will explore perceptions of sworn police officers in the city of Burleson, Texas in regards to law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates. This study is conducted as a required component of a Master of Arts degree in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice and is in no way affiliated with the City of Burleson, or the Burleson Police Department.

Should you choose to participate, my hope is that I will be able to include your responses in order for researchers to better understand the perceptions of sworn police officers in regards to law enforcement hiring practices as they pertain to minority candidates. Findings may be published as part of a thesis, included in scholarly journals, and posted on the World Wide Web.

There are no known risks to you if you participate in this study. Responses to this questionnaire are anonymous. The survey will in no way be identified with you personally, nor will the survey personally identify you with any other respondent. In order to assure your anonymity, you should not enter your name or email address on the questionnaire. Your participation is voluntary. I hope you will choose to take approximately 20 minutes to complete the survey. There is no penalty if you choose not to participate and you may skip any question.

If you choose to participate, please complete the survey that I am going to pass out to you. Fill in your responses on the survey form itself.   Upon completion, return your survey to me. I will keep the completed surveys in a secure location until such a time as I turn them into the University with my completed research.

If you would like information regarding the general results of this study, or if you have questions or concerns, please contact:

A. Nicole Shaw   nshaw@cityofallen.org
        469.855.9020

A. Del Carmen, PhD   adelcarmen@uta.edu

OR-

Institutional Review Board   University of Texas –Arlington   817.272.3729

SURVEY

This survey is being used to investigate the hiring practices of law enforcement agencies in Texas. Your participation in this survey is purely voluntary and no penalty will be administered to you if you opt to not participate. In order to participate in this study, you must be over the age of 21 and be a law enforcement officer in the State of Texas. Your responses are anonymous and confidential.

The following statements are about your law enforcement officer experience. On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being agree strongly and 5 being disagree strongly, please read and mark your responses to the following statements.

For the sake of this study, gender minorities describe females in law enforcement. Minority groups describe all races/ethnicities other than Caucasian.

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1. The racial makeup of my police department should closely reflect the racial demographics of the community in which I work.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

2. Members of minority groups are productive law enforcement officers.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

3. The hiring process in my department is fair as it pertains to minorities.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

4. The hiring process in my department is conducted according to **TCLEOSE** guidelines.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

5. The hiring process in my department is conducted according to **departmental** guidelines.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

6. I was hired at my department due to my **racial/ethnic makeup**.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

7. I was hired at my department due to my **gender**.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

8. The Command Staff at my department is committed to diversity in the workplace.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

9. The current TCLEOSE hiring standards are very strict in that it makes it difficult for **racial/ethnic** minority candidates to seek a career in law enforcement.

   Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
       1   2   3   4   5

10. The current TCLEOSE hiring standards are very strict in that it makes it difficult for **gender** minority candidates to seek a career in law enforcement.

    Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
        1   2   3   4   5

11. The current departmental hiring standards are very strict in that it makes it difficult for **racial/ethnic** minority candidates to seek a career in law enforcement.

Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
    1   2   3   4   5

12. The current departmental hiring standards are very strict in that it makes it difficult for **gender** minority candidates to seek a career in law enforcement.

Agree Strongly   Disagree Strongly
    1   2   3   4   5

13. My gender is:

Female   Male

14. The race/ethnicity I most closely identity with is:

Caucasian

African American

Hispanic

Asian/Pacific Islander

Middle Eastern

Other

15. My age is:

21-25   26-30   31-35   36-40   41-45   46+

16. I have been employed as a law enforcement officer for _____ years. (Please indicate number of years)

17. I have experience in recruiting and/or hiring police candidates on behalf of my department?

                    YES   NO

18. If you answered yes to question #17, please indicate the number of years of experience. _____ years

19. Please indicate your current rank:

    P1-Patrol Officer

    Corporal/FTO

    Sergeant

    Lieutenant

20. I belong to a specialized unit:

                    YES   NO

21. I believe that the following represents the most significant reason as to why minority police candidates find it difficult to begin a career in law enforcement. (please select only ONE)

    Socioeconomics

    Unfair hiring process

    Family pressures

    Lack of confidence in law enforcement

    Lack of opportunity

    Criminal record/prior criminal

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Angela Nicole Shaw began her law enforcement career in 1997 and has 6 years of experience as a background investigator and recruiter. She began her educational journey at the University of Texas-Arlington in 2008 and graduated in 2010.