

**“They Talk the Talk but They Don’t Walk the Walk”:
A Qualitative Inquiry into Police Officers’ Perceptions of Stress and Stress Management**

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Abstract

Police officers have one of the most stressful jobs in existence. However, information pertaining to stress management programs is limited, especially within a Canadian context. Furthermore, little is known about the processes through which officers construct their perceptions of stress and stress management since the literature has mainly focused on enumerating the frequency of existing stressors. The present study addresses these limitations by conducting a content analysis of 24 in-depth interviews with officers from a law enforcement agency in Ontario. By drawing on symbolic interactionism, the present study concludes that police officers gravitate toward the “me” or the socialized aspect of the self (Goffman, 1969) when constructing their perceptions of stress and stress management in order to protect their image and avoid stigmatization. Policy implications based on these findings are presented at the end of the study, along with directions for future research.

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Chapter 1:

Introduction

Police officers tend to have one of the most stressful jobs in existence (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Paton, Violanti, Burke & Gehrke, 2009). In addition to routine stressors, law enforcement personnel may be exposed to potentially life-threatening circumstances (Brown & Campbell, 1994). As a result of this exposure, police officers may also become vulnerable to physical or mental illnesses (Ainsworth, 2002; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Madonna & Kelly, 2002). Although physical or mental illnesses may arise due to stress associated with police work, a vast majority of law enforcement personnel fail to seek help due to the stigma associated with available programs (Lantermann, Boyle, Pascarella & Furrer, 2010; Paton et al., 2009). In order to avoid being stigmatized, police officers may decide to self-medicate through the use of alcohol and drugs (Lantermann et al., 2010; Paton et al., 2009). This is problematic since substance abuse can lead to absenteeism, early retirement, and an overall decrease in work performance (Ainsworth, 2002; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Madonna & Kelly, 2002; Paton et al., 2009). In extreme cases, officers may commit suicide to alleviate work-related stress (Baker, 2010; Paton et al., 2009). According to Lantermann et al. (2010), the suicide rate for police officers continues to be higher than the suicide rate for the general population, proving that work-related stress in policing should not be ignored.

1.1 The Purpose & Significance of the Present Study

While research pertaining to stress in police work has been identified in the existing literature, it remains incomplete. According to Abdollahi (2002), the current state of knowledge on stress in policing is limited because it lacks a theoretical foundation; academics mainly focus on listing the frequency of existing stressors in policing and accentuating the relationship

between these stressors and officers' demographic characteristics and levels of perceived stress. Some researchers, on the other hand, tend to emphasize the correlation between officers' coping strategies and demographic characteristics, while others tend to embrace the conceptual framework of police culture to describe how police officers cope with their work environments. Scholars also tend to assess the effectiveness of various stress management programs by comparing officers' physical, psychological, and behavioural outcomes following their engagement with these programs. By limiting their focus, however, academics fail to apply broader criminological or sociological theoretical frameworks to explain the processes through which officers' perceptions and behaviours emerge, develop, and change. Consequently, the present study seeks to develop possible criminological and sociological explanations of stress and stress management in policing by examining officers' perceptions from a symbolic interactionist perspective. By referring to the symbolic interactionist framework, this study will be better able to understand the ways in which officers interact amongst themselves and others in order to construct their perceptions and their coping strategies.

According to the literature, there are two main sources of police stress: operational demands (those that are specific to policing) and organizational demands (those generated by the hierarchical nature of the profession) (Brown & Campbell, 1990; Brown, Fielding & Grover, 1999; Kohan & Mazmanian, 2003; Violanti & Aron, 1993, 1994, 1995). While both operational and organizational demands are prevalent in policing, researchers fail to explore other possible sources of police stress such as the criminal justice system (Anderson, Swenson & Clay, 1995; Daniello, 2011; Duxbury & Higgins, 2012; Finn & Tomz, 1997; Pozzulo, Bennell, & Forth, 2009), the media and/or the public (Anderson et al., 1995; Duxbury & Higgins, 2012), work-life conflict (Duxbury & Higgins, 2012), and commuting to and from work (Brown & Campbell,

1990). Consequently, the present study seeks to acquire additional knowledge about officers' accounts of stress in order to determine whether or not alternative sources of police stress exist.

Since the definition of stress in policing is focused on operational and organizational demands, researchers often compare the two and, in doing so, have discovered that organizational demands are more distressing than operational demands (Kohan & Mazmanian, 2003; Lanterman et al., 2010; Paton et al., 2009; Pozzulo et al., 2009). Nevertheless, programs offered by law enforcement agencies tend to address operational demands as opposed to organizational demands (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Goldstein, 2006; Madonna & Kelly, 2002). While these programs are commonly implemented by law enforcement agencies, the literature fails to consider whether or not police officers perceive them as helpful. The present study seeks to better understand existing stress management programs in order to determine whether or not they are perceived as useful in addressing police officers' accounts of stress.

In examining the issue of stress in police work, many researchers have proposed a series of recommendations based on their findings. Upon examining work-life conflict and officer well-being in Canada, for instance, Duxbury and Higgins (2012) found that officers had very little control over their work hours and managers rarely provided them with career development opportunities. Duxbury and Higgins suggested that Canadian police organizations increase the level of flexibility and control that officers have over their work hours and train managers to become more supportive. While these recommendations are legitimate, they do not originate from officers themselves. The present study seeks to better understand the ways in which police officers would design their own stress management programs in order to develop a series of recommendations based on police officers' perspectives and experiences.

By addressing the above-mentioned research objectives, the present study can enhance our understanding of symbolic interactionism and police officers' perceptions of stress and stress management, making the results from this study academically and practically significant. On an academic level, results from the present study can be used to better understand officers' socially mediated perspectives and how they develop and change through social interaction. The results can also be used to further develop our understanding of symbolic interactionism, including the specific processes through which identity management and the construction of meaning take place. On a practical level, results from the present study can be used to influence policy reform. By sharing their perspectives, officers are able to encourage police organizations to strengthen existing stress management programs so that these programs better address their needs.

1.2 Overview

The following chapter (Chapter 2) is devoted to examining the different ways in which stress in police work has been studied and defined in the literature. Various sources of police stress are also conceptualized. In addition, Chapter 2 focuses on describing the types of stress management programs that are typically available to police officers such as counselling, wellness programs, critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) programs, and peer support programs. This chapter also draws on police culture to illustrate the ways in which officers cope with their environments. From there, the tenets of symbolic interactionism are described, forming the basis of the researcher's theoretical framework. The chapter then concludes by outlining the research questions to be explored, along with the researcher's objectives. Chapter 3 describes the methodological framework and the qualitative research design used to explore the topic of stress in policing. Furthermore, the data collection and analysis process is thoroughly explained. From there, the strengths and limitations associated with semi-structured interviews and content

analysis are also acknowledged. Lastly, details pertaining to participant recruitment and the study population are introduced, along with the ethical safeguards undertaken to protect officers involved in this study. Chapter 4 presents the results pertaining to officers' perceptions of stress and stress management programs, along with the results pertaining to officers' ideal stress management programs and initiatives. Furthermore, reasons for using or not using existing stress management programs are explored, along with preferred coping strategies. Chapter 5 analyzes these findings in relation to the symbolic interactionist framework outlined in the literature review. By analyzing these results, the researcher is able to conclude that officers choose to gravitate toward the "me" or the socialized aspect of the self (Goffman, 1969) when constructing their perceptions and their coping strategies so that they can protect their reputations and avoid stigmatization. The final chapter (Chapter 6) reviews the purpose and significance of the present study. From there, policy implications based on officers' perceptions of stress and stress management programs are presented. The chapter then concludes with the study's strengths and limitations, along with directions for future research.

1.3 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented the current state of knowledge on stress in policing and expressed the need to examine officers' perceptions from a symbolic interactionist perspective. I then concluded with an overview of the remaining five chapters of this thesis. In the following chapter, I conceptualize the topic of stress in policing and introduce the research goals and objectives based on the apparent gaps in the literature.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review

In this chapter, I introduce the concept of stress and contextualize it within the field of policing. I then describe the stress management programs available to police officers. From there, I refer to the literature on police culture to describe how police officers typically cope with their work environments. I then introduce my theoretical framework of symbolic interactionism, along with my research questions and objectives, in order to situate and guide the present study.

2.1 What is Stress?

According to Cooper, Dewe, and O'Driscoll (2001), stress is a complex term that has a variety of meanings to different people. Stress, for instance, has been traditionally defined in the literature as a stimulus, a response or the result of an interaction between the two (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Stinchcomb, 2004). More recently, however, stress has also been defined as a transaction – a continuous, ever-changing process through which individuals engage with their environment and perceive it as stressful (Cooper et al., 2001; Jones & Bright, 2001).

While stress is a concept that originated from the fields of physics and engineering, Hans Selye was the first to conceptualize the term in relation to human subjects (Le Fevre, Matheny & Kolt, 2003; Stinchcomb, 2004; Toch, 2002; Webb & Smith, 1980). It is for this reason Selye has become known as the founder of stress research. With a background in biology, Selye began to develop and view the concept of stress in physiological terms. According to Selye (1974), stress is defined as the “nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it” (p. 27). To some extent, certain demands made on the human body are specific. For instance, heat produces the specific response of sweating and cold produces the specific response of shivering.

Evidently, every demand on the body produces a unique physiological response. However, these

demands share one thing in common: they increase the body's need to perform adaptive functions so that homeostasis can be restored. Regardless of the demand or the stimulus, the human body's response will always be to adapt. This consistent need to adapt is considered a universal, non-specific response. The only thing that varies is the body's degree of response, which ultimately depends on the intensity of the demand for adjustment.

Although Selye's research has influenced our understanding of stress, his theory has been criticized for being too simplistic. According to Cooper et al. (2001), Selye's conceptualization of stress fails to acknowledge the body's psychological response to demanding stimuli. In addition, Selye's conceptualization of stress focuses solely on the body's physiological response to stress rather than the environmental conditions (e.g., stressors) that cause the stress itself (Stinchcomb, 2004). In order to address the second criticism, researchers adopted a stimulus-based approach by measuring life events – external, verifiable changes in an individual's social and personal environment (Jones & Bright, 2001). By doing so, researchers were able to define stress as something that is imposed on an individual from the outside.

While demanding environmental conditions influence the level of discomfort felt by individuals, the stimulus-based approach to stress has been criticized because it fails to explain why individuals experience different levels of psychological discomfort after being exposed to the same stimulus (Cooper et al., 2001; Jones & Bright, 2001; Stinchcomb, 2004). Furthermore, the stimulus-based approach does not take into account the possible individual differences in personal attributes (e.g., personality) that may also be responsible for varying responses to stress (Cooper et al., 2001; Webb & Smith 1980). Due to these discrepancies, an interactional approach to stress was developed (Ainsworth, 2002; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Chan, 2007).

According to Jones and Bright (2001), the interactional approach defines stress in relation to environmental factors and individual responses to such factors. More specifically, the interactional approach states that stress results from an “imbalance between the demands of the environment and the individual’s ability to adjust to those demands” (Webb & Smith, 1980, p. 252). Therefore, the interactional approach views stress as the behavioural, physiological, and/or psychological outcomes that are experienced in response to distressing environmental conditions. Based on this understanding, researchers who adopt this approach seek to examine the cause and effect relationship between various stimuli (e.g., workload) and the resulting behavioural (e.g., decrease in job performance), physiological (e.g., heart disease), and/or psychological (e.g., anxiety) outcomes that are experienced (Stinchcomb, 2004). Despite its contribution, the interactional approach has been criticized for focusing too much on identifying the cause and effect relationship between two variables associated with stress (Cooper et al., 2001). By limiting its focus, the interactional approach fails to consider the ongoing relationship between the individual and the environment, as well as the endless variables that influence the outcome of stress. Lastly, researchers who adopt the interactional approach have also been criticized for their tendency to measure threatening demands and the presence of individual outcomes without examining the perceptions of those who have been affected (Jones & Bright, 2001).

Following these criticisms, the conceptualization of stress has evolved even further, resulting in the development of the transactional approach or the transactional theory of stress. Lazarus and Folkman (1984), supporters of the transactional approach, define stress as “a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being” (p. 19). In other words, the transactional approach recognizes that stress is a complex multivariate process in which an

infinite number of factors shape an individual's experience of stress, including the environment, personality factors, the way in which one appraises the environment, and the way one copes with stress. According to the transactional perspective, however, the experience of stress is not static; the continual interplay between the individual and the environment causes one's experience of stress to change over time (Cooper et al., 2001; Jones & Bright, 2001).

2.2 What is Stress in Policing?

Like stress research itself, research pertaining to stress in police work has yet to conceptualize the “true” meaning of stress. Some researchers define stress in policing in terms of the sources or causes of such stress, while others define stress in terms of the interaction between police officers and the environment (Brown & Campbell, 1994). Regardless, stress in police work is most commonly defined as the “strain experienced by individuals as a result of not being able to deal with the demands of the disrupting conditions” (Chan, 2007, p. 130). The strain that results from exposure to such taxing environmental conditions can be experienced physiologically or psychologically (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Chan, 2007; Shane, 2010). According to Anderson et al. (1995), physiological stress refers to the “physical changes that occur in the body as a result of a stressful situation” (p. 34). Heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes are examples of physiological stress (Ainsworth, 2002; Lanterman et al., 2010; Pozzulo et al., 2009). Psychological stress, on the other hand, refers to the “emotional reactions that occur in response to stress” (Anderson et al., 1995, p. 5) such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Paton et al., 2009; Pozzulo et al., 2009).

While a universal definition of stress in police work has yet to be agreed upon, the majority of researchers believe that there are two main sources of stress (e.g., stressors) in

policing: operational demands or acute stressors and organizational demands or chronic stressors (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Dabney, Copes, Tewksbury & Hawk-Tourtlot, 2013; Kohan & Mazmanian, 2003; Paton et al., 2009). According to Pozzulo et al. (2009), operational demands are the “stressors relating to the job itself” (p. 47). More specifically, operational demands are those that are specific to street-level police work, such as the threat of physical danger and the potential exposure to disturbing or traumatic events (Dabney et al., 2013; Gershon, Barocas, Canton, Li & Vlahov, 2009). Other examples of operational demands include the unpredictability associated with the job, exposure to violence while working on the streets, and witnessing the murder of a fellow officer (Chan, 2007; Lanterman et al., 2010). Since they tend to be unpredictable, exposure to any of these operational demands may cause officers to experience acute stress – immediate stress that individuals experience in response to critical, unexpected incidents that are beyond their control (Anderson, Litzenberger & Plecas, 2002). Examples of acute stress may include anxiety, depression, and symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder. Although they can have a significant impact on police officers’ health and well-being, operational demands are considered low frequency events because they do not take place on a regular basis (Lanterman et al., 2010). In addition, acute stress caused by operational demands tends to have a short-term impact on those who are affected. If officers do not access available services to help them cope with the incident, however, acute stress can develop into chronic, long-term distress (Waters & Ussery, 2007).

According to Paton et al. (2009), organizational demands are “context driven events, and can include administrative issues as well as demands on officers generated by the bureaucratic, hierarchical nature of the profession” (p. 30). Organizational demands tend to involve routine tasks associated with the organizational structure of the police agency. Examples of

organizational demands include shiftwork, inadequate supervision, poor communication between patrol officers and supervisors, insufficient rewards, and lack of career development or advancement (Lantermann et al., 2010; Madonna & Kelly, 2002; Pozzulo et al., 2009). Station or force politics, otherwise known as office politics, can also be considered an organizational demand in policing (Brown & Campbell, 1990). According to Vigoda-Gadot (2007), office politics refers to the behaviours that maximize self-interests and conflict with collective organizational goals. In Brown and Campbell's (1990) study, between 20 and 49 percent of all officers (n = 954) were exposed to station or force politics and at least 50 percent of these officers reported instances of felt stress. As a result, police constables were more likely to be stressed by station or force politics compared to sergeants and senior managers.

In this same study, keeping up with new technology was also considered an organizational demand. According to Brown and Campbell (1990), between 20 and 49 percent of officers (n = 954) in their study were exposed to technological changes and perceived them as stressful. In Duxbury and Higgins' (2012) study, however, keeping up with technological advancements was not perceived as stressful. Instead, police officers stated that stress resulted from the added workload attributed to technological advancements (e.g., accessing work-related e-mails from home). This added workload also appeared to increase with rank; 59 percent of officers belonging to the command rank reported that their workload increased as a result of technology compared to 30 percent of officers belonging to the constable rank.

Unlike operational demands, organizational demands are considered high frequency events because they are more common and more widespread (Lantermann et al., 2010). Although organizational demands are not necessarily traumatic in comparison to operational demands, the accumulation of organizational demands may cause police officers to experience chronic stress

or long-term distress in the form of physiological ailments (e.g., heart disease) or psychological strain (e.g., depression). While acute stress caused by operational demands appears to be the most serious form of distress, both acute and chronic stress can lead to long-term physical or psychological consequences (Lanterman et al., 2010; Paton et al., 2009).

Although serious long-term physical and psychological consequences may result from stress, individual experiences of stress may also vary (Ainsworth, 2002; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Daniello, 2011; Gershon, et al., 2009). This is because situations are not stressful in themselves; “stress results from an imbalance between perceived environmental demands on the individual and his or her perceived response capability” (Brown & Campbell, 1994, p. 15). In other words, different people respond to incidents in different ways. Two police officers arriving at a gruesome crime scene, for instance, may develop different reactions; one may be unaffected by the tragedy while the other may develop symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder. Stress may also result due to individual differences in personal attributes (Abdollahi, 2002). According to Kirmeyer and Diamond (1985), police officers with Type A personality traits (e.g., high self-demand for achievement, competitive, cynical, suspicious, aloof) tend to actively appraise a stressful situation as one that can be changed. Officers with Type B personality traits (e.g., non-competitive, non-aggressive, patient, easy-going), on the other hand, tend to passively view a stressful situation as one that cannot be changed. As a result, officers with Type A personality traits tend to select coping strategies that are narrowly focused on the stressor at hand compared to those with Type B personality traits. In other words, officers with Type A personalities tend to report using problem-focused coping strategies more often than their Type B counterparts. Type A officers, for instance, tend to change their own behaviour (e.g., try a new technique) to cope with stress while Type B officers tend to wait and see what

would happen upon encountering a stressful situation. Since statistical measures were used to analyze the relationship between officers' coping strategies and personality types, however, the underlying meanings behind these findings could not be assessed.

In order to better understand the relationship between stress and policing, researchers have looked at perceived work stress and the presence of operational and organizational demands in police work. Kohan and Mazmanian (2003), for instance, gathered 199 police officers from the Thunder Bay Police Service (TBPS) ($n = 43$) and the northwest region of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) ($n = 156$) to voluntarily participate in completing a series of questionnaires, including the Police Daily Hassles and Uplifts Scales. These questionnaires gathered information pertaining to perceived work stress and officers' work experiences. In order to examine officer well-being, Kohan and Mazmanian measured burnout – “an extreme state of depleted resources that can result from chronic exposure to work stress” – using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (p. 561). The MBI looked at various dimensions of burnout including emotional exhaustion (depleted energy and fatigue) and depersonalization (cynicism toward the organization). Kohan and Mazmanian found that, as a group, police officers appraised operational demands more negatively than organizational demands. Nevertheless, patrol officers reported operational demands as more bothersome than organizational demands compared to supervisors and administrators who reported the opposite. Furthermore, Kohan and Mazmanian found a stronger correlation between organizational demands and emotional exhaustion ($r = .42$) compared to operational demands and emotional exhaustion ($r = .29$). They also found a stronger correlation between organizational demands and depersonalization ($r = .45$) compared to operational demands and depersonalization ($r = .34$). Altogether, Kohan and Mazmanian found that, while both operational and organizational demands were associated with burnout, a stronger

correlation existed between burnout and daily organizational work experiences. These conclusions, however, did not consider the salience of operational and organizational demands in relation to other perceived stressors. In addition, Kohan and Mazmanian employed closed-ended questionnaires and inferential statistics to generate these conclusions. As such, they were unable to explain why these relationships exist. They were also unable to explain the processes through which these relationships emerge, develop, and change.

Since organizational demands are prominent in policing, Duxbury and Higgins (2012) decided to identify the most common organizational sources of police stress. In their study, Duxbury and Higgins administered a survey containing pre-established measures of organizational demands to 7,091 officers in 25 police forces across Canada and discovered that police officers appraised having to deal with multiple complex tasks and understaffing as the most distressing. More specifically, 40 percent of respondents are often required to complete a number of tasks (e.g., work on multiple assigned files) simultaneously within what they perceive to be an unrealistic timeframe. Forty percent of respondents also stated that understaffing is problematic; officers that leave a particular department are not being quickly replaced, resulting in unfilled positions and insufficient staff coverage. While these findings are informative, the use of pre-established measures prevented Duxbury and Higgins from determining whether or not additional forms of organizational demands exist.

Brown and Campbell (1990) and Violanti and Aron (1993, 1994, 1995) used closed-ended surveys and descriptive statistics to examine the prevalence of organizational sources of perceived stress, resulting in similar findings. In Brown and Campbell's (1990) study, 954 officers from an English police force were surveyed about their degree of exposure to organizational demands and their level of perceived stress using the Stressors and Felt Stress

Inventory. In Violanti and Aron's (1993, 1994, 1995) study, 103 police officers from a police department in New York were asked to rank their level of perceived stress (0 = no stress; 100 = maximum stress) with respect to organizational demands. Altogether, Brown and Campbell (1990) discovered that the most frequently reported organizational sources of perceived stress for more than half of the respondents were staff and manpower shortages, shiftwork, time pressure and deadlines, as well as lack of communication with superiors. Violanti and Aron (1993, 1994, 1995) reported similar results, stating that the highest ranked organizational stressors were shiftwork, inadequate support from the department, insufficient personnel, excessive discipline, and inadequate support from supervisors. Unlike Duxbury and Higgins (2012), Brown and Campbell (1990) and Violanti and Aron (1993, 1994, 1995) also examined police officers' degree of exposure to operational demands and their level of felt stress. In doing so, Brown and Campbell (1990) discovered that attending the scene of a sudden death and arresting a violent person were the two most frequently reported operational sources of felt stress for more than half of the respondents. Violanti and Aron (1993, 1994, 1995), on the other hand, discovered that the two top-ranked operational demands were killing someone in the line of duty and witnessing a fellow officer's murder. Since closed-ended questionnaires were used in both studies, these researchers were unable to determine whether or not alternative forms of operational and organizational demands exist, or whether results can be generalized to a Canadian context. They were also unable to uncover the latent meanings behind their findings; they could not determine why these particular operational and organizational demands were perceived as stressful.

The criminal justice system/court system is also considered a source of stress to some police officers (Anderson et al., 1995; Daniello, 2011; Duxbury & Higgins, 2012; Finn & Tomz, 1997; Pozzulo et al., 2009). Police officers may experience stress when their expertise is

challenged in the courtroom (Anderson et al., 1995). In Brown and Campbell's (1990) study, for instance, between 20 and 49 percent of officers ($n = 954$) testified in court and between 20 and 49 percent of these officers experienced stress as a result. Without being able to probe participants and analyze the underlying implications of their findings, however, Brown and Campbell could not determine why court appearances were perceived as stressful.

The public and/or the media are another common source of police stress. According to Anderson et al. (1995) and Duxbury and Higgins (2012), the public and the media often hold unrealistic expectations about police officers' roles. Many of these expectations come from Hollywood movies in which officers' roles are misconstrued. Police officers tend to be portrayed as indestructible superheroes who can enforce the law as they see fit (Anderson et al., 1995). In reality, police officers are human beings like the rest of us; they are required to report to their superiors and deal with routine tasks. Therefore, when they are unable to live up to the public's unrealistic expectations, they may experience stress. Police officers may also experience stress when they encounter distorted accounts or publicized allegations of brutality and/or racism in the media (Finn & Tomz, 1997).

According to Duxbury and Higgins (2012), stress is also caused by work-life conflict since police officers are required to balance heavy demands at work with heavy demands at home. In their study, Duxbury and Higgins discovered that police officers typically spend approximately 53.5 hours per week engaging in police work and that an officer's workload increases dramatically with rank. Higher-ranking officers who devote longer hours to their work are at a higher risk of experiencing stress and greater work-life conflict. Elevated levels of work-life conflict can also be caused by non-work related demands such as childcare and eldercare. In their study, Duxbury and Higgins found that respondents spend about 16 hours per week caring

for their children and elderly dependents. However, officers in higher-ranking positions spend the least amount of hours per week engaging in childcare and/or eldercare compared to lower-ranking officers. In addition, female officers tend to spend more time per week engaging in childcare compared to their male counterparts. Female sergeants, for instance, spend 26 hours per week caring for their children compared to their male counterparts who spend an average of 19 hours. Therefore, officers working full-time, particularly females and those in lower-ranking positions, are placed at a higher risk of experiencing work-life conflict, role overload, and stress as the number of hours they spend engaging in childcare and/or eldercare increases. This is especially true for officers with pre-school aged children. According to Duxbury and Higgins, work-life conflict typically decreases as the age of the youngest child increases. Closed-ended questionnaires did not allow Duxbury and Higgins to determine whether or not alternative forms of work-life conflict exist.

Excessive travel to and from work is another source of stress for police officers. In Brown and Campbell's (1990) study, for instance, fewer than 20 percent of officers (n = 954) from a large police force in England reported that they traveled excessively to and from work and 50 percent or more of these officers experienced stress as a result. Brown and Campbell were unable to probe participants to determine why this source of stress was particularly bothersome. Since descriptive statistics were also used, Brown and Campbell (1990) were unable to uncover underlying meanings and themes associated with this particular source of stress.

These sources of police stress identified in the research literature suggest that stress in police work remains an ongoing issue. As such, many law enforcement agencies have implemented a number of programs to help alleviate the stress experienced by police officers. While some of these programs are mentioned in the literature, research pertaining to stress

management programs in policing is lacking, especially within a Canadian context. The following section will examine the literature pertaining to the types of programs that are available to police officers.

2.3 What Kinds of Stress Management Programs are Available to Police Officers?

In the 1960s and 1970s, major companies in North America implemented a series of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) so that counselling and support services could be made available to employees (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Goldstein, 2006; Roland, 2011). These programs were based on this idea that the welfare of the organization is highly dependent on the welfare of the people within the organization (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Roland, 2011). In keeping with this mentality, a number of police organizations have also introduced a series of EAPs. In policing, EAPs are “structured interventions that are designed and implemented to remediate stress” (Daniello, 2011, p. 72). Generally speaking, these EAPs seek to provide intervention as early as possible after a traumatic incident has taken place in order to alleviate forms of psychological distress such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Blau, 1994; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Daniello, 2011; Madonna & Kelly, 2002).

In addition to being clearly defined, Employee Assistance Programs can be broken down into two categories: internal EAPs and external EAPs. According to Goldstein (2006), internal EAPs are management-based programs “located within the organization itself” (p. 34) and external EAPs are programs that “function outside of the department or organization itself” (p. 35). Whether they are internal or external, EAPs serve the same purpose: to alleviate stress among police officers (Goldstein, 2006).

According to Goldstein (2006), EAPs that function internally tend to provide short-term support in the form of critical incident stress management and debriefing. The critical incident

stress debriefing (CISD) program, for instance, is an internal EAP that is commonly used by many law enforcement agencies. In policing, the CISD program is an “organized and systematic approach to managing psychological crises” (Daniello, 2011, p. 77). It is comprised of mental health professionals and peer support personnel who are trained to provide support to officers after a traumatic incident occurs (Madonna & Kelly, 2002). In order to discourage officers from engaging in maladaptive coping strategies, CISD teams respond within 24 and 72 hours after a traumatic incident has taken place (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Daniello, 2011). Altogether, CISD teams aim to mitigate the impact of the critical incident and accelerate the recovery process (Daniello, 2011; Madonna & Kelly, 2002). In order to do so, CISD teams focus on debriefing; participants are encouraged to discuss the events that took place along with their feelings about what transpired (Daniello, 2011). In response, CISD teams provide officers with information on how to reduce the impact of stress. Although immediate support can be beneficial to officers, CISD programs may not be as effective for some since symptoms of distress do not always emerge immediately after an incident; it is possible for symptoms associated with trauma to “make their appearance weeks, months, or even years later” (Madonna & Kelly, 2002, p. 10).

Carlier, Lamberts, Van Uchelen, and Gersons (1998) assessed the effectiveness of the CISD program in minimizing distress among police officers following a traumatic incident. More specifically, Carlier et al. conducted non-randomized clinical structured interviews with 46 police officers who engaged in the CISD program and 59 officers who did not engage in the CISD program eight months and eighteen months following a civilian plane crash in Amsterdam. Eight months after the incident took place, there was no significant difference between debriefed and non-debriefed officers. By 18 months, debriefed officers experienced more hyper-arousal symptoms compared to non-debriefed officers. Seven percent of the debriefed officers, for

instance, developed partial PTSD 18 months following the disaster ($p < .05$) compared to none of the non-debriefed officers. These results, however, are inconsistent with those found in Leonard and Alison's (1999) study. In their study, Leonard and Alison investigated the coping behaviours of Australian police officers who did ($n = 30$) and did not ($n = 30$) participate in the CISD program following a shooting incident. Upon examining their results, Leonard and Alison discovered that officers who participated in the CISD program showed a significant reduction in anger levels and displayed a greater use of adaptive coping strategies compared to those who did not participate in the CISD program. Interestingly enough, however, officers who participated in the CISD program did not rate it as useful; over one-half of debriefed respondents did not change their attitudes about CISD programs, stating that they were too brief and did not offer any follow-up support. Despite these findings, Carlier et al.'s (1998) use of structured interviews and Leonard and Alison's (1999) use of questionnaires did not allow them to probe participants about their perceptions of CISD programs. At the same time, their use of inferential statistics prevented them from exploring possible underlying explanations for officers' perceptions.

While CISD programs are widely used by a number of police organizations, peer support programs are another set of internal EAPs that have been growing in popularity since the 1970s (Goldstein, 2006). Peer support programs are programs run internally by the police organization in which peer support officers "provide basic support to coworkers across ranks" (Roland, 2011, p. 509). Peer support officers are active or retired police officers who volunteer their time to help fellow officers in need of someone to talk to (Anderson et al., 1995; Goldstein, 2006; Madonna & Kelly, 2002; Roland, 2011). Although they act as counsellors, peer support officers do not conduct therapy; they are briefly trained on the fundamental elements of counselling and are only required to provide an empathic ear (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Goldstein, 2006). The

Membership Assistance Program (MAP) is an example of a peer support program available to police officers at the New York City Police Department (NYPD) (Crane, 2001). Since the implementation of MAP, officer suicides throughout the NYPD have decreased. While peer support programs can help preserve lives, some officers may feel reluctant to confide in peer support officers. This is because police organizations may require peer support officers to report violations of departmental guidelines or existing laws to their superiors (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Goldstein, 2006). Nevertheless, if peer support officers recognize serious signs of distress that are beyond their abilities like suicide or substance abuse, they often refer police officers to mental health professionals (Blau, 1994; Goldstein, 2006; Waters & Ussery, 2007).

Services offered by mental health professionals can be considered a form of internal or external employee assistance. This is because some mental health professionals work directly in specific police departments while others are contracted by police organizations (Blau, 1994). Mental health professionals who are contracted by police agencies are not actually affiliated with police departments; they are private mental health care providers who work independently from the police organization (Blau, 1994; Goldstein, 2006). Nevertheless, many of the external mental health professionals are familiar with law enforcement procedures and have experience working with front-line officers (Blau, 1994). Unlike peer support officers, psychiatrists are legally required to protect the confidentiality of police officers involved (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Goldstein, 2006). Furthermore, psychiatrists are able to refer officers to other agencies that can provide further assistance without the knowledge of the police organization (Brown & Campbell, 1994). While external services are available, police officers may feel like mental health professionals would not be able to assist them since these mental health professionals do not know what it is like to work in law enforcement (Anderson et al., 1995; Crane, 2001). On the

other hand, officers may feel less reluctant to use counselling services if these officers are employed within supportive police departments (Carlan & Nored, 2008). In their study, Carlan and Nored found that officers working in departments that offer supportive counselling services reported significantly lower levels of stress ($p < .01$) and a greater willingness to use counselling services ($p < .05$). Millar (2002) had a similar conclusion. Upon conducting structured interviews with 13 former British clients of in-house police counselling services, Millar (2002) found that officers had a favourable perception of counselling; all of the participants had benefited from counselling, with two-thirds indicating significant improvements to their physical and physiological health, social functioning, and work performance. Since questionnaires and statistical procedures were employed in Carlan and Nored's (2008) study, however, the underlying meaning behind officers' perceptions of counselling could not be explored. Millar (2002), on the other hand, conducted structured interviews and grounded theory analyses. Since structured interviews were employed, however, Millar was unable to seek clarification or probe participants to elaborate on interesting themes that may have emerged throughout her study.

In order to address police officers' reluctance to use various internal and external psychological services, alternative peer support programs have been implemented which are outside of the police agency's control and management (Lantermann et al., 2010). The Police Organization Providing Peer Assistance (POPPA) program, for instance, was launched in 1996 to provide support to police officers employed by the NYPD. Although POPPA is a non-departmental program that is supported by the NYPD, it functions as its own distinct entity. The program aims to provide a confidential hotline and face-to-face contacts to officers who are experiencing stress without the knowledge of the NYPD. Peer support officers (PSOs) – active NYPD officers from all ranks who volunteer to assist officers in need – run this hotline. PSOs

are trained to provide an empathic ear and screen for suicidal or homicidal ideation and alcohol abuse. If PSOs believe that callers are in need of immediate attention, they will schedule a face-to-face meeting at a neutral location no more than 24 hours after the initial call has been made.

The New Jersey Law Enforcement Officers Hotline, otherwise known as the Cop-2-Cop program, was implemented in 1998 following an increase in police suicides (Lanterman et al., 2010). Like POPPA, the Cop-2-Cop program seeks to provide 24-hour crisis intervention, suicide prevention, and mental health support to officers experiencing distress. Unlike POPPA, retired officers run the Cop-2-Cop program as opposed to active law enforcement personnel (Lanterman et al., 2010; Ussery & Waters, 2006). By employing retired officers to run the hotline, it is believed that police officers' risk of being identified will be minimized. According to Ussery and Waters' (2006) study, the Cop-2-Cop program should be successful because the officers who run the hotline integrate the norms and the language of the police profession into the program, shortening the assessment phase and the length of the therapeutic process. Ussery and Waters' conclusion, however, is based on the fictional accounts of four police officers. Consequently, Ussery and Waters are unable to determine how police officers actually feel about peer support programs. Evidently, further research is needed to determine whether or not officers perceive peer-based programs as helpful in alleviating stress.

In addition to EAPs, a number of law enforcement agencies offer a variety of wellness programs to police officers. While they may differ across various law enforcement agencies, wellness programs seek to instill lifestyle changes so that police officers can better manage their stress and maintain a healthier way of life (Church & Robertson, 1999; Daniello, 2011). According to Church and Robertson (1999), wellness programs are different than EAPs because they focus on prevention as opposed to intervention. More specifically, wellness programs aim to

change police officers' negative behavioural habits by improving their physical fitness, nutrition, and diet. It is believed that, by focusing on these areas, wellness programs will be able to enhance police officers' psychological health and coping abilities (Brown & Campbell, 1994). According to Anderson et al. (1995), Daniello (2011), and Webb and Smith (1980), exercise can improve physical fitness and psychological well-being, reducing police officers' risk of engaging in maladaptive coping strategies (e.g., excessive drinking) to alleviate stress. In addition to regular exercise, a nutritious diet has been proven to enable the body to resist the depletion of the physical and emotional energy needed to cope with stressful stimuli (Daniello, 2011). Knowing this, many wellness programs focus on educating police officers about maintaining a healthy exercise regime and a nutritious diet.

Although wellness programs are offered by various law enforcement agencies, research pertaining to their perceived effectiveness in alleviating stress is limited. In one experimental study, for instance, Tanigoshi, Kontos, and Remley (2008) recruited 51 police officers from Louisiana to determine whether or not wellness counselling had a positive influence on health outcomes. Half of the participants were required to meet with a counsellor to determine personal wellness needs. The other half did not meet with a counsellor. Before and after the study took place, both groups were required to complete the 5F-Wel Inventory which measured total wellness. In the end, Tanigoshi et al. found that police officers who participated in wellness counselling achieved significantly higher scores on various wellness dimensions from pre-test to post-test compared to officers who did not participate in wellness counselling. Although wellness counselling achieved favourable results, this study was experimental in nature and did not evaluate the perceived effectiveness of existing wellness programs. Similar limitations were found in Church and Robertson's (1999) study. In their study, Church and Robertson surveyed

50 personnel directors from 50 state police agencies to determine the extent to which they provided a complete wellness program. In doing so, Church and Robertson found that participating agencies failed to address all five components (physical fitness, stress management, psychological/mental health, nutrition, alcohol or chemical dependency) of wellness. Although these findings are valuable, Church and Robertson failed to ask police officers about wellness programs and whether or not they found them useful. Since they employed closed-ended surveys and descriptive statistics, Church and Robertson were also unable to identify, analyze, and interpret the underlying meanings hidden beneath the surface of their findings.

2.4 How do Police Officers Cope with their Environments?

In order to determine how police officers cope with their environments, it is first important to explore how they generally construct meaning in their everyday lives. According to Shearing and Ericson (1991), police officers transmit anecdotes or police stories to best explain the complexities they face. In other words, police officers use stories to represent to each other the way things are, “not as statements of fact but as cognitive devices used to gain practical insight into how to do the job of policing” (Shearing & Ericson, 1991, p. 491). Altogether, these stories convey experiences in a form that officers can use to construct their actions on an ongoing basis.

According to Van Hulst (2013), police stories may differ from one context to the next. In his study on police storytelling in the Netherlands, Van Hulst found that storytelling was mostly a group activity which took place in the pantry – a space where team members had their breaks. In the pantry, officers would discuss general and private matters, including how they spent their weekends and/or what transpired in the news. However, Van Hulst found that the pantry was considered a natural environment in which officers were able to share exciting stories such as car

chases and officer shootings. Similar interactions also took place in patrol cars and in desk areas. In formal contexts (e.g., meetings between senior officers and staff), storytelling remained more factual; officers would recount incidents by excluding their personal opinions.

Regardless of the context, Brown (2007) states that interactions between police officers have led to the development of a police culture – an occupational culture embedded in policing through which officers are socialized to adopt “a set of assumptions that work to define, guide and constrain what is seen as appropriate behaviour” (p. 210). According to Paton et al. (2009), both formal (e.g., training) and informal (e.g., discussions with co-workers) interactions help shape officers’ perceptions. Through these formal and informal interactions, police officers learn to abide by certain rules and expectations. When they first join the force, police officers learn to adopt a sense of mission; they are socialized to believe that they must protect society from criminals (Cockcroft, 2013; Reiner, 1992). Once they have gained some experience on the job, however, police officers sometimes discover that justice does not always prevail. In order to minimize the anxiety produced by this realization, police officers become cynical about society and the criminal justice system (Reiner, 1992), and learn to abide by the following motto: “we take care of our own and do not need help; we are the helpers” (Baker, 2010, p. 9). In other words, police officers learn to maintain a macho image by being “brave and strong” as opposed to “sensitive and weak”.

As the literature suggests, police officers may feel pressured to abide by the norms set out by the police culture. Those who fail to abide by these norms are often seen as unfit to perform their occupational role (Ainsworth, 2002; Paton et al., 2009). Therefore, in order to maintain their macho image, officers may choose to relieve stress by engaging in selective coping strategies. By conducting open-ended interviews with 8 officers, for instance, Koch (2010) found

that the majority ($n = 6$) of participants used humour to “neutralize their emotional responses” so that unpleasant tasks could be performed (p. 94). However, Koch’s analysis was limited to officers’ responses to completed suicides, ignoring other possible mechanisms used by officers to cope with different stressful circumstances. In addition to humour, police officers may choose to self-medicate through the use of alcohol and drugs (Lantermann et al., 2010; Paton et al., 2009). In order to test this claim, Chopko, Palmieri, and Adams (2013) administered the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) to 193 officers across various police departments in the United States and discovered that 77.5 percent of subjects scored between 0 and 7, indicating no alcohol risk; 18.4 percent scored between 8 and 15, indicating moderate risk; 3.5 percent scored between 16 and 19, indicating high risk; and 0.6 percent scored 20 or more, indicating severe risk. Furthermore, Chopko et al. found a significant association between alcohol use and work-related traumatic stress, suggesting that some officers use alcohol to relieve stress. While these results are valuable, the AUDIT did not allow the researchers to determine whether or not officers use other mechanisms to cope with stress. Nevertheless, the literature suggests that substance abuse is especially problematic since it can lead to work-related problems including absenteeism, early retirement, and an overall decrease in work performance (Ainsworth, 2002; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Madonna & Kelly, 2002; Paton et al., 2009). For some officers, the pressure to abide by cultural norms and expectations may exacerbate their condition, causing them to engage in aggressive behaviour (e.g., smashing things) to alleviate stress (Gershon et al., 2009). In extreme cases, police officers may even commit suicide to alleviate work-related stress (Baker, 2010; Paton et al., 2009).

In order to avoid stigmatization, police officers may also fail to seek professional help (Lantermann et al., 2010; Paton et al., 2009). Goldstein (2005), for instance, examined police

officers' utilization of the Vermont State Police Peer Support Program by administering questionnaires to members of the Vermont State Police Department. Of the 141 subjects who returned the questionnaires, 108 of them had never used the program because they believed that there was stigma associated with its use. Since open-ended interviews and content analyses were not conducted, however, Goldstein was unable to determine whether or not officers had other reasons for not using the program. In addition, he was unable to determine the reasons behind why some officers chose to use the program. Nevertheless, Goldstein's study highlights the importance of the police culture in shaping officers' perspectives and behaviours. As such, the traditional occupational police culture will be described, along with the sources of variation in police culture.

2.4.1 The Traditional Occupational Police Culture

There are different ways to conceptualize police culture. According to Paoline (2003), some researchers refer to the Traditional Occupational Police Culture Model to better understand the concept of police culture. The model views police culture as a "collective bond and professional world-view that arises among police officers as a result of the common strains encountered on the job" (Paoline & Terrill, 2014, p. 3). Suspiciousness and maintaining the edge, for instance, are two coping mechanisms commonly prescribed by the police culture to help officers cope with their occupational environments (Cockcroft, 2013; Loftus, 2010; Paoline, 2003; Paoline, Myers & Worden, 2000; Reiner, 1992). By being suspicious of their surroundings, officers are able to reduce the uncertainty associated with their occupational environment. The same holds true with maintaining the edge. Officers believe they can minimize the potential danger they confront by constantly being one step ahead of community members and by properly displaying coercive authority over them. Laying low ("cover your ass") and

embracing the crime fighter orientation are two other coping mechanisms prescribed by the police culture to help officers cope with their organizational environments (Cockcroft, 2013; Paoline, 2003; Paoline et al., 2000). By laying low and maintaining a strict adherence to the crime fighter orientation, officers are able to minimize undue attention from punitive superiors. By maintaining a strict adherence to the crime fighter orientation, officers are also able to minimize any role ambiguities; they are able to identify with the orientation that has been recognized as the official mandate of the police, supporting law enforcement or “real” police work over order maintenance and serving the public. While these coping mechanisms are designed to assist police officers, they can result in social isolation (Loftus, 2010; Paoline, 2003, Reiner, 1992). By being suspicious and maintaining the edge, police officers may feel disconnected from the communities they serve. Due to this disconnect, a strong group loyalty may also form; officers may socialize exclusively with other police officers.

The demands for exclusive loyalty and total commitment put forth by the occupational culture suggest that police organizations possess the characteristics of “greedy institutions” (Peterson & Uhnno, 2012). According to Coser (1974), “greedy institutions” are establishments that “seek exclusive and undivided loyalty” from their members while attempting to reduce the claims of competing organizations (p. 4). In other words, “greedy institutions” are organizations that exert subtle pressure on individuals to weaken their ties (or not form any ties) with other groups that might conflict with their own demands. In response, members become so totally committed to the “greedy institution” that their limited energies cannot be devoted to other social groups. Unlike total institutions, which physically isolate like-situated individuals from the wider society, Coser (1974) states that “greedy institutions” “tend to rely mainly on non-physical mechanisms to separate the insider from the outsider” (p. 6).

In addition to emphasizing the importance of exclusive loyalty and total commitment to the organization, the Traditional Occupational Police Culture Model contends that police culture is monolithic; it is interpreted and experienced by all officers in the same way (Herbert, 1998; Loftus, 2010; Manning, 2007; Manning & Van Maanen, 1978; Paoline & Terrill, 2014; Skolnick & Fyfe, 1993). According to Paoline (2003), this model is no longer realistic since police organizations are constantly changing; various police departments are more heterogeneous than ever before, employing a diverse set of male and female officers from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Paoline argues that police culture is not a uniform phenomenon but one that varies depending on officers' social position within that culture.

2.4.2 Sources of Variation in Police Culture

The way officers view the world changes depending on the organization in which they work, their rank, their policing style, their race, their gender, and the philosophical orientation of the police organization (Haarr, 1997; Haarr & Morash, 1999; Loftus, 2010; Paoline, 2003). These sources of variation in police culture will be presented in the following sub-sections.

(i) Organizations

According to Paoline and Terrill (2014), occupational and organizational environments differ as a result of some identifiable attributes across police agencies. Wilson (1968), for instance, states that there are three departmental policing styles that law enforcement agencies may adopt. The first is known as the watchman style which emphasizes the use of informal tactics to resolve conflicts. The second is known as the legalistic style which is bureaucratic, rigid, and emphasizes a law enforcement approach to policing. The third is known as the service style which emphasizes the importance of community involvement, public relations, and providing helpful services to all citizens. Police officers working within service style

departments tend to see themselves as helpers as opposed to crime fighters; they focus on fulfilling myriad responsibilities, including those not directly related to crime control.

(ii) Rank

There are many police cultures that are maintained by members of various levels of the police chain of command (Cockcroft, 2013; Paoline & Terrill, 2014). According to Reuss-Ianni (1983), two different police cultures exist with regards to rank. The street cop culture, found among the lower-ranking patrol officers, focuses on the daily grinds of street-level police work and, in doing so, endorses many of the codes associated with the Traditional Occupational Police Culture Model such as group loyalty and laying low from supervisors. Furthermore, the street cop culture emphasizes the need to rely on in-group ties and personal decision-making experiences to influence local crime reduction. Contrarily, the management cop culture is found among upper-level supervisors and senior-ranking officers and focuses on long-term concerns (e.g., crime control, citizen responsiveness) in relation to a number of political, social, and economic factors. Unlike the street cop culture, the management cop culture emphasizes the need to engage in city-wide or system-wide crime reduction through efficient organization, rational decision-making, cost-efficient procedures, and objective accountability at all levels of policing. According to Cockcroft (2013) and Davies (2000), upper-management is more concerned with cost-efficient procedures because of political pressures to reduce costs and create value-for-money services.

Although different cultures exist, Paoline (2003) argues that officers' engagement with a particular culture is not static. As officers advance in rank, commitment to the street cop culture may wane. This is because the street cop culture, which emphasizes the need to manage the strains found within the occupational environment, may no longer be relevant.

(iii) Police Officer Style

In addition to rank, variations in police culture exist due to individual differences among police officers (Cockcroft, 2013; Paoline, 2003; Paoline & Terrill, 2014). According to Paoline and Terrill (2014), police officers develop different working styles depending on the ways in which they individually perceive their occupational and organizational environments. While they share certain attitudes, officers are able to think individually. The style that police officers adopt, however, is largely influenced by personal experiences in the field (Paoline, 2003).

According to Reiner (1992) and Talarico and Swanson (1980), police officers may adopt one of four individual policing styles. The first is known as the professional. The professional understands that his or her job goes beyond fighting crime; he or she must also assume the role of enforcer, social worker, and counsellor. The second style is known as the reciprocator who believes that servicing citizens is more important than law enforcement. The third is known as the enforcer who is dedicated to fighting crime and taking decisive action. He or she tends to emphasize law enforcement, even if rules need to be bent. The fourth is the avoider who is cynical about the profession and about society as a whole. He or she also displays disdain for confrontation. The avoider tends to maintain a low profile and he or she tends to ignore conflicts, hoping that they will resolve themselves.

(iv) Race and Gender

In addition to officers' policing style, the transformation of the police culture can also be attributed to the changing composition of police personnel. According to Paoline (2003), police forces are becoming more heterogonous since they are now employing more racial minorities, women, and individuals with higher education (Paoline, 2003; Paoline et al., 2000). Consequently, such diversity may influence socialization patterns between previously excluded

members and traditionally accepted officers. This is especially evident in Haarr's (1997) study on socialization patterns within a police organization ($n = 48$) in the United States which found that white males' rates of cross-race (19.2 percent) and cross-gender (15.4 percent) interactions were substantially lower than their rates of same-race (80.8 percent) and same-gender (84.6 percent) interactions. Haarr also found that white female officers were more likely to form friendships with other female officers in the department as opposed to male officers. This division in race and gender may have occurred in response to the traditional occupational culture which normalizes masculinity and racial prejudice (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Paton et al., 2009; Reiner, 1992). As a result, women and racial minorities tend to encounter sexist and racist attitudes upon entering the police force (Haarr, 1997). In order to evade these attitudes, women and racial minorities may avoid interacting with certain members of the police force, resulting in weaker attachments to dominant peer groups (Paoline, 2003; Paton et al., 2009). With diversity across police personnel, however, new styles of policing may develop, ultimately diluting those reinforced by the traditional occupational culture (Loftus, 2010).

Since socialization patterns differ across groups of police officers, the way in which these groups develop mechanisms for coping with stress may also differ. By surveying 1,087 officers in the United States, Haarr and Morash (1999) found that female officers tend to cope with stress by escaping their stressors (e.g., ignore the situation) and keeping written records of their actions more often than men. Haarr and Morash also found that African-American officers tend to cope with stress by interacting with those whom they share a racial bond ($p < .001$). Caucasian officers, on the other hand, are more likely to cope with stress by avoiding their stressors. In this study, Haarr and Morash administered a questionnaire to participants based on in-depth interviews with six Caucasian and two African-American female officers. Consequently, the

perceptions of male officers and officers from other ethnic backgrounds were not captured in the questionnaire. Furthermore, additional coping strategies used by male officers and other racial minority officers, along with the contexts behind these strategies, were largely ignored.

Additional research emphasizing the use of in-depth interviews would be helpful in identifying other possible coping strategies that have not yet been identified in the literature. In addition, since statistical procedures were used to analyze and interpret the relationship between officers' race, gender, and coping strategies, Haarr and Morash were unable to delve below the surface of their data and explore the underlying implications of these existing relationships.

(v) Philosophical Orientation of the Organization

In addition to gender and race, the transformation of police culture can be attributed to police organizations' changing philosophical orientations which have been influenced by the advent of neo-liberalism and shifting mentalities of governance (Garland, 1996; Rose, 1996; Shearing, 1996). Through neo-liberal influence, the "responsibility and authority for governance has been relocated from the state to private entities" (Shearing, 1996, p. 286). This means that central government is no longer primarily responsible for the well-being of its citizens; rather, citizens and non-state agencies are responsible for regulating their behaviours and keeping their communities safe. According to Gray (2009) and Kelly and Colquhoun (2005), workplace safety has also gone through a process of responsabilization; employees are assigned more responsibility for their own safety at work. Due to this ideological shift, police organizations have embraced a community policing philosophy that favours greater role orientations and partnerships with citizens (Paoline, 2003). Consequently, officers employed by these organizations are expected to expand their role to include functions beyond that of law enforcement, such as resolving public disputes.

2.5 Theoretical Framework

According to Abdollahi (2002), the current state of knowledge on stress in policing is limited because it lacks a theoretical foundation. Researchers mainly focus on enumerating the frequency of existing stressors in policing and accentuating the relationship between these stressors and officers' demographic characteristics and levels of perceived stress. Some researchers emphasize the importance of identifying the correlation between officers' coping strategies and demographic characteristics, while others tend to identify the relationships between stressful circumstances and negative outcomes such as psychological stress, psychiatric disorders, and physical ailments (Abdollahi, 2002; Cullen, Lemming, Link & Wozniak, 1985). Due to the importance placed on these relationships, researchers have also focused on assessing the effectiveness of stress management programs in reducing negative outcomes. Consequently, researchers have yet to fully examine police officers' perceptions of stress management programs and the processes through which perceptions of stress and stress management are constructed. In other words, researchers have yet to explore the ways in which officers use various linguistic resources and symbols to formulate their perspectives and their coping strategies, and have yet to explore the processes through which officers interpret the reactions of others to shape their own perceptions and behaviours. Instead, researchers have used the conceptual framework of police culture to describe how police officers cope with particular aspects of their work environment. While police culture plays an important role in shaping officers' perceptions, including their decision to engage in various coping strategies, there has been a failure to apply broader criminological or sociological theoretical frameworks to explore the extent to which police officers use social scripts prescribed by the police culture to simultaneously cope with stress, manage impressions, and stay true to their role.

In order to address the theoretical shortcomings of the existing literature, the present study seeks to develop possible criminological and sociological explanations of stress and stress management in policing by examining officers' perceptions from a symbolic interactionist perspective. Symbolic interactionism seeks to understand society, particularly the influence culture plays in human behaviour, and the place of the individual in society (Barbalet, 2009). By drawing on the work of symbolic interactionists, particularly Blumer (1966) and Mead (1972), this study will be able to explain how officers use significant symbols, including language or vocal gestures, to shape or guide their perceptions of stress and stress management. By drawing on Blumer (1966) and Mead's (1972) concept of role-taking, this study will also be able to explain how officers define and interpret their actions in relation to the actions of others before adopting various perspectives and stress management techniques. In using the symbolic interactionist framework, this study will examine how officers mediate between the socialized ("me") and individualized ("I") aspect of the self in order to shape their lines of conduct (Mead, 1972). Furthermore, by drawing on the work of Becker (1973) and Cohen (1955), this study will explore how police officers create, interpret, and modify the social scripts prescribed by cultural and subcultural groups in order to make sense of their organizational environments. Finally, by employing a symbolic interactionist framework, this study will be able to explain how these social scripts help officers manage impressions and adequately perform their role while in the front stage (Goffman, 1969).

By examining officers' perceptions of stress and stress management from a symbolic interactionist perspective, this study will also address some of the other limitations associated with previous empirical research by moving beyond enumerating existing sources of perceived stress and assessing the relationship between stressors, outcomes, and coping strategies. Rather

than reproduce existing knowledge, the symbolic interactionist paradigm will enable me to examine the processes through which officers interact with others (and themselves) to guide their behaviours and construct their perceptions of the environment. Lastly, by examining stress in police work through this lens, I will also be able to better understand human interaction and the creation of meaning, ultimately contributing to our existing knowledge of the symbolic interactionist perspective. The basic tenets of symbolic interactionism will be presented in the following sub-section.

2.5.1 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological perspective that grew from the philosophy of pragmatism in the late 19th century (Hewitt, 2000). Unlike functionalist perspectives that view reality as inherently made and waiting to be discovered, pragmatists believe that knowledge acquisition involves an active process of coping with life's demands and is therefore always in the making (Pascale, 2011). At the same time, pragmatists believe that knowledge does not represent reality; rather knowledge is an instrument for dealing with it. To pragmatists, each action changes the conditions for subsequent actions. In addition, pragmatists believe that one's identity is not established prior to action but is discovered or constructed by an individual during his or her course of action and that human beings are able to continuously adapt to the changing world by contemplating and assessing the situations they encounter (Barbalet, 2009). It is for this reason that, unlike functionalists, pragmatists believe mental activities should be open to scientific investigation.

George Herbert Mead was one of the first pragmatists to develop his own notion of social interaction. According to Blumer (1966), Mead believed in two forms of social interaction – non-symbolic interaction and symbolic interaction. In non-symbolic interaction, a conversation of

gestures takes place; individuals unconsciously respond directly to each other's actions (Blumer, 1966; Mead, 1972). During non-symbolic interaction, the meaning of gestures is not understood; individuals simply respond to the stimuli they encounter. From this conversation of gestures emerges symbolic interaction or the interpretation of gestures. During symbolic interaction, gestures have a meaning for the person who makes them and the person toward whom they are directed. When gestures have the same meaning for each party, an understanding arises. These gestures of mutual understanding are referred to as "significant symbols" (Mead, 1972, p. 47). Through the use of significant symbols, particularly language or vocal gestures, organisms are able to anticipate their own responses and the responses of others, resulting in the adjustment of those responses on the basis of anticipation. Organisms also create meaning by taking on the role of the other through the use of significant symbols (Blumer, 1966; Mead, 1972). By developing lines of conduct through the definition and interpretation of their actions in relation to the actions of others, human beings are able to sustain established schemes or patterns of group life (Blumer, 1966). These schemes, according to Mead (1972), are only maintained by the continued confirmation of others. This process, however, is not static. Definitions and interpretations may change over time as individuals re-define each other's acts via vocal gestures.

The self, otherwise known as the process through which organisms can view themselves reflexively, also develops in a similar fashion (Blumer, 1966; Mead, 1972). According to Mead (1972), the human being is an object to himself; he is able to perceive himself, have conceptions of himself, communicate with himself, and act toward himself. The human being may, in other words, become the object of his own actions, resulting in self-interaction (Blumer, 1966; Mead, 1972). The human being has the ability to describe things to himself, including his wants and his goals, as well as the actions of others around him. It is through self-interaction that the human

being is able to form and guide his conduct. His behaviour is not a product of biological and environmental factors; rather, the human being acts toward his world, interpreting what confronts him and organizing his action on the basis of the interpretation. In order to view himself reflexively, however, the human being must see himself as others would see him; he must place himself in the position of others and view himself or act toward himself from that position. According to Mead (1972), there are two aspects of the self – the “me” and the “I”. The “me” is “the organized set of attitudes of others which one himself assumes”, resulting in the formulation of internalized norms and values (Mead, 1972, p. 175). It is considered the socialized aspect of the individual and represents learned attitudes, behaviours, and expectations of others and society. The “me” is developed from the knowledge of society and the social interactions that the individual has gained. The “I”, on the other hand, is “the response of the organism to the attitudes of the others” (Mead, 1972, p. 175). It is the unpredictable and impulsive aspect of the self and represents the individual’s identity based on the response to the “me”. Both the “me” and the “I”, according to Mead, have a dialectic relationship; the “me” exercises societal control over oneself and the “I” allows the individual to express creativity and individualism.

In 1937, Herbert Blumer used Mead’s perspective to form his own theory of social interaction, which is now commonly referred to as symbolic interactionism. Like Mead, Blumer (1969) believed that “human beings act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them” (p. 2). The meanings assigned to physical objects, people, and abstract concepts develop through social interaction with others. These meanings, however, are not static; they develop and change through a dynamic process in which people adjust their definitions based on the responses they receive from others. While meanings are the product of social interaction, Blumer believed that the meanings held by each individual actor develop through a process of

interpretation; the individual actor identifies the objects that have meaning by interacting with himself/herself. From there, “the actor selects, checks, suspends, regroups, and transforms the meanings” before taking action (Blumer, 1969, p. 5).

During the late 1960s and the early 1970s, Blumer’s work inspired the development of the criminological theory of deviance proposed by Howard Becker. According to Becker (1973), individuals are not considered deviant until the acts they commit are labelled as such. Unlike traditional theories of criminality that viewed deviance as inherent in the act, Becker (1973) believed that deviance is created by society, particularly moral entrepreneurs who believe that “nothing can be right in the world until rules are made to correct it” (p. 148). While moral entrepreneurs may be interested in forcing their own morals onto others, many of them support humanitarian crusades; they believe that other people will also benefit from what they think is right. Some of them even make a career out of identifying social problems; they develop formal and informal rules that help them identify problem behaviours that are worthy of sanction. Nevertheless, the ability of social groups to make rules and apply them to other people rests on their legal and extralegal means. Groups that have power in society are the ones that are typically able to enforce their rules. Whether an act is considered deviant, however, depends on how others react to it once these rules have been established. One person, for instance, may consider dancing along a sidewalk deviant while another person may not. The degree to which people respond to a given deviant act varies over time as societal norms and values change. Although it has yet to shift toward total acceptance, same-sex marriage, for instance, was widely considered deviant in Canada up until it was legalized in 2005. Once a deviant label is administered, it often becomes an individual’s master status; it overrides any other identity that the individual may also possess (e.g., spouse). Treating individuals as if they are generally rather than specifically

deviant, according to Becker, also results in a self-fulfilling prophecy; individuals treated in accordance to their label begin to accept that given label and continue to perform deviant acts.

Once they are labelled, deviants become shunned from non-deviant groups and are forced to stick with other similarly labelled deviants, resulting in the creation of a deviant subculture (Becker, 1973). According to Becker (1973), a deviant subculture is “a set of perspectives and understandings about what the world is like and how to deal with it” (p. 38). Once a subculture has been established, deviants develop a rationale for following a deviant career and they learn how to avoid trouble by interacting with other deviants.

Like Becker, Albert Cohen believed that delinquent subcultures emerge in response to the pressures of society. According to Cohen (1955), there exists a dominant culture – an “ascetic, achievement-oriented, highly competitive, middle-class way of life” (Downes & Rock, 2007, p. 123) – that serves to enable individuals to solve problems created by the social structure. Via socialization, individuals learn to resolve problems in ways that are consistent with and accepted by this dominant culture; they look up to reference groups within that culture to help guide their beliefs about appropriate and inappropriate behaviours. In doing so, these individuals achieve status – “a grant of respect from others” in the dominant social group (Cohen, 1955, p. 136) – and are rewarded with acceptance and recognition. Although there are incentives to conform to the dominant culture, the way in which individuals choose to solve their problems is contingent upon the situation that they are in. According to Cohen (1955), the situation or the physical setting within which individuals operate may contain limited avenues through which they can resolve conflicts. In addition, the way in which individuals feel and act in response to particular problems also depends on their point of view or their frame of reference. Human beings view the situations and the problems they encounter through their own lens of knowledge, experience,

preconceptions, stereotypes, and values. The situations and the frame of reference through which they are viewed vary depending on an individual's age, gender, race, occupation, and social class. Individuals who do not share the same frame of reference as those from the dominant culture may gravitate toward a different subculture that is more consistent with their own values.

Although subcultural groups share values and beliefs that are inconsistent with those shared by dominant cultural groups, they borrow elements from the dominant culture (e.g., norms) and turn them “upside down” (Cohen, 1955, p. 28). In other words, subcultures develop a new status system that sanctions behaviours that are frowned upon by the larger society. To become a member of a subculture, Cohen (1955) states that individuals must relinquish the status they once had in the dominant group. They must also refrain from conforming to the expectations of the dominant group. Once status within the subculture has been obtained, members are able to receive social validation for their beliefs and their new ways of life.

While each subculture has its own set of norms and values, these norms and values are not fixed; they emerge and change via continuous social interactions between group members (Cohen, 1955). During such interactions, individuals engage in exploratory gestures; they release ambiguous cues pertaining to a novel problem and examine how their group members respond. If the responses to the subtle cues are unfavourable, individuals are able to retreat without being identified as a supporter of a deviant position. If the responses to the cues are favourable, individuals become progressively committed to their new position. The “acceptability of an idea to oneself”, therefore, “depends upon its acceptability to others” (Cohen, 1955, p. 61).

The theory of symbolic interactionism was further developed with Erving Goffman's dramaturgical analysis. According to Goffman (1969), social interactions are equivalent to theatrical performances. There are actors who put on a performance and an audience toward

whom that performance is directed. In the context of social interaction, a performance refers to “all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers” (Goffman, 1969, p. 19). In order to deliver a performance, actors intentionally or unintentionally use fronts – “expressive equipment of a standard kind” that seek to define the situation for the observer (Goffman, 1969, p. 19). These fronts, otherwise known as scripts, are comprised of two parts: first there is the setting which contains the physical geographical layout, various props, and other background items used for the performance; then there is the personal front or the items of expressive equipment that are attributed to the performer such as rank, sex, age, race, clothing, and bodily gestures. Some of these aspects of the personal front are fixed (e.g., race) and others (e.g., facial expressions) are not. The stimuli that make up the personal front can be classified as appearances and manners. Appearances refer to the stimuli that function to portray the performer’s social status and temporary ritual state during a performance (Goffman, 1969). Manners refer to the stimuli that seek to warn the audience of how the performer will act in a particular situation. Appearances, however, may not always be consistent with one’s manners; it is possible for individuals to behave in a way that goes against their social role. A military man, for instance, is supposed to appear brave and emotionless according to the standards set out by society. When diagnosed with PTSD, however, this military man may outwardly display feelings of helplessness, resulting in a discrepancy between appearance and manner.

A front, regardless of its form, serves as a “collective representation” of the act to be performed and takes on “a meaning and stability apart from the specific tasks which happen at the time to be performed in its name” (Goffman, 1969, p. 24). A front, in other words, serves as a pre-established social script that suggests how actors should behave in a given situation. The

same front, however, can be used for different performances. Even when performing a new role, actors refer to pre-established fronts to guide their behaviours. By referring to these scripts and adhering to social standards, actors may also present an idealized view of themselves in order to appear better than they are. They may tailor their performance to reflect socially acceptable expectations and statuses. According to Goffman (1969), performers may also engage in negative idealization; they may succumb to traditional stereotypes (e.g., dumb blond) and play a role that understates their expressions of wealth, capacity or self-respect in order to achieve some end. By succumbing to these standards and stereotypes, performers must ensure that they conceal any behaviour that is inconsistent with the idealized version of themselves. They must also create an impression of legitimacy; they must “foster the impression that the routine they are presently performing is their only routine or at least their most essential one” (Goffman, 1969, p. 42). They must also foster the impression that their performance and their relationship to their audience are unique. When performing roles and fostering impressions, actors use a number of cues or signals to convey meaning. By giving off these cues, however, performers risk that audience members misinterpret them. Audience members, for instance, may attribute meaning to an inadvertent cue, ultimately threatening the reality in which the performer seeks to exhibit.

While they are formed in a similar manner, social interactions take place in different regions and vary depending on the region in which they occur. The front region, according to Goffman (1969), is the “place where the performance is given” (p. 93). It is in this region that accentuated facts make their appearance and activities that might discredit a fostered impression do not. Actors engage in impression management and adhere to social mores in order to influence the observer’s perception of them. The back region, on the other hand, is where suppressed facts make an appearance. It is in this back region where actors can let their guard

down, relax, drop their front, and step out of character. Rather than engage in impression management, actors in the back region engage in performance maintenance practices; they adjust certain aspects of their personal front in order to prepare for front stage performances. Without the mere presence of an audience, actors can run through their performance and check for any flaws that may hinder or discredit the impression they seek to convey. While the front stage and the back stage are different, they can be interchangeable; some regions may function as a front region at one point in time and a back region at another point in time.

In addition to a front stage and a back stage, Goffman (1969) states that there is also an outside region where performers may put on a show that is “different from, or all too similar to, the one in progress” (p. 117). Outsiders in this region are segregated from the performance in progress. This allows the actors and the audience members to preserve their relationships and interactions, along with the establishments in which these interactions take place. When outsiders make their way to the front stage, this may not necessarily effect the performance in progress but rather the performance that the actors or the audience members would present to the outsider at a time and place when the outsider would be the anticipated audience. An outsider’s unexpected presence during a performance in progress intended for another audience can, therefore, alter the outsider’s impression of the actors or the audience members. It is for this reason Goffman (1969) states that impression management is best preserved through audience segregation. In other words, actors should maintain social distance from audience members when they are conducting a performance geared toward another group of audience members.

In addition to developing meaning through performances, Goffman (1965) states that individuals make sense of the world around them by categorizing people. Those who share the same values and adhere to a set of established norms are categorized as “normals” and those who

do not share the same values are categorized as “deviators”. These “deviators” possess an attribute or a stigma that makes them “different from others in the category of persons available” for them to be (Goffman, 1965, p. 3). According to Goffman (1965), individuals are stigmatized if they possess any of the following attributes: abominations of the body (e.g., physical deformities), blemishes of individual character (e.g., mental disorder), and/or tribal stigma of race, nation, and religion (e.g., stigma transmitted through lineages). These deviant attributes tend to override the uncontaminated aspects of the stigmatized individual’s identity.

Consequently, “normals” may fail to regard these stigmatized individuals with respect. They may also prevent stigmatized others from participating in particular social functions, resulting in a means of social control. While “normals” may treat stigmatized individuals differently, Goffman (1965) states that it is possible for certain people to accept stigmatized individuals as “normals”, regardless of the blemishes they possess. Goffman (1965) refers to these accepting individuals as “sympathetic others” (p. 19). Sympathetic others may consist of individuals who also share similar blemishes as stigmatized individuals. This group of sympathetic others accepts stigmatized individuals for who they are because they know what it is like to live with the particular stigma. They may even provide stigmatized individuals with advice on how to deal with the repercussions of their stigma. Sympathetic others may also consist of the “wise” – individuals “who are normal but whose special situation has made them intimately privy to the secret life of the stigmatized individual and sympathetic with it, and who find themselves accorded a measure of acceptance, a measure of courtesy membership in the clan” (Goffman, 1965, p. 28). Wise individuals may include those who work in an establishment that caters to the wants of stigmatized individuals (e.g., nurse) and those who are related or closely connected to stigmatized individuals (e.g., spouse). Due to their acceptance of these “deviators”, however, the

“wise” tend to acquire a courtesy stigma; they “share some of the discredit of the stigmatized person” and, therefore, risk being treated as “deviators” (Goffman, 1965, p. 30).

2.6 The Present Study

Given what we know about meaning as described by symbolic interactionists, it is important to examine culture and the social interactions that take place within that culture in order to truly understand human perception (Pascale, 2011). As mentioned earlier, individuals interact within a given culture to guide their conduct and better understand their surroundings. Individuals consciously and unconsciously interpret their environments while acting out roles and identities that are similar to their interpretations. Therefore, their behaviours depend on their subjective interpretation of reality as opposed to the objective reality itself. Symbolic interactionists would argue that demands and experiences (e.g., exposure to gruesome scenes), including the police culture, are objective realities. Although these demands and experiences exist in the real world “out there”, they are interpreted and negotiated between individuals, resulting in variations of meaning. Since people behave based on what they perceive and not on what is objectively true, symbolic interactionists believe that subjective meaning and the processes through which this meaning develops and changes over time should be given primacy (Pascale, 2011). As such, the variation in the construction and interpretation of meaning, as opposed to the objective reality itself, forms the object of inquiry in this study.

Like other human beings in the social world, police officers construct meaning by interacting with themselves and others (Paton et al., 2009; Shearing & Ericson, 1991; Van Hulst, 2013). In order to understand the processes through which officers construct their perceptions, it is important to investigate the ways in which police officers interact with others (and themselves) within their cultural contexts. This study will address the gaps in the existing literature by posing

questions that tap into symbolic interactionist notions of the subjective and the development of meaning via social (and self) interaction:

- 1) What are the perceived sources of stress in police work?
- 2) How do police officers perceive stress management programs?
- 3) What kinds of “significant symbols” do police officers use to construct their perceptions of stress and stress management? (Blumer, 1966; Mead, 1972)
- 4) How do police officers engage with pre-existing “schemes” or social scripts to cope with stress? (Blumer, 1966; Mead, 1972)
- 5) How do police officers use “cultural” and/or “subcultural” values to formulate their coping strategies? (Becker, 1973; Cohen, 1955)
- 6) What role does self-identity (“I”) and social identity (“me”) play in officers’ decisions to make use of available stress management programs? (Mead, 1972)
- 7) What would police officers’ ideal stress management program(s) look like?
 - (i) Which aspects of identity management are the most important to police officers? (Goffman, 1969)

In posing these research questions, this study seeks to achieve a number of objectives. Since the definition of stress in the existing literature is mainly limited to operational and organizational demands, I would like to better understand how police officers define stress. At the same time, since perceptions change over time via social interaction, I would also like to determine whether or not alternative definitions of stress exist that have not yet been identified in the existing literature. Secondly, I would like to better understand the types of programs that are available to police officers in Canada. Since existing programs seek to address critical incidents and stress induced by operational demands, I would like to determine whether or not existing

programs actually address stress as police officers experience it. In addition, I would like to better understand how police officers cope with stress and the processes through which they choose to use or not use existing stress management programs. In doing so, I would also like to better understand how police officers use social scripts prescribed by the police culture to simultaneously cope with stress and engage in impression management. Lastly, I would like to better understand the processes through which police officers consult with pre-established schemes in order to develop their ideal stress management initiatives.

2.7 Chapter Summary

Stress in policing is typically attributed to operational and organizational demands. However, officers may be exposed to other sources of stress such as the criminal justice system, the media, work-life conflict, and commuting to and from work, resulting in physical or mental illnesses. As such, police organizations have implemented a number of internal and external EAPs. While sources of perceived stress and stress management programs have been identified in the literature, the processes through which officers construct their perceptions of stress and stress management have yet to be explored. In order to analyze these processes, I expressed the need to examine officers' perspectives from a symbolic interactionist framework. In the following chapter, I present my methodology and describe how the symbolic interactionist framework has informed the methods I have chosen to answer my research questions.

Chapter 3:

Methodology

In this chapter, I introduce my methods of choice for investigating the topic of stress in police work and explain why these particular methods were chosen. I also present the strengths and limitations of these methods, along with the processes through which I collected and analyzed my data. I then conclude with a presentation of the ethical considerations that were also taken into account before the study took place.

3.1 Methodological Approach

According to Grant and Osanloo (2014), the researcher's theoretical framework must be used to build his or her methodological approach. I have adopted the methodological position of symbolic interactionism in order to appropriately measure officers' perceptions of stress and stress management. Like other interpretivist researchers, symbolic interactionists embrace a social constructionist or relativist ontology, believing that reality is constructed intersubjectively via social and self-interaction and that multiple constructions of reality collectively exist; human beings attach subjective meanings to various aspects of their lives and these meanings vary across social settings (Annells, 1996; Blumer, 1969; Neuman, 2011; Pascale, 2011). Reality, therefore, cannot actually be known since it is continuously constructed and interpreted (Annells, 1996; Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Symbolic interactionists also embrace a transactional or subjectivist epistemology, believing that the most valid way to create or acquire knowledge is to spend time with research participants (Berg, 2009; Blumer, 1969; Creswell, 2007; Neuman, 2011; Palys & Atchison, 2008). According to symbolic interactionists, knowledge is created and negotiated through dialectic transactions between researchers and research participants (Berg, 2009; Blumer, 1969;

Creswell, 2007; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Neuman, 2011; Palys & Atchison, 2008). By directly speaking to participants on an individual or group level, researchers are able to delve below the surface and acquire a deeper, richer understanding of their perceptions (Palys & Atchison, 2008). Symbolic interactionists, therefore, view research as an inductive process of exploration and discovery; they believe that researchers should interpret the world from the subjective experiences of participants before they generate theoretical concepts (Herman, 1994). In order to understand social life and create meaning via dialectic negotiations, symbolic interactionists tend to rely heavily on qualitative or naturalistic methods, including in-depth interviews (Creswell, 2007; Neuman, 2011; Pascale, 2011). These naturalistic methods allow researchers to take on the role of the other and examine behaviours from the participants' perspective (Bulmer, 1969; Potter, 2009). They also provide a means through which to ensure an adequate dialogue between researchers and participants so that a collaborative construction of reality can take place.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the topic of stress in policing has typically been analyzed using experimental or quasi-experimental designs, closed-ended surveys, and structured interviews. By engaging in these structured methods, the research literature has failed to acquire in-depth information about the processes through which officers construct their perceptions of stress and stress management. It has also failed to uncover the context behind officers' perceptions and coping strategies. Given the exploratory nature of this research and the ontological and epistemological assumptions associated with the symbolic interactionist paradigm, I investigated officers' perceptions qualitatively using semi-structured, in-depth interviews. This allowed me to generate rich information and probe participants so that the context behind officers' perceptions could be retrieved.

3.2 Method of Data Collection: The Semi-Structured Interview

With semi-structured interviews, I was able to pose open-ended questions and explore themes that spontaneously arose throughout the interactions (Barriball & While, 1994; Doody & Noonan, 2013). Since the semi-structured interview process is flexible, I was also able to vary the order of my questions depending on the direction of the interviews. By conducting semi-structured interviews, I was also able to probe interviewees about interesting topics that emerged relating to my theoretical framework. This type of probing could not have been done with surveys or questionnaires. Through probing and seeking clarification from research participants, I was also able to uncover new themes pertaining to officers' conceptualizations of stress and stress management. As such, I was also able to acquire in-depth information about the ways in which officers interact with themselves and others in order to form these conceptualizations.

Although the semi-structured interview was the most suitable method of data collection for my research, there are some limitations associated with its use. As a novice researcher, for instance, I sometimes had a difficult time knowing when to probe interviewees during the interview process (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Since I served as the instrument through which data were collected, I was not always able to recognize the complexity of my questions. As a result, participants may not have understood the questions being asked, resulting in poor, less-thorough responses. Researcher bias may have also influenced the type of data collected (Chenail, 2011). As the research instrument, I may have unknowingly used certain techniques (e.g., body language) when conducting interviews to elicit specific responses from participants.

In order to address these limitations, I initially decided to engage in piloting – the process of testing the proposed methods to see if they perform as envisioned by the researcher (Chenail, 2011; Hermanowicz, 2002). Since I only had access to a limited number of research participants,

however, a pilot study was not feasible. Consequently, I decided to use the “interviewing the investigator” approach as a viable alternative. In this approach, the researcher assumes the role of the interviewer and the interviewee (Chenail, 2011). Just like in pilot studies, the researcher is able to practice conducting interviews in order to review the content produced and make certain adjustments before the actual interviews take place. By using the “interviewing the investigator” approach, I was able to test my interview questions and techniques and make sure the questions were clear and concise as opposed to vague or ambiguous.

While pre-tests can be done to minimize issues associated with researcher bias and ambiguous questions, other limitations associated with the semi-structured interview exist. Since the interview is considered a social process through which the interviewer and the interviewee “create and construct narrative versions of the social world” (Miller & Glassner, 2004, p. 125), an absolute depiction of police officers’ real world “out there” may not have been retrieved. During the interview process, for instance, interviewees may have referred to familiar narratives as opposed to their own subjective views to construct meaning (Miller & Glassner, 2004). Participants may have been less than candid throughout the interview process to protect the institution or conceal certain emotions regarding a sensitive or embarrassing issue (Gardner, 2001; Polkinghorne, 2005). Some may have concealed certain aspects of a story in order to appear socially desirable to the researcher (Barriball & While, 1994; Diefenbach, 2009). At the same time, interviewees may have provided inaccurate accounts due to poor memory or lack of complete knowledge regarding the phenomenon in question (Gardner, 2001). According to Miller and Glassner (2004), the social position of the researcher may also influence the types of narratives created during the interview process. Unlike participants in the present study who were mostly white, middle-aged, middle-class males, I am a young, white, middle-class graduate

student who does not “share membership” with officers in the police culture (Miller & Glassner, 2004, p. 128). As such, police officers may have been reluctant to share their perspectives with me because they may have viewed me as an “outsider”. Given these limitations, I may not have been able to capture the authentic accounts of officers’ subjective experiences, resulting in potential threats to the theoretical and empirical status, validity, and reliability of the research findings.

Although it was impossible for me to determine whether or not interviewees’ testimonies were authentic, there are a couple of things that I did to minimize the risk of acquiring fictitious accounts. As suggested by Berg (2009) and Miller and Glassner (2004), I was open and up-front with participants throughout the research process. In other words, I informed them about my intentions and how the data would be used. I also informed participants that a variety of perspectives and opinions were being sought (Doody & Noonan, 2013). Furthermore, I was non-judgemental throughout the interview process (Berg, 2009) and listened attentively to each participant; I let them know that their perspectives mattered (Miller & Glassner, 2004). Consequently, I was able to build a rapport with participants, minimizing interviewees’ desire to lie or provide socially desirable accounts during the interview (Barriball & While, 1994; Doody & Noonan, 2013). Finally, by acknowledging the interview process as a symbolic interaction between the researcher and the interviewee, I was careful to ensure that officers’ testimonies were not viewed as objective “truths” but as socially constructed perspectives.

3.2.1 The Data Collected

According to Morash, Haarr, and Kwak (2006), police officers’ experience of stress may vary depending on the geographic location in which they work. Police officers working in urban areas tend to manage larger populations compared to those working in suburban areas. As a

result, officers working in urban areas are more likely to encounter critical, traumatic or unpredictable incidents compared to officers who work in smaller cities (Shane, 2010). Since urban police departments are larger than their suburban counterparts, officers working within these departments tend to also have distant relationships with their superiors (Morash, et al., 2006). As a result, police officers working in urban areas are more likely to encounter a number of stressors compared to those working in rural areas. In order to capture an array of experiences, I examined the perceptions of police officers employed by an urban law enforcement agency.

In the present study, police officers from a municipal law enforcement agency in Ontario were recruited for interviews via purposeful sampling. According to Berg (2009) and Patton (1990), qualitative researchers engage in purposeful sampling in order to select information-rich cases for the purpose of conducting in-depth research. In order to select information-rich cases to better understand police officers' perceptions of stress and stress management, I engaged in criterion sampling, a form of purposeful sampling. The purpose of criterion sampling is to "review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance" (Patton, 1990, p. 176) and to ensure that only participants with specific attributes are included in the study (Berg, 2009). I interviewed male officers, females, and those with varying ranks and demographic characteristics. I also interviewed only those police officers who had been working for the law enforcement agency of interest for at least one year. This condition was in place to increase the likelihood that participants would be familiar with the stress management programs offered by that police agency. All police officers from that agency were notified about my study via e-mail (see Appendix A). From there, all interested candidates who met the criteria for participation were selected and interviewed.

A total of 24 officers volunteered to share their perspectives about stress and stress management. Of those 24 officers, 19 were male and 5 were female. In addition, the majority (79 percent) of the officers were White. 3 were Asian, 1 was Pakistani, and 1 officer self-identified as Muslim. The median age of those interviewed was 43. The youngest participant was 30 and the oldest was 60. Of the 24 officers interviewed, 15 held the rank of police constable, 4 held the rank of detective constable, 1 held the rank of sergeant, and 4 held the rank of detective sergeant. While each officer had a different career path, the majority of those interviewed were first responders. The remaining participants held administrative or investigative positions. The names of these positions were omitted to protect the identities of the interviewees. Moreover, the majority of officers interviewed had a post-secondary education: nine of the police officers had a college degree; seven had an undergraduate degree; and 3 had a Master's degree. Lastly, the majority of participants (13) self-identified as having a Type A personality based on a few traits identified in the literature as aligning with these types. While officers were able to identify with one of the personality types, their attributions may have been inaccurate due to insufficient experience with validated personality assessments. Officers who were unsure may have also rated themselves favourably in order to appear socially desirable to the researcher. As such, the data pertaining to officers' personality type may not be completely valid or reliable.

While many officers shared their racial backgrounds during the interview process, some of them did not. When officers failed to explicitly mention their racial or cultural backgrounds, I used my own assumptions and perceptions to complete this category. As a result, the data pertaining to officers' racial backgrounds may not be completely valid or reliable.

3.3 The Data Collection Process

In order to collect police officers' accounts of stress, I first developed an interview guide (see Appendix B) containing a series of questions that reflected my research questions. I categorized questions into groups of similar topics and I organized my topics in a logical order; I placed all questions pertaining to stress together and all questions pertaining to stress management together. In addition, I started each interview with non-threatening questions (e.g., age) and then I moved on to more difficult questions (Berg, 2009; Doody & Noonan, 2013). First, I asked participants about their demographic characteristics. From there, I asked officers about their perceptions of stress and stress management. This allowed me to build a rapport with each research participant.

The setting in which the study took place was also carefully taken into account. According to Villa, Morrison, and Kenney (2002), police officers have very hectic schedules due to the many tasks and duties they must perform. For instance, police officers may work long hours, usually in the form of shiftwork, and those who patrol the streets in the evenings may spend their mornings or afternoons resting or catching up on sleep. In some departments, police officers may also pick up extra shifts due to personnel shortages. Knowing this, participants in the present study were given the option to be interviewed in a boardroom within one of the agency's police stations. This option may have been more convenient for some police officers since they did not need to travel to meet with me. By addressing the issue of convenience, I was able to recruit more than just a couple of research participants.

While convenience is an important issue to address, so too is the issue of comfort. As suggested by Berg (2009) and Elmir, Schmied, Jackson, and Wilkes (2011), I decided to conduct interviews at a venue where participants would feel the most comfortable; the more

comfortable participants feel, the more likely they will be to disclose their experiences. Since police officers are in constant contact with the law enforcement agency in which they work, some of them may have felt comfortable disclosing their personal accounts in a familiar environment. With stigma apparent in various police organizations, however, other participants may not have felt as willing to participate in a study conducted within their work environment. As a result, participants in the present study were given the option to be interviewed at a police station, a public library or a coffee shop. These details, including those pertaining to the purpose of the study and the measures taken to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, were outlined in the consent form which was given to participants before each interview (see Appendix C).

Once all of my data were collected, I transcribed each interview word-for-word into a Microsoft Word document and removed any identifiers (e.g., names). I then converted the interview transcripts into PDF documents and uploaded them onto NVivo, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis program. From there, I engaged in data analysis.

3.4 Method of Data Analysis: Qualitative Content Analysis

Like other interpretivist researchers, symbolic interactionists tend to rely on methods derived from hermeneutics or theories of interpretation to analyze data and uncover deeper meanings (Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Neuman, 2011; Pascale, 2011). Hermeneutics, according to symbolic interactionists, involves an in-depth inquiry into text and relating its parts to the whole (Neuman, 2011; Pascale, 2011). Since true meaning is rarely obvious on the surface, researchers bring their own subjective experiences to the text in order to contemplate its many messages and uncover the connections among its parts (Pascale, 2011; Potter, 2009). By conducting a very detailed reading of texts, symbolic interactionists believe that a deep, profound understanding of human perception and action can be achieved. In order to acquire a deeper understanding of

officers' perceptions of stress and stress management, I decided to thoroughly analyze my interview transcripts using qualitative content analysis.

The approach taken in this study is different from the ones outlined in the existing literature which have mainly focused on enumerating existing stressors and analyzing their prevalence among different groups of police officers using descriptive and inferential statistics. The existing literature has also relied on statistical tests of significance to assess the effectiveness of available programs in remediating instances of felt stress among police officers. Some researchers even examined the correlation between perceived stressors and officers' levels of felt stress, while others examined the relationship between officers' demographic characteristics and coping strategies. In doing so, scholars have been unable to explore the hidden meanings behind these existing relationships. By engaging in qualitative content analysis, however, I was able to delve below the surface of my data and explore the latent content or the underlying meanings behind officers' perceptions and behaviours (Bryman, Bell & Teevan, 2012). As such, I was able to better understand why these perceptions and behaviours prevailed given current cultural contexts and symbolic interactionist notions about impression management and the creation of meaning. While qualitative content analysis was performed, simple frequencies were also generated using NVivo to determine the prevalence of particular findings in relation to specific groups of police officers. By examining these frequencies, I was able to identify important themes worthy of further discussion.

According to Altheide (1987), content analysis is used to document and understand the communication of meaning. In other words, content analysis tends to serve a descriptive or exploratory purpose; it is often used to describe similarities and differences within written texts in order to discover theoretical conceptions that have not yet been identified by the literature

(Berg, 2009). Due to its descriptive and exploratory nature, however, content analysis cannot be used to make generalizations or causal inferences about the relationships between variables (Bryman et al., 2012). As a criminologist and social science researcher, I did not seek to locate the causes of police stress or use my findings to make wider generalizations about stress and stress management. Instead, I sought to understand how police officers conceptualize stress and perceive available stress management techniques. Based on my research goals and objectives, content analysis facilitated the types of interpretations and conclusions I sought to make.

Content analysis is also particularly useful in analyzing interview transcripts because it is flexible and reflexive in its approach (Altheide, 1987; Schilling, 2006). Through content analysis, I was able to go back and forth between coding, analyzing, and interpreting my data. Since the goal of my research was to uncover themes and the meanings behind them, the flexibility and reflexivity associated with content analysis enhanced my ability to do so. When openly coding my interview transcripts for the first time, for instance, important concepts associated with stress in policing were not inherently obvious. However, by reading, re-reading, and re-coding my data, I was able to uncover themes and concepts that were initially missed.

While content analysis is useful for analyzing data, there are some limitations associated with its use. According to Bryman et al. (2012), content analysis can be considered a reactive method for analyzing interview transcripts. This is because the content of interview transcripts may be partly influenced by the fact that the researcher knows what the transcripts will be used for. Since I interviewed participants with the intent of engaging in content analysis, the credibility or the trustworthiness of my findings may have been threatened.

According to Tracy (2010), the credibility of the findings can also be threatened if researchers fail to display sincerity or authenticity. This is because content analysis always

requires some level of interpretation by the coder, especially when it comes to identifying latent themes. In other words, the researcher's personal biases influence the types of interpretations and conclusions that are made. In order to achieve the highest level of credibility, I was honest about my biases and the steps taken throughout the research process (Shenton, 2004; Tracy, 2010). More specifically, I was transparent when conducting my own research and provided readers with a detailed description of the steps I used throughout the study. I also acknowledged my personal biases. As a media consumer, I have read many mediated accounts of police brutality. Consequently, I have been trained to be critical of police officers and their actions. Nevertheless, I have learned to acknowledge these biases and try to put them aside in order to better understand officers' subjective experiences about stress and stress management. In order to further minimize the impact that my personal biases may have on the credibility of my findings, I also sent my interview transcripts to each consenting interviewee before they were coded. This ensured that the perceptions of each officer were adequately articulated.

In order to avoid issues associated with coding, I decided to pre-test my codebook before the actual coding process took place (Bryman et al., 2012). In doing so, I was able to test the coding instructions and the suitability of the categories for each theme. I was also able to change, add or delete certain categories if issues associated with my codebook (e.g., non-mutually exclusive categories) were found. In order to ensure that the categories used in my study were exhaustive and mutually exclusive, I tested my codebook on five interview transcripts. From there, discrepancies and ambiguities in my codebook were revised. Throughout the data analysis process, I continuously tested and revised my codebook until all ambiguities and discrepancies were resolved. Once my codebook was finalized, I then coded all of my interview transcripts.

Since I coded my interview transcripts independently, issues associated with intra-coder reliability may have also arisen (Bryman et al., 2012). As a single coder, I may have forgotten to code certain latent elements of my texts. At the same time, I may have mistakenly coded certain aspects of the texts that should not have been coded. In order to minimize these inconsistencies, I coded my transcripts at one point in time and re-coded them again two weeks later. As such, I was able to locate and fix the mistakes that occurred throughout the initial coding stage.

3.5 The Data Analysis Process

In the initial stages of content analysis, researchers examine the recurring, easily identifiable aspects of the text, otherwise known as the manifest content (Bryman et al., 2012; White & Marsh, 2006). According to Hannah and Lautsch (2011), Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2011), and Schilling (2006), the manifest content provides researchers with clues as to where to look for latent themes and patterns. I decided to look for recurring words in order to determine which topics were most frequently discussed individually and collectively across research participants. Once the manifest content was identified, I then coded my interview transcripts; I tagged or assigned units of meaning to the information I was examining (Campbell, Quincy, Osserman & Pedersen, 2013; DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall & McCulloch, 2011). Before coding could take place, however, I had to determine whether I planned to code my data inductively or deductively. With an inductive approach, codes are developed from the raw data itself (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). With a deductive approach, on the other hand, codes are developed a priori from the existing literature. According to Kohan and Mazmanian (2003), stress in police work is usually defined as operational or organizational. At the same time, the criminal justice system (Anderson et al., 1995; Daniello, 2011; Duxbury & Higgins, 2012; Finn & Tomz, 1997; Pozzulo et al., 2009), the media and/or the public (Anderson

et al., 1995; Duxbury & Higgins, 2012), work-life conflict (Duxbury & Higgins, 2012), and commuting to and from work (Brown & Campbell, 1990) have also been identified in the literature as sources of police stress. As a result, codes were developed a priori in relation to each known source of police stress. As mentioned earlier, however, other potential sources of police stress are often left unexplored. Knowing this, I also inductively coded my interview transcripts to determine whether or not alternative conceptualizations of police stress exist. Since information pertaining to stress management programs in policing is currently limited, I also employed an inductive approach in order to learn more about these available programs.

Since I mainly approached my interview transcripts inductively, I read my texts repeatedly and broke them apart using open coding (Burnard, 1991; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). In other words, I analyzed my interview transcripts minutely (e.g., word-by-word) so that a number of concepts, codes, and categories could be created (Bowen, 2009; Burnard, 1991; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Upon reading samples of the texts a few times, I was able to identify similar concepts, quotes, and important themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Once codes were created through open coding, I then analyzed them by engaging in axial coding; I identified relationships between open codes (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011). Once these relationships were established, I was able to group concepts into similar overarching categories. In the present study, for instance, I looked for recurring words and phrases (e.g., scheduling) associated with stress, stress management, and stress management programs. I then defined these words and grouped them into broader themes and categories (e.g., organizational demands).

Once my codes were developed, I placed them into a codebook. According to DeCuir-Gunby et al. (2011), a codebook is a book that researchers create and use as a guide to help them code their documents. In order to facilitate the data analysis process, I developed a detailed

codebook with definitions, inclusion/exclusion criteria, and examples for each code (see Appendix D). I also referred to my codebook constantly to ensure that I consistently coded my transcripts. If new concepts and themes arose as I coded my transcripts, I made the necessary changes to my codebook and re-coded my data.

According to Basit (2003), coded data may become de-contextualized once they are carved from their place in the original data. Therefore, I made sure to analyze quotes in relation to the context of the original interviews so that true patterns could be identified (Basit, 2003; Booth, 1993). According to Ozkan (2004), NVivo enables researchers to view coded segments of their data in context without separating them from their origin, making it a suitable tool for analyzing findings. By using NVivo, I was able to view each coded theme by participant. As a result, I was able to better understand the context in which participants used each coded theme. I was also able to identify similarities and differences between police officers' accounts of stress and stress management. Furthermore, by using NVivo, I was able to re-contextualize quotes and collectively view all of the excerpts pertaining to each individual code (Basit, 2003; Booth, 1993). As a result, I was able to examine similar quotes from different participants within a single document in order to identify and interpret latent themes. Once similar responses were identified, I compared them against the personal characteristics (e.g., rank) of my sample. In doing so, I was able to detect certain relationships between these characteristics and individual perceptions. Once my data were coded and all of my relationships were identified, I interpreted my findings in relation to my theoretical framework (White & Marsh, 2006).

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Since I decided to interview human subjects to achieve my objectives, there were a number of ethical considerations that I needed to take into account before my study took place.

For instance, I needed to acquire informed consent from research participants (Berg, 2009; Bolderston, 2012; Neuman, 2009). In order to gain informed consent from each participant, I explained the potential risks and benefits of the study. Before I conducted interviews, I informed all of the interested candidates about the goals of the present study, the types of questions they would be asked, and the need to provide written or verbal consent in order to participate. In the consent form, participants also indicated whether or not they consented to being audio-recorded for transcription purposes. In the present study, all 24 participants signed the consent form and 23 consented to being audio-recorded. Rather than audio-recording the non-consenting participant, detailed notes were taken during this interview instead.

In order to minimize participants' risk of feeling coerced to participate, I also explained to the interviewees that their participation was completely voluntary (Tracy, 2010) and informed them that they had the right to drop out of the study at any time or refuse to answer any question. Before the study took place, participants were also told that they would not be penalized for choosing to withdraw from the study.

I also ensured that all research participants remained anonymous (Berg, 2009; Bolderston, 2012). In order to ensure anonymity, I assigned pseudonyms to each research participant. Fictitious names were also used to replace the names of family members or co-workers mentioned throughout the interviews. Participants were also made aware that their gender and/or rank might be published to highlight differences in perceptions across different groups of police officers and were informed that such information would not be disclosed if it would make them more easily identifiable. I also assigned the pseudonym "Woodford Police Service" to the law enforcement agency from which my sample was derived. As a result, I was able to further protect the identity of the participants under study. Although these measures were

taken to ensure that research participants remained anonymous, there was still a possibility that interviewees could be identified based on the information they chose to disclose during the interview. Since quotes were published in my final thesis, readers may be able to distinguish certain participants based on the accounts mentioned. To guard against this, only quotes that did not reveal participants' identity were used in the final thesis.

In addition to ensuring anonymity, I made sure that the personal information provided by each participant was kept confidential (Bolderston, 2012; Tracy, 2010). I sought to protect the confidentiality of all participants by keeping audio recordings and interview transcripts in a locked drawer and saving interview transcripts as password-protected PDF files on my password-protected laptop. Once interviews were transcribed, the audio recordings were destroyed. Participants were also informed that the data collected for this study would be securely conserved for a minimum of five years following the study's publication date.

In this study, every precaution was also taken to minimize any risk of harm to the interviewees (Berg, 2009; Tracy, 2010). For instance, police officers were not asked questions that were too sensitive. Instead, police officers were asked broad questions in which they could choose what information to disclose. Furthermore, participants were debriefed after the interview; they were asked if they had any concerns about the present study. Even if they did not show any overt signs of distress, all participants were given a debriefing form following each interview (see Appendix E). This debriefing form contained the contact information of various support/counselling services, along with my contact information and the contact information of my supervisor in case participants had further inquiries after the study took place. Finally, the debriefing form contained the contact information of the University of Ottawa's Research Ethics Board (REB) in case participants wanted to report any ethical concerns or violations.

The present study was presented to the University of Ottawa's Research Ethics Board and was granted ethics approval before any interviews took place (see Appendix F). The police organization of interest also approved of the study before any interviews took place. In order to protect the identity of the organization and the research participants, however, the letter of approval granted by the police organization of interest was not included in the appendices.

3.7 Chapter Summary

This research study used qualitative semi-structured interviews to examine officers' perceptions of stress and stress management. Criterion sampling was used to recruit a total of 24 participants from a municipal law enforcement agency in Ontario. Qualitative content analysis was implemented to analyze interview transcripts so that latent elements of officers' perceptions could be uncovered. In addition, this chapter explored the advantages and disadvantages associated with the methods of data collection and analysis used in the study. Ethical considerations were also taken into account. In the following chapter, I present the findings and the major themes derived from in-depth interviews with police officers.

Chapter 4:

Presentation of Findings

In this study, a number of themes were found in relation to sources of stress in policing, coping strategies, feelings toward stress management programs, reasons for using/not using stress management programs, and officers' ideal stress management initiatives. The results from the present study will be displayed according to each major theme.

4.1 Sources of Stress in Policing

In this study, all 24 participants discussed their perceived sources of stress in policing. While two participants stated that these sources of stress were necessary in order to keep them alert and safe while doing their job, the majority of participants viewed stress as potentially harmful to the health and well-being of police officers. Patsy, for instance, stated that "the issue of police stress is an ongoing problem. We've had two this year (suicides). So when it comes to that aspect, we, as a Service, need to address it". In the present study, stressors associated with operational and organizational demands, work-life conflict, public scrutiny, and commuting to and from work were reported. Each of these stressors will be discussed in the following sub-sections.

4.1.1 Operational and Organizational Demands

While all 24 participants discussed operational and organizational demands as sources of stress in policing, the majority of them referenced organizational demands more frequently than operational demands (see Appendix G, Table 1), suggesting that officers in this study perceived organizational demands as more stressful than operational demands. This was even explicitly and implicitly stated by a few interviewees:

The administrative aspect of policing is probably one of the biggest stressors. It isn't actually out on the street. (Hannah)

So a lot of our day is – they say it's 90 percent boredom and 10 percent panic. And that's basically it. (Josh)

The internal politics of policing, the interpersonal conflicts with other officers and other supervisors, I would say, is more stressful than the actual physical dangers and dealing with belligerent people. (Victor)

Although officers tend to perceive organizational demands as stressful in comparison to operational demands, Kohan and Mazmanian (2003) state that these perceptions may differ by rank. In the present study, each ranked group (police constables, detective constables, sergeants, detective sergeants) spoke about organizational demands more frequently than operational demands (see Appendix G, Table 2). Since police constables engage in street-level police work and are exposed to operational demands more frequently than officers in higher ranks (Brown & Campbell, 1990; Paoline, 2003; Paoline & Terrill, 2014), police constables in the present study chose to discuss operational demands more often than higher-ranking officers.

(i) Common Organizational Sources of Police Stress

While organizational demands are considered the primary source of stress in policing, particular organizational demands are deemed more stressful than others. In the present study, 16 participants indicated that scrutiny from management and lack of support from supervisors and/or the police organization were the most stressful aspects of their job:

There's people who go above and beyond, they don't get any recognition for it. They do what they're asked of, yet they're the first person to get hollered at by a superior. (Josh)

You go to work and sometimes at work there's unrealistic expectations. They're sitting there on one hand telling you, you know, do more radio calls, spend more time getting, you know, what they call "owning it" – "owning" the radio call – you know, getting intimately involved. Follow-up with these people the next day, check in on them, do a little bit of background research, try and find out – see if you can help them find a place. But make sure you take your lunch hour, don't incur any overtime, and make sure you clear more radio calls. Oh, and by the way, you don't write enough tickets. Get out there

and write more tickets. And you're sitting there and going, "There's not enough hours in a day to do all that you're asking me to do". (Norman)

In addition to being scrutinized, participants stated that their superiors did not offer support in response to sensitive personal issues. When going through a divorce and raising two young children, Garrett found that his supervisor failed to show compassion or understanding:

You know, you come in and you say I'm having a real issue at home, you know, childcare, I'm going through a divorce or what have you, and it's like, "Well you better get a nanny then".

According to Sophie, this lack of support even takes place in response to work-related incidents:

...and they were expected at work the next day. Like, so they came to work the next day. So I pulled one aside, I'm like, "What are you doing here?" Like, he was standing right beside the guy that shot the guy. I'm like, "What are you doing here? Go home! You need some time off". And he was like, "Ah, no. I'm OK". It's like – and they had counsellors come to the station to talk to him but management did – I thought they did nothing for those guys. Like, they just expected them there the next day. I thought it was horrible.

As mentioned in the literature, shiftwork is another well-known organizational source of stress in policing (Violanti & Aron, 1993, 1994, 1995). While shiftwork was mentioned as a source of stress in the present study, 16 participants expanded on this point to include the stress associated with scheduling in general. According to the majority of participants, the most problematic aspect of working a compressed work week is the fact that their days off are often cut short due to mandatory court appearances. With very few days off, most officers perceived the compressed work week schedule as a source of stress because it does not enable them to manage relationships outside of the profession:

You know, a lot of people might think that working a compressed work week where you're eight days on, six days off is a good lifestyle 'cause you have all these days off but still, it's not. You're not in that normal timetable where, hey your friends are off every weekend. You can see your friends every second weekend if you're lucky. And out of those six days, you're off to court three days anyways so you're only getting maybe two or three days off. (Garrett)

No, it's roughly six days off. But during those six days is when we get scheduled for court unless it's a weekend. So before, when I used to work in a detective office, I really had no days off unless it was a Saturday or Sunday. Other than that, you were in court. So that's kinda hectic, you know, through balancing family life and work. (Joe)

While shiftwork and/or scheduling have been identified in the existing literature, so too has office politics (Brown & Campbell, 1990). In the present study, participants described office politics as the attempts made by certain officers to advance within the organization, even if such advancements were to be made at the expense of other colleagues. This is exemplified in the following passage:

We always heard of this brotherhood, you know? I don't think that exists anymore. I think there's a lot of in-fight, a lot of fend for yourself, a lot of ladder climbing. So if I can stab you in the back in order for me to get ahead, it's going to be done. (Joe)

As shown in Table 3, police constables referenced office politics as a source of stress more often than officers in higher-ranking positions (see Appendix G). According to many of these police constables, office politics is stressful because it impacts relationships between supervisors and road officers. If supervisors climb the promotional ladder too quickly, they may lose sight of the concerns associated with street-level police work:

...or you know, supervisors, maybe they're so – they've been away from real police work for so long and they have a desk job for so long that they are no longer – they forget what it's like to be a police officer. (Charlie)

Constant changes within the organization were another common source of stress in the present study. According to the majority of participants, policies and procedures are constantly changing within the organization and, as a result, officers find it difficult to keep up:

There have been changing policies, there have been changing approaches, which is always good and necessary. It's just how much of it has been happening. So the front line feels that these changes are just being stuffed down their throats. They can't keep track of it. Every other month, every three, four months it's a new thing coming in and just as you're getting used to the last five things that came through, right? (Karim)

And when you see an influx of that happening where you'll get a new boss and all of a sudden, everything's gotta change. And it just stresses everybody out because you'll get a system that's working in a squad or a unit and is being productive, but everybody – if you get a new boss, and they all put their stamp on it, so everything's gotta change. And then you gotta work out all new bugs and kinks and by the time you get things running smooth, they change it on you again. (Allen)

Some participants even stated that constant changes in policies and procedures make it difficult for them (or their colleagues) to complete necessary day-to-day tasks associated with their job:

A lot of guys get into trouble because they don't know what they're doing or they're doing something that used to be an old practice or an old way. So there's a lot of frustration there. I constantly answer phone calls at the station from guys who haven't been in [this unit] for so long and they're like, "Yeah, I've been out of [this unit] for 10 years, what have I got here?" And you're sort of like, here we are at the basics of policing, you know? So that's where it becomes very difficult. (Joe)

With regards to stress management, officers also found it stressful when the Service made changes to their Employee Assistance Programs:

I was speaking with somebody with the old one. And then when they changed providers, they did it very quickly and left me in a situation where I'd spend over a course of two years talking to this one counsellor. He knew everything that had been going on for some time. It was still going on so I sort of had to check in once in a while. And now I had to start with somebody new so that was frustrating. And especially because I'm not sure what the reasons why the Service changed providers. (Norman)

According to participants, technological advancements are also stressful because they make it difficult for officers to complete routine tasks:

It's a whole new program, a whole new computer system, kind of an out-of-the-store, off-the-shelf, box, box product that, I guess, is working in maybe smaller services. Umm, I mean, it was years and years in the process trying to find this product and this is what they came up with and it's just been more of a nightmare, I think, than anyone thought it would be. (Hannah)

Paperwork is stressful too because there's a new system that's come in the last year and a half so there's bugs to be worked out in it. And I'm a coach officer so I'm working with someone and I'm like, "I have no idea what that means". Like some of it is not user friendly. Like I've worked on a certain system for 12 years and all of a sudden, boom! The system's changed. It's like, OK, I have no idea what I'm doing here. So you have to learn it again and you feel brand new. And it adds to it and you get kind of like frustrated with it, which can be stressful. (Josh)

In the present study, 7 participants discussed changes in technology during their interviews. The youngest participants to mention changes in technology were 35 and 36 years old. The remaining participants were between the ages of 42 and 50. Knowing this, it appears that older officers may find technological advancements more stressful than younger officers. This was even explicitly stated by Patsy who is 49 years of age: “It’s getting more and more challenging when it comes to change – the issue of technology. It’s hard for us old people”.

(ii) Common Operational Sources of Police Stress

In the present study, the unpredictability associated with the job was referenced a total of 15 times between 8 participants. According to Patsy, the unpredictability of the job refers to “the unknown in that you start your shift and heaven knows, you know, what your next call’s going to be. So just the, umm, that you have to be ready for anything and you’re waiting for anything to happen”. The unpredictability of the job was particularly stressful to participants because it elicited a need for them to be alert at all times:

Even on a slow day when nothing major happens, I find driving around the city for 10 hours is kind of stressful in its own way because you’re always alert. When you’re on-duty and you’re in uniform and you’re in a uniform police car – especially with a heightened risk in the world today with the Nathan Cirillo shooting and with the other officer in Quebec – there’s always kind of this idea in the back of your mind that at any time you may be threatened by somebody that you don’t even see. (Victor)

I don’t know how many times I’ve gone to a violent domestic and she’s got bruises and you go to arrest the husband and she attacks you. Like, or the kids are hitting you. You know? You just never know. So you’re always on your guard, right? (Ellen)

The unpredictability of the job also elicited a need for police officers to be alert when off-duty:

We’re always on-duty. That’s the one reality of our job. If I see someone beating the crap out of someone I’m obliged to do something, right? You know? We’re always on-duty. So how do you – how do you shut it off? (Christopher)

We’re on-duty 24 hours a day. I’m on-duty right now sitting in this coffee shop. If anything happens here, I am compelled by the way of the Police Services Act to arrest a person. So knowing that you have that sitting in the back of your mind 24 hours a day,

when you're going for drinks with friends, or if you're sitting at a coffee shop, or you're driving down the street. You're compelled to – so it's like you're never not working. (Tim)

The majority of police officers in the present study also mentioned exposure to dangerous and gruesome scenes more often than any other operational demand:

Every terrible call you're going to attend is going to have permanent effects on you. Permanent. There's no ands, ifs or buts. I mean you absorb the images, you absorb the smells, you absorb all the auditory factors involved and it just burns in your head. Think of the most terrible thing you could possibly envision and it's in your head forever until it gets replaced by something equally terrible or even worse. (Christopher)

You can't unsee that dead body, you can't unsee that rotten dead body, you can't forget the smells of those rotten bodies. I still remember the first one where I had to pick him off the [train] tracks and I never realized but the blue gloves were perforated so when I was picking up brain matter, I could feel it through the gloves on my fingers. (Raja)

Unfortunately, there's a lot of officers in my division – there's a lot of officers in [Woodford] that have shot somebody. But the ramifications after the fact that people don't realize is that it not only affects the guy who was shot, it affected me and my partner like you wouldn't believe. (Josh)

As shown in Table 4, police constables spoke about exposure to dangerous and gruesome scenes more often than any other group of officers (see Appendix G). However, participants only perceived dangerous or gruesome situations as stressful if these situations mirrored their personal lives or resonated with them in some way:

He had smashed in the back door. It was a door with a glass window and he broke the glass, reached in, turned the deadbolt. He unscrewed the light above, went in, and sexually assaulted her and beat her so bad that you wouldn't even recognize her face as being a female. Beat her, blood. And it's funny, you know, you look after all that and – when I bought my house out in [Brinkwood] about 12 years ago – I'm standing there in my kitchen, it's at night, and it was like frigging déjà vu. I was back in her kitchen 'cause she had the same countertop that I had, same backdoor, same light. And it's funny, since then it – I had to change the countertop in my house, I painted things differently. I put a new lock on. (Ellen)

I dealt with some mental health issues within my family, including concerns about suicide amongst my family members, and I deal with that. I come to work and then I go to a suicide call and, you know, those things, they're stressful. They linger and you don't want it – they add to things and you can't get rid of them sometimes. That's tough sometimes. (Norman)

Some participants went further, stating that exposure to situations that mirrored their personal lives influenced their ability to do their job fairly and effectively. For instance, Ellen discussed how her youngest daughter was a victim of domestic violence and how that influenced her ability to conduct objective investigations as a detective:

When I was in the D office – I was in the D office for four years. I asked to come out because I couldn't, I couldn't investigate domestic violence in a non – I couldn't do it because in all my victims, I saw [my daughter]. And all I wanted to do was just lay all kinds of charges. I, I wasn't being fair. I wasn't being objective. And I saw that in myself. It bothered me so, so I saw that in myself so I took care of it. I went to the Inspector at the station and I said, "Listen, I...I...I need to come out of the D office. I need a break and, you know, I really want to go back on the road". And I did.

Only one participant (Sophie) stated that she experienced PTSD after being exposed to a dead body that did not resonate with her in some way:

My issue was that I went to a call. I already discovered the dead body which really messed me up. I don't know why because I went to dead bodies before then. It was just this particular one really screwed me up.

Nevertheless, participants in the present study suggest that dangerous or gruesome scenes are not particularly stressful unless they remind them in some way of their own personal circumstances.

Half of the officers interviewed also referenced exposure to vulnerable victims, particularly children, when discussing sources of stress in policing. The majority of these references came from officers with children of their own (see Appendix G, Table 5). It is possible that exposure to crimes involving children may be a source of stress to these officers because of the way in which those particular crimes remind them of their own kids:

I have been a homicide investigator. I've been a child abuse investigator. Those investigations were very difficult to do because, even at the time I started, I had my first child and I couldn't come into a situation where I would look at somebody and think, "What if that happened to my child?" (Austin)

4.1.2 Work-Life Conflict

In the present study, 18 participants referenced work-life conflict as a source of stress. More specifically, officers in the present study felt like work-life conflict was stressful because of the pressure to choose between work and family life:

What do I do? You know? It's like do I follow my career, you know, successful career, or do I go towards family? And I went that route, you know? At least that way I have my Monday to Friday at [this unit] and all my weekends with my daughter. I get to tuck her in, you know, at night. And that was a hard decision. (Christopher)

That was probably the most stressful time of my life, probably. It's just trying to function at work normally which can still be stressful but knowing that all this other weight is on you about the daycare and getting your kids places and your kids still want a normal life to play sports and everything else but you know every third week you're on afternoons and you can't take them so it's a desperate thing phoning friends and other parents to see if they can take your kids and everything else. (Garrett)

You're trying to work around shiftwork and court time and, of course, you want to work that extra shift now and then when you can for a little bit of extra money for the family vacation or whatever you got planned and that. So you're trying to do all of this, meanwhile you've got a family, though. They have plans, they have lives that they want you to be a part of. (Norman)

Males in the present study referred to work-life conflict more often than their female counterparts (see Appendix G, Table 6). Out of the 5 females interviewed, only one police constable (Megan) stated that managing work and home life was stressful. This may be due to the fact that Megan was expecting her third child while her other two children were under the age of five. Out of the remaining four female participants, three were higher-ranking officers (2 detective sergeants and 1 sergeant) who had children that were no longer dependent and one was a police constable who did not have any children.

While balancing work and family life is a common source of stress in policing, results from the present study show that work-life conflict includes more than just managing

responsibilities associated with family life. Some of the officers interviewed had additional obligations outside of their work and family life:

My stresses are different than, I guess, other guys. I have assignments due, papers due, like, 'cause I'm in school still. I have to meet deadlines for my school so my stress mostly revolves around running around and getting to work on time, running around, getting to school on time, getting stuck in rush hour, just thinking a lot about what I've got to do and planning. (Raja)

I manage a fitness program, I have my real-estate license, I'm involved in music, I work full-time as a police officer, I'm married, I go to – I'm involved in my church. Like I do a ton of things and I feel like I'm able to do it all reasonably well. Umm, but that's also my biggest weakness because sometimes I get spread thin and then I get burnt out and then everything kind of suffers when that happens. (Victor)

A few participants in the present study also stated that their loyalty to the organization had been tested in the past. Victor, for instance, decided to take a year off from policing to explore his passion for music. As a result, his loyalty to his colleagues was challenged:

There's been times where I've tried to take a day off work to do something and then I'm made to feel as if like, "Oh, you're taking the weekend off, eh? Look at you, not dedicated" or whatever. I actually took an extended leave to pursue my music on the side last year and when I returned, I went to a new station. I heard some rumours that people thought I wasn't like, you know, serious about being a police officer. And it was totally lies and wrong, right?

Like Victor, Megan's fellow officers questioned her loyalty to the profession once they discovered she was pregnant for the third time:

I don't mean this to be conceited but I'm a good officer. Like I was really doing well with my career and just because I'm on the front desk as reception, I'm not stupid. And I'm not incapable of investigating and there's a lot of negativity that comes with having children...I've been called a "Pez dispenser". I get told all the time that my husband just has to look at me and I'm pregnant.

4.1.3 Public Scrutiny

The public and/or the media are common sources of police stress. Of the 24 officers interviewed, 13 identified public misperceptions about policing as a source of stress:

That's a general public perception that they think that we bark out commands and, "Do it now!" Like, no. The majority of the time we talk to the public the way I'm talking to you now, right? (Charlie)

We have a lot of oversight and there's a constant sort of judgment and almost like a perceived expectation that the police should be perfect. And that can cause – like I've been stressed by it before. Because knowing that that expectation is out there, you always want to meet that, right? You don't want to make mistakes but you have to realize that each situation you go into, no matter if sometimes maybe the general public – we as officers can suffer from this feeling that the general public expects us to be perfect. I can't speak for all police officers but I know that that's the general sort of idea that we are considered to be at the top of our game all the time and that's not always the case. It can't be. No one can operate like that. (Todd)

Officers in the present study also felt stressed by the constant oversight from community members and their ability to post distorted accounts of police conduct via social media:

Somebody will capture a portion of an event and – let's say on their cellphones. I think you'd constantly be asking yourself, "This snippet of time is captured and this snippet of time is not captured. How does that make me look?" And that's a very different – you may be doing exactly the right thing...for example, there was an interaction between an officer and the guy who was carrying the knife which ultimately led to him getting shot. While this happens, a person has their cellphone out. It doesn't start at the point where he's walking around exposing himself with a knife in his hand. It starts when the police arrive and are yelling at him. (Todd)

Even if you're justified in using force, you really, really have to stop and think twice about disengaging and – just because in the back of your mind, you're always thinking, "OK, lawsuit, front page of the [newspaper]. Like how's this gonna go?" So even if you're justified, you're still always questioning. (Megan)

Even things that happen in the States like the whole Ferguson thing lately, all the negative press about police, you know, shooting and killing unarmed black people in the States, you know? From my research, a lot of it is unfounded. The officers were acting properly but it doesn't matter because in the media, the story that's being told is quite different and it has a harmful effect that impacts all officers. So I think that creates stress. (Victor)

Some participants went further, stating that public scrutiny influenced the way in which they did their job while working on the street:

I've been confronted with somebody with a knife, and I chose a – I made a poor choice for my use of force option and I was injured because of it. And I based that decision on the situation that was occurring in the community at the time. Umm, that was years ago, back in the '90s. And, you know, I was confronted by a black male with a knife and the

[Woodford] Police had shot several black males that summer and there was a huge uproar and I thought, “Oh, this ain’t gonna happen” and I tried to disarm him with my baton and it didn’t work. And it went downhill from there. I mean he was arrested and whatnot but, yeah, it was not the best moment of my career. (Scott)

In the present study, police officers also classified scrutiny from outsiders, including family, friends, and the community, as a source of stress in policing. According to participants, those outside of the profession are often quick to criticize how police officers do their job:

You’re coming home and you’re telling stories about what you did and he would say, “Well why didn’t you do this? And why didn’t you do that? Why wouldn’t you have done this?” And I’m going, “You know what? Next time I’m at a call I’ll phone you up. Come on down and see if you can do any better”. (Ellen)

They can all do it better, you know? Like I wouldn’t tell an accountant, “Oh, I know how to do this budget better” or I wouldn’t go into a restaurant and tell the chef, “I can cook this better”. You just don’t. But when it comes to police work, everybody can do it better except the police. (Charlie)

We’re so stressed with going out and trying to help these people and for what? They don’t even like us. Like the next night after the [Fallwick] shooting, I went and sat in the command post ‘cause we had to guard the community, and I had people throwing stuff at us, giving us the finger, and I’m like, why? (Megan)

These particular instances of scrutiny from outsiders were perceived as stressful to the point that many officers refused to share certain work-related experiences with friends and family members. Others even lied about their profession when meeting new people while off-duty:

You know, if someone says, “Oh, what do you do?” I say, “Oh, I work for the city”. You know? Or “I’m a garbage man” or something like that. (Joe)

I don’t bring it up as a topic of conversation. I don’t say, “Hi, I’m [Charlie]. I’m a police officer”. No. “I work for the city”. (Charlie)

4.1.4 Travel/Commute

Another common source of stress for police officers in the present study was the long commute to and from work. This stressor was referenced 16 times between 10 police officers:

Let’s say most people live out in [Kettle Town], so you’re talking an hour to get into work and you have to be there half an hour ahead of time to get dressed, to be ready,

‘cause you have to be ready for parade 15 minutes before your shift starts. So there’s an hour and a half. There’s almost three hours of travel, getting ready. So three on 12, that’s a 15-hour day. So all you’re left is nine hours to do whatever and sleep. (Ellen)

Very few of us live close to the city. This is the furthest east division so I live 40 minutes away. So by the time you track in my 40-minute drive here, my 40-minute drive home, like that’s a 12-hour day. (Megan)

Although traveling to and from work was perceived as stressful, officers chose to live outside of the city in order to escape certain operational demands:

I know most of my colleagues don’t live within the city. Umm, many of us live well outside the city because we work in the city. We don’t want to be here when we’re done. It’s overwhelming; it’s too much. We want to be some place very quiet that is nothing like work so we get as far away from it as possible. (Norman)

4.2 Officers’ Coping Strategies

In this study, participants described a number of strategies that they preferred to use to cope with stress. However, these coping strategies did not align with the pre-established response categories in questions 19 and 20 of the interview guide (see Appendix B). Given the qualitative nature of this study, officers’ coping strategies were grouped into two new categories – pro-active tactics and diversionary tactics. These two types of coping strategies will be discussed in detail in the following sub-sections.

4.2.1 Pro-active Tactics

In the present study, the majority of participants described how they used a number of pro-active tactics or coping mechanisms to relieve stress. For the purpose of this study, pro-active tactics were defined as strategies that involve confronting stressors directly. They include making reasonable appraisals of stressors, recognizing and changing unhealthy reactions, and trying to prevent adverse effects on the body.

Of the 24 participants interviewed, 17 stated that they engage in some form of physical activity to help reduce tension and alleviate stress:

But it really helps me to work out and that testosterone and that ‘grrrrr’, you know? Deal with it in the gym. When I go home, I’ll have a positive attitude. (Nathan)

Well one of the big things for me is working out. Umm, just to break that mould of, you know – I don’t know a lot about the chemical organs of the human body but I know that I feel a lot more relaxed after I go to the gym, whether it’s jogging or lifting or whatever it is. (Tim)

As demonstrated by the above-mentioned participants, physical activity was a helpful coping mechanism because it allowed officers to release tension in a pro-social way. As a result, officers did not feel compelled to take their frustrations out on friends and family members.

Another pro-active coping strategy for participants was spending time with family and friends outside of work:

I keep going back to it: my friends were my best resources for help because they know you, right? And they are not there because they are required to be there to speak to you. They are there because they want to be. (Charlie)

I will conduct myself with my friends and people that don’t necessarily think of me as a police officer. At least we don’t talk about it. So I stay away from that. (Austin)

I got some advice when I first came on the job from my training officer many years ago...he said, “These are the people that you work with and what you have over here, these are the people that you live with. And keep them apart”. So I still see a lot of young guys today – the people that the guys that they work with are the guys that they party with, the guys they go to Cuba with, and things like that. You need to separate that. You need to have a gap because even though I’m friends with the people here, I don’t – we don’t socialize. (Edwin)

According to these participants, confiding in friends and family brought them comfort. It was also a positive coping mechanism for police officers because it allowed them to maintain a balanced lifestyle. By confiding in friends and family as opposed to colleagues, officers felt like they were better able to separate their work life from their personal life.

Lastly, many of the participants stated that they had participated in voluntary stress management programs, particularly counselling via the Service’s EAP and various wellness activities. This voluntary participation can be considered a pro-active tactic as officers are able to

use stress management programs to confront their stressors head on in order to prevent any adverse effects to their own well-being. In the present study, many participants discussed how they voluntarily chose to speak to a counsellor in order to work through a variety of stressors:

So I'm like, "I gotta do something". So I called again, set up an appointment, and I'm still currently seeing a counsellor for it to help me deal with it so it doesn't become an issue down the road. (Josh)

Because of an injury I received here, I was off and I had some surgeries and stuff and then coping with the stress was bad. I started seeing a therapist and stuff like that. (Allen)

4.2.2 Diversionary Tactics

In this study, the majority of participants described how they used a number of diversionary tactics or coping mechanisms to relieve stress. Diversionary tactics were defined as coping mechanisms that provide immediate relief from stress. Officers often used these tactics to escape stressors without confronting them directly.

Some participants stated that they would go out with their co-workers at the end of the week and have the occasional beer; however, the majority of participants stated that they never resorted to excessive alcohol or drug use to relieve stress. For the most part, substance abuse was mainly perceived as a coping mechanism of the past:

There's not this bull-headed kind of mentality that there used to be some 20, 30 years ago where it was just a bunch of overweight bike guys that went out drinking every night and just did whatever they want. That's kind of past due. (Tim)

...you'd hear the war stories from the old guys where it was a nightly thing. Whereas now, at the end of your scheduled week that you work, it's the last night, OK, it's the last shift after day shift, we're all gonna go out, have some wings and that's it. (Allen)

When I first started the job, you know, the binge drinking was ridiculous. Ridiculous. And the drinking, period. And that, I don't see – I don't know – I don't see it at all anymore. (Scott)

Others recognized the harmful effects of alcohol use as a coping mechanism:

My brother's an alcoholic, my brother-in-law's an alcoholic, my father-in-law was an alcoholic. You know? You just see what it does to them and it's not there to help. It only makes it worse. So I realized that. (Joe)

When discussing alcohol as a coping mechanism of the past, many officers alluded to the fact that social expectations have also changed; smoking and drinking are no longer viewed as acceptable social practices. Health and wellness have also been prioritized in schools. Therefore, participants believe that newer recruits are a lot more health conscious than they were in the past:

You know what, the young kids that are coming on now, they're not the coffee drinkers. They're coming in with their big lunch bags. It's a totally different – they're not going out drinking like they used to. (Ellen)

I think we're more aware of it. And it's not always just – it's so wide now. I mean if you don't – if you watch TV, you see the commercials. I don't think you can find a cigarette commercial anywhere. Even for alcohol, like for beer. The beer commercials during the hockey games or the sporting events, they always say, you know, be responsible; drink responsibly. And there are even some of the anti-drinking, anti-smoking campaigns that are out there. They're very strong. So the message is getting across. (Edwin)

Unlike alcohol use, humour was perceived as a common coping mechanism. In the present study, 9 participants referenced the use of humour to cope with stress. The majority of participants that referenced humour as a coping mechanism were police constables (see Appendix G, Table 7). According to these participants, humour provides officers with immediate relief and helps them cope with unpleasant encounters on the street:

Well I didn't realize she had an IV in because it was covered by the medical blanket and I pulled the IV so then there's blood spurting everywhere, so I had to go get my partner and I'm like, "Yeah, you need to go get the medical kit". He's like, "I thought she was already dead?" So here we are doing first aid on a dead body. So for everybody here that was quite hilarious. But for my husband, he's like, "I can't even believe: A – You touched a dead body; and B – You're so morbid. How's that funny?" (Megan)

I think if people could hear us talk sometimes, they'd think we're a pretty messed up bunch of people. But it is – it's just the only way some people can get something off their chest. (Edwin)

Most people on my Service have been conditioned to deal with stress by laughing it off. I don't know if that's successful. We tend to do that in closed door settings and the stuff

we say, anyone that's coming in that's not of a police mentality would think we're sick, that something's wrong with us but I'm pretty sure it helps a bit. (Austin)

In addition to humour, 9 participants mentioned that they used avoidance to help them cope with stress. Avoidance was displayed in three ways. Firstly, some of the participants stated that they would seclude themselves from friends and family or suffer in silence:

Well after learning how to walk again, I secluded myself. I became angry, I became – I didn't know how to cope. I eventually ended up losing my marriage and at that time I was like 12 years in and we were like the ideal couple. (Christopher)

I shut down, not properly probably, but I shut down. I get quiet. And I just work through and hopefully a couple of nights of proper sleep and it might dissipate or at least not become so important to me. (Austin)

Others would avoid addressing the stressors directly and, instead, find ways to distract themselves from the issues at hand:

I'm very much a distraction kind of person. Like if I get home after a bad shift 'cause I saw a lot of horrific things, then I'll try to do some sort of activity like watch a movie so your whole mind is within that movie. You're not thinking about what you dealt with. (Sophie)

Some participants even mentioned how they avoided watching the news or any crime dramas:

Like I don't watch the news. I haven't watched the news in well over 10 years. I don't read the newspaper anymore, you know? (Joe)

It's the same reason I don't watch police shows or police movies or read real crime novels or anything like that. I want away from policing when I'm not policing. (Norman)

This is a very negative environment lately and so I don't watch the news if I can avoid it and I don't want to talk about what's happening at work if I can avoid it because it's just more stress. (Megan)

4.2.3 Individual Differences in Coping Mechanisms

In the present study, male and female officers referenced pro-active tactics more often than diversionary tactics (see Appendix G, Table 8). Male officers, however, referenced the use of diversionary tactics more often than their female counterparts. More specifically, four male officers (Christopher, Tim, Allen, and Austin) stated that they would seclude themselves from

others or suffer in silence to cope with stress while none of the female officers reported seclusion or silence as a coping mechanism. Furthermore, three male officers (Charlie, Joe, and Norman) and one female officer (Megan) stated that they refuse to watch the news or crime shows. Three male officers (Raja, Norman, and Allen) and one female officer (Sophie) also play videogames and/or watch TV to cope with stressful encounters. Lastly, seven male officers (Garrett, Joe, Leo, Josh, Edwin, Austin, and Ronnie) and two female officers (Ellen and Megan) referenced the use of humour to cope with stress.

Caucasian officers and officers from other racial backgrounds referenced pro-active tactics more often than diversionary tactics (see Appendix G, Table 9). However, Caucasian officers referenced the use of diversionary tactics more often than racial minority officers. More specifically, three Caucasian officers (Joe, Norman, and Megan) and one Asian officer (Charlie) indicated that they avoid watching the news to cope with stress. Furthermore, three Caucasian officers (Norman, Allen, and Sophie) and one Pakistani officer (Raja) stated that they play videogames and/or watch TV to cope with stress. In addition, three Caucasian officers (Tim, Allen, and Austin) and one Asian officer (Christopher) reported that they seclude themselves or suffer in silence to cope with stress. Lastly, nine Caucasian officers (Garrett, Ellen, Joe, Leo, Josh, Megan, Edwin, Austin, and Ronnie) reported that they would use humour to cope with trauma. None of the racial minority officers, however, reported humour as a coping mechanism.

Four Type A officers (Patsy, Ellen, Charlie, and Edwin) stated that they ate healthy foods compared to one Type B officer (Nathan). Furthermore, ten Type A officers (Patsy, Raja, Ellen, Charlie, Joe, Tim, Hannah, Leo, Josh, and Edwin) and seven Type B officers (Christopher, Garrett, Karim, Allen, Victor, Sophie, and Nathan) stated that they engage in physical activity to cope with stress. However, ten Type B officers and eight Type A officers stated that they

participated in counselling via the Service's EAP. Out of the remaining participants who did not use counselling, five of them were Type A officers and one was a Type B officer (see Appendix G, Table 10). The Type A officers who did not use the Service's EAP stated that they preferred to use their own resources to alleviate stress (to be discussed later in the chapter). This finding is consistent with the existing literature which states that Type A officers are more likely than Type B officers to try something new to counter stress (Kirmeyer & Diamond, 1985). Since question 18 pertaining to personality type (see Appendix B) did not align with the theoretical framework used in this study, this finding was not analyzed further. As such, additional research is needed to examine the relationship between personality type and officers' perceptions of stress and stress management.

4.3 Officers' Perceptions of Stress Management Programs

Throughout the interview process, officers described their perceptions of stress management programs, including counselling via the Service's Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs), wellness programs, critical incident stress debriefing (CISD) programs, and peer support programs. In addition, officers described their ideal stress management programs. These perceptions will be discussed in great detail in the following sub-sections.

4.3.1 Counselling via Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs)

In the present study, feelings about counselling via the Service's EAP were mixed. Nine of the 24 participants interviewed stated that the EAP was a helpful tool in getting them in touch with a counsellor. Since they were able to access counsellors through the EAP, officers were able to set up additional appointments if they felt the need for a "tune-up". These "tune-ups" were seen as preventative measures through which officers could consult with counsellors before their stressors began to adversely affect them:

I might only go once every two years. So if something's going on in my home life, umm, I call it a "tune-up". I might go to two or three sessions and, because I've known this lady for so long, it's like talking to a friend and you just get things. (Ellen)

I went and saw a counsellor for a little while, then didn't for a little while. I was feeling better. So it was like, "OK, let's take a break and see how we're doing". And then when it started feeling rough again, right away I was back in like, "Listen, I'm struggling with it again. Let's get back to it". So a couple of times it was that way, you know, do a month or two, maybe three months of weekly or bi-weekly and then I would go off for a few months and then go back again if I needed. (Norman)

The door is open to me to go back whenever I want and I'll probably do that. Every now and again I need a "tune-up". I have yet to go back for the first "tune-up" but I can see that coming. (Nathan)

Some officers went further, stating that the EAP was helpful because it connected them to a counsellor that understood their profession, culture, and experiences:

He had a great background and he got it all; he got me. He had a background in the military doing counselling with the military for 17 years in combat zones so he got anything I could throw at him and he had great insight. He and I had a great rapport together and he helped me out with a lot. (Norman)

Other participants stated that, although they were open to seeing a counsellor, they did not perceive the EAP as a helpful tool. According to certain participants, the EAP only connects officers to counsellors with Master's degrees as opposed to psychologists with added credentials. To participants, these counsellors charge less for their services and are, therefore, under-qualified to address officers' unique needs:

I tried to use the EAP. I was in family counselling with my wife. The guy they sent us to, he was an idiot. They go for the best for the cheapest so, yeah. They'll offer you help but it's not always the best help. (Allen)

And I understand the people that they have for us are Master's, Psychology Master's, and that's what they provide us with right now. I've tried one, two, three – three of them – and none of them really helped. I could do the same thing if I wanted to sit down and talk to a friend. (Austin)

Since counsellors were perceived as under-qualified, officers felt that they did not receive the best support or advice:

And I initially went to that because that's all I knew I had access to and it was horrible. Like every time I came home from a session, I felt ten times worse. Umm, and I felt like it was maybe because they weren't properly trained on how to deal with anyone with PTSD. (Sophie)

...she just kind of said, "You're both adults, if you don't get along then my recommendation to you is to separate". And then I asked, "Well we have two small kids". "Oh, they'll deal with it and if they don't then have them come and see me". And that was it. (Garrett)

In the present study, 6 of the officers interviewed felt that counselling via the Service's EAP was inadequate because it only served as a short-term solution:

I mean it was helpful but it just – it's not a long-term solution. Like we don't have enough coverage to make it feasible to be a long-term solution. We have decent coverage. Decent. But not as much as I think we should have. Like I think we get – well this was a long time ago – so I think at that time we got \$1,200 a year. So that's basically like 6 sessions. (Megan)

So then you go, you talk about your feelings, and then I think they max it out at four sessions. And then the only way they'll add more sessions is if the counsellor thinks you need a few more. It depends on the counsellor. Like when I went with my mother, it was four sessions, that's it, you're cut off. And at the end of it, I felt OK. So I guess it was OK to cut it off. Like with the PTSD it was like, "No, I'm not good" but then again I didn't find it helpful so... (Sophie)

Others felt that the EAP process was too lengthy or too much of a hassle. According to officers in the present study, they had to wait a while to be put in contact with a counsellor:

You call the number, you get put on hold, you get put into a queue where somebody has to call you back. It's almost like being put on a suicide hotline and listening to the song "suicide is painless", you know, so to speak, you know? You're just sitting there waiting, and waiting, and waiting, and you want to talk to somebody but you've gotta wait for them to call you back. It's not instantaneous. (Joe)

But it's not the same as like, you know, I went and got a massage and here's my receipt, go ahead and reimburse me. You have to jump through three or four different loopholes to finally end up in a psychiatrist's office. (Tim)

(i) Officers' Ideal Counselling Services

When asked about counselling via the Service's EAP, a few participants stated that they would like to have more qualified counsellors to choose from. According to participants, these

individuals do not necessarily need a PhD to be qualified. Some officers stated that they would consider experience in the field as a sufficient qualification to help officers:

I would really like, probably, someone that's done my job and has that degree because then I could talk to you openly about everything because you'll understand the subculture. Then I won't have to maybe keep a few things back from you. (Allan)

Personally, from my experience now and dealing with three separate counsellors, I would get somebody with a PhD psychology level. (Austin)

Others wanted to see the EAP process simplified. According to participants, one way this could be done is by making counselling services more readily available; officers should not have to wait a couple of days before they are able to set up an appointment with a counsellor:

It would be great to have a counsellor available at the station all the time because you go to such a crazy call, you come back to the station, and it's like, "OK, go home. Come back to work tomorrow". (Sophie)

So you have an officer who's just been through something hellish on a call and you want somebody supporting them there, right now. You've got somebody right there that can be doing that. (Norman)

Some officers even stated that counselling should be built into their schedules as a pre-emptive measure against stress. Currently, EAPs are designed to assist officers after a traumatic incident has occurred (Blau, 1994; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Daniello, 2011; Madonna & Kelly, 2002).

While participants felt this reactive aspect is necessary, some also felt that counselling should have a pro-active component so that officers can vent about their frustrations and learn particular coping mechanisms to help them counter similar stressors in the future:

When I started this job I was 22 or 23 and I honestly thought – I guess from growing up watching cop shows or whatever it was and movies – that police officers sat down regularly with a psychologist. I don't know where it came from but I thought they would say stuff like, "OK, you have to go see the psychologist today". That's what I thought it was. I didn't realize that, no you only go and see them after the fact. To see them as a pre-emptive measure to combat – yeah, I think it would be good. (Josh)

We need to maybe have an opportunity to sit down with someone one-on-one and just check in and make sure things are OK like you see on TV, right? Like you sit down with a psychologist once a year and just check in and I think they should do that. (Megan)

4.3.2 Wellness Programs

In the present study, all 24 participants had participated in mandatory wellness activities, particularly the yearly wellness lectures. However, 9 of these participants felt that the wellness program offered by the police agency was a “joke”. According to these participants, wellness lectures are a waste of time because they inform officers about common sense information:

...whatever her name is at the college, she'll come out and do lectures and shit and talk about, “This is what you should eat and you should try to sleep on midnights”. Really? Wow, that's really helpful. (Hannah)

It's always the big joke that it's a great class about sleep because we all take a nap. They don't – I think the last year when I went they were focusing a bit more on PTSD and that. This is what it is. It was very analytical, very textbook, in my opinion, very useless. (Norman)

According to participants, officers are well educated in wellness, especially the younger recruits. As a result, participants did not see the value in re-iterating this common sense information during wellness lectures. Others felt like the wellness program was unrealistic for some officers, particularly road officers. This is because road officers are often too busy to take part in wellness activities or apply any of the helpful tips about eating right, sleeping well, and exercising:

But on the road, the majority of the guys never get a lunch hour here. Umm, you know, you're never eating well 'cause you're eating quick and whatever and even for sleep, you know, I remember a couple years ago when they were giving the lecture on sleep, they say, “Try to take a nap during the day time while you're working”. Where are you going to take a nap? Everybody is looking at the guy going, “OK, I'll just tell my boss it's my nap time”. You know? I'll put a blanket on the floor like you're in kindergarten. But they're talking about how refreshed you'll be and this and that. And it's like, well, like, you don't even get a lunch hour. (Garrett)

And I think it's a joke to be honest. Because they talk about sleeping but when are you supposed to sleep when you're working 10 hours plus? If you get overtime, if you have court – and you're not allowed to be excused from court. So if you work, say you work your 8 hour night shift, you get 2 hours overtime, there's 10 hours overnight, and then

you have – so you’re finishing at say 8 or 9 in the morning. Well then you have to be at court for 10. Well you’re at court until 5 in the afternoon and then you have to come in and do your shift again. When are you supposed to eat healthy and all of that because how are you supposed to prepare your meals? ‘Cause eating healthy is a lot of work, let alone eat properly. Like how are you even supposed to schedule your meal times in there, healthy or not healthy? And then how are you supposed to sleep? So I think it’s a joke. (Megan)

Some officers stated that the wellness programs are a means through which the Service can “cover its ass”. In other words, some officers felt like wellness initiatives were only in place to make officers feel like the Service is pro-actively doing something to help alleviate stress:

Now on our yearly use of force requirement, they brought in a PTSD component. But I think that’s – I personally think that’s more of a reaction due to the fact that we’ve had a number of suicides on the Service last year. (Joe)

And it’s the same people that are standing up saying, “You know what? We now have all these organizations, all these groups to help you out and this is what we believe in, this is what we’re pushing”. No, you don’t believe in it. You’re pushing it and it’s only because if something goes wrong, you can stand before the public and say, “But we have all these things in place. We don’t know what went wrong”. (Austin)

According to participants, the police organization primarily engages in lip service; it appeases its members by offering wellness programs and making officers feel like the issue of stress is being adequately addressed. The organization’s main concern, however, is to serve the community:

They’re focusing more on customer service now, I guess, would be a good way of putting it. You know, all of our interactions – we are customer service representatives just like the guy that sells you your fries at McDonald’s or whatever. We’re that contact point so it’s working hard on teaching us, I think, better customer service and encouraging that. (Norman)

We’re a service. We are a service. So I think that’s what they try and reflect onto the community is positive customer experience, you know? Umm, which in a way is a little – it doesn’t make sense ‘cause, yes, we are providing a service but at the same time, we’re an enforcement branch. So it’s kind of hard, really, to give customer service to somebody that you know you’re going to have to take away their rights and freedoms. (Joe)

(i) Officers' Ideal Wellness Programs

In the present study, officers' ideal wellness programs went beyond offering common sense information about maintaining a healthy diet and a consistent exercise regime. Instead of offering wellness lectures, officers felt that wellness activities (e.g., yoga classes) should be made available on an ongoing basis in each station so that officers would be able to access them more readily:

Even probably a couple of years ago, this – and I can't think of her last name but she's at the college, she's a civilian, her name is [Tina] – she actually took a yoga teacher training program. And where are they teaching it? You know? Like they're not bringing it forward to the members. Like why not have this type of thing for the members of the Service at different divisions or wherever? (Hannah)

Even when wellness lectures are mandatory, participants felt that officers as opposed to nurses and other professionals outside of policing should administer them:

People want it. They want somebody up there who is genuine, who has been there, and they want to hear it from them that, "Look, you can still be successful. I wasn't a basket case but I could very well have been". You know? (Scott)

Six interviewees also stated that the wellness program should focus more on training as opposed to lecturing; officers should be informed on how to recognize stress within themselves and within their colleagues. From there, officers should be trained on how to go about addressing this stress, whether it be seeking assistance from a counsellor or making fellow officers aware of certain behavioural changes that they might not be able to recognize:

But at the same time, I think it comes down to the training of how do we show everybody else how to recognize it within others and bring that to the forefront? How to approach them, you know? That's the whole thing. Not to show it as a sign of weakness but as a sign of strength. (Joe)

Nobody teaches us what to do. We know how to help a stranger. You know? You go, you help them. Worst case scenario – you know what, if I'm concerned that you might hurt yourself, you know, I'm going to throw you in the back of my car and take you to the hospital and let the professionals deal with this. We have those, you know, very clear-cut things. If A, B, and C are here, then we're apprehending you and taking you to the

hospital. If they're not here, then there's no worry. Umm, when we're dealing with each other, though, it's just different. (Norman)

Lastly, a few officers stated that their ideal wellness program would include more incentives. This would encourage officers to participate, either by exercising more, eating healthier foods, or taking care of their own health and well-being in general:

If they were able to strike a corporate rate with [a gym] proactively, like proactively go out and – like we have a corporate rate which is the same as the regular rate, which is what I pay, but if they were able to proactively bring the price down, I can guarantee you more people would join, use their programs as well. (Raja)

...or what's wrong with having even more incentives, right? I talked about that fitness pin thing, right? Why's it only four hours? Right? Like, unfortunately, I think it's – people should be a little bit more apt to do it for free, right? But in an ideal world, you know, like that's only in an ideal world, right? Like, I mean, maybe having more initiatives that way or even like contests. (Tyler)

4.3.3 Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) Programs

In the present study, 16 police officers shared their feelings about the Service's CISD program. In doing so, some officers stated that the critical incident debriefings they participated in were helpful, while others were not. According to Josh, the best debriefing he participated in was run by a psychologist and a peer who had gone through a similar critical incident. These individuals helped him recognize the emotions he would likely experience after the incident:

The two that ran it actually had been through traumatic events themselves. One's a corporate psychologist so she can analyze whatever but the officer who was the peer officer involved had been through traumatic events herself and listening to her talk and the emotions that she went through were very similar to what I was going through and I was told when it happened, "This is how you're going to feel".

According to officers in the present study, the worst critical incident debriefings were ones that focused on criticising the actions taken by officers involved in particular incidents:

It was really bad because it was more about scrutinizing, scrutinizing the officers on what they could have done right instead of focusing on what was done right. Like, "Hey guys, we didn't kill a person. How's that for, how's that for, you know, yeah there were guns being fired off and I ran in front of a gun and I tackled a guy, and he's not dead!" How

about that? No. Instead, they would go into details like, “Why didn’t you put it on the radio? Why didn’t you put it on the radio that you were chasing this guy?” (Raja)

Usually what these debriefs are – they pick apart what went wrong, what should have happened. And it’s like kind of pointing fingers. (Ellen)

Officers also stated that the worst debriefings were ones that involved talking about the incident on a factual level; officers simply discussed exactly what took place and nothing more. Instead of actively participating, officers kept to themselves and listened to the facilitator. Consequently, officers were only able to bring certain issues to the surface without actually addressing them or sharing particular tips on how to cope with the incident:

There’s a protocol in place here that when something traumatic like that happens, we have to come in – we have a debriefing with a corporate psychologist and it’s mandatory to attend but not to participate in. So I came in for that and I had no clause about talking about it in front of my colleagues, the guys on my shift, people who were there. And I felt really weird because every guy on my shift never been through it except for – I was the first one to shoot anyone on my shift that I know of. Like I’m one of the senior guys there and no one else has had – I don’t want to say that opportunity – but had that happen to them. (Josh)

You just sit down with let’s say two people from the critical incident debrief team and everybody that was involved. So there would be 8 to 10 people in the room at one time. So you’re not gonna get anybody to open up in that regard. (Tim)

According to Blau (1994) and Daniello (2011), CISD programs are designed to encourage participants to discuss the events that took place along with their thoughts and feelings about what transpired. In response, CISD teams are required to be supportive and empathetic. They are also encouraged to provide officers with information and suggestions on how to reduce the impact of stress. This aspect of the debriefing process, however, was not always fully conducted according to participants in the present study.

Officers perceived debriefings as short-term solutions since they were not offered any follow-up support once the debriefings were over:

It was better than nothing. But that was the end of it. It was almost like – it was like, “OK, well we did debrief so now everybody’s fine”. And the reality is you’re not fine. Like now here it is, three years later, and it’s still in my mind like it happened yesterday and it still – I don’t have PTSD over it but it’s still something that I find upsetting. (Megan)

In the present study, 13 participants stated that critical incident debriefing sessions could help officers cope with stress; however, they are implemented inconsistently. At times, officers felt they could have benefited from a debriefing session but one was not offered:

Like I think it’s interesting in the Service because if you work for homicide or sex crimes, because of the nature of your work, you have to go see the Service psychologist or psychiatrist – one of the two – every six months where, being, before when I worked in the division and dealt with the child abuse and sexual assaults, there was no requirement and in the division I was probably seeing more of it than out of the sex crimes unit. (Joe)

I mean it’s not every day you walk into a situation and you got a dead body or something, right? Or you’re working on somebody who has just been shot and they die while you’re trying to save them type of thing. And there’s no – and they give you a phone number and say, “Here you go”. There’s no sort of debrief or anything. (Allen)

Other participants stated that debriefings only take place if officers request them:

One of them was done three days after the incident, maybe four. And it was done because somebody said, “Aren’t we doing a critical incident debriefing for this?” And somebody went, “Oh, shit. I guess we should”. And the next thing you know, they’re yanking the dispatchers and everybody else to talk about it. (Norman)

(i) Officers’ Ideal CISD Programs

A few officers stated that mental health professionals and/or officers who have experienced critical incidents in the past should administer CISD programs. According to participants, supervisors should not be running debriefing sessions because officers may not have the best relationships with them. Furthermore, supervisors are not trained to be sensitive to the feelings and frustrations that officers may be going through after a critical incident has occurred:

I find when it’s your immediate supervisors doing it, it’s a lot different because you may not have the right kind of relationship with them. Your immediate supervisors may – some of them are really friendly, some of them are really not. They’re really – because

they have to be managers. So you may or may not have a positive relationship with them. And when they sit down in a group and do a debrief, it does not go well. On the other hand, when it's a professional who's done it before who understands that you're gonna be closed off for a while. You're not gonna open up right away. And they take their time and they set aside 8 hours or 4 hours or whatever and let us talk and we all open up. Those are good debriefs, right? (Raja)

I know one in particular who was involved in a shooting, shot and killed someone and he had somebody there, peer support person, who's also another guy who was working who also shot and killed someone. Umm, and I believe that's incredibly important and would help massively. (Nathan)

According to certain participants, debriefing sessions are mandatory for officers in particular units. However, officers working on the street encounter horrific instances just as often as individuals in specialized units. Consequently, a few officers stated that they would like to see debriefing sessions applied more frequently:

So I think in a way, they're looking at just two units when they should have been looking at anybody who deals with it. (Joe)

Maybe the [Hinton] Police model is something to look at because they will actually – they have the squad or the unit – whatever you want to call it – of peer support workers that will get a list of calls over the last – I don't know if it's 24 hours or however it works with the [Hinton] Police because they're smaller than us – they will review the calls. So they will actually have calls that they can read off and go, "That's probably a call we should actually go to the officers and talk to them because it was a, I don't know, a SIDS baby or somebody died, or it was a suicide, or it was a homicide". So they'll go through the list of calls, and they'll actually go and talk to the officers and say, "Hey, we saw this call" and you can print out, you can now access the computers and do an actual print out of the call and go and debrief the calls yourself and see what's going on. (Hannah)

4.3.4 Peer Support Programs

In the present study, feelings about peer support programs were mixed. Five participants stated that peer support programs allow officers to share their frustrations with other officers who understand the culture and the types of situations they encounter:

A peer group is not a bad thing in the sense that, once you reach a comfort level – because a lot of people have gone through similar things – it's easier to talk about. It's hard to talk about it with, even with friends. It's hard to talk about certain things that happen here in this job because they don't understand it. They don't work in this kind of

environment. But with your own peers, for sure. They understand the environment. They definitely understand. (Edwin)

On the other hand, 9 participants stated that they would be more hesitant to reach out to peer counsellors, especially if they have never met them before. At the same time, others stated that they would be reluctant to use peer support programs out of fear that participants may divulge their issues to colleagues in the field, putting their anonymity and confidentiality at risk:

I don't want to sit there around with a group of people. They may not know me but they know people on my shift. So if I'm talking, say to this police officer or whatever it is, and I'm sitting around and I'm making reference to a certain incident, these guys may inadvertently be talking to someone on my shift, "Oh, you should have seen this guy at the counselling session who was talking about this". And they're going, putting two and two together, and now they realize that I'm in counselling. (Josh)

The overwhelming fear in law enforcement is that there's going to be disclosure. Say if I go to that peer support group and I talk about a stressor that I'm going through right now and next week I shoot and kill somebody and it's a borderline shooting. Is all that stuff I said disclosable? Are all those people that were at that peer group, are they now going to be interviewed by the SIU because they heard me say that stuff? I think that's where a lot of our resistance comes from to anything like that. (Scott)

A couple of officers also stated that peer support officers only volunteer to assist peers so that they can receive a promotion in the future. Knowing this, officers felt reluctant to participate:

And I think that's why they scrapped it 'cause they found nobody was dealing with it because I know from some of the other stations, guys are saying, "There's no way I'm going to talk to this guy 'cause he's a prick on the job and I know he's doing it for one reason; it's self-serving". (Garrett)

I feel like they're on that list because they want to be promoted some day and it looks good to be on the list. (Megan)

(i) Officers' Ideal Peer Support Programs

Out of all the programs discussed in the present study, officers had less to say about peer support programs. This may be due to the fact that peer support programs are no longer offered by the Woodford Police Service: "But from nearly 20 years ago when I joined, things have changed in how that works and how it operates. It used to be peer counselling prior but now it's

outsourced” (Joe). Consequently, officers may not have experienced peer support programs in the past, making it difficult for them to come up with possible amendments to similar peer-based programs. Nevertheless, 5 of the participants interviewed agreed that their ideal peer support program would need to involve the assurance of anonymity:

...or even then like a web chat room – something along those lines – where you could log on as, whatever, like hotdog boy or whatever the heck it is. And you can just sit there and chat with people on a regular basis about, you know, the different things that you’re going through. But first and foremost, it would have to be anonymous. (Tim)

How about an app, right? Like a free downloadable app for all officers. You have a specific login, right? You have an anonymous chat room. There’s not to be any sort of derogatory conversations that occur here. This is strictly for things to help people with real problems, right? (Tyler)

4.4 Officers’ Reasons for Using/Not Using Stress Management Programs

During each social interaction with the researcher, police officers provided a number of reasons for which they have chosen to use and/or not use existing stress management programs offered by the organization of interest. These reasons are discussed in great detail in the following sub-sections.

4.4.1 Reasons for Using Stress Management Programs

Participants used stress management programs, particularly counselling via the EAP, to relieve stressors associated with personal circumstances (e.g., divorce) and/or operational demands (see Appendix G, Table 11). Only one participant, Victor, explicitly mentioned how he sought counselling to deal with the stress caused by operational and organizational demands.

A few officers attributed their reason for seeking help to others. Some officers were encouraged to seek help from friends or family members, while others were encouraged to seek help from their co-workers or physicians:

I was at home and I was – the first few weeks after, I wasn’t sleeping very well and I went and saw my own doctor. I told my own doctor what happened. He told me that I

should be reaching out to my Employee Assistance Program if I felt comfortable doing that so I did. (Josh)

[My colleague] gave me the number for the lady she had dealt with, the same therapist that she had been to for her own issues, family issues. It took about three months before I would finally go. (Nathan)

Before deciding whether or not to participate in stress management programs, however, a number of officers would test their colleagues' reactions to the idea. If officers received a favourable response, they would accept their colleagues' support and seek assistance. If they received a negative response, officers would play off the encounter light-heartedly:

And if they're like, "Yeah, I've been thinking about it", then you can go, "OK, let's get serious". But if they're like, "What do you mean? What are you saying?" "Buddy, I was just making a joke man" and you can back away from it. (Norman)

4.4.2 Reasons for Not Using Stress Management Programs

In the present study, half of the interviewees found that they had trouble recognizing that they were stressed right away. For these participants, the realization that they were stressed came once they recognized changes in their behaviour over time (e.g., crying) or when co-workers or family members brought it to their attention:

You don't realize it's too late until it's too late; until you pull over on the street and you're sitting there crying. You don't realize it until that time that you have to make changes. (Raja)

One of the most important things about it is not realizing that you're going through it at the time until you have an opportunity to step away. Things like questioning your judgment or just, you know, feeling deflated or exhausted and overwhelmed but the only thing you're doing is sitting on your couch. You have no motivation to do anything. You prefer just to sit there. Not understanding the warning signs is one of the most debilitating things when it comes to the Service as a whole. Just not knowing what you're going through. (Tim)

I think that the difficulty may be in the fact that one individual doesn't recognize right away that they currently are under a great deal of stress sometimes. I mean I fall into that sometimes, right? You just don't realize, right? And, for me anyways, a good sounding board has been close friends just saying, "OK, listen. Like, you've been kind of different

lately”. You know? And you sort of stop and you’re like, “Oh my God. Yeah, I have!” You know? (Tyler)

Knowing this, it is possible that some police officers in the present study may not have used various stress management programs (or were reluctant to use them at first) because they were not always aware that they were stressed.

In the present study, 10 of the officers interviewed stated that they do not engage in some of the stress management programs offered by the Service out of fear of damaging their careers:

And also you’re concerned because at a certain point they can always make recommendations like you don’t work anymore. You get sent home. You’re concerned for that. You’re concerned because that will negatively impact your career for the next 20, 25 years. You will not go anywhere. If you ever have your gun taken away because you’re stressed, you will not go to the SWAT team, you will not go to the hold-up squad, you will not go to homicide, you will not go to anywhere that’s good that you want to do. You will not go to canine if dogs are your thing. You will not. Because they will have another 20 applicants whose gun was never taken away. (Raja)

It’s just not something you do. Like if you even say the word stress to a superior colleague, there’s a chance that you could, although remote, be essentially suspended immediately, have your firearm taken away from you, and immediately put on stress leave. (Tim)

Ten participants also stated that they did not participate in any of the voluntary stress management programs because they did not feel the need to. Some of these participants stated that they failed to use any of the voluntary stress management programs like counselling because they preferred to use their own stress management tools, resources, and/or strategies:

So I, I sit down and if I have stressors – and there’s always more than one – if it’s work, whatever at work is bothering me, the 5 things or the 4 things or the 2 things; if it’s at school, what are the 3 things or the 4 things bothering me at school; or personal life, umm, you know, be it finances, or you know, your car needs repairs, the small stuff that’s adding up. And I haven’t paid attention to it. And then I start checking off how I can fix those things. Maybe set an appointment for my car, set an appointment for, you know, my dentist ‘cause – whatever it may be that’s on my mind. But I realized that it would start accumulating over time, the small things that I put on the backburner, you know? “Yeah, I’ll call the dentist next week” or “I’ll take the car in for an oil change next week” and then next week never comes. So now I find it’s a lot better when I write a list out and I have a definitive plan. I know what needs to be done. (Raja)

I have a really, really strong relationship with my wife and with some friends outside of work. And I actually have a really close friend who's a psychiatrist. So sometimes I just sit down and we just kind of, you know, have a chat. (Edwin)

Others never felt like they required intervention:

I never thought I needed to take that step. Umm, so I haven't got that far in the thought process. I think, I think if I was in an acute situation now that I would probably make a phone call. (Patsy)

You can't seek help for everything but if it's something like children involved or violent assaults, or disfigurements – let's say a family member of yours committed suicide and then you had to go to a suicide call in the same manner. Well you've been to many suicides but that's gonna trigger – I just haven't had anything that's on that level. I've normalized all the normals and haven't found my kind of "oh my God" kind of situation. I guess for someone like me who hasn't used it, I guess, it's just nice to know that it's there if I need to use it. And I haven't had to yet. (Leo)

As mentioned earlier, participants in the present study stated that shifts are slowly taking place within the police culture. However, certain officers suggested that stigma is still associated with stress and seeking help:

Almost everybody that I talk to, I hear them saying, "Yeah right. Who's gonna walk into headquarters and say I'm here to see the psychologist?" (Hannah)

Once in a blue moon someone will mention PTSD or something and I'll hear someone say like, "Oh, yeah. That's really horrible. My friend has that. It's really bad". But even when you see that they're, I guess, supporting people with PTSD, you still don't want to tell them. It's just, you still feel like a wimp. (Sophie)

He said that – and this is through his wife after the fact – that he didn't get support, that he was teased and things like that about needing help from his peers. (Christopher)

There's one guy who did reach out and talked to someone. People still talk about him. He hasn't worked with us for 8 years since then – sorry, no, 6 years. He's quit since then. So he's now a mortgage agent or something. And people still talk about him: "Oh, he was so well put together, I wonder what happened? Like, come on. The job can't be that bad". (Raja)

Based on the above-mentioned accounts, it is possible that participants in the present study may have also failed to voluntarily use various stress management programs due to the stigma

associated with their use. Certain officers even suggested that stigma was a significant factor in preventing them from using stress management programs:

I don't know what I would do. Umm, I haven't felt the need to do that yet. But if I did, I don't know what I would do because, yeah, I know there's that – as much as I don't consider it a stigma – but there's that, “Oh, what would other people think?” (Karim)

I used the independent counsellor and at that time, we did have to refer through the Service which sucked and I actually ran into somebody I know at the counsellor's office. And that was the last time I went 'cause it was really awkward for both of us. (Megan)

If I had gone when I was in the previous environment, I would have, I think, been worried about stigma. That may have been a reason why I didn't go when I was there, umm, for sure. I think that's probably the case. I didn't – I probably wouldn't have wanted to give anybody another reason to dislike me or think poorly of me. I think at the time, there was probably enough rumours being spread that, you know, I just didn't – I just needed to get out of that atmosphere. (Victor)

4.5 Officers' Ideal Stress Management Initiatives

In addition to describing how existing stress management programs could be improved, officers in the present study constructed their very own stress management initiatives. Like officers in the existing literature, participants in the present study believe that organizational demands are the primary sources of stress in policing (Brown & Campbell, 1990; Kohan & Mazmanian, 2003; Violanti & Aron, 1993, 1994, 1995). Consequently, the majority of participants (16) stated that they would like to see the Woodford Police Service address these organizational demands. In the present study, 7 participants stated that the police organization should focus on hiring mature recruits with more education and/or life experience. According to participants, hiring an educated workforce will not only improve officers' ability to do their job but will also encourage officers to overcome stigma, start talking about stress, and not feel ashamed to seek help if they need it:

The more knowledge you get, the more cultured you are, the more understanding you are of other cultures, issues, and problems. If you hire a bunch of people that are very narrow and don't understand the bigger spectrum and such then, yeah, you're gonna have a

harder time with people seeking help and talking to each other and such. But if you notice with hiring a more educated workforce, talking about stress won't bother people. (Leo)

I think we need to hire sort of more adult-like people or people who can – we need to put a focus on people making good decisions for themselves. (Todd)

A few officers also stated that their schedules should be altered. Although officers acknowledge that shiftwork is inevitable, a few of them stated that the schedule could be modified to include court duties during paid working days as opposed to days off:

I think that the Service needs to evaluate their shift schedules and that would make a huge difference in a lot of people. Seven days of working 10-hour days is too much and I've been doing it for 13 years and it's too much. I think that would – if they brought something in that would control the amount of work hours, something also to control your court while you're off-duty because a lot of people despise court because it just completely ruins that whole day. (Josh)

I talked to a buddy of mine who's with another police service. You know what? Every 5 or 10 weeks he has one day – all of his court matters for traffic court are all in that one day. They schedule it that way so he has his court day. (Norman)

According to participants, modified schedules would help officers better manage work-life conflict. One officer even suggested that the Service implement a rotation in which officers could alternate between street-level work and administrative work. This would ensure that officers get a break from the schedule and the stress associated with working on the street:

I think with these young people, I think their expectations are more of the job but I think that if they don't get a break occasionally and rotated through, you know, a desk job once in a while or the police college or headquarters or a squad, they are going to find that they are going to have a lot of stress-related problems. (Garrett)

In addition to addressing organizational demands, many participants stated that they would like to see additional changes to the police culture so that officers feel more comfortable speaking about stress and seeking help. In order for stress and stress management to become less taboo, 10 participants stated that police officers need to get the ball rolling so that negative

attitudes can change over time. Some of these officers stated that they (or their colleagues) have already initiated the process, hoping that other officers will begin to do the same:

Cops are killing themselves all the time but nobody talks about that. I'm prepared to break the ice and, you know, and start, you know, at least trying to get some co-workers starting to talk about the fact that some of the stresses that we deal with are just so overwhelming to the point where officers just feel lost, lost to the point where they commit suicide. (Tim)

I know a few cops lately that have been publicly posting things on Facebook about their struggles and sharing it openly and talking about it so that's – I think that's good to see too. (Victor)

A few officers also stated that supervisors should be trained on how to recognize warning signs associated with stress and how to address officers who display these warning signs:

[Supervisors] need to recognize some of the warning signs that they can see in the people that are below them and that has to start from the top and work its way all the way down. Umm, and once officers, Sergeants, and Staff Sergeants and such spend more time being trained in, you know, noticing these warning signs in officers that are going through – whether they are taking extended sick days, or they're coming in late for work, or they're inexplicably gone for a week or two, or whatever it is. People need to perk their ears up and start looking around and saying, "Wait a second, what has this officer been through and is there anything that we can sit them down and help them out with?" (Tim)

So it's important to get the front line supervisors on site to realize that this is a problem and monitor it. I'm not saying drag a guy in every night and say, "How are you feeling today?" But just monitor it and talk to people and get to know your people. (Scott)

In addition to training, participants also stated that encouragement from supervisors is necessary in order to further erode the stigma associated with stress and seeking help. Participants in the present study believe that supervisors need to encourage discussions about stress. They also need to act as role models so that officers become more willing to seek help:

So inherently there's an inherent amount of respect assigned to someone within a higher rank. Having those higher rank structured people break down certain barriers and have them sort of proliferate a perception that; one, weakness is not assigned to people that are currently feeling a great deal of stress to ask for help. That's the difference. (Tyler)

The higher-ups should talk to the constables at any level just about stressful situations like, "It's OK if this messes you up", just so it creates more of a discussion. 'Cause when you have lectures like that or situations come up, you find that guys are more willing to

talk about it but if they're so rare, then guys just don't talk about it. The more people are talking about it, the more it's acceptable, the more you feel OK with talking about it. (Sophie)

Other officers went further by indirectly suggesting that a change in culture can take place through informal tactics. According to these participants, informal tactics can simply include colloquial discussions among colleagues:

I would rather we engage in that type of behaviour, interaction, on an informal basis. And it does happen, obviously, on an informal basis, whether it be a beer after work at the end of the week of the shift or you just bump into a colleague you haven't seen in a couple of weeks: "Hi, how's it going?" And you have a few minutes to chat. Sometimes we get tied up and we create processes for everything and procedures for everything and obviously this job is incredibly top heavy with procedure and protocols and stuff. (Nathan)

While additional stress management programs or initiatives were deemed necessary, 18 participants stated that the emphasis should be placed on responsabilizing officers to take care of themselves. According to these participants, additional stress management initiatives may not be helpful because, at the end of the day, officers must want to seek help:

Every time that you do your yearly training, they come and they talk about it and they have posters up and they have everything else. The thing is, they can't force people to be healthy and they can't force people to get help. They can't force these things. And a lot of times, cops don't like being told what to do. (Leo)

And those things are there. It's up to me if I decide to reach out and use them or not. There's a gym there. There's a gym at every station. Now if I don't go there, that's nothing to do with the gym, that's more to do with me, right? A friend of mine uses an example it's like, you know, there's two people who bought an exercise bike. One of them after a month lost 10 pounds, the other one didn't. There's nothing wrong with the exercise bike. It's who decides to use it, right? (Karim)

I could use an analogy, you know, if you think about, like, a homeless person – and there's a lot of resources in a city like [Woodford] for somebody not to be homeless. But, from my experiences, there's a lot of people on the streets that don't want to accept any of those resources so they choose to be homeless. I think there's a lot of resources available for officers but I think there's a lot of officers that choose not to take them even though they know that they exist. So I do think there's a lot of individual responsibility to tackle issues like stress and to avoid being in that situation in the first place. (Victor)

4.6 Chapter Summary

Officers in this study perceived organizational demands as more stressful than operational demands. Participants also preferred to engage in a combination of pro-active and diversionary tactics to cope with stress, regardless of their perceptions of available stress management programs. While perceptions of stress management programs were mixed, the majority of participants agreed that available programs only provided temporary, short-term relief. Officers only used stress management programs if they were encouraged to seek help from friends, family members, co-workers or physicians. This is because participants often had a difficult time recognizing when they were stressed. In order to help officers alleviate stress, participants stated that police organizations should better address certain organizational demands including shiftwork schedules and mandatory off-duty court appearances. In the following chapter, the findings from this study will be analyzed and interpreted using the symbolic interactionist framework.

Chapter 5:

Discussion & Analysis

In this chapter, I interpret my findings in light of the symbolic interactionist framework outlined in Chapter 2 and assess how these findings can be used to better understand officers' perceptions of stress and stress management. In the following sections, I discuss the processes through which officers construct "reality" and engage in impression management. I then analyze officers' perceptions of stress and stress management from a symbolic interactionist perspective and conclude with a discussion on impression management and stigma.

5.1 Officers' Construction of "Reality"

As mentioned in Chapter 2, stressors (e.g., operational and organizational demands), stress management programs, and the police culture exist in the real world "out there". Within the real world "out there", however, officers interact with themselves and others and interpret their surroundings, resulting in variations of meaning (Pascale, 2011). Since people behave based on what they believe and not on what is objectively true, this study is primarily concerned with analyzing variations in meaning and how this meaning is constructed.

Police officers develop social scripts through verbal communication or vocal gestures; they use language to share stories about their experiences on the job. Through storytelling, officers are able to engage in symbolic interaction; they are able to develop, transmit, and retain significant symbols or gestures of mutual understanding (Mead, 1972). Once they are sworn into the profession, police officers develop a repertoire of stories, significant symbols, and social scripts which they use to shape their perceptions and guide their behaviours. By referring to this repertoire of social scripts, officers are able to adequately conduct themselves in ways deemed appropriate by the dominant police culture when communicating with the media and/or the

public, other colleagues, and supervisors. As they perform their daily routines, police officers also share stories and develop a repertoire of mutual understanding regarding stress and stress management. This repertoire of mutual understanding, as shown by participants in the previous chapter, suggests that fearlessness and machismo are commendable characteristics for officers to display. Overtly displaying signs of stress and/or discussing the need to seek help, on the other hand, are considered deviant acts; officers who express their emotions are considered weak and are, therefore, stigmatized (Goffman, 1965). Altogether, this repertoire of mutual understanding contributes to the development of officers' "me" or social self; it forms officers' internalized set of norms and values which are influenced by the attitudes, behaviours, and expectations of others (Mead, 1972). The "me" exercises societal control over officers' perceptions and decisions, ultimately influencing the way in which they choose to talk about stress and stress management. While some officers may express individualism or creativity by complying with the "I" or the individualized aspect of the self, the majority of officers in the present study gravitated toward the "me" since they often chose to comply with the norms and expectations endorsed by their social selves. By gravitating toward the "me", officers were able to conceal their blemishes of individual character (e.g., stress), avoid stigmatization, and preserve their reputations as heroic, courageous police officers (Goffman, 1965).

By developing, transmitting, and retaining significant symbols through storytelling, officers are also able to engage in role-taking; they are able to interpret the reactions of the actors in the stories as well as the reactions of the storyteller and his or her audience members. In doing so, officers are able to use those reactions to shape their perceptions as well as their own responses in similar situations (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1972). Participants in the present study constantly engaged in role-taking by referring to countless stories in their repertoire when

developing their perceptions of stress and stress management throughout the interview process. For instance, they referred to stories they heard in which supervisors praised officers who displayed fearlessness and reprimanded those who displayed overt signs of distress (e.g., crying) by taking their guns away or putting them on restricted duties after a dangerous or traumatic incident occurred. When they encountered similar dangerous or traumatic incidents while performing their roles, officers would refer to their associated repertoire of stories, put themselves in their supervisor's position, and act toward themselves from that position before constructing their course of action. Using the stories they heard as a frame of reference, officers anticipated that their supervisors would respond negatively to overt displays of distress just like other supervisors did in the stories they heard. By engaging in role-taking and interpreting their actions in relation to the actions of their supervisors, officers refused to overtly display signs of distress in front of their supervisors out of fear of destroying their careers as some of their colleagues have done. Officers also took on the role of their colleagues in order to best construct their course of action in other social situations. Participants would refer to their repertoire of stories involving officers being criticized by other officers before deciding whether or not to disclose certain fears and/or participate in certain stress management programs. Officers would put themselves in the position of their peers and act toward themselves from that position before constructing their course of action. By referring to their repertoire of police stories, officers anticipated that their peers would make fun of them or talk about them behind their backs for admitting that they have been adversely affected by particular stimuli. In order to avoid a similar fate as those who have been stigmatized in the past, officers refrained from sharing any personal feelings that would have caused colleagues to question their strength as well as their ability to be an effective police officer.

Although officers are capable of acting toward themselves from the position of others in order to appropriately construct their own lines of action, they are not always able to take on the role of the other to empathize with the lines of action taken by their colleagues. Police constables, for instance, stated that senior-ranking officers scrutinize lower-ranking officers because they lose sight of the challenges and stressors associated with street-level police work. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, it appears as though senior-ranking officers' perceptions of stress are inconsistent with lower-ranking officers' perceptions of stress because senior-ranking officers fail to put themselves in lower-ranking officers' position. Interestingly enough, however, the opposite may also be true. Police constables may perceive the scrutiny they receive from supervisors as stressful without putting themselves in their supervisors' position to truly understand why this scrutiny is occurring in the first place. According to participants, the police organization in question is primarily concerned with appeasing the public and adequately servicing the community. Knowing this, it is possible that senior-ranking officers are being pressured by their own supervisors, the public, and/or the media to make sure that street-level police officers abide by certain expectations set out by the community.

Perceptions and social scripts are not static but susceptible to change (Blumer, 1966; Mead, 1972). This is because individuals are constantly re-defining each other's acts via social interaction; they are always adjusting their definitions based on the responses they receive from others (Blumer, 1969; Mead, 1972). Officers in this study altered their perceptions of stress and stress management using a similar tactic. For instance, officers mentioned how they used subtle vocal gestures, particularly humour, to assess their colleagues' responses to proposed changes to cultural norms and dominant perspectives associated with stress and stress management. Some officers challenged widely accepted notions, including various taboos about counselling. By

doing so, they were able to determine whether or not social scripts about stress and stress management have changed. Throughout the interviews, some officers recalled how they would drop subtle hints to their colleagues about their desire to seek professional assistance while others would cautiously encourage their peers to seek assistance following a traumatic incident. From there, officers would assess their colleagues' reactions. If colleagues reacted negatively to the subtle cue, officers would retract their statement and play it off as a joke. If colleagues accepted the subtle cue, however, officers would make note of it in their repertoire and adjust their perceptions of stress and stress management. Some of them would even alter their course of action. Participants sometimes received positive responses from colleagues (e.g., words of encouragement to seek counselling) after delivering subtle cues that they were in distress. Participants would then use these positive responses to alter their perceptions of stress and seek assistance.

While they may change over time via social interaction, social scripts as well as officers' construction of stress and stress management may also vary depending on where they are situated within the organization or the subcultural group they belong to. According to Becker (1973) and Cohen (1955), subcultural groups emerge because they provide members with specific means through which to deal with the world that have not been provided by the dominant culture. As such, subcultural groups tend to consist of members with similar experiences, preconceptions, stereotypes, values, and frames of reference. In the present study, a number of subcultural groups have been identified. The most prominent subcultural groups were those based on rank; police constables belonged to one subcultural group and senior-ranking officers belonged to a different subcultural group. Within these subcultural groups, officers' perceptions of stress and stress management varied. For instance, police constables used

operational stressors to construct their perceptions of stress more often than senior-ranking officers. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, this is not surprising. Police constables used operational stressors more often in their construction of stress because those are the stressors they most often encounter and discuss with other police constables. By discussing operational stressors with other police constables in their subcultural group, street-level police officers are able to share particular coping mechanisms that better address their own specific needs. In other words, they are able to adequately relieve stress associated with operational demands by developing coping mechanisms that have not been prescribed by the dominant police culture. These particular coping mechanisms, as seen in the previous chapter, include humour (e.g., laugh it off) and spending time with friends outside of the police organization. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the dominant police culture, otherwise known as the traditional occupational police culture, prescribes general strategies (e.g., suspiciousness and maintaining the edge) to help officers reduce the uncertainty associated with their job (Cockcroft, 2013; Loftus, 2010; Paoline, 2003; Paoline et al., 2000; Reiner, 1992). It is for this reason a number of participants in the present study remained suspicious of various stress management programs, particularly peer support programs; officers believed that peers would share participants' personal experiences with other members across the Service. The dominant police culture, however, does not explicitly provide officers with particular techniques for engaging in stress management since stress itself is considered taboo. It is for this reason that police constables turn to their subcultural group to learn how to best cope with stress.

Like police constables, senior-ranking officers turn to their subcultural group of senior-ranking officers in order to construct their own perceptions of stress. By interacting with other officers in their subcultural group, senior-ranking officers learn to construct their perceptions of

stress using the management cop culture. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the management cop culture focuses on long-term concerns (e.g., crime control, citizen responsiveness) in relation to political, social, and economic factors (Reuss-Ianni, 1983). By interacting with other officers in their subcultural group using the management cop culture as their frame of reference, senior-ranking officers develop perceptions of stress that are different from those created by police constables. Senior-ranking officers tend to lose sight of the stressors associated with street-level police work and fail to use operational demands when constructing their perceptions of stress. These findings, however, are not surprising since senior-ranking officers are less likely than street-level police officers to encounter operational demands on the job (Brown & Campbell, 1990; Paoline, 2003; Paoline & Terrill, 2014). Rather than focus on the demands associated with street-level police work, senior-ranking officers learn from other officers in their subcultural group to concern themselves with organizational demands, including the political, social, and economic pressures to create value-for-money services (Cockcroft, 2013; Davies, 2000; Reuss-Ianni, 1983). These pressures may also explain why counsellors with Master's degrees administer stress management programs, particularly counselling via the Service's EAP, as opposed to psychologists with added credentials. Management and senior-ranking officers may be more concerned with saving money as opposed to preserving officers' health and well-being due to the management cop culture and the political and social pressures associated with organizational restructuring.

Officers' perceptions of stress management also varied by gender and race. Female officers and racial minority officers were less likely than male officers and Caucasian officers to perceive avoidant coping strategies as appropriate means through which to relieve stress. This may be due to the fact that race and gender-based subcultures condition their members to work

harder in order to be accepted in a profession dominated by Caucasian males. In order to prove their worth as a police officer, females and racial minorities may choose to endure particular stressors rather than avoid them. Since the current sample of research participants consisted mainly of male officers, however, additional research is needed to further explore variations of perceived stress and stress management within gender and race-based subcultures.

5.2 Impression Management and the Performance

As mentioned in the previous section, officers develop, learn, and transmit social scripts through social interactions. According to Goffman (1969), social interactions are equivalent to theatrical performances. During each social interaction, there is an actor and an audience in which a performance is being directed to. Like all other forms of human interaction, officers' social interactions can also be considered theatrical performances. In policing, for instance, officers act out their role in front of a number of different audiences, including other officers and colleagues, supervisors, and members of the public. Regardless of the actors and the audience members involved, theatrical performances always take place in the front region where officers are on-duty, in uniform, or on the clock. While in the front stage, officers use certain fronts, particularly settings and personal fronts, in order to adequately and convincingly deliver their performances (Goffman, 1969). As mentioned in Chapter 2, settings refer to the geographical layout and various props used for the performance. A setting tends to stay put geographically speaking so that those who use a particular setting as part of their performance cannot begin their act until they have brought themselves to the appropriate location. Personal fronts, on the other hand, refer to the items of expressive equipment that are attributed to the performer, such as clothing, rank, age, and gender. These fronts, according to Goffman (1969), define the situation for those who observe the performance. When audience members see a male officer in uniform

(e.g., personal front) at the police station (e.g., setting), for instance, they can already anticipate the type of performance that is about to take place. Audience members may anticipate that these male officers will refrain from talking about their roles (e.g., father) outside of the profession. They may also anticipate that these male officers will be brave, strong, and courageous at all times. According to Goffman (1969), however, one's appearance may not always be consistent with one's manners. Since they are expected to be tough and brave at all times, some of the officers in the present study had a difficult time recognizing when they were stressed. As seen in the previous chapter, these officers only recognized that they were stressed after they detected changes in their behaviour (e.g., crying) upon stepping back from their role. In these particular instances, officers effectively used their settings and their personal fronts while in the front stage to mask the manner in which they were truly feeling inside.

In addition to fronts, social scripts play an important role in setting the stage for particular performances. In the front region, officers engage in storytelling; they generate, transmit, and transform social scripts associated with the police officer role (Goffman, 1969). It is in the front region where officers engage in impression management; they succumb to the social scripts (e.g., act tough, brave, and fearless) ascribed by the dominant police culture and its various subcultures during their performances with audience members. Throughout these performances, officers do not overtly display perceptions and behaviours that may cause audience members to doubt their strength and courage. As a result, officers are able to present an idealized view of themselves to their audience members. Officers in this study, for instance, managed impressions and presented idealized views of themselves when performing in the front stage. In order to be considered "normal" as opposed to "deviant", officers refused to share their fears and anxieties with other officers. Some of them even failed to disclose the fact that they were seeking professional

assistance to cope with stress. By keeping these facts to themselves, officers are able to influence the perceptions that their colleagues create of them; they allow other officers to view them as brave, strong, and courageous, as opposed to “sick”, weak, or unreliable in dangerous or life-threatening situations. During front stage performances, officers also create an impression of legitimacy in order to convincingly deliver their role; they foster the impression that the routine they are performing is their only routine or their most important routine (Goffman, 1969). In the present study, for instance, participants would refrain from sharing details about their personal lives with their partners. Others would work extra pay duties during days in which they were supposed to be off-duty. Consequently, officers were able to foster an impression of legitimacy; they were able to demonstrate to their partners and their supervisors that they are solely committed to the police organization in which they work.

While maintaining appearances is important, police officers are able to step out of character, let their guard down, and release any suppressed emotions or behaviours when they are back stage or off-duty (Goffman, 1969). For police officers, the back stage encompasses any location that is outside of the policing context, whether it be at the cottage or at the family home. In other words, officers are considered back stage when they are not working or when they are with friends and family members outside of the police organization.

Given what is known about performances and impression management, symbolic interactionism will be used in the following section to interpret and explain officers’ perceptions of stress and stress management, as well as officers’ preferred coping strategies.

5.3 Officers’ Perceptions: A Symbolic Interactionist Perspective

As mentioned in the previous chapter, officers perceived shiftwork and work-life conflict as stressful. These findings are unsurprising given that police organizations have increasingly

become “greedy institutions” (Peterson & Uhnnoo, 2012). According to Coser (1974), “greedy institutions” are organizations that exert subtle pressure on individuals to weaken their ties with other groups that might conflict with their own demands and test their members in order to determine whether or not they are loyal to the police organization. As shown in the previous chapter, friends, family, and other social institutions have their own demands, which may conflict with the organization’s ability to thrive (Coser, 1974). By requiring officers to spend most of their time within the profession via shiftwork and off-duty court appearances, police organizations are more likely to obtain absolute loyalty from their members. Since officers are required to work long hours and are sometimes expected to work during days off due to mandatory court appearances, however, officers are left spending very little time back stage with their families and friends. Consequently, they end up spending most of their time acting or managing impressions in the front stage. This type of acting can be exhausting since it does not provide officers with an opportunity to relax, let their guard down, and be themselves.

Scrutiny and lack of support from management may also be directly related to the fact that police organizations have become “greedy institutions” (Peterson & Uhnnoo, 2012). In the present study, some officers were scrutinized for not doing enough work (e.g., did not write enough tickets) while others were offered little support when demonstrating a lack of total commitment to the job due to responsibilities associated with childcare. It is possible that such scrutiny and lack of support occurs within police organizations so that officers weaken their ties with other institutions and remain totally committed to the profession. Furthermore, such scrutiny may be perceived as stressful because it reminds officers of their need to foster an impression deemed appropriate by the police culture; officers are expected to be superhuman and therefore able to complete a number of tasks without being affected by stressful or taxing stimuli.

By scrutinizing officers' every move, senior-ranking officers are able to ensure that their subordinates are living up to the expectations set out in the social scripts of the organization. In response, officers constantly feel the need to manage impressions and live up to these expectations in order to avoid such scrutiny in the future.

Officers also perceived scrutiny from outsiders, including the media and the public, as a source of stress. From a symbolic interactionist perspective, this is unsurprising. According to Goffman (1969), individuals from the outside region are typically segregated from performances in progress. This allows the actors and the audience members to preserve their interactions, along with the institutions in which these interactions take place. Nevertheless, it is possible for outsiders to make their way into the front stage during a performance in progress. This was particularly evident in officers' testimonies. As shown in the previous chapter, bystanders and passers-by would sometimes make their way into front stage performances involving officers and armed or dangerous individuals. These bystanders would often take videos of these performances and upload them onto social media, allowing other outsiders to virtually observe the front stage performance. When outsiders make their way into the front stage performances intended for a different audience, however, they risk altering their perceptions of the actors in question (Goffman, 1969). In a world governed by social media, this already appears to be happening. Community members view snapshots of altercations in progress between an officer and a dangerous individual online and start to assume that all officers abuse their power. In response, police officers perceive these situations as stressful because they are no longer able to influence the types of perceptions that community members create of them. Even if officers are able to effectively deliver their role and present an idealized view of themselves during these performances, outsiders are unable to capture and/or view these performances in their entirety.

As a result, outsiders may misconstrue these performances and develop misguided perceptions that the officers did not intend to convey.

Like officers in Brown and Campbell's (1990) study, participants in the present study perceived constant changes within the organization, particularly technological advancements and changes to the computer programs used to facilitate paperwork, as sources of stress. This may be due to the fact that these changes add to the cumbersome and already extensive roles, expectations, and social scripts officers must live up to. As mentioned in the previous chapter, older officers typically perceived technological advancements as stressful more often than younger officers. This particular finding is unsurprising. Older officers may have a larger repertoire of social scripts that they have accumulated over time compared to younger officers who have had less experience in the field. It is possible that older officers find it more difficult to incorporate these changes into their repertoire while juggling multiple social scripts at one given time.

Consistent with Brown and Campbell's (1990) findings, traveling to and from work was also perceived as a source of stress for some officers. According to participants in the present study, commuting to and from work was stressful because many police officers live at least 40 minutes away from the station in which they work. By traveling great distances to and from work, officers in urban areas are often stuck in limbo between the front stage and the back stage. Although officers are not necessarily required to engage in impression management during their commute home from work, they are still not able to let their guard down since they have not yet entered their back stage realm of relaxation.

Since the back region allows individuals to drop their front, step out of character, and refrain from engaging in impression management (Goffman, 1969), it is unsurprising that

officers found comfort in various coping strategies located outside of the police organization. While some officers admitted to using various stress management programs offered by the police organization, the majority of them preferred to use a combination of pro-active (e.g., engage in physical activity at an outside gym, spend time with friends and family members) and diversionary tactics (e.g., seclude themselves from others, watch movies, and avoid the news) to relieve stress. Regardless of their ability to assist officers in addressing and confronting stress directly, these coping mechanisms offered some form of relief because they allowed officers to separate themselves from the front stage. It is for this reason the majority of officers interviewed stated that they refuse to spend time with officers outside of work. When back stage, officers prefer to remain back stage. They do not want their front stage experiences to taint their realm of relaxation. To police officers, their back stage is their safe haven; they can share certain thoughts, feelings, emotions, and behaviours with “wise” sympathetic others (e.g., friends, spouses, family members) that they would not think to share with other colleagues (Goffman, 1965). When back stage, officers are also able to use the coping mechanisms that bring them the most comfort without having to worry about managing impressions or delivering performances. When using stress management programs offered by the police organization, on the other hand, officers are unable to let their guard down; they must participate in these programs while maintaining the impression that they are tough, brave, and emotionless. This was apparent in the present study since a number of participants refused to actively participate in certain programs (e.g., CISD programs and wellness programs), while others joked about these programs when they were in the presence of their colleagues. Even when officers perceived stress management programs favourably, many of them still chose to engage in coping strategies found within the

back region, suggesting that officers value their reputations and their social identities (e.g., the “me”) over their personal beliefs and their individual identities (e.g., the “I”) (Goffman, 1969).

Although the back stage is supposed to be officers’ safe haven, it can sometimes become an arena for engaging in impression management (Goffman, 1969). This is because, despite officers’ best efforts, their front stage can sometimes impose on their back stage. When back stage, for instance, officers sometimes encountered scrutiny from their friends, family, and community members. Others found that certain aspects of their back stage would remind them of particular dangerous or gruesome scenes that they encountered in the front stage. These instances were perceived as stressful because they tainted officers’ safe space where they are supposed to feel relaxed and let their guard down. As such, officers would engage in additional cautionary measures to better separate their front stage from their back stage. Officers, for instance, would lie about their profession when meeting new friends. Others would make changes to their back stage (e.g., renovate their house) or create a completely new back stage (e.g., move outside of the city) so that they would not be reminded of the traumatic or distressing stimuli associated with the front stage. Officers who were able to successfully separate their front stage from their back stage were also better able to manage stress and cope with stressful circumstances.

While many officers were able to preserve their back stage, some were not. For some officers in the present study, a back stage did not exist; they were constantly delivering performances and managing impressions. In other words, officers were always on-duty and never able to step out of character even when they were no longer in uniform. As mentioned in the previous chapter, officers are legally required to act in an emergency to protect the safety and security of the community at all times, even when they are off-duty. Consequently, some police officers felt like they were always on guard; they were always playing the role of the police

officer, regardless of whether or not they were working. As such, these officers were less capable of managing stress; they had no outlet in which they could let their guard down, relax, and be themselves. For these officers, their careers formed their entire identity; their reputations and their social identities (e.g., “me”) completely overpowered their individual identities (e.g., “I”) (Mead, 1972). As a result, their personal identities ceased to exist.

5.4 Impression Management and Stigma

According to certain participants, stigma continues to be associated with police stress and seeking help. Some participants even explicitly stated that stigma prevented them from using various stress management programs. The majority of participants, however, stated that cultural shifts are currently taking place in policing; officers are no longer drinking in excess to cope with stress and avoid stigmatization. Drinking alcohol to cope with stress is now, therefore, considered deviant; officers who drink alcohol in excess to cope with stress are breaching the social scripts and societal norms pertaining to stress management. Despite this apparent cultural shift, latent elements of officers’ testimonies suggest that stigma is still associated with stress in policing.

There is still an element of stigma associated with stress and stress management since officers continue to engage in impression management when they are in the front stage. As seen in the previous chapter, the majority of participants stated that officers are responsible for their own health and well-being; officers must take care of themselves and seek help when they need it. Although participants in the present study recognize and acknowledge this responsibility, many of them fail to actively participate in programs offered by the police organization. Even when programs are mandatory, officers treat them as a “joke” when they are in the presence of other officers. By acknowledging that they must take responsibility for their own health and

well-being, officers also indirectly attribute blame toward those who fail to do so. Therefore, police officers who fail to take care of themselves are considered at fault for their own suffering, suggesting that an element of stigma still exists with regards to stress and stress management.

Stigma is still attributed to stress and stress management in policing since officers fail to discuss how they truly feel with their colleagues and supervisors. Rather than talk about their stressful experiences with colleagues in the front stage, some of them preferred to acknowledge stress and its detrimental effects via social media; officers would share personal experiences on Facebook about the topic in question. This suggests that officers are still not completely comfortable expressing their feelings in the front stage; their reputations and their social identities are more important to uphold than their individual identities (Mead, 1972). By sharing their true feelings and certain aspects of their personal identity (e.g., the “I”) via social media, however, officers are able to test the reactions of others while staying within their safe haven or their comfort zone. Other officers even chose to manage impressions within the back stage context of the interview. When communicating with the researcher, for instance, a number of officers would construct their perceptions of stress by referring to the stories and experiences of other officers. Instead of sharing their own personal experiences, participants were able to save face in front of the researcher; they were able to avoid feeling stigmatized or judged by the researcher for admitting that they have been affected by stressful stimuli.

The way in which officers construct their perceptions of police organizations also provides some indication that stigma continues to be associated with stress in policing. A number of participants in the present study stated that police organizations overtly promote their stress management programs and inform officers of their existence in order to “cover their ass”. By offering these programs, police organizations create this image that they care about their officers

and that officers should not be ashamed to seek help if they need it. As seen in the previous chapter, however, these programs are not adequately designed to relieve the stress experienced by police officers. Many of these programs, for instance, are designed to provide temporary, short-term relief while others require lengthy processes before help can be received. Like police officers, police organizations engage in impression management; they actively promote and offer a variety of programs to make officers believe that they are adequately addressing the issue of stress. Nevertheless, by creating loopholes and making it difficult for officers to seek the help they need, police organizations indirectly attach a negative connotation to stress and stress management. In doing so, police organizations further reinforce cultural expectations and social scripts associated with machismo, strength, and bravery. They also reinforce this idea that stress is a taboo topic and that officers should continue to cope with stress independently.

Since certain latent elements of the interview transcripts suggest that stigma may not be declining within the police organization, it is possible that participants may have acknowledged the decline in substance abuse in policing in order to protect police officers. Rather than provide some insight into their actual perspectives about stigma and stress in policing, officers may have provided a perspective that would better protect their image. Others may have provided these testimonies in order to appear socially desirable to the researcher. This is particularly plausible since the literature continues to acknowledge alcohol consumption as a means through which officers relieve stress and evade stigmatization (Chopko et al., 2013; Lanterman et al., 2010; Paton et al., 2009). Even if substance abuse is declining among police officers, the way in which participants construct their social interactions and their perceptions of the police organization suggests that there is still an element of stigma associated with stress and stress management in policing.

5.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I interpreted my findings in light of the symbolic interactionist framework and concluded that officers gravitate toward the “me” when constructing their perceptions of stress and stress management in order to avoid stigmatization and preserve their reputations. In the final chapter, I consider the broadest academic and policy implications of these findings and probe the strengths and weaknesses of particular conclusions through a consideration of the uses and limitations of the data on which this study was based.

Chapter 6:

Conclusion

In this chapter, I review the purpose and significance of the present study. From there, I discuss the overarching policy and practical implications of the findings and consider which claims I have more and less confidence in due to the nature of the data I was able to collect. The chapter then concludes with the study's strengths and limitations, along with directions for future research.

6.1 The Scholarly Significance of the Present Study

According to the literature, police officers tend to have one of the most stressful jobs in existence (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Paton et al., 2009). In addition to routine stressors, police officers may be exposed to unpredictable and potentially life-threatening circumstances (Brown & Campbell, 1994). As a result of this exposure, police officers may also become vulnerable to physical or mental illnesses (Ainsworth, 2002; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Madonna & Kelly, 2002). Despite this vulnerability, police officers tend to avoid seeking help due to the stigma associated with available programs and instead may decide to self-medicate through the use of alcohol and drugs (Lantermann et al., 2010; Paton et al., 2009). Substance abuse can lead to absenteeism, early retirement, and an overall decrease in work performance (Ainsworth, 2002; Brown & Campbell, 1994; Madonna & Kelly, 2002; Paton et al., 2009). In extreme cases, police officers may commit suicide to alleviate work-related stress (Baker, 2010; Paton et al., 2009).

Research pertaining to stress in police work remains incomplete. According to Abdollahi (2002), the current state of knowledge on stress in policing lacks a theoretical foundation; researchers mainly focus on enumerating the frequency of existing stressors and accentuating the relationships between these stressors and officers' characteristics or levels of perceived stress. At

the same time, researchers within the field tend to embrace the conceptual framework of police culture to describe officers' coping strategies. Some researchers even compare officers' outcomes following their participation in various programs in order to assess the effectiveness of interventions. Due to this limited focus, the literature has failed to apply criminological or sociological theories to explain the processes through which officers develop their perceptions of stress and stress management, as well as their desired coping strategies. To address this gap, I examined officers' perceptions of stress and stress management from a symbolic interactionist perspective.

By applying the symbolic interactionist framework, I was able to contribute to the literature by examining the processes through which officers interact with others (and themselves) to guide their behaviours and construct their perceptions. In doing so, I discovered that police officers share stories, use vocal gestures, and engage in role-taking in order to formulate a repertoire of mutual understanding about stress and stress management. This repertoire, which classifies overt signs of stress as deviant, contributes to the development of officers' "me" or social self. Instead of complying with the individualized aspect of the self (e.g., "I"), the majority of officers gravitate toward the "me" when constructing their perceptions of stress and their coping strategies so that they can conceal their blemishes of individual character (e.g., stress), avoid stigmatization, and preserve their reputations (Goffman, 1965).

Traditionally, symbolic interactionism has been used to examine social interactions between deviants in society, such as marijuana users (Becker, 1953) and gang members (Cohen, 1955). By employing the symbolic interactionist framework to examine an unusual population like the police, this study was able to uncover new themes pertaining to human interaction, identity management, and the creation of meaning. Symbolic interactionism, for instance, states

that human beings manage impressions in the front stage and step out of character in the back stage (Goffman, 1969). Findings from the present study, however, suggest that this is not always possible. For some individuals, a back stage does not exist and for others, the front stage imposes on the back stage, requiring individuals to manage impressions at all times. Without a back stage, human beings are unable to let their guard down, potentially hindering their ability to manage stress. The symbolic interactionist framework also states that subcultures form in retaliation to the dominant culture; individuals sever ties with the dominant group in order to acquire status in the subcultural group (Cohen, 1955). As seen in the present study, however, this is not always the case. In addition to maintaining their identity within the dominant culture, individuals may form subcultural groups to cope with their environments. By forming subcultural groups based on similar characteristics such as gender, race, and rank, police officers are able to better understand their roles and develop appropriate means through which to engage in particular coping strategies that have not been adequately established within the dominant culture.

6.2 The Practical Significance of the Present Study

According to the literature, there are a number of stressors in policing including operational and organizational demands (Brown et al., 1999; Brown & Campbell, 1990; Kohan & Mazmanian, 2003; Violanti & Aron, 1993, 1994, 1995), the criminal justice system (Anderson et al., 1995; Daniello, 2011; Duxbury & Higgins, 2012; Finn & Tomz, 1997; Pozzulo et al., 2009), the media and/or the public (Anderson et al., 1995; Duxbury & Higgins, 2012), work-life conflict (Duxbury & Higgins, 2012), and commuting to and from work (Brown & Campbell, 1990). Interestingly, stress-based research has mainly focused on identifying various types of operational and organizational demands, placing less emphasis on other sources of police stress.

Consequently, the present study sought to acquire more information about police officers' accounts of stress to determine whether or not alternative sources of police stress exist.

While some sources of police stress have been identified, programs tend to address operational demands (Brown & Campbell, 1994; Goldstein, 2006; Madonna & Kelly, 2002). This is particularly problematic since officers perceive organizational demands as predominantly stressful (Kohan & Mazmanian, 2003; Lanterman et al., 2010; Paton et al., 2009; Pozzulo et al., 2009). In addition, the literature fails to consider how police officers perceive existing stress management programs. This study sought to better understand existing stress management programs to determine whether or not they are perceived as useful in addressing officers' accounts of stress.

In examining the issue of stress in police work, many researchers have proposed a series of recommendations based on their findings. Duxbury and Higgins (2012), for instance, suggested that Canadian police organizations increase the level of flexibility and control that officers have over their work hours. While this recommendation is legitimate, it does not originate from officers themselves. The present study sought to better understand the ways in which police officers would design their own stress management programs in order to develop recommendations based on officers' perspectives and experiences.

In this study, the majority of participants agreed that organizational demands, particularly shiftwork and off-duty court appearances, are the most prominent stressors in policing because they require police officers to manage appearances. This suggests that police organizations should consider addressing their shiftwork schedules and mandatory off-duty court appearances. With a restructured shiftwork schedule, officers would be better able to separate their front stage from their back stage; they would have more time to exercise, eat right, and rest during days off.

A number of participants also stated that stress management programs are not consistently applied or readily and easily available. Given the salience of this finding, police organizations should consider restructuring their stress management programs. As suggested by participants, police organizations should consider making stress management programs more readily and consistently available so that officers may be able to access them on a regular basis. Wellness activities, for instance, could be implemented in each station on a weekly or bi-weekly basis so that officers would not have to seek them out independently. Police organizations could also simplify the EAP process so that officers could access counsellors more easily. By offering easily accessible counselling services, officers may be more inclined to use them. Furthermore, police organizations could offer debriefing sessions in a more consistent manner. Certain participants, for instance, stated that debriefings are not consistently offered according to policy, while others stated that debriefings are only offered to officers in particular units. As such, police organizations should consider restructuring their CISD programs so that debriefing sessions are administered to all officers who encounter critical incidents.

While reactive measures are important, the majority of participants stated that stress management programs should also be implemented pro-actively. As suggested by participants, police organizations should incorporate wellness activities and counselling sessions into officers' schedules as pro-active measures against stress. These pro-active measures would allow officers to address particular stressors before they begin to adversely affect them. Through routine wellness activities, officers would be able to release tension in a pro-social manner, reducing the desire to release such tension on friends and family members. Furthermore, through regular counselling sessions or "tune-ups", officers would be able to discuss their frustrations and learn particular coping mechanisms to help them counter similar stressors in the future. These regular

“tune-ups” may also aid in changing the culture around stress, ultimately normalizing the use of stress management programs and reducing the stigma associated with seeking help.

In the present study, a number of participants stated that stress management programs are the most helpful in relieving stress when mental health professionals or officers with life experience administer them. Given the salience of this finding, qualified individuals should administer stress management programs. More specifically, police organizations should ensure that counsellors with PhDs or officers with first-hand experience in dealing with critical incidents administer counselling and CISD programs. By having their counselling services and CISD programs administered by psychologists and officers with life experience, police organizations are more likely to ensure that their members receive the best support and advice.

With regards to wellness programs, a number of officers stated that the organization should use more incentives to secure participation from its members. On the basis of this finding, police organizations should consider implementing additional incentives so that officers would be more willing to participate in wellness programs. As suggested by participants, police organizations could provide their officers with more rewards (e.g., extended vacation time) in exchange for their participation in wellness activities. Police organizations could also partner with other establishments that promote health and wellness (e.g., gyms) so that officers would be more likely to eat well and exercise regularly. As mentioned in Chapter 4, many participants stated that existing wellness programs focus on educating officers about important issues (e.g., PTSD) rather than training officers on how to recognize particular stressors. Since most officers are already well informed about these issues, police organizations should consider incorporating stress recognition training in their wellness programs. This would help officers identify various warning signs within themselves and their colleagues so that they could encourage each other to

access the proper resources before stressors become unmanageable. Officers should also be trained to engage in role-taking. As mentioned in the previous chapter, officers fail to take on the role of the other to empathize with the lines of action taken by their colleagues. By learning to take on the role of their colleagues, officers would be better able to understand the particular stressors that subcultural groups and stigmatized others experience. Through this understanding, officers would be able to reconstruct their perceptions of stress and refrain from judging those who experience stress and/or express the need to seek help.

As stated by participants, informal tactics and individual initiatives should also take place in conjunction with existing stress management programs. Rather than rely on subtle vocal gestures to talk about stress and stress management, officers should take it upon themselves to open up with each other in informal settings like police cars in order to learn proper coping mechanisms and break down the stigma associated with stress and seeking help. Once they start explicitly sharing stories and helpful tips to relieve stress, officers' frame of reference may also change; they may begin to develop a repertoire of positive police stories that further encourages honesty and openness. In order to alter officers' existing frame of reference and further erode the stigma associated with stress in policing, senior officers and supervisors should also act as role models for other officers in the organization and speak openly and positively about stress management. By doing so, they would be able to help change the police culture's negativity about stress, ultimately inspiring their colleagues to seek assistance if they need it.

6.3 Strengths, Limitations & Directions for Future Research

In this study, semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather Canadian police officers' accounts of stress and stress management. While the stressors found were similar to those in the literature, the use of semi-structured interviews allowed me to better understand the

context behind why certain demands are perceived as stressful over others. With regards to operational demands, for instance, dangerous or gruesome scenes were particularly stressful to police officers if they mirrored their personal lives. The context behind these stressors had not yet been identified in the literature, making such findings extremely valuable. I was also able to better understand officers' feelings toward stress management programs, including the strengths and limitations associated with each. This information had also not been extensively explored by the literature, especially in a Canadian context. Nevertheless, further research should continue exploring other potential sources of stress, coping mechanisms, and perceptions of stress management programs as they may vary over time, especially within a fluid police culture.

While they are useful for exploratory purposes, there are certain limitations associated with semi-structured interviews. As mentioned in Chapter 3, police officers' accounts may not be reliable or accurate due to social desirability and issues associated with memory recall. The social position of the researcher may also influence the types of narratives created (Miller & Glassner, 2004). Therefore, participants' accounts cannot be viewed as "truths" but as socially constructed and co-constructed perspectives. Due to the exploratory nature of the project and the small, non-randomized sample, results cannot be used to make generalizations. Consequently, I am less confident in my ability to make claims about all officers in Canada, including officers employed within the Service under study and officers employed in other jurisdictions. Smaller police forces in rural areas, for instance, may experience different stressors and offer fewer or different stress management programs. At the same time, officers employed by these Services may perceive stress and stress management in different ways. Large-scale quantitative studies should be implemented in conjunction with open-ended interviews to determine whether similar programs are offered in other Canadian police forces and whether other officers in Canada

perceive them in similar ways. This mixed methods approach would also allow researchers to make stronger conclusions and generalizations with regards to stress in policing.

Despite the cultural shifts taking place in policing, results from the present study suggest that stigma continues to be associated with stress and seeking help. Due to the scope of the present study, however, sufficient data pertaining to variations in police culture (e.g., policing style) could not be retrieved. Consequently, I was less confident in my ability to use these variations to analyze officers' perceptions of stress and stress management. As such, additional qualitative research should be conducted in order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of these different police subcultures in relation to stress and stress management.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, I was less confident in my ability to make strong claims about officers' perceptions in relation to their personality type since information pertaining to officers' personality type may not have been reliably collected. Officers were asked to identify with the Type A or Type B personality even though they may not have had sufficient experience with validated personality assessments. In addition, personality type was not analyzed in great detail since it did not align with the theoretical framework used in this study. In order to address these limitations, quantitative surveys and/or personality assessments should be administered in conjunction with open-ended interviews to determine whether or not there is a relationship between personality type and officers' perceptions of stress and stress management.

As mentioned in Chapter 4, participants' use of coping mechanisms differed according to race and rank. Caucasian officers referenced the use of diversionary tactics more often than racial minority officers. At the same time, police constables referenced the use of humour to cope with stress more often than officers in higher-ranking positions. Since assumptions were made about officers' racial backgrounds, however, I was less confident in my ability to make

strong claims about officers' perceptions and behaviours based on ethnic differences. Additional research should examine officers' perceptions in relation to participants' self-identified ethnic categories. Further research should also examine the perspectives of senior-ranking officers and officers from a variety of units and police departments. This would provide a better understanding of stress in police work among different groups of police officers in Canada.

Officers' conceptualizations of stress and use of coping strategies also differed according to gender. As mentioned in Chapter 4, male officers referenced work-life conflict as a source of stress more often than their female counterparts. Male officers also referenced the use of diversionary tactics more often than female officers. Since the majority of police officers interviewed were white males from the police constable rank, I was less confident in my ability to make strong claims about female officers' perceptions of stress and their use of coping mechanisms. Given the limited number of female participants in this study and the fact that law enforcement continues to be a male-dominated profession, it is important for future research to explore the unique experiences of female officers and how stress management programs are currently addressing them. The results from this research could be used to determine whether or not specialized programs could be implemented to better address the individual needs and perceived stressors of female officers in Canada.

6.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I reviewed the current state of knowledge on stress in policing in order to justify the need to examine officers' perceptions from a symbolic interactionist framework. I also discussed the policy implications of my findings and described the claims I had more and less confidence in. I then concluded with the study's strengths and limitations, along with directions for future research in the field of stress in policing.

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Appendix A



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December 17, 2014

To whom this may concern,

I am a Master's student at the University of Ottawa conducting research on the topic of stress in police work. I am looking to conduct in-person interviews with police officers to better understand how they define stress and whether or not such definitions are adequately represented in available stress management programs. By conducting research on stress in policing, I hope to inform the literature about police officers' perceptions of stress so that stress management programs can be modified or improved to better address their needs.

I am looking for interested candidates who have been employed by the [Woodford] Police Service for at least one year. All candidates must also be at least 18 years of age. Participation is completely voluntary and all information provided throughout the interview process will be kept anonymous. Interviews will take place around participants' availability (e.g., day or night) and interested candidates will not be penalized by their employer for their participation in this study or if they choose to withdraw. Furthermore, data collected during the interviews will only be used for the purpose of this study. If you are interested in participating and you meet the criteria required for participation, you can contact me at the information provided. Spaces are limited; therefore, participation will be granted on a first come/first served basis. Interested candidates are encouraged to contact me as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Kristina Musca

Department of Criminology

Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa

phone: ()

e-mail:

Appendix B

INTERVIEW GUIDE

The following is a list of questions that may be asked during the interviews. Since open-ended, semi-structured interviews will be conducted, not all questions will be asked. Questions will be asked based on the flow, direction, and pace of each individual interview. Therefore, the following only serves as a tool to help guide the researcher throughout the interview process.

General Questions

- Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
- How old are you?
- How long have you worked as a police officer?
- How long have you worked as a police officer for the [Woodford] Police Service?
- What is your current position/rank at the agency in which you work?
- How many hours per week do you typically work?
- What does your typical workday look like?

Questions Pertaining to Stress

8. What does the word “stress” mean to you? How would you define it?
9. How do you know when you are stressed?
10. What is the most stressful aspect of your job?
 - a. Why?
11. What is the least stressful aspect of your job?
 - a. Why?
12. Have you ever been in a life-threatening situation?
 - a. How did you deal with it?
 - b. What coping mechanisms did you rely on?
 - c. Did these coping mechanisms help?
 - i. Why/why not?
 - d. Would you rely on these coping mechanisms again in similar situations?
 - i. Why/why not?

13. Are there any tedious tasks or routines that cause you stress?
- What are they?
 - How do you deal with them?
 - What coping mechanisms do you rely on to help you cope with this stress?
 - Do these coping mechanisms help?
 - Why/Why not?
 - Would you rely on these coping mechanisms again to manage similar stressors?
 - Why?/Why not?
14. Are there any other personal factors or events that have caused you to experience stress at work in the past?
- What are they?
 - How have you dealt with them in the past?
 - What coping mechanisms did you rely on?
 - Did these coping mechanisms help?
 - Why/Why not?
 - Would you rely on these coping mechanisms again to manage similar stressors?
 - Why?/Why not?
15. How satisfied are you with your job overall?
- Why?
 - Is there anything you would change?
 - What would you change?
 - Why?
16. How would you describe the [Woodford] Police Service's policing style? What roles/values does the [Woodford] Police Service encourage its officers to adopt?
- Are informal tactics preferred over formal tactics to resolve conflicts? Is discretion the most important?
 - Are law enforcement/bureaucracy/rigidity the most important?
 - Are community involvement/public relations/providing helpful services to all citizens the most important?
17. Do your own personal policing styles clash with those employed by the [Woodford] Police Service?
- If yes:
 - How so?
 - Is this problematic?
 - Why?/Why not?
 - Does this affect your ability to resolve conflicts at work?
 - How?

- 2. Why/Why not?
- iv. Does this clash in policing styles cause you to feel stress?
 - 1. How do you cope?
- b. If no:
 - i. How are they similar?
 - ii. Has this caused you to experience less stress at work?
 - 1. Why?/Why not?

Questions Pertaining to Stress Management & Stress Management Programs

18. How would you describe your personality?

- a. Type A? (e.g., high self-demand for achievement, competitive, cynical, suspicious, aloof)
- b. Type B? (e.g., non-competitive, non-aggressive, patient, easy-going)

19. How do you generally cope with stress?

- a. Do you use problem-focused strategies? (e.g., change your behaviour/confront the stressor using a new technique)
- b. Do you wait to see what happens upon encountering a stressful situation? (e.g., you don't let the situation get to you/you refuse to think about it)
- c. Other?
 - i. Are these strategies successful?
 - ii. Why/why not?

20. When making decisions, are you:

- a. Rational? (you conduct a logical evaluation of alternatives before taking action)
- b. Intuitive? (you rely on premonitions and feelings before taking action)
- c. Dependent? (you depend on advice from others before making important decisions)
- d. Avoidant? (you try to avoid making decisions altogether)
- e. Spontaneous? (you quickly take a stand in order to reach a decision as quickly as possible)

21. Do you feel comfortable sharing your feelings and frustrations with others? (e.g., family members, co-workers, supervisors etc.)

- a. If yes:
 - i. Who do you feel most comfortable talking to?
 - ii. Why?
- b. If no:
 - i. Why not?

22. What types of stress management programs are available to officers in the law enforcement agency in which you work?
- Can you describe them?
 - What kinds of stress/stressors do they target?
 - Do these programs differ or are they the same?
 - Do they focus on prevention or intervention? (Do they seek to prevent stress before it occurs or do they seek to address stress after it arises?)
 - Are these programs run internally or externally from the police organization in which you work?
23. How did you learn about these programs? (e.g., from Co-workers? Supervisors? Pamphlets?)
- Is there enough being done to inform police officers about these programs?
 - Why/Why not?
 - What do you think can be done to further inform police officers about these programs?
24. Do supervisors and/or colleagues freely encourage each other to use such programs?
- If yes or no:
 - Why do you think that is?
25. Have you ever used any of these programs?
- If yes:
 - Why?
 - What program worked best? Why?
 - What was missing? What did not work best? Why?
 - If no:
 - Why not?
 - How did you alleviate stress instead? What coping mechanisms did you use?
26. What factors influenced your decision to use certain coping mechanisms?
- Did your friends/family play a role?
 - Co-workers? Peers? Supervisors?
 - How did these factors influence your decision to use/not use existing stress management programs?
27. How do you feel about programs involving peer support?
- Would you use them?
 - Why?/why not?

28. How do you feel about programs run by mental health professionals?
- Would you use them?
 - Why?/why not?
29. How do you feel about stress management programs that implement 24-hour hotlines?
- Would you use them?
 - Why?/why not?
30. How do you feel about wellness programs that focus on preventing stress and instilling lifestyle changes so that police officers are better able to manage their stress and maintain a healthier way of life?
- Would you use them?
 - Why/why not?
31. What would your ideal stress management program look like?
- How would it be designed?
 - How would it be used to address stress?
 - Would it focus on prevention or intervention? Or both?
 - Would it operate internally or externally from the organization in which you work? Or both?
32. Do you know of any colleagues who use or have used any of these stress management programs?
- If yes
 - Which ones have they used?
 - What did they think of them?
 - Were they effective in alleviating stress?
 - If no
 - Why do you think they are not using any of them?
 - Have they expressed any feelings towards these programs in the past?
 - What do you think can be done to help police officers feel more comfortable to use various stress management programs in the future?

Appendix C



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Consent Form

Title of the study: Stress in Police Work

Research conducted by:

Kristina Musca
Department of Criminology
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa
phone: () ext.
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Dr. Michael Kempa
Department of Criminology
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa
phone: () ext.
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Invitation to Participate: You are invited to participate in the above-mentioned research study on stress in police work which is being conducted by Kristina Musca as part of her Master's thesis in Criminology, under the supervision of Professor Michael Kempa.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the present study is to better understand police officers' definitions of stress and their opinions about existing stress management programs. The present study also seeks to determine whether or not police officers' definitions of stress are adequately represented in available stress management programs.

Participation: Participation in this study will consist of attending one interview session of approximately 40 to 60 minutes in length. During the interview session, you will be asked a series of questions pertaining to your understanding of stress in the workplace. You will also be asked a series of questions pertaining to your opinions about various stress management programs (e.g., peer support programs) offered by the [redacted] Police Service. The interview session will take place in a boardroom at the [redacted] Police headquarters ([redacted] Street). However, you may choose to be interviewed at one of the following locations instead: a nearby Starbucks coffee shop ([redacted] Street), the [redacted] Library ([redacted] Street) or the [redacted] Library ([redacted] Street West). The interview will also take place at an agreed-upon date and time that is most convenient for you.

Risks: Your participation in this study will entail that you volunteer your personal information and your perspectives on stress and existing stress management programs. You may feel psychological discomfort (e.g., stress, anxiety) if you choose to discuss sensitive personal experiences throughout the interview. In addition, you may experience regret for disclosing personal information during the interview process. Furthermore, you may experience legal repercussions if you choose to disclose any illegal and/or criminal activity during the interview. If you choose to participate in this study, you may also experience social repercussions. For instance, you may be negatively judged by peers for participating in the study and/or sharing your perspectives and feelings with the researcher.

Although these risks may be present, every effort will be made to minimize such risks. In this study, you will be asked broad, general questions about stress in police work which will allow you to choose what information to disclose. As a result, the risk of experiencing psychological discomfort and/or legal repercussions will be minimized. If psychological discomfort does arise, however, you will have access to support/counseling services and resources any time during or after the interview session. The contact information of the support/counseling service providers



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will be made available to you at the location in which the interview will take place. You will also have the opportunity to retract any information you disclosed during the interview. Such information will not be quoted or published in the researcher's final thesis, resulting in a minimal risk of further psychological discomfort. Although this is true, the researcher will be legally and ethically required to report instances of criminal and/or illegal activity mentioned throughout the interview session, regardless of your request to have such information retracted. In order to reduce the risk of experiencing social repercussions (e.g., being judged by colleagues), all information provided in the interview will be kept confidential. Furthermore, your real names and the names of people you mention during the interview will not be disclosed in the study or in any publications. This will minimize your risk of being identified. Your gender and/or rank will not be published if such information will increase your risk of being identified and/or ridiculed by colleagues. You may also choose to be interviewed at a Starbucks coffee shop (██████████ Street), the ██████████ Library (██████████ Street) or the ██████████ Library (██████████ Street West) as opposed to a boardroom within the ██████████ Police headquarters (██████████ Street). This option will further minimize your risk of being identified and/or ridiculed by colleagues and supervisors.

Benefits: Your participation in this study will provide you with an opportunity to share your thoughts, opinions, feelings, and perspectives about stress in police work and the various stress management programs that have been created to address this stress. By sharing your perspectives, you will also be able to potentially influence policy reform so that existing stress management programs can be better designed to address your needs and the needs of all police officers. If recommendations made by participants in this study are used by law enforcement agencies to strengthen or improve their existing programs, society would also benefit. With programs and resources that better address stress, police officers would be more equipped to further serve and protect their communities. Therefore, your participation in this study would help promote the safety and well-being of police officers and the communities in which they serve.

Confidentiality: The results derived from this study will solely be used in the publication of the principal investigator's Master's thesis. However, the information that you will share will remain strictly confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of this research. In other words, the information you will share will only be used to better understand your perspectives about stress and the available programs offered by law enforcement agencies to address this stress. The only people who will have access to the research data (e.g., audio-recordings, interview transcripts, hand-written interview notes) are the principal researcher, Kristina Musca, and her supervisor, Michael Kempa. If you admit to committing any form of criminal and/or illegal activity, however, the researcher will be legally and ethically obligated to report such activity to her supervisor and the authorities. In such cases, a breach of confidentiality would be justified so that no further harm and/or danger to others would ensue. Interviews will also be recorded solely for transcription purposes. If you do not consent to being audio-recorded, please indicate that at the bottom of this form.

Anonymity: Your answers to open-ended questions may be used verbatim in publications but your anonymity will be guaranteed since you will not be identified. In other words, pseudonyms or fictitious names will be published instead of your real names. Fictitious names will also be used to replace the names of family members or co-workers mentioned throughout the interview. Only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the pseudonyms used in this study to link the data to your identity. Your date of birth will be collected to ensure that you are over the age of 18. It will also serve as the password in which you will be able to access your password-protected interview transcript if you choose to review it after the interview has



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taken place. Therefore, your date of birth will not be published. Your gender (male/female) will also be assigned a code (A/B) in the interview transcript. The use of such codes to hide your gender will further protect your identity and minimize any social repercussions. Although this is true, your gender and/or rank may be quoted in the researcher's final thesis to highlight differences in perceptions of stress across different groups of police officers. If the publication of your gender and/or rank will make you more easily identifiable, such information will not be quoted or included in the researcher's final thesis. If you are the only male or female participating in this study, for instance, the gender of each participant will not be publicized. While various measures will be taken to protect your identity, certain facts, experiences, and/or stories that you choose to disclose throughout the interview may make you identifiable to readers of the study and other publications in which you may be quoted.

Conservation of data: The data collected throughout the study such as audio recordings, hand-written interview notes, electronic copies of interview transcripts, and hard copies of interview transcripts will be kept in a secure manner. Audio recordings from each interview will be stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office. The principal researcher will be the only individual with access to this cabinet. Printed copies of interview transcripts and hand-written notes taken during the interview process will also be stored in this cabinet. Electronic copies of interview transcripts will be saved as password-protected PDF documents that only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to. These documents will also be saved on the researcher's password-protected laptop. This laptop will be stored in a secure location at the researcher's personal office at home. All of this data will be conserved and stored in the supervisor's office at the University of Ottawa for a minimum of 5 years following the publication of the researcher's final thesis.

Voluntary Participation: Participants are under no obligation to participate since participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw from the study at any time and/or refuse to answer any questions without suffering any negative consequences. If you refuse to participate or if you choose to drop out of the study at any time, you will not be penalized by your employer in any way. If you choose to withdraw, all data gathered until the time of withdrawal will be included in the study so long as you grant the researcher permission to do so.

Acceptance: I, (Name of Participant) _____, agree to participate in the above research study conducted by Kristina Musca of the Department of Criminology and the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ottawa, which is under the supervision of Professor Michael Kempa. By signing this form, I also acknowledge that I have worked for the [REDACTED] Police Service for at least one year and I am above the age of 18. By participating in this study, I (consent/do not consent) _____ to being audio-recorded during the interview session for transcription purposes. I also (wish/do not wish) _____ to review my interview transcript after the interview process has taken place. The interview transcript may be sent to me at (e-mail address) _____.

If you prefer to provide verbal consent as opposed to written consent, you may do so. However, acknowledgement of your verbal consent will be audio-recorded.

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact the researcher or her supervisor at the information provided.

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If you have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5
phone: (613) 562-5387
e-mail: ethics@uottawa.ca

There are two copies of the consent form, one of which is mine to keep.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D

Codebook

Code Name	Definition	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Sample Quotes from Transcripts
Operational Demands	Stressors relating to the job itself, particularly the tasks associated with working on the street.	Exposure to Gruesome/Traumatic/Disturbing Scenes *e.g. exposure to dead bodies *e.g. exposure to gruesome crime scenes *e.g. attending the scene of a sudden death Exposure to Danger/Threat of Physical Danger *e.g. dealing with violent individuals/mentally ill *e.g. shootings *e.g. receiving a serious or minor injury Exposure to Vulnerable Victims *e.g. child victims, domestic abuse victims Unpredictability of the Job *e.g. never knowing what you'll encounter Always on Duty/Expected to Act at Any Time Situations Relating to Officers' Personal Life *e.g. officer has family members who are mentally ill/suicidal Managing Multiple Roles *e.g. law enforcer vs. social worker etc.	Going to Court/Testifying in Court	"So you can't unsee that dead body, you can't unsee that rotten dead body, you can't forget the smells of those rotten bodies. I still remember the first one where I had to pick him off the [train] tracks and I never realized but the blue gloves are perforated so when I was picking up brain matter, I could feel it through the gloves on my fingers" (Raja, p. 17). "...so the unknown in that you start your shift and heaven knows, you know, what your next call's going to be. So just the ummm...that you have to be ready" (Patsy, p. 5). "But I mean, one of the most stressful things I ever had to do was tell a 6 year old her mother died. She committed suicide. And you try telling a 6 year old their mother died and not go home and cry about it" (Megan, p. 33). "We're on duty 24 hours a day. I'm on duty right now, sitting in this coffee shop. If anything happens here, I am compelled by the way of the Police Services Act to arrest a person. So knowing that you have that sitting in the back of your mind 24 hours a day, when you're going for drinks with friends or if you're sitting at a coffee shop, or you're driving down the street. You're compelled to...so it's like you're never not working" (Tim, p. 9). "I mean, you know, I dealt with some mental health issues within my family, including concerns about suicide amongst my family members and I deal with that. I come to work and then I go to a suicide call and, you know, those things, they're stressful. They linger and you don't want it...they add to things and you can't get rid of them sometimes. That's tough sometimes" (Norman, p. 8). "The guys that are in uniform that are on the road answering the radio calls probably have it the hardest because they're normally the first ones at a scene, no matter what it is. They're the ones that have to do the initial assessment. They gotta figure out what hat to wear first, whether it's a de-escalation, the education process, helping...they have it the worst" (Allen, p. 4-5).
Organizational Demands	Routine, administrative demands as well as demands on officers generated by the bureaucratic, hierarchical nature of the profession or the policies and practices of the police organization.	Inadequate Supervision *e.g. poor communication between patrol officers and supervisors *e.g. supervisors act as a "buddy" as opposed to a manager Over-Supervision *e.g. micro-managed by supervisors Criticism/Scrutiny from Management Decline in Team Work/Brotherhood *e.g. lack of trust in supervisors/co-workers Scheduling *e.g. shiftwork, long hours, attending court on days off (lack of sleep) Work Overload/Heavy Caseload *e.g. excessive paperwork *e.g. pressure to take on more work Testifying in Court/Unjust Criminal Justice System Insufficient Rewards/Lack of Career Development or Advancement *e.g. undervalued by management *e.g. lack of support from senior officers *e.g. stuck in same place for too long/boredom Office Politics *e.g. favouritism *e.g. pressure to conform (become more Type A) *e.g. backstabbing to get ahead Inadequate Resources *e.g. understaffing *e.g. poor equipment Constant Changes within the Organization *e.g. change in policies/rules *e.g. change in EAP provider *e.g. change in technology Managers Managing/Supervising their Officers *e.g. difficult to supervise/manage officers	Public Scrutiny *e.g. criticism by media/community members	"I've had random people e-mail my bosses saying, "Oh my god, I talked to constable [Raja] and I'm so impressed and so on and so forth". That doesn't really go anywhere but that's a good e-mail, right?" (Raja, p. 7). "They have no idea how to manage people. What it takes to keep morale up. Like it doesn't take anything to keep morale up. All it needs is a pat on their shoulder, a good work, understanding that people's families come first before the [Woodford] Police Service" (Ellen, p. 6). "We call the Service, it's a multi-million dollar organization running on a Salvation Army budget. We don't have the resources. Some of the cars that we drive, the seats won't go up. Like...like...it is so...you know, and...and at one point they didn't have enough Tasers even for all the Sergeants" (Ellen, p. 22). "But even the rigors of the Service itself makes it very strenuous. The constant scrutiny, under the microscope by management for the littlest things. You know, they're quick to negatively document you but not positively document you" (Joe, p.3). "In my current job, sometimes the caseload can be a little overwhelming" (Edwin, p. 7). "You know, there's a saying that says, "When we go out on the street, we put on our bullet proof vest, we tap our gun, we have all our use of force options, we mentally prepare to go out on the street but we don't expect to be betrayed by our very own people" (Hannah, p. 8).

Work-Life Conflict	Managing or juggling the demands, expectations, and responsibilities at work with the demands, expectations, and responsibilities at home.	Difficulty with: * e.g. juggling work & childcare * e.g. maintaining relationships with friends/family * e.g. sustaining a marriage * e.g. juggling work & school work Bringing Work Home * e.g. completing paperwork at home * e.g. prepping for court at home * e.g. constantly thinking about work incidents at home Stress of Supporting a Family/Financial Stressors *e.g. taking extra pay duties *e.g. high cost of childcare *e.g. financial strain on marriage/family (paying medical bills)		"What do I do? You know? It's like...do I follow my career? You know?...successful career. Or do I go towards family? And I went that route, you know? At least that way I have my Monday to Friday at [this unit] and all my weekends with my daughter. I get to tuck her in, you know, at night. And that was a hard decision" (Christopher, p. 3). "...at the time I was just trying to get off nights 'cause I could deal with days and afternoons but nights it's very difficult to find someone to look after your kids" (Garrett, p. 11). "It goes from worrying about paying bills to worrying about...I don't have kids...but worrying about your kids, worrying about your marriage, worrying about whether the roof's going to leak...all the life stressors. And then you add them to job stressors. You know? Just socially getting along with your co-workers, being able to do a good job, worrying about meeting the needs of the organization" (Scott, p. 7). "You're trying to work around shiftwork and court time and, of course, you want to work that extra shift now and then when you can for a little bit of extra money for the family vacation or whatever you got planned and that" (Norman, p. 7).
Public Scrutiny & Public Misperceptions	Critical examination, observation or evaluation of police officers by those on the outside of the police service.	Judgment from Community Members *e.g. constantly being watched/monitored/recorded via cell phones and social media Judgment from the Media *e.g. constantly being criticized by newspapers etc. Judgment from Family/Friends *e.g. not understanding why certain actions were taken over others Misconception of Police as Superhuman *e.g. belief that police officers are/should be perfect	Judgment from Peers/Co-workers Judgment from Management/Supervisors	"And always ending up in the media, right? Uhh...what you're saying may be recorded... it's always recorded with the [Woodford] Police now, right? But it may be uhhh chopped up. And they only present one certain aspect of it. And they don't really present the entire situation. So it may be taken the wrong way" (Raja, p. 8). "When I talk to people and they find out what I do for a living and they have a preconceived notion of what police work...like everybody can do police work better than the police can" (Charlie, p. 10). "Within 5 minutes, he got flipped off by a 5 year old and we were dealing with some things like, "Oh, well you're not black anymore" or "you're a traitor", blah, blah, blah. And he kinda looked at me like, "Alright, I get it now" (Allan, p. 13). "You're coming home and you're telling stories about what you did. And he would say, "Well why didn't you do this? And why didn't you do that? Why wouldn't you have done this?" And I'm going, "You know what, next time I'm at a call I'll phone you up. Come on down and see if you can do any better"" (Ellen, p. 14).
Travel/Commute	Stressors related to the time spent traveling to and from work each day.	Traveling Long Distances to Work via Car or Public Transportation Traveling in Traffic/During Rush Hour	Traveling Unrelated to Work *e.g. visiting family/friends	"There's almost three hours of travel, getting ready. So three on 12, that's a 15 hour day. So all you're left is 9 hours to do whatever and sleep" (Ellen, p. 22). "And after working 10 hours, none of us live around here, very few of us live close to the city. This is the furthest east division so I live 40 minutes away. So by the time you track in my 40 minute drive here, my 40 minute drive home, like that's a 12-hour day" (Megan, p. 21). "And then for guys that are coming from outside the city, it's the stress of commuting on top of that. It really cuts into your off duty time to relax and gather your thoughts and have time alone, have time with your family" (Victor, p. 15).
Pro-active Tactics	Coping strategies that may provide long-term relief from stress. They involve confronting problems directly, making realistic appraisals of problems, recognizing and changing unhealthy emotional reactions, and trying to prevent adverse effects on the body.	Voluntarily Participating in Available Stress Management Programs *e.g. counselling *e.g. peer support *e.g. wellness activities Exercising/Engaging in Physical Activity *e.g. walking the dog *e.g. going to the gym Spending Time with/Confiding in Friends or Family Members Leaving Work at Work *e.g. not spending time with co-workers on days off *e.g. living away from the city/place of work	Mandatory (Involuntary) Counselling, Critical Incident Debriefs, Wellness Lectures Socializing Solely with Co-workers outside of work (not leaving work at work)	"You just leave it at work and that's all and you have to have that mechanism where whatever happens at work, once you get in your car, it doesn't follow you home" (Garrett, p. 10). Participant D: "I have a lot more friends now because of university, right, which are not cops". Kristina: "Do you think that's a good thing? Does that help you?" Participant D: "It does. Because you can go and talk about your day without people judging you" (Raja, p. 15). "So I still see a lot of young guys today...the people that the guys that they work with are the guys that they party with, the guys they go to Cuba with, and things like that. You need to separate that. You need to have a gap because even though I'm friends with the people here, I don't...we don't socialize" (Edwin, p. 9). "I'd say the best way to deal with stress is to keep physically active. So I go to the gym four or five times a week. And I find it when I have a workout, it gets you using that excess energy and it takes your mind off things" (Garrett, p. 6). "Like the lady that does yoga, she's very receptive and wanting to help. I haven't used her for any nutrition or fitness stuff. I ended up setting up the yoga at my station through her" (Sophie, p. 13).
Distraction Tactics	Coping strategies that may provide immediate relief. They are often used to escape problems/stressors without confronting them head on.	Alcohol Use Humour *e.g. joke about morbid/traumatic experiences Playing Video Games or Watching TV/Movies (Including silence/seclusion from others) Absenteeism *e.g. take time off/sick day Avoiding the News/Crime Shows		"Like if I get home after a bad shift 'cause I saw a lot of horrific things, then I'll try to do some sort of activity like watch a movie so your whole mind is within that movie. You're not thinking about what you dealt with" (Sophie, p. 6). "And obviously the alcohol helps but if you can deal with the alcohol you're not going to have an issue. But there's a lot of guys that can't deal with it and they drink too much and end up getting in trouble themselves" (Garrett, p. 9). "They talk about what happened that night, most of the time you know you're laughing at the stuff...but it's stuff that normal people wouldn't laugh at. But I think you have to treat these things as almost being comical, the situations, to deal with them" (Garrett, p. 9). "Well, there's really nothing else right now. Like...I don't drink and I know some guys might have a beer after work. I don't want to start 'cause I've obviously seen guys that completely use it for coping and it doesn't work for them" (Allen, p. 6). "Yeah. And the stress here. Like if stuff gets really stressful, I take it off" (Megan, p. 20). "It's just...this is a very negative environment lately and so I don't watch the news if I can avoid it and I don't want to talk about what's happening at work if I can avoid it because it's just more stress" (Megan, p. 20).

Stress Management Programs as Insufficient Stress Relievers	Police officers believe that stress management programs do not actually improve officers' ability to manage and/or relieve stress due to certain drawbacks in the way they are designed or deployed.	Stress Management Programs as Comical/Enforcing Common-Sense/Unrealistic e.g., When officers perceive stress management programs as comical or useless, regardless of their intention to help police relieve stress. Despite these intentions, officers feel as though stress management programs cannot be realistically used or applied to everyone, particularly road officers. Stress Management Programs as Tools for Covering the Service's Ass *e.g. When officers perceive stress management programs as a means of protecting the reputation of the organization as opposed to assisting officers with stress. Stress Management Programs as Short-term Solutions *e.g. When officers perceive stress management programs as temporary stress relievers with an expiry date; they cannot be used long-term due to coverage packages provided. Stress Management Programs as Inconsistent *e.g. When officers believe stress management programs are not always deployed as per policy. *e.g. debriefs are only deployed for some major incidents over others. Stress Management Programs as too Formal *e.g. When officers perceive stress management programs as unnatural social interactions. Stress Management Programs as Untrustworthy *e.g. When officers perceive stress management programs as unsafe venues for sharing personal information; when officers do not trust their counsellors' credentials/their co-workers' ability to maintain confidentiality. Stress Management Programs as Venues for Engaging in Criticism *e.g. When officers perceive stress management programs as avenues for co-workers/supervisors to complain or criticize the actions of other officers. Stress Management Programs as Nothing Special *e.g. same as talking to a friend/normal person *e.g. counsellor just lends a listening ear Stress Management Programs as Lengthy Process *e.g. required to jump through hoops before speaking to counsellor Stress Management Programs as Addressing Operational Demands Only *e.g. organizational demands are left unaddressed		"After somebody has worked 10 hours, and often times when you're out on the road, you're working overtime. We're exhausted. We're tired. Nobody's gonna come in and do a workout. Nobody's gonna stop at the gym on the way home. And we work 7 in a row. You're exhausted" (Ellen, p. 20). "I just found it very...I don't want to say counterproductive but I didn't see any real help with it. It was...he just basically talked common sense" (Allen, p. 17). "I was diagnosed with PTSD a year and a bit ago. And I initially went to that because that's all I knew I had access to and it was horrible. Like, every time I came home from a session, I felt 10 times worse. Umm...and I felt like it was maybe because they weren't properly trained on how to deal with anyone with PTSD" (Sophie, p. 6-7). "Like, when I went with my mother, it was 4 sessions, that's it, you're cut off. And at the end of it, I felt OK. So I guess it was OK to cut it off. Like with the PTSD it was like, "No, I'm not good" but then again I didn't find it helpful, so..." (Sophie, p. 7). "It was just sitting down and having somebody to talk to which I could probably do with a friend where I expected more somebody saying, "Well, this is what I see. This is the psychology of what's happening here" (Austin, p. 8). "No and it's the same people that are standing up, saying, "You know what? We now have all these organizations, all these groups to help you out and this is what we believe in, this is what we're pushing." ... No you don't believe in it. You're pushing it and it's only because if something goes wrong, you can stand before the public and say, "But we have all these things in place. We don't know what went wrong" (Austin, p. 13).
Stress Management Programs as Sufficient Stress Relievers	Police officers perceive stress management programs as viable tools for helping officers better manage and/or relieve stress.	Counsellors/Speakers Have Similar Experiences *e.g. they've been through a traumatic incident Counsellors/Speakers have Worked with Police/Military Before *e.g. they understand policing/police culture Suggestions are Useful Good Starting Point		"And then I got a guy who was just fantastic. He had a great background and he got it all, he got me. He had a background in the military doing counselling with the military for 17 years in combat zones. So he got anything I could throw at him. And he had great insight. He and I had a great rapport together and he helped me out with a lot" (Norman, p. 13). "And it only just started blooming so I used that service for that and I thought it was fantastic 'cause I was able to get some resources and some tools to work with her, to be able to help her out" (Sophie, p. 6). "No, I think the sessions helped because it helped me talk through what the issues were and then what kind of resources or what kind of game plan I should approach it with. So she...like she actually did some research for me and found some agencies. I didn't end up using any of those agencies she suggested but it was still good to know that there were agencies out there and I used different agencies along the same lines, so I did find that block of sessions very helpful" (Sophie, p. 7). "I know one in particular who was involved in a shooting, shot and killed someone and he had somebody there, peer support person, who's also another guy who was working who also shot and killed someone. Umm...and I believe that's incredibly important and would help massively" (Nathan, p. 20).

Stigma Associated with Stress & Seeking Help	Officers fail to use stress management programs because of the stigma associated with stress and seeking help; officers fear social disapproval from colleagues/supervisors and/or career setbacks.	Fear of being Ostracized/Ridiculed by Peers/Supervisors *e.g. seen as faking illness *e.g. accused of working another job while getting paid on sick leave Fear of being Regarded as Incapable of Doing Job Fear of being put on Administrative Duties/Restricted Duties *e.g. working the front desk *e.g. having gun taken away *e.g. no career advancement	"So you know, my Sergeant comes, he's a very nice guy, he gives me a pat on the back and says, "good job, man" he says, "hey listen, listen kid...you look pretty shaken up from yesterday, people told me...you know, you need some help?" And it's almost very awkward for him to say that because...we were on a different level. And I was like, "Fuck off man, no! I'm ok". Right?" (Raja, p. 15). "No...there's one guy who did reach out and talked to someone. People still talk about him. He hasn't worked with us for 8 years. Since then....sorry, no, 6 years. He's quit since then. So he's now a mortgage agent or something" (Raja, p. 18). "Well they're going to say, "well this guy craps under pressure". Not that this guy reached out and got help, but this guy's got issues" (Raja, p. 18). "But she dared to cry, dared to cry at work because her daughter was missing. You know, they had the police involved and she dared to cry at work. They ordered her down to see the psychiatrist and they tried to take her gun away because she cried" (Ellen, p. 9). "I don't think it's prudent to talk to your employer about personal issues that you have" (Charlie, p. 13). "It's only been 2 years of doing it. Umm...very reluctant and didn't want to go at first. Small town boy, farm boy. You don't go to things like that" (Allan, p. 6). "If I had gone when I was in the previous environment, I would have, I think, been worried about stigma. That may have been a reason why I didn't go when I was there" (Victor, p.12). "I worked inside for about a month and then everyone was asking me if I was pregnant which really pissed me off. I wasn't and I didn't want to tell them why. Umm...then finally I was like, "OK. I'm going to start going back on the road. I can fight it" (Sophie, p. 8). "Like if you even say the word stress to a superior colleague, there's a chance that you could, although remote, be essentially suspended immediately, have your firearm taken away from you, and immediately put on stress leave" (Tim, p. 11). "Yeah. So you're up here then all of a sudden, you get hurt, you're not able to work. They think you're faking it, so all of a sudden you're down here on the totem pole so to speak" (Allan, p. 15). "Is it gonna screw me with my career aspirations?" (Nathan, p. 19).
No Need for Stress Management Programs	Officers fail to use stress management programs because they never felt the need to; they have always been able to manage stress on their own.	Prefer to Use Personal Tools, Strategies & Resources *e.g. stay organized/keep track of schedule *e.g. never make plans too far in advance Never Felt Unable to Manage Stress/Seek Assistance Have their Own Positive Social Support Networks	Kristina: "So you've never once called the number, used any of the services?" Participant Q: "No, I haven't". Kristina: "Is it OK to ask why?" Participant Q: "Umm...I don't think I've...I have a really, really strong relationship with my wife and with some friends outside of work. And I actually have a really close friend who's a psychiatrist. So sometimes I just sit down and we just kind of, you know, have a chat" (Edwin, p. 11). Participant P: "I've never seen that or have been part of anything like that. I know there's some sort of an initiative where some of the guys that have gone through PTSD type issues and stuff, try to get together". Kristina: "On their own terms?" Participant P: "On their own" (Allen, p. 19). Participant D: "If something starts bothering me, I make a list of what it is". Kristina: "And do you address each one individually?" Participant D: "I do, yeah. And, you know what, it's very helpful" (Raja, p. 5). "I haven't felt the need or I have not felt a sense of requiring intervention" (Patsy, p. 20).
Difficulty Recognizing Stress/Stressors	Officers fail to use stress management programs because they often don't realize that they are stressed; officers' behaviours may change but they often don't know why. Without being able to identify stress or particular stressors, officers do not recognize the need to seek help.	Officers Don't Recognize Stress on their Own *e.g. Officers are told by others that something is wrong Officers Recognize Stress on their Own a Long Time after They have Been Removed from the Source *e.g. change in position/job type	"When I think of the word, umm...let's see, let's see. One of the things for me is the lack of understanding. So...from not recognizing, you know, the warning signs until you've taken a step away and you look back and you're like "Oh...wow"" (Tim, p. 6). "When a friend approaches you and asks you what's wrong?.... You know, and they tell you, like, "Oh, OK. Well, you seem this way or you haven't seemed this way, or you seem that way." Sometimes we're not good at seeing ourselves" (Tyler, p. 6). "So I had that eventually diagnosed by a neurosurgeon and he said that the lesion on my brain is no way near balance centers in the brain so the dizziness I'm experiencing has got nothing to do with the lesion on my brain. It's benign, it's not affecting me at all. And I described to him what I've been going through on a professional and a personal level and he said, "Buddy, nobody can handle what you're dealing with. You're stressed to the max. You've got historical PTSD maybe. You've experienced PTSD on the job. You need to deal with it. You need to go see someone" (Nathan, p. 8). "Umm...so that is what helped me...what told me that I need some help and I need to deal with things, was a colleague identifying it and learning about me and getting to know how I would respond to that being pointed out to me. Once she figured it would be OK, she told me and shared that with me out of concern for me" (Nathan, p. 14). "Oh no, it came as a shock to all our friends and family. You know? But I knew...it took that for me to realize: "holy crap, maybe it is me". Because before then it's like "no I'm fine". You'll hear that with cops...."no I'm fine". I just....I just stuck my fingers, my two fingers in that five year old's abdomen to make sure it didn't bleed to death, but I'm fine" (Christopher, p. 17). "One of the biggest challenges with the programs is getting people to realize when they... when they need them" (Patsy, p. 21).

Unaware of Them/Not Available	Officers fail to use stress management programs because they are unaware of their availability within the Service or they are no longer available.	Officers Do Not Know Certain Programs are Offered by the Service *e.g. no idea that a nutritionist is on staff Certain Programs are no Longer Offered by the Service *e.g. peer support programs are no longer available		"There are people that don't know what we have available. Like I didn't know we had a nutritionist available until a month ago" (Raja, p. 21). Participant B: "I can't remember what they called them...and...I think they were peer counsellors or something like that...but that just disappeared maybe ten years ago". Kristina: "So they don't offer peer support anymore?" Participant B: "No" (Garrett, p. 22).
Encouragement to Seek Help	Officers use stress management programs because of encouragement from others to seek help.	Encouragement from Family/Friends to Seek Help Encouragement from Co-workers/Supervisors to Seek Help Encouragement from A Doctor		"Umm...on encouragement from...including from my wife at the time, encouragement from her, I gave it another shot and said, "Look, I just need another counsellor"" (Norman, p. 13). "She gave me the number for the lady she had dealt with, the same therapist that she had been to for her own issues, family issues" (Nathan, p. 14).
Used them in the Past/ Need to Keep Themselves in Check	Officers use stress management programs because they have used them in the past; they may also return in order to keep themselves in check and avoid reaching their breaking point.	Officers are Comfortable with Counsellors *e.g. they've been seeing a counsellor for a long time *e.g. they visit a counsellor for a "tune-up" to prevent adverse effects Used them in the Past and Have no Other Outlet of Support *e.g. they don't know where else to seek help		"And at the time I didn't know 'cause I was just in a horrible place that...that was the only outlet that I knew of that might be able to help" (Sophie, p. 7). "So...and I call it the...I might only go once every two years, so if something's going on in my home life...umm...I call it a "tune-up". I might go two or three sessions and...because I've known this lady for so long" (Ellen, p. 2).
Covered in Benefits	Officers use stress management programs because they are covered in their health benefits.	Officers Don't Need to Pay to Partake in Programs		"Umm...it's great that it's free. I think if it wasn't free, I'd be more hesitant to book the sessions just 'cause I tend to be frugal" (Victor, p. 11).
Responsibilized Organization	The belief that the Police Service is required to take care of their officers' well-being.	The Service must Inform Officers of Available Programs		"The organization itself is very proactive in taking care of the police officers. I mean, there's always room for improvement...umm but we're way ahead of other services" (Raja, p. 9). "Well, when you first come on, you're told about all this. Plus there's posters everywhere, all over the station" (Ellen, p. 17).
Responsibilized Officer	The belief that officers are required to take care of their own well-being.	Officers Must Reach Out for Help if Needed *e.g. officers must take the initiative and call EAP Officers Must Accept Help on their Own/Can't be Forced *e.g. officers decide when they're ready to seek help Officers Must Change/Control Their Bad Habits		"I'm not the type to look to my employer for all the answers. So I don't expect them to... like the help is there for members that need it, right? Umm...I don't know what else they can provide. I mean, they provide a counselling service, they provide advice on fitness, and diet, and what else do you want? I don't think there's any more that they can do" (Charlie, p. 15). "Like they gave you the tools for that, you just gotta be able to pick them up and run with it type thing and do what you need to do. I knew after my surgery and I came back this time, that I was completely out of shape and not as healthy as I used to be. And it was... like, eventually, I knew that but it was getting the initiative to do something about it" (Allan, p. 23). "And I still see guys now who have been on as long as I have and they complain: "I can't sleep on night shift. I feel terrible all the time". But they haven't changed their habits. They're still doing the same things when they first came on the job. They haven't tried to manipulate it or change it around so that they become accustomed to it" (Edwin, p. 13). "We've got the [EAP]. Umm...I called them probably after about a year and a half of struggling through it, which I think was too long. That was my own fault for waiting. I knew it existed the whole time. I just thought I was, you know...I didn't think it was that bad, I was in denial, whatever" (Victor, p. 11).
Need for Holistic Initiatives	Initiatives that seek to address all aspects of wellness and mental health within the spectrum; a variety of different programs should be available to address minor, moderate, and serious instances of distress.	Initiatives that Address all Aspects of Wellness/Stress *e.g. from eating habits to crisis situations Initiatives Must be Proactive & Reactive *e.g. must address all areas of the stress/wellness spectrum		"I think in an ideal world...and this is money aside and everything else...so we're talking ideal world...it would be a holistic approach. So it would be...not one size fits all. So not one...there isn't one answer to fit every problem. Because everybody is so unique and it becomes so...well just everybody is affected differently by whatever the situation is" (Hanna, p. 24). "I would try and teach people of the issue of the spectrum...that mental health, depression, crisis, all of these things isn't just like...mental health isn't just crisis. Mental health is also stress management. Anxiety, depression, but not depression to the point that people think the issue of catatonic" (Patsy, p. 26).
Need for Informal Tactics/Change in Culture	Initiatives that seek to normalize or encourage openness about stress among police officers and eliminate or reduce the stigma or taboo surrounding stress and stress management.	Talking/Debriefing with other Officers Informally Encouragement from Higher-Ups *e.g. supervisors need to break down the barriers Individual Initiatives from Officers to Encourage Openness *e.g. sharing experiences via social media *e.g. asking colleagues how they are Need to be Responsible for Each Other *e.g. look out for co-workers' well-being	Formal Tactics	"The more people are talking about it, the more it's acceptable, the more you feel OK with talking about it" (Sophie, p. 15). "Umm...I would rather we engage in that type of behaviour, interaction, on an informal basis. And it does happen, obviously, in an informal basis, whether it be a beer after work at the end of the week of the shift or you just bump into a colleague you haven't seen in a couple of weeks: "Hi, how's it going?" And you have a few minutes to chat" (Nathan, p. 19). "And I'm not going to sit down and talk things over with them, unless, like I said before, we're sitting in the office and the topic comes up and it comes, you know, in general conversation...then I'll do that but to sit down with somebody in a professional... no" (Austin, p. 9). "No, on open Facebook. Like he's got another open profile for PTSD. He's reaching out and telling people to come out and talk about it" (Raja, p. 19). "Well the first thing we need to do is start talking. And it has to start talking like at the most basic level possible" (Tim, p. 17). "I think that being a supervisor, they need to recognize some of the warning signs that they can see in the people that are below them" (Tim, p. 18).

Need to Address Organizational Demands	Initiatives that seek to address the organizational demands that officers encounter rather than solely addressing operational demands.	Need for Initiatives that Address: *e.g. poor communication between patrol officers and supervisors *e.g. criticism/scrutiny from management *e.g. lack of trust in supervisors/co-workers *e.g. shiftwork, long hours, attending court on days off (lack of sleep) *e.g. excessive paperwork *e.g. favouritism *e.g. understaffing *e.g. poor equipment *e.g. constant changes within the organization Need to Hire Mature People *e.g. with education/life experience Rotating Officers Roles/Positions *e.g. from the road to an administrative role	Initiatives that Address Operational Demands	"No one should have to work 7 shifts in a row. And that's all we work: 7 days, 7 evenings, 7 nights. Working 7 of anything is horrible. There are lots of other shifts out there that are...but again the service picks the shift that's best for them. The less people that they have to pay...there are lots of shifts out there that they could implement that would be better on the people. The shifts that they pick are best for the Service" (Ellen, p. 21). "I think that the Service needs to evaluate their shift schedules. And that would make a huge difference in a lot of people. 7 days of working 10 hour days is too much. And I've been doing it for 13 years and it's too much. I think that would...if they brought something in that would control the amount of work hours, something also to control your court while you're off duty because a lot of people despise court because it just completely ruins that whole day" (Josh, p. 23). "I definitely want a better line of communication from the top of command to down to the front line because there's a big, big gap and a big dissociation between those two aspects" (Karim, p. 14). "But if you notice with hiring a more educated workforce, talking about stress won't bother people" (Leo, p. 19). "And that's why I'm a strong believer. I discussed it with guys this weekend about it...and they all agree with me that there should be a fair rotation that...that...that even in the military you're not put on the field and only World War Two was it that you're going to be on the field until the war is over" (Garrett, p. 13).
Need for an Easier EAP Process	The belief that the process through which counselling is offered through EAPs should be hassle-free; the EAP process should not add to police officers' existing stress.	Officers Should Not Have to go Through a Lengthy Process Before Speaking to a Counsellor *e.g. officers shouldn't have to jump through hoops before speaking to a counsellor Counselling More Easily/Readily Available *e.g. counsellors should be readily available; officers should be able to speak to someone right away Process Needs to Be More Compassionate *e.g. officers shouldn't have to pay up front before seeing a counsellor *e.g. counsellors should seek payment directly from the insurance company *e.g. counselling should include the family Use Counsellors of Officers' Choosing *e.g. officers should be able to speak to a counsellor of their choosing, not just one on the approved EAP list Make EAP Number Accessible Outside of Work *e.g. make EAP number easily accessible from home		"I think I'd make it easier for payment because I think that money is one of the major problems for stress. And umm...I know a lot of the time that...that these doctors aren't just dealing with the police department...they're dealing with Bell telephone and other big corporations that you have to wait too long sometimes" (Garrett, p. 21). "So I mean...they've posted posters all over the station, right? But you're not at the station when you need to call. You're sitting in your basement in the dark, sitting there, thinking about your day, and thinking about how hard it's gonna be to get out of that. And that's when we need the number" (Raja, p. 14). "Umm...but it's not the same as like, you know, I went and got a massage and here's my receipt, go ahead and reimburse me. You have to jump through three or four different loopholes to finally end up in a psychiatrist's office" (Tim, p. 12). "I was speaking with somebody with the old one. And then when they changed providers, they did it very quickly and left me in a situation where I'd spend over a course of 2 years talking to this one counsellor. He knew everything that had been going on for some time. It was still going on so I sort of had to check in once in a while. And now I had to start with somebody new" (Norman, p. 10). "...and to have counsellors more readily available because the only time they bring counsellors in are for shootings but if I go see a guy hanging, I don't get anything" (Sophie, p. 14).
Need More Coverage for EAPs	The belief that the available coverage toward EAPs is not enough; officers should have increased benefits geared toward EAPs, counselling, and/or mental health.	Officers Should Receive Added Benefits for Counselling *e.g. the amount of coverage currently allotted for counselling should be increased Officers Should Receive Unlimited Coverage for Counselling		"There should be no limit on the...we only have 4,000 dollars a year now. There should be no limit" (Scott, p. 18). "No we have decent coverage. Decent. But not as much as I think we should have. Like I think we get...well this was a long time ago...so I think at that time we got 1200 a year. So that's basically like 6 sessions" (Megan, p. 25).
EAPs Need More Qualified Counsellors	The belief that EAPs should be run by psychiatrists, psychologists, or any other individual with the highest level of education (i.e., PhD) and/or experience (i.e., work with officers currently or in the past).	Counsellors with Higher Education/Experience *e.g. EAPs should include services offered by psychologists/psychiatrists *e.g. service should be provided by the most qualified, not the cheapest *e.g. counsellors should have more than a masters degree; need for counsellors with PhDs *e.g. counsellors with experience being a cop/working with cops/military Have Officers Provide Feedback *e.g. officers should provide EAP supplier with feedback on counsellors		"But to me the concern is always, is this just a cost effective thing? Like oh, this is more cost effective so we're gonna go with them because it's cheaper or something like that. And it's like, where does that leave us?" (Norman, p. 10). "Personally, from my experience now and dealing with three separate counsellors, I would get somebody with a PhD psychology level. I don't know. I found so far, and I could just be a matter of bad luck, these psychology Masters don't have what it takes to help me out" (Austin, p. 11). "I would really like, probably, someone that's done my job and has that degree because then I could talk to you openly about everything because you'll understand the subculture. Then I won't have to maybe keep a few things back from you" (Allan, p. 18). "Yeah, more attainable and maybe every time someone goes to see one of these people, gets some feedback from them. Like, it's a police department that's paying for it. 'Cause it's...it's just administered by [the insurance company] but the city of [Woodford] actually pays. So I'm sure that the city of [Woodford]...I'm sure...it's unbelievably a high bill every year. Well don't just pay them money, make sure that the people...that it's working for them and that they feel that this person that you've hired...however they do that process, is worth the money that they're charging. Because obviously there's some good doctors and there's some poor doctors" (Garrett, p. 21-22).
Need For Mandatory Counselling	The belief that EAPs should be designed to allow for mandatory counselling for officers on a regular basis.	Officers Should be Required to Meet with Counsellors *e.g. officers should check in with a counsellor/psychologist on a regular basis *e.g. officers should have someone to talk to even if not in crisis		"Like you see on TV, right? Like you sit down with a psychologist once a year and just check in. And I think they should do that. I think that would be beneficial as opposed to everybody sitting as a group 'cause all that would happen is there would be jokes or there'd be nothing. Jokes or silence" (Megan, p. 26-27). "I would like to see them do a psychological evaluation every year or two. I think that's important" (Megan, p. 29). "I mean it's just one of those things where I think there should be more frequent training. So you go once a year to retrain on your gun, well you should be going twice a year for mental health" (Raja, p. 22). "You know? I mean we have employee assistance plans. You know? We have everything that you could possibly offer but... what they didn't stress is that they should make you do it" (Christopher, p. 13).

Need for Wellness Partnerships & Incentives	The belief that more incentives should be incorporated into wellness programs so that officers will be more inclined to use them and/or participate in various wellness-based events.	Partnerships with Companies that Focus on Health Promotion *e.g. discounts for officers at healthy restaurants (i.e., Subway) Reward Officers for Participation *e.g. allow officers to accumulate money/time off	"If they were able to strike a corporate rate with [a gym] proactively...like proactively go out and...like we have a corporate rate which is the same as the regular rate, which is what I pay, but if they were able to proactively bring the price down, I can guarantee you more people would join, use their programs as well" (Raja, p. 23). "Working out for a police officer should be part of their paid day" (Ellen, p. 20). "Or what's wrong with having even more incentives, right? I talked about that fitness pin thing, right? Why's it only 4 hours?" (Tyler, p. 14).
Need for Expansion of Wellness Programs	The belief that wellness-based programs or initiatives should be expanded beyond the programs already being implemented; wellness-based programs should be widely available and accessible to all officers and include a training component.	More Frequent *e.g. wellness lectures more than once a year Wellness Programs Available at Each Station *e.g. yoga offered at every station, not just one Wellness Training *e.g. address stress before it arises; *e.g. education/training on recognizing stress (training at police college) for officers, new recruits, and supervisors *e.g. wellness training included in each course Wellness Lectures Given by Officers *e.g. have an officer who has experienced stress/distress give lectures on wellness Notify Officers When Wellness Programs Take Place at Their Station *e.g. notify officers of nutritionist's upcoming visit Need to Draw People in *e.g. new and creative ways to talk about wellness	"And e-mail everybody that on this day I will be in this division, come by. 'Cause we have our work e-mail that everyone gets" (Raja, p. 22). Kristina: "So do you think more wellness-based programs that are more than twice a year are necessary?" Participant E: "Well, yeah. I still think...because there's still a lot of "us" out there" (Ellen, p. 20). Participant I: "Absolutely. Even...probably a couple of years ago, this...and I can't think of her last name but she's at the college, she's a civilian, her name is [Tina]...she actually took a yoga teacher training program. And where are they teaching it? You know? Like they're not bringing it forward to the members. Like why not have this type of thing for the members of the Service?" Kristina: "So maybe offer a class once or twice or however many times a week?" Participant I: "Yeah! At different divisions or wherever because it's a big city so I get that it's strategically...it's a big problem. It's a big problem to tackle" (Hannah, p. 15). "Yeah. Not like you're selling...well you are selling something. It's exactly what you're selling. You have to be up there. Yeah, that's it exactly. You're selling. You need people up there to be able to sell it (Scott, p. 19). "Well it's been said...people want the information. They want...I can point to a dozen...actually a half dozen in the last lecture I did of the feedback forms...it said this needs to be on every single course this college teaches. So people want it. They want somebody up there who is genuine, who has been there and they want to hear it from them that, "Look, you can still be successful. I wasn't a basket case but I could very well have been". You know?" (Scott, p. 19). "I've looked through stuff through them and resources that they make available or they refer and there are courses out there that teach first responders how to watch our own people. I think that they're not well advertised though. I know most of my co-workers have no idea about them" (Norman, p. 15).
Need for Mandatory Wellness Programs	The belief that wellness programs should be designed to include mandatory participation from all officers.	Mandatory Wellness Lectures *e.g. all officers should attend wellness lectures, even those who do not pass their firearm re-qualification Mandatory Fitness Assessments *e.g. officers should be required to undergo an annual fitness test Mandatory Online Course *e.g. short quiz about wellness	Participant Q: "No you don't. You don't have to. But there is a pin. It's called the Pin Test actually. And we can do it at the station, we can do it at headquarters. And if you do it every year, you get a button every year for it that you do it". Kristina: "But it's voluntary?" Participant Q: "Yeah. It's voluntary. Yeah". Kristina: "OK". Participant Q: "I'd like to see it mandatory but that's just my thought" (Edwin, p. 14). "Even with the online, make a mandatory online course. At least it'll get guys thinking" (Edwin, p. 15). "Almost. Yeah. I explained it to one of the guys I was on the course with this year. I said, "They put all this emphasis on stress management and PTSD but if you failed your firearms, you get to go and re-qualify and you get to miss this. It doesn't make sense that if it's that important to the Service, it should be mandatory for everybody. Not for the people who pass their firearms". Does that make sense?" (Josh, p. 24).
Critical Incident Debriefs Executed by Professionals	The belief that critical incident debriefs should be run by psychiatrists, psychologists or any other individual with the highest level of experience (i.e. someone who has been through a traumatic experience).	Debriefs Run by Psychologists as Opposed to Managers/ Supervisors Debriefs Run by Individuals Who Experienced Trauma *e.g. other officers with similar traumatic experiences	"I find when it's your immediate supervisors doing it, it's a lot different because you may not have the right kind of relationship with them. Your immediate supervisors may...some of them are really friendly, some of them are really not. They're really...because they have to be managers. So you may or may not have a positive relationship with them. And when they sit down in a group and do a debrief, it does not go well. On the other hand, when it's a professional who's done it before who understands that you're gonna be closed off for a while. You're not gonna open up right away. And they take their time and they set aside 8 hours or 4 hours or whatever and let us talk and we all open up. Those are good debriefs, right?" (Raja, p. 12). "The two that ran it actually had been through traumatic events themselves. One's a corporate psychologist so she can analyze whatever but the officer who was the peer officer involved had been through traumatic events herself and listening to her talk and the emotions that she went through were very similar to what I was going through. And I was told when it happened...this is how you're going to feel" (Josh, p. 6).
Mandatory Critical Incident Debriefs	The belief that critical incident debriefs should be designed to include mandatory debriefing sessions for all officers after a critical or traumatic incident takes place.	All Officers Should be Debriefed After Traumatic Incidents *e.g. all officers should be debriefed, not just those in specialized units	"So I think in a way, they're looking at just two units when they should have been looking at anybody who deals with it" (Joe, p. 21). Participant P: "It would be nice to see something put in place, even if they don't want it. If there's something like a traumatic incident or something, you have to say, "Oh, this is available. Call this number". No. You're not. You are actually gonna see somebody at least once". Kristina: "Make it mandatory?" Participant P: "Make it mandatory. And then from there, you decide if you want to continue or not. But you need to go initially, see somebody, a professional". Kristina: "For a venting, debriefing?" Participant P: "Yeah" (Allen, p. 25).

Appendix E



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Debriefing Form

Stress in Police Work

Stress in police work is a serious issue that affects police officers, their families, and the communities in which they serve. If not adequately addressed, stress in police work can lead to various work-related problems (e.g., absenteeism), psychological discomfort, and even suicide. However, improvements to the ways in which stress management programs address police officers' accounts of stress can help promote and maintain the health, safety, and well-being of police officers and the communities in which they work. In this study, you answered questions pertaining to your perceptions on stress in policing and the stress management programs available to alleviate such stress. The purpose of this study is to determine whether or not stress management programs actually address stress as it is perceived by police officers. With your help, stress management programs may be modified to better address police officers' needs.

It is difficult to answer questions on stress in police work and your willingness to participate in this study is greatly appreciated. Sometimes participants may find the subject matter of these interview questions disturbing. If answering any of these questions led you to feel distressed and you would like to speak to someone about your thoughts, you may contact the following counseling/support services offered by the [Woodford] Police Service:

[Woodford] Services	Description
Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) xxx-xxx-xxxx	The [Woodford] Police Service provides its members with a variety of Employee Assistance Programs that are administered by [Harrington's], a third-party organization that helps employees from other agencies cope with stress, relationship problems, depression, anxiety, nutrition and weight loss, parenting, and other challenges. These EAPs provide officers with a range of professional counseling services which can be made available through in-person sessions, telephone sessions, and online chat sessions. These services are available to officers 24 hours a day, seven days a week and they are completely confidential.

You may also contact any of the following counseling/support services unrelated to the [Woodford] Police Service:

Services Unrelated to the [Woodford] Police	Description
[Woodford] Distress Centre xxx-xxx-xxxx	The [Woodford] Distress Centre provides a distress line to individuals who are feeling overwhelmed or distraught. The distress line provides callers with emotional support and encouragement, crisis management and intervention, and community resource or referral information 24 hours a day, seven days a week. All calls are answered by crisis line specialists or trained volunteers and remain completely confidential.

████████ Crisis Centre Hotline: xxx-xxx-xxxx ████████ Street Woodford xxx-xxx-xxxx ████████ Street Woodford xxx-xxx-xxxx	The ██████████ Crisis Centre is a community-based mental health crisis service that provides [Woodford] residents with a crisis line that they can call to discuss overwhelming thoughts, feelings of distress, anxiety, and concerns pertaining to their mental health and well-being. This crisis line is staffed by trained volunteers and professionals who provide support to callers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Volunteers and professional staff offer support to callers and refer them to other community-based services that offer ongoing support if needed. The ██████████ Crisis Centre also offers mobile team visits where crisis workers can meet distressed individuals in the community at a mutually chosen and convenient location after contacting the crisis line. All of these services are voluntary, free, and confidential.
████████ Walk-in Counseling Services ████████ Street Woodford xxx-xxx-xxxx	The walk-in counseling service offered by ██████████ is run by trained counselors and psychotherapists who offer their expertise to clients in need of someone to talk to. These trained counselors allow clients to discuss the challenges they are facing and provide them with access to the resources necessary to help them cope. Many of the challenges discussed in counseling may be related to anxiety, depression, social isolation, personal stress, trauma, and much more. This walk-in service is free and operates every Wednesday from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. No appointment or referral is required and all counseling sessions are confidential.

If you have any concerns or questions about this study, please feel free to contact the principal researcher, Kristina Musca, or her supervisor, Michael Kempa, at the information provided below.

Kristina Musca

Department of Criminology
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ottawa
phone: (████) ██████████
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Dr. Michael Kempa

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If you have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, you may also contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5.

phone: (613) 562-5387
e-mail: ethics@uottawa.ca

Thank you again for participating in this study on stress in police work. Your contribution to this study is greatly appreciated.

Appendix F

File Number: 06-14-29

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 08/21/2014



Université d'Ottawa
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa
Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

Ethics Approval Notice

Social Sciences and Humanities REB

Principal Investigator / Supervisor / Co-investigator(s) / Student(s)

<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Role</u>
Michael	Kempa	Social Sciences / Criminology	Supervisor
Kristina	Musca	Social Sciences / Criminology	Student Researcher

File Number: 06-14-29

Type of Project: Master's Thesis

Title: Stress in Police Work

Approval Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Expiry Date (mm/dd/yyyy)	Approval Type
08/21/2014	08/20/2015	Ia

(Ia: Approval, Ib: Approval for initial stage only)

Special Conditions / Comments:

N/A



Université d'Ottawa
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa
Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

This is to confirm that the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board identified above, which operates in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement (2010) and other applicable laws and regulations in Ontario, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above named research project. Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions / Comments".

During the course of the project, the protocol may not be modified without prior written approval from the REB except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) pertain to only administrative or logistical components of the project (e.g., change of telephone number). Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes which increase the risk to participant(s), any changes which considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project and safety of the participant(s). Modifications to the project, including consent and recruitment documentation, should be submitted to the Ethics Office for approval using the "Modification to research project" form available at: <http://www.research.uottawa.ca/ethics/forms.html>.

Please submit an annual report to the Ethics Office four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval. To close the file, a final report must be submitted. These documents can be found at: <http://www.research.uottawa.ca/ethics/forms.html>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Office at extension 5387 or by e-mail at: ethics@uOttawa.ca.

Signature:

Riana Marcotte
Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research
For Barbara Graves, Chair of the Social Sciences and Humanities REB

Appendix G

Tables

Table 1 – Frequency of Operational & Organizational Demands by Participant

Participant	Operational Demands	Organizational Demands
Christopher	12	31
Garrett	9	32
Patsy	17	14
Raja	9	12
Ellen	6	29
Charlie	4	7
Joe	12	15
Tim	6	5
Hannah	5	27
Leo	10	4
Todd	5	17
Josh	4	39
Karim	6	13
Norman	6	13
Megan	10	35
Allen	9	14
Edwin	3	6
Tyler	3	5
Scott	3	8
Victor	5	13
Sophie	4	5
Nathan	8	5
Austin	2	14
Ronnie	1	6

Table 2 – Frequency of Operational & Organizational Demands by Rank

	Constable	Detective Constable	Sergeant	Detective Sergeant
Operational Demands	114	13	6	26
Organizational Demands	243	44	29	53

Table 3 - Frequency of Office Politics by Rank

	Constable	Detective Constable	Sergeant	Detective Sergeant
Office Politics	37	6	5	12

Table 4 - Frequency of Exposure to Danger & Trauma by Rank

	Constable	Detective Constable	Sergeant	Detective Sergeant
Exposure to Danger/Threat of Danger	34	2	0	4
Exposure to Trauma/Gruesome Scenes	14	2	2	2

Table 5 - Frequency of Exposure to Vulnerable Victims by Parental Status

	Kids	No Kids	Unknown
Exposure to Vulnerable Victims	11	2	6

Table 6 - Frequency of Work-Life Conflict by Gender

	Male	Female
Work-life Conflict	63	18

Table 7 - Frequency of Humour by Rank

	Constable	Detective Constable	Sergeant	Detective Sergeant
Humour	8	1	1	5

Table 8 – Frequency of Diversionary and Pro-active Tactics by Gender

	Diversionary Tactics	Pro-Active Tactics
Male	49	87
Female	21	36

Table 9 - Frequency of Diversionary and Pro-active Tactics by Race

	Diversionary Tactics	Pro-Active Tactics
Caucasian	61	101
Other	9	22

Table 10 – Officers That Used/Did Not Use the EAP & Officers’ Perceived Personality Type

Participant	Used EAP	Did not use EAP	Officers’ Perceived Personality Type
Christopher	X		B
Garrett	X		B
Patsy		X	A
Raja		X	A
Ellen	X		A
Charlie	X		A
Joe	X		A
Tim	X		A
Hannah	X		A
Leo		X	A
Todd	X		A
Josh	X		A
Karim		X	B
Norman	X		B
Megan	X		B
Allen	X		B
Edwin		X	A
Tyler	X		B
Scott	X		A
Victor	X		B
Sophie	X		B
Nathan	X		B
Austin	X		B
Ronnie		X	A

Table 11 – Officers’ Reasons for Seeking Help (via EAP)

Participant	Personal Stressors	Work-Related Stressors		Did not use EAP
		Operational	Organizational	
Christopher		X		
Garrett	X			
Patsy				X
Raja				X
Ellen	X			
Charlie	X			
Joe	X	X		
Tim	X			
Hannah		X		
Leo				X
Todd	X			
Josh	X	X		
Karim				X
Norman	X			
Megan		X		
Allen	X	X		
Edwin				X
Tyler		X		
Scott	X	X		
Victor		X	X	
Sophie	X	X		
Nathan		X		
Austin	X			
Ronnie				X