

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

**PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND PRACTICE: OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
OFFICER AND EDUCATOR PERCEPTIONS OF USE OF FORCE EDUCATION AND
EXPERIENCES**

ANNETTE JUBRIL

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
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Abstract

In the last 20 years, the number of incidents involving police use of force (UOF) has nearly doubled in Canada (Marcoux & Nicholson, 2018). There have been at least 460 documented fatal police encounters across Canada between the years 2000 and 2017 and at least 1,860 police UOF investigations specifically in Ontario (Dunn, 2018; Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2018). According to a 2019 annual report by Ottawa Police Service (OPS, 2019), a municipal police service in Ontario, between the years 2018 and 2019, OPS reported a 21% decrease (from 767 to 607) of applications of force among officers and a 15% increase (from 529 to 609) of UOF reports. Although the latter data is relevant to Ottawa, to better understand and potentially minimize negative police-civilian encounters, both specifically and on a larger scale, this Canadian-focused study centers on policing as well as the context at OPS and explores the extent to which professional education (PE) influences professional practice (PP). It does so by reviewing OPS's UOF training and gathering perspectives from patrol officers and UOF educators. Using a qualitative instrumental case study (QICS) research design, the study analyzes the UOF training materials that OPS used to certify and recertify officers between the years 2010 and 2021. It also incorporates semi-structured interviews with officers and educators to gather insights on how participants define UOF, their perspectives on their pre-service and in-service training, as well as how they relate their PE to their police-civilian encounters, particularly when they used or did not use force. A document analysis of the data revealed that OPS's UOF training uses both traditional as well as progressive and collaborative approaches to educate and relate to officers. Such approaches also aim to promote appropriate communication and de-escalation skills. At the same time, the learning objectives found in the lesson plans lack the detail needed to signify that officers have achieved the intended goal of the training. Among the important themes that emerged from the interviews were 1) the differences in priorities, between the officers and educators, concerning UOF training, 2) the value that officers place on their instructors' experiences, 3) the challenges that educators face while adhering to provincial expectations, and 4) the integral role that training and life experiences play during police-civilian encounters. The relevance of social media was another significant theme that emerged within the study, particularly considering the participants' views on the current social climate of policing (i.e., how the public perceives the police as well as the contentious debate about defunding the police). With limited research on police perspectives and issues specific to policing in Canada, the present study, by virtue of access to OPS's training materials, patrol officers and UOF instructors, seeks to initiate rich and meaningful discussions about PE and PP. It also aims to encourage reflection among educators, policy-makers and society so as to address and deepen our understanding of issues related to education.

Key words: professional education and practice, police use of force and training, police officer and educator perceptions, qualitative instrumental case study, document analysis, (reflexive) thematic analysis, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

There is debate within literature about whether or not policing is a profession (Carlan & Lewis, 2009; Perrier, 1979). In certain contexts, some police officers view policing as a profession because of its relevance to institutional training, a code of ethics and high standards (Green & Gates, 2014; Lumsden, 2017). Such attributes might indicate that policing is a profession, yet it is not universally recognized as such (Potts, 1982). Professionalization involves a discipline having qualities such as a specialized body of knowledge, standards of performance, and codes of ethics—characteristics which, arguably, have not been established in policing (Barker, 2011; Schneider, 2009). Although this is disputed and researchers have described policing as a profession (Chatterjee & Ryan, 2020), I believe that it is a profession—or it at least strives to be one (Ashenhurst, 1959). For the purposes of this paper, I begin with this notion in order to discuss two important components—professional education (PE) and professional practice (PP).

While PE often establishes expectations for practitioners as they conduct themselves through their PP, what people learn through training or specialized programs may not effectively resonate with a professional. Presently, research have discussed the extent to which PE influences a person's beliefs, attitudes or behaviour. Some professionals have difficulty applying their learning to their work while others have demonstrated the little effect PE has on PP (Daley, 2001; Schumuck et al., 1966; Wood, 1998). On the other hand, other scholars have shown that PE is imperative for PP and influences what practitioners think, believe or do (Kasemsap, 2017; Morris & Hiebert, 2017). While there are clear and sometimes conflicting perspectives on how individuals and groups of people teach and learn, the current direction of research demonstrates

that the effect PE has on PP is contested. It is a discussion explored in different professions such as teaching and nursing but limited in studies related to policing.

Given the increased tension between law enforcement and civilians during certain encounters in the last 20 years (Barrera, 2020; Marcoux & Nicholson, 2018; Sanchez, 2020), the present study explores the issue of PE and PP while relating it to police training and use of force (UOF) experiences. I focus particularly on the perceptions of individuals who work or have recently retired as patrol officers and educators at Ottawa Police Services (OPS) in Ontario, Canada. I explore answers to questions related to the approach that OPS takes with their UOF training as well as officers' and educators' perspectives on their training and their police-civilian encounters.

To better understand the impact PE has on PP and contribute to scholarly research related to education, this study aims to learn from the training that OPS uses to educate their officers while analyzing how the training is conceptualized, designed and delivered. It also seeks to explore the perspectives and experiences of patrol officers and UOF instructors. By focusing on such aspects and insights, the goal of the study serves three purposes: 1) to gather information that could help improve police training, police decisions, as well as what happens during police-civilian encounters, 2) to invite educators to reflect on and address issues related to teaching and learning, and 3) contribute discourse to existing scholarship in a way that deepens our understanding of education as well as considers the implications of evolving contexts that have yet to be accounted for.

Overview

The thesis is divided into eight chapters¹ that explore the link between PE and PP. The chapter that follows, chapter 2, is a literature review devoted to contextualizing educational terms while drawing connections to police education and its effect on practice. It also describes traditional and contemporary theories about teaching and learning that are discussed in literature. Chapter 3 explains how the issue of PE and PP can be explored within the police profession and focuses on the research problem. The study's central questions are also explicit in chapter 3.

Chapter 4 begins with identifying the theoretical frameworks—constructivism and social constructivism—that are used to give shape to the study. This is followed by chapter 5, which explains the study's methodological approach—specifically, qualitative instrumental case study (QICS) and document analysis. Using these strategies as part of the research design supports the process of looking at the relationship between PE and PP while examining UOF education and experiences through officers' and educators' perceptions. Chapter 5 also presents a description of the three sources of information gathered to address the research questions—specifically, the UOF training materials, the officers and educators.

Chapter 6 categorizes the data into themes that were developed as part of the study's analysis. Chapter 7 is a discussion of the research findings with links to educational literature and considerations for ways we may reinterpret how individuals and groups of practitioners teach and learn in professional programs. The final chapter, chapter 8, returns to the purpose of the study and describes what it seeks to contribute to literature. It also reviews the study's strengths, limitations, and offers suggestions for future research.

¹ **Note:** The PDF version of the study allows readers to navigate through chapters and sub-chapters of the paper by clicking on the hyperlinks embedded in the table of contents. This note also applies to other hyperlinks that lead to external resources and references to the appendix.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

Chapter Overview

In this chapter, I provide context to the study by reviewing literature on the impact professional education (PE) has on professional practice (PP). I start by defining relevant terms such as *professions*, *PE*, *PP* and *effect* to illustrate how they are used within research and within the present study. I then draw upon a framework for understanding different approaches to education—including teaching and learning—in order to make sense of the ideas covered within the thesis. This leads into a presentation of articles on the effect PE has on PP within two professions: teaching and nursing. I chose examples from within these fields because teaching and nursing share similarities with policing. In particular, teachers and nurses are licensed practitioners who are governed by professional standards, provide a service to the public and regularly interact with people. In addition, there were fewer studies on police education and practice for me to explore and position the thesis. As such, I decided to add research on professions that are parallel, yet different from policing. I then draw attention to how policing is structured in Canada in order to explain the existing literature on police education and practice. This aims to provide sufficient familiarity for readers before explaining how use of force (UOF) training is facilitated at Ottawa Police Service (OPS). Finally, I conclude the chapter with a section that applies the framework for educational approaches to the literature on UOF training.

Defining our Terms

Professions

In the 1950s and 1960s, professions were often considered jobs that had a diverse range of characteristics. For instance, their attributes were primarily distinct from other occupations (Millerson, 1964; Saks, 2012; Vollmer & Mills, 1966). While defining professions based on their

traits (Eraut, 1994; Freidson, 1994), some scholars point out that essential qualities of a profession include a general and systematic set of knowledge, autonomy, orientation towards service, altruistic interests, influence on society, as well as internalized codes and ethics (Barber, 1963; Cheetham & Chivers, 2005). Other researchers highlight the importance of a governing body that establishes standards of education and credentials for entry into a profession (Abbott, 1988; Preston, 2014). Furthermore, a profession can refer to a vocation or occupation that is founded on specialized and extensive educational training and skills (MacVean & Neyroud, 2012; Mulayim & Lai, 2016). For example, it is argued that lawyers are considered professionals because of the legal knowledge that they provide to people in society (Fullinwider, 1996). Similarly, teaching and nursing are professions because of the educational and medical background that such practitioners have for their practice. They both incorporate a certain level of education and expertise. Lastly, a profession has a number of individuals in the same occupation organized to serve a certain objective (Davis, 1999).

Defining policing as a profession is not as easy, however. As explained in the introduction of the paper, some scholars argue that policing is not a profession while others contend that it is (Carlan & Lewis, 2009; Green & Gates, 2014; Perrier, 1979; Potts, 1982). For the purposes of this thesis, the present study posits that policing is a profession because, like teaching and medicine, it includes institutionalized training; a process for certification, which permits entry and upkeep of membership; and a set of standards or ethics that connote what is expected of officers in terms of their conduct and performance. These traits are also used to characterize a profession (Saks, 2012; Vollmer & Mills, 1966). The point of this discussion is not to convolute the term *profession*; rather, it is to begin with this notion in order to point out two key and related components of professions. I discuss these components next.

Professional Education (PE)

PE refers to the formal or informal approach to learning, training, and preparation of a professional. PE is designed so that the individual may understand theory, skills, or techniques needed for their role (Markauskaite & Goodyear, 2014). It connotes any planned series of learning that is directed towards a learner's understanding (Jarvis, 1983). Thus, education is associated with terms such as learning, knowledge, and training because these concepts signify an experience of development or activity for a learner.

PE can take place in many different forms such as workshops, mentorship and coaching programs, lectures, or informal discussions among colleagues. It may also be part of a program that practitioners complete before their practice (i.e., pre-service education), or as part of their career while in practice (i.e., in-service education) (Van Nuland, 2011). In the Canadian police profession, pre-service includes mandatory courses that officers take to learn about policing as they are hired. In-service education would include curricula intended to supplement learning or to recertify an officer while he or she is in practice. Whether done through pre-service or in-service education, PE covers relevant objectives and learning outcomes that are pertinent to a professional's role.

In policing literature, police education is explained as the learning of theoretical and abstract concepts often taught in higher education (Kelling & Moore, 1988), whereas training is discussed as the teaching of practical, technical, and applied skills (Cordner, 2016). Education on or about UOF is known as training. For the purposes of this study and given the various aspects covered within education, I approach and discuss UOF training as a component of police PE.

Professional Practice (PP)

PP refers to the application of knowledge and education in a discipline, such as medicine, teaching and law. It describes a set of interconnected activities built around a collective and common orientation (Corradi et al., 2010; Polkinghorne, 2004). Members of a profession uphold standards that are determined by the discipline itself. Practice is shaped by a multitude of factors that come together and are utilized specifically within the context of a profession. Practice can also refer to the enactment, moral-ethical quality, and disposition of a professional as they conduct themselves in the world (Green, 2009; Kemmis, 2009). It can additionally represent the process of moving from a level of amateur work to a distinct and higher standard of expertise (Boud & Hager, 2012). Through education and practice, professionals learn to know and master the codes and ethos of their position because it is a significant aspect of their work (Smeby, 2012).

Given how the terms above are defined, we can acknowledge that policing has standards and expectations of its members—some of which are detailed in their PE and exhibited via PP. The PP of police officers can be demonstrated through different ways such as their policing philosophies, their experience, or even their demeanour and approach with civilians.

Effect, Impact and Influence

In this study, I use the words *effect*, *impact* and *influence* to explore the relationship between PE and PP (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). I also use these terms to refer to what individuals express about how they perceive a particular event, occurrence or idea (Matua & Van Der Wal, 2015; Montanye, 2017). Rather than prove that PE causes PP, or suggest the opposite, I use words like effect, impact and influence to acknowledge the meaning that officers and educators make as they reflect on the connection between PE and PP (McConnell-Henry,

Chapman & Francis, 2009; Wojnar & Swanson, 2007). In other words, these terms show the ways that practitioners describe their thoughts and the inferences that they make of their experiences.

In the next section, I focus on literature that discusses different approaches to education while synthesizing ideas and examples that give further context into the debate about PE and PP.

Approaches to Education and Relevance to Practice

There are several perspectives in literature that describe learning, teaching and education generally. For instance, some professional learning authors (e.g., Guile, 2014; Taylor et al., 2010) describe the effect that education has on professional work as a continuous *recontextualization*. In other words, practitioners recontextualize existing knowledge as they seek to understand new experiences and evolve in their practice (Taylor, et al., 2010). Another perspective, as explained by Theodore Schatzki's (1996), is called *practice theory*, which argues that education is entangled and emergent with practice. Put differently, education is interwoven with and emerges through human activities, such as language, social connections, actions, and relations (Green, 2009; Hopwood, 2016; Schatzki, 2001). These are just a couple of theories that I came across and considered using to shape the study. Many contemporary approaches stem from entrenched conventional assumptions while others are linked to a variety of more progressive reconceptualizations of the nature and mission of education. I decided to turn to an existing framework for the study and use it as a tool to organize discussions about education. I chose *Engaging minds: Cultures of education and practices of teaching* by Davis, Sumara and Luce-Kapler (2015) to explain these ideas in an accessible way. Their book offers language and vocabulary that can help us compare, contrast and otherwise discuss approaches to education.

Although there are scholars who have provided different explanations for what it means to teach and learn (see Illeris, 2018), I believe Davis et al. (2015) give us a good starting point.

Davis et al. (2015) organized their book into four historical moments to explain the evolution of formal education. These moments are illustrated in the graphic that I created below:

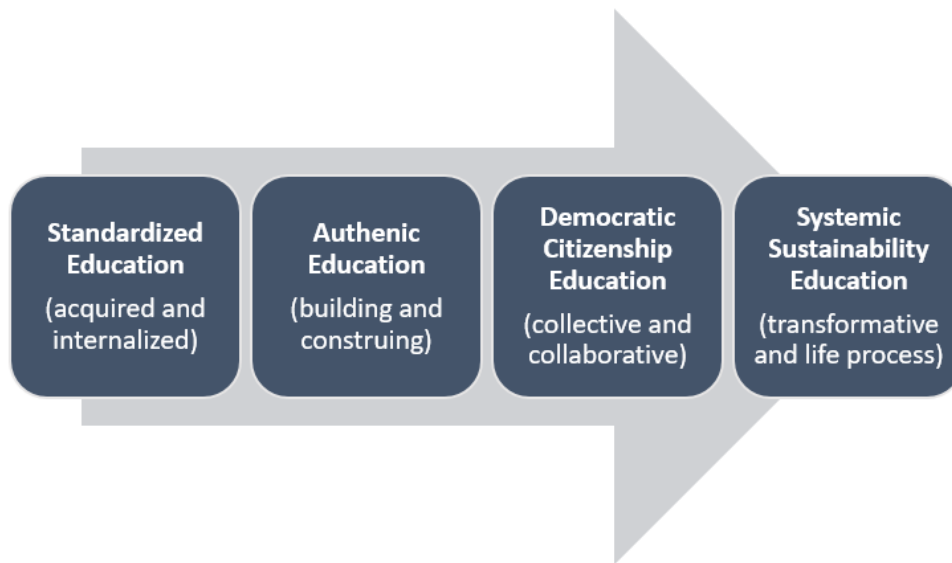


Figure 1. As described by Davis et al. (2015), the four moments in formal education constitute an evolution (as opposed to a spectrum) and include standardized education, authentic education, democratic citizenship education and systemic sustainability education. Written in brackets are terms that reflect ideas and assumptions about learning associated with each moment. For example, the first moment describes learning in terms of acquisition and internalization, whereas in authentic education, learning is described more in terms of building and construing, and so on.

I will describe the four moments (i.e., standardized, authentic, democratic citizenship and systemic sustainability education) below. However, I would like to first point out that examples of how we may understand education, in light of these categorizations, is limited in police literature. In order to provide concrete examples of the approaches discussed by Davis et al., I reviewed studies about education and practice within other contexts—particularly teaching and nursing. As alluded to earlier, both professions share similar traits with policing. Thus, literature on teaching and nursing will act as lessons that we can learn about education within the police profession. There are many lessons that can be learned from these and other professional

education contexts, however, what I draw upon are only some examples from literature. I am not suggesting that I have covered all insights but I am simply providing a few for context.

That being said, the next four sections are organized by the moments described by Davis et al. (2015). For each section, I first describe the approach to education, and then I bring in examples from teaching and nursing to illustrate the categorizations. This will lay the groundwork to understanding education before I explain how policing is structured in Canada. The four moments in education and the lessons learned from studies within teaching and nursing will be especially useful when we later discuss police education and practice.

Standardized Education

The first historical moment is called *standardized education*. This period is characterized by a school system designed to gather and disseminate knowledge from one person to another. Heavily influenced by the industrial era and historical ways of teaching, formal education was viewed as a way to prepare people for the workforce. As such, standardized approaches to education assumed that learning was a linear process where the teacher possessed and transferred information that was acquired and internalized by the student. Such thinking aligns with a *correspondence theory*, which suggests that learning is understood as an internal model that corresponds to an external reality (Davis et al., 2015). In other words, what we think corresponds to, matches or is a direct reflection of what happens in real life. In addition, there are two sub-categories within correspondence theory: *mentalism and behaviourism*. Mentalism focuses on what occurs in the mind while behaviourism concentrates on observable and measurable behaviours. Describing learning as a process of inputting and storing data or as a change in behaviour based on a controlled environment came into prominence during the emergence of standardized education. Given that the mentalist aspect of standardized education focuses on

information acquisition, PE arguably has an effect on PP when it provides learners with instruction and direction.

Let us now consider how approaches to standardized education appear in teaching and nursing. A study that examined the use of instruction in a teaching program showed that teachers were still using what they were told about lesson planning for math years after graduation (Morris & Hiebert, 2017). In other words, the passive approach to educating teachers had an effect on the teachers while in practice. A different study on a module within a nursing program revealed that lectures improved the nurses' understanding of what it means to be accountable (Pitt et al., 2016). Similarly, Phillips, Hall, and Irving's (2016) research showed that what was taught during lectures from an expert clinician was helpful in strengthening nurses' ability to manage patients. These examples suggest that direct instruction will have an impact on PP.

However, education that overloads the learner with information or relies heavily on passive approaches to teaching can also be ineffective ways of influencing practice, especially when the experience is not appropriately managed (Mugford et al., 2013). As previously mentioned, there is a passive approach to teaching and learning within standardized education because of an assumption that individuals can be filled with, or trained to possess, particular skills. For instance, Chambers, Hobson and Tracey's (2010) study, which looked at teacher candidates' experiences of a teacher education program, presents an example where a participant did not feel prepared when it was her turn to teach a class. The experienced teacher who suggested that the student read additional materials caused her to feel unsupported. Although other strategies were used in this PE program, the mismanaged learning and passive approach were disadvantageous to the candidate's practice. John Sweller (2006), who developed the cognitive load theory, explains that in order for education to be productive, there needs to be a

logical balance in the participant's learning so that knowledge becomes useful for practice. With the examples of studies presented so far, we may acknowledge that didactic instructional strategies can be a way to apply standardized approaches to education; however, it should be dealt with appropriately. Otherwise, the strategies employed and the learning experiences that happen can be less meaningful.

Recall that behaviourism is another part of standardized education—where learning is demonstrated by a change in behaviour. This means that PE can be used to condition students' learning so that particular results occur (Skinner, 1954; Watson, 1913). By targeting specific objectives related to a practitioner's actions, educational strategies such as simulations and repetitive activities can translate meaningfully into PP as they influence practitioners' attitudes and skills (Kantek et al., 2017; Olander et al., 2018; Voorhees, 2001). Nurses in Olander et al.'s (2018) research attributed their formal education to increased quality of patient care because of frequent review of materials. On the other hand, too much emphasis on repetitive action such as reflection or maintaining a journal, as seen with DeMink-Carthew et al.'s (2016) article on teacher education, can also disinterest practitioners and disturb the process of learning. This leads to learning gaps as educators try to support connections for practice. Participants in Sims' (2010) study expressed that the training that they attended about co-teaching did little to change perspectives about inclusive practices, as teachers felt they already incorporated these practices in their work.

The literature thereby reminds us to reflect on how curriculum developers can improve or cultivate skills that professionals may already have. Simulations and repetitive action are approaches to education that professions like teaching and nursing use, yet the key point seems to return to the objective behind using such strategies. In other words, why is it used, and what

does it seek to educate? It is therefore important to consider what behaviours PE aims to change, nurture or enhance if it is meant to shape practice (Taylor & Hamdy, 2013).

Authentic Education

Standardized education was challenged by a movement towards *authentic education*, which recognizes that the learning process pragmatically differs among people. Approaches used as a result emphasize personalized learning, diverse developmental stages of the learner, and more realistic understandings. Beginning in the early 1900s, research in biology and communication changed perspectives on human learning as more learner-centred strategies to teaching were introduced. Influenced by the work of Jean Piaget (1954), education during this time focused on individual knowledge and how it related to personal meaning and interpretation. As such, *coherence theories* in education emerged and suggested that learning, for the individual, was about construing a world that would allow the person to maintain a coherent sense of reality (Davis et al., 2015). In other words, learning was viewed in terms of accommodating prior knowledge to deal with present experiences. Authentic education sought to build upon each individual's unique experiences because it understood that learners were more than just containers that acquired information.

Authentic education is reflected in educational programs that have opportunities for experiential learning. Using practice or inquiry-based strategies, for instance, allows practitioners to explore and try new skills that are realistic and relevant to their work (Kolb & Fry, 1975). Consider Swars et al.'s (2009) study. The inquiry-based approach to the teacher program explored demonstrates that teachers feel more prepared for their profession when they can try different teaching techniques. When content or activities are unrealistic to students, as was the

case in Chambers et al.'s (2010) research (described in the previous section), there can be unintended outcomes.

As seen with Lotter et al.'s (2016) and Hensley et al.'s (2017) studies, training on mathematics and financial literacy that allowed participants to navigate their own learning led to improved confidence and instruction strategies for teachers. We may understand that learner-centred programming and critical reflection in PE are strategies that encourage practitioners to make connections with their experiences. Through role-playing and hands-on activities, practitioners connect better with their learning and develop practical knowledge (Yardley et al., 2012). Authentic and realistic education helps learners to link prior knowledge with current learning and build upon an individual's previous experiences. This is especially authentic when learners can relate to what is being taught and refer to it while in practice. If not, the value of the education can be lost or seen as irrelevant to the learner—which would be indicative of the objectives of professional programs, considering what that often goes into designing them.

Reflection and feedback are other valuable tools for helping practitioners connect learning with practice. What I mean here is that focusing on the learners' experiences in PE will have an impact on what professionals do or how they grow and improve thereafter. Conducting surveys before, during and after PE are beneficial for the purposes of gathering data and tailoring curriculum to the needs of the learner or practitioner. Without considering how learning can be authentic and relevant—not only at an individual level, but all encompassing—it can be difficult for practitioners to draw links between their education and practice (Corcoran et al., 2003). In a study that examined teachers' experiences of an online course, for instance, researchers found that PE did little to impact the participants' PP because new learning did not occur (Powell & Bodur, 2019). The participants explained that they had already been using differentiated

instruction in their classrooms prior to and after taking the online professional workshop. As such, their experience through the course was not valued because it was ineffective at elevating their awareness of educational strategies.

In another study, Nsemo et al. (2013) discuss how content in the PE that nurses received did not address the needs of the people who attended the course. What was covered in the course, namely clinical skills and quantitative research methodologies, seemed more relevant for clinicians than for nurse educators, who felt topics such as evidence-based practice, attitudinal issues, nursing theories and patient safety should have been the focus. For this reason, educators may want to consider incorporating feedback in their programs and assessing the impact training has on practical outcomes without imposing linear approaches to learning or neglecting the experiences of the intended audience (Sandars, 2009). The potential to influence practice through education increases when information collected from feedback and assessments are used effectively.

Democratic Citizenship Education

Democratic citizenship education focuses on the contextual and collective aspects of teaching and learning. Psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1978) argued that what we know is dependent on cultural practices that are negotiated by the language, tools and resources that surround us—it is what helps us develop. Learning and teaching are considered as entangled in the artifacts, structures, habits and beliefs of communities during a specific time (Davis et al., 2015). Not only is learning about what is occurring within the individual; rather, it is part of physical, social, and cultural environments. Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991) have developed many of these notions into a theory called *communities of practice* (CoP), which stems from the work of Lev Vygotsky (1978). This theory recognizes that learning is social,

contextual and particularly effective when individuals interact with things and people (Michaelson, 2004; Wenger, 1998). Learning is a social activity where tools and resources affect thinking and experiences (Land et al., 2008). Based on a CoP lens, people learn and are educated by adapting their thinking to the social practices that they participate in. Thus, we approach education as participants and co-facilitators of a culture and contribute to what communities understand and believe.

Social interaction and context are therefore important factors to consider in terms of the influence education has on practice. Social learning theories focus on context and community as two elements in PE that impact PP (Durning & Artino, 2011). Mentorship and coaching, for instance, are strategies used in programs to guide and support learners through applicable circumstances in practice. As Glazerman et al. (2010) point out, supportive mentors are important to the successes of first-time practitioners because of the value their experiences can have for others. In a similar way, Crowley and Kulikowich (2009) show that opportunities to network are valuable for shaping the attitudes and perspectives of professionals as it helps people build connections among themselves. Furthermore, Tame (2013) explains that learning in environments where practitioners work together can holistically influence the practices of professionals.

However, Felstead and Springett (2016) caution that a mentor should be mindful of how they influence a learner. Their study on clinical nurses' experiences with their mentor suggests that students need to work with different staff because of their exposure to behaviours that they may emulate in their own practice. The role of a mentor is vital for a students' practice because they are seasoned practitioners but the value and emphasis of their experiences will be important as they guide and support the professional development of learners.

In another study involving students' views on their experiences in a clinical nursing program, the authors emphasize that negative incidents with mentors affect students' skills and abilities as they work through being motivated in their own professional career (Pearcey & Elliott, 2004). What practitioners learn is implicated by their engagement and interaction with the resources made available, including the diversity of mentors.

Studies on collective activity and culture in professional programs are explored less than those related to mentorship and practice in teaching and nursing; however, there is existing research that explains the relevance of community in educational approaches. For example, Pijl-Zieber and Kalischuck (2011) note that many professional nursing schools have used community settings for non-traditional placements of nurses on rotation as part of program requirements. Placements involve having nurses learn in sites like schools, shelters, correctional centers etc. Teaching programs have structured education for teachers in a similar way by assigning teacher candidates to community-based organizations where they teach and learn as part of their field placement (McDonald et al., 2011).

Pijl-Zieber and Kalischuck (2011) explain that integrating community into nursing programs has been beneficial to education as it allows nurses to learn among groups of people who are integral to the profession. Through community, nurses are educated about the context of their practice while making conceptual links to their program. Their PE is an opportunity to incorporate principles and elements such as social justice and determinants of health within the curriculum (Boutain, 2008; Reimer Kirkham et al., 2005). Such concepts might be essential to teach explicitly like standardized approaches to education would suggest, but using social interaction as a way to teach and learn (as emphasized in democratic citizenship education) helps practitioners draw links between theory and practice. With the literature that has been presented,

we can take into account the significance that collective and contextual learning has for approaches to education and practice.

Systemic Sustainability Education

The final moment is called *systemic sustainability education*, which is an evolution of the previous moments and moves beyond accepting that humans learn solely in a traditional or social sense. More recently, scholars viewed education as multiple layers of robust and complex systems. This approach incorporates ideas from ecology, sociology as well as psychology and describes education in terms of systems that are continuously interacting and evolving (Davis et al., 2015). Systemic sustainability education acknowledges the three moments previously mentioned but also brings in interobjectivity and complexity theories. With this approach, education is not just about individual and social construals but also about life processes, physiology and ecosystems that factor into how different phenomena have adapted and evolved (Davis et al., 2015). How we teach and learn is informed by the construals we make but also influenced by our surroundings, our environments, the physical space we occupy or the resources available. Systemic sustainability education relates to perspectives that consider the interconnected layers involved in understanding and dealing with learning and teaching. It is a newer and progressive approach to education that is being explored.

As such, few studies have accounted for the idea that learning is a systemic transformation (possibly at multiple levels) and a lifelong process. Still, there are some studies that enact systematic sustainability sensibilities, without explicitly endorsing it. For instance, researchers who have examined teacher education programs, specifically about physical education, advocate prioritizing meaningful approaches to teaching because of the implications associated with learners' experiences (Blankenship & Ayers, 2010; Kretchmar, 2008). Here,

“meaningful approaches” refers to how teachers plan for, experience, educate, enact and reflect on physical education—or, the complex layers involved with teaching and learning. According to a study that looked at educators’ reflections and non-participant observations, the authors concluded that using meaningful strategies to design lesson plans helped participants understand pedagogical principles and how they can promote valuable outcomes (Ní Chróinín et al., 2017). The guiding pedagogical principles represented an innovative way to support teachers as they responded to challenges with motivating students to be physically active. In other words, the PE program incorporated elements of systemic sustainability education in a way that was advantageous to the practitioners and the learning experiences they designed for their students.

As we expand our understanding of the different approaches to education, teaching and learning become more complex and interconnected. The four moments in formal education have moved from a simplistic concern about knowledge transfer and acquisition, to more authentic and diverse ideas of individual learning, to recognizing how education is entangled in social and cultural dynamics, and finally to understanding learning, teaching and education generally as enmeshed in multiple layers of complex systems (from the cellular and personal to the social, cultural and ecological).

As intended, the four moments described by Davis et al. (2015) give us a useful framework to compare a wide range of educational approaches. It also shows how what we do in one area of education will influence what happens in other areas. For example, if we think learning is about *acquisition*, *retention*, *construals*, *enculturation* or *embodiment*, then that will influence the sort of training we think is appropriate: *delivery*, *reinforcement*, *facilitation*, *inclusion* or *nurturing*. Ultimately, a review of the approaches to education as well as literature

in teaching and nursing has offered us lessons to consider before we examine police PE, which I explain in the next section.

Extending the Literature to Policing

Keeping in mind the approaches to formal education that Davis et al. (2015) have described and considering how they relate to practice, I argue that the literature above can further extend debates about PE and PP in a profession like policing. It is important to recognize that education itself and its relationship with practice can be viewed or framed in different ways. As I mentioned earlier, how people perceive objectives, content, and the delivery of a PE program will bring out different outcomes of the educational experience (Taylor & Hamdy, 2013). We can take what has been contributed to literature about teaching and nursing and relate it to policing. To acknowledge this means that we can explore the effectiveness of education while also seeking ways to improve practice. In light of my review of literature, I was interested in exploring the teaching and learning that is happening within the police profession and if such education influences the PP of police officers. In order to do that and provide context for readers, I dedicate the next area of discussion to an overview of the police profession in Canada. I also examine how lessons about approaches to education may apply to police education and practice.

Overview of Policing in Canada

Policing in Canada is governed at three levels—municipal, provincial, and federal. Most urban areas in Canada maintain a municipal police service while some rural areas rely on provincial or federal policing. In addition to municipal policing, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador are three provinces that also have police services at the provincial level. Provincial police services are mandated under provincial law and can patrol areas or support smaller police agencies. Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), for instance, has presence in

municipal areas to patrol highways or protect government buildings and personnel. The remaining seven provinces and three territories currently do not have provincial police service, but rely on services provided by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), which is a federal police agency (Wyatt & Bell, 2014). This means that across Canada, the police education that officers receive will differ and depend on their jurisdiction. In other words, training for officers who work in British Columbia is different from officers who work in Ontario, and differs even more so in areas with a municipal police service, like Ottawa Police Service (OPS). Recall that the focus of this study is on policing at one single municipal service and specifically at OPS, which is in Ontario. As such, the study will focus our attention on what is occurring within these parameters.

With the recent documented rise in use of force encounters (Bonner, 2018; Gordon, 2020; Gray & Parker, 2019), police services in Canada and worldwide have been the focus of public criticism. The number of police use of force encounters in Canada has doubled and there have been nearly 2,000 investigations in Ontario alone (Marcoux & Nicholson, 2018; Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2018). Within the last five years, news outlets have covered many instances of police officers in Ontario using or restraining their use of force.² As a result of concerning police-civilian encounters, formal independent reviews and reports on police services have recommended making improvements to police training, especially with respect to interacting with people facing mental health challenges (Iacobucci, 2014).

² These instances, among others, include: Constable Forcillo, who shot and tasered Sammy Yatim in a streetcar in Toronto (Kari, 2015); Constable Doyle, who fatally shot Andrew Loku in his Toronto residence (DiManno, 2017); Constable Weir and Constable Montsion, who were involved in the death of Abdirahman Abdi in Ottawa (Nease & Kupfer, 2016); Constable Lam, who drew a gun on Alek Minassian during his arrest in Toronto (Lofaro, 2018); and D'Andre Campbell who was tasered and fatally shot by police in his Brampton home (Nasser, 2020).

This issue of police UOF is not isolated to Canada. Officers in the United States use lethal force twelve times more often than officers in Australia, and seven times more often than officers in Canada (Hopper, 2018; Swaine et al., 2015). Examples of police-civilian encounters that involve significant harm or similar outcomes are intriguing, problematic, and at the same time, concerning for both police practitioners and the public (Andersen & Gustafsberg, 2016). It raises questions about the obligations of the police, the training that officers receive, and the justification officers have for using force, minimizing their use of it, or not using force at all (Worrall et al., 2018). The number of incidents and the issue of police UOF illustrate a long-standing yet timely and much-needed analysis on police training and practice (Alpert & Smith, 1999; Marin, 1997; Maynard, 2017).

While it should be noted that UOF issues, policies and regulations will vary over time and across police services or jurisdictions (e.g., the number of incidents compared to the number of UOF reports or the law enforcement agency itself), Bennell et al. (2021) unsurprisingly remind us of the urgency to address this issue and advance police UOF research with promising solutions. As such, I suggest improving police services by exploring the opinions of those who partake in the training and practice of policing itself. First, let us understand how education on and about police UOF is structured.

Police Education within Ottawa, Canada

Standards for Canadian policies on UOF within police services derive from the *Criminal Code of Canada* (Parent, 2011). Since policing spans across the three levels of government, how police officers are recruited and trained on UOF also varies across jurisdictions (Griffiths, 2016). That being said, there is no federal UOF training curriculum used in police services across the country, other than a national framework called Incident Management/Intervention Model

(IM/IM) used within the RCMP (2021). Since its inception, the goal of the framework has been to create a model that is easy to understand, representative of a nonlinear dynamic perspective and is consistent in language (Hoffman et al., 2004). While the model is another resource for understanding UOF, it is not something police services across the country are obligated to use. What is interesting to note is that the model and annual recertification training were recently updated in April 2021 to emphasize communication, crisis intervention, and de-escalation (RCMP, 2021). This was done following the death of George Floyd³ in the United States and with protests to defund the police⁴, which have been pivotal moments in policing and society. As one would expect, an examination of police UOF training has been very crucial. In terms of UOF training, individual provinces and municipal police services can establish their own pre-service or in-service training standards based on their facilities and policies or if it is necessary.

In the case of OPS, police candidates are hired and partake in basic constable training at the Ontario Police College (OPC), otherwise known as the police academy. Officers in municipal police agencies across Ontario also attend OPC to receive basic police education. Prior to attending OPC, Ottawa recruits go through initial training at OPS's Professional Development Centre (PDC), which is a rented space located in Algonquin College. The PDC also reports to the Human Resource Directorate within OPS's organizational structure. Courses taught at the PDC are only for OPS officers. According to the OPS (2020b) website, recruits hired as officers are educated at OPC for 13 weeks full time. Unless OPS deems it necessary, attending OPC is not

³ "The death of George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man, drew widespread outrage in May 2020 after a video circulated online showing officer Derek Chauvin holding his knee on Mr. Floyd's neck on a Minneapolis street corner as he gasped for breath" (The New York Times, 2021, p. 1).

⁴ Anti-black racism protests across the world ignited movements to defund the police. Use of the word "defund" has been symbolic of the desire to reallocate resources to non-policing forms of intervention. Alternative forms of intervention are viewed as a step forward to supporting communities. Sociology and criminology professor, Julius Haag, says that many Canadian cities have made little progress to address these calls or make substantial cuts to police funds (Neustaeter, 2021).

required for individuals who are hired through direct entry, which is a program that recruits and employs individuals because of their skills, qualifications and experiences. While at OPC, recruits learn about topics such as safety, policing philosophies, policies, operational standards, and pertinent skills (Arsenault & Hinton, 2014; Wyatt & Bell, 2014). After graduation, officers at OPC then return to their respective police service for further learning.

OPS (2020b) takes a holistic approach to teach officers a multifaceted and diverse number of techniques and procedures. For example, officers receive 40 hours of UOF training, which is organized and conducted by other former or active OPS officers. During this training, police are provided with a provincial UOF model and guideline designed to help law enforcers assess a situation and act appropriately while ensuring public and police safety. Their education also relies heavily on simulations and the work of knowledgeable officers. At OPS, UOF training includes de-escalation workshops and exercises with scenarios and live actors. Although separate from the UOF training that officers receive and part of OPS's training more generally, officers undergo 500 hours of on-the-job practical mentorship from a senior patrol and experienced frontline officer. This provides the police with opportunities to apply de-escalation techniques and follow procedures.

The final point about UOF training I would like to make is that every OPS officer is required to attend annual UOF training for recertification. It is also a requirement for all officers in other jurisdictions in Ontario. The UOF recertification training is also themed with de-escalation scenarios and simulations. "General incident management strategies [and] decision-making tools are taught to all officers so as to guide them in making logical, well-thought-out decisions" (OPS, 2020b). Recertification is part of in-service training and another key component to the research study.

Although not explicitly stated, police UOF training incorporates elements of all four of the various approaches to formal education described by Davis et al. (2015). In other words, the UOF training curriculum includes teaching methods like lectures and simulations, which promote the idea that learning is a matter of knowledge acquisition or conditioning—as seen with standardized education. The training also has elements that accord with authentic education, such as reflective activities where learning is understood in terms of construals. One can also find aspects of collaborative approaches, as articulated within democratic citizenship education, and transformative approaches that can be linked to systemic sustainability education. In order to bring us back to the relevance of all that has been discussed in the chapter so far, I dedicate the next section to discussing literature on how different UOF training strategies have been used by police agencies. I also link these strategies to the framework for educational approaches described earlier in the chapter.

Police Education and Practice

Standardized Education Approaches with Policing

It is presumed that instructional approaches to education that focus on lecturing police officers will enhance the learning outcomes of officers—especially if it deals with highly complex situations (Cerpa et al., 1996; Glasgow & Lepatski, 2012). On one hand, direct instruction can be an effective methodology for recruits (Vodde, 2009). Birzer (2003) contends that police training has been fairly behavioural and militaristic because officers have traditionally shown an ability to follow commands. For this reason, informative direction is seen as a benefit to learners.

Increasingly, standardized approaches have been problematic—not only for the training environment but for the general culture of policing. As pointed out in Lee et al.’s (2010) study on

police UOF and neighbourhood contextual factors, situation and social contexts—which are relevant for a democratic citizenship education—are important to consider in terms of the goals of UOF training. This is because context can contribute to the rationale or justification of officers’ decisions. We may also see the problem of standardized approaches with a study on American recruits’ opinions about their defence and tactical training (Kaminski & Martin, 2000). Officers noted an overall level of dissatisfaction with their training because they felt it was largely ineffective on the field. Participants also mentioned that their training did not adequately prepare them for encounters with physically resistive individuals (Kaminski & Martin, 2000). What we may learn about Lee et al.’s (2010) as well as Kaminski and Martin’s (2000) studies is that there are some aspects of PE that cannot simply be acquired through instruction.

In line with what was discussed earlier regarding standardized education, there is an implicit assumption that learners “take in” the information presented to them. By contrast, authentic education asserts that the learner may construct meaning that is completely different from what was initially intended. Training techniques that are effective with novice police officers can be ineffective for experienced officers and vice versa (Kalyuga et al., 2003; Paas et al., 2003). This is evident when learners demonstrate that they are not efficiently equipped to manage real police-civilian encounters (Kaminski & Martin, 2000).

Authentic Education Approaches with Policing

Recall that authentic approaches to education involve personalized learning, diverse developmental stages of the learner as well as realistic and relatable experiences. When teaching about realistic UOF instances through activities like role-playing or simulations, practicing behavioural responses and providing immediate feedback can be supported in a controlled environment (Helsen & Starkes, 1999). As explained by Bennell et al. (2007), simulations and

scenarios can be used to condition learning. Given that simulations attempt to showcase authentic events for the learner, their inclusion in UOF training allows police officers to unconsciously build a dossier of experiences that they can refer to during moments with decisions related to using force (Berlin, 2014; Davis et al., 2015). It exposes the learner to scenarios that can refine or revise his or her UOF decision-making (Bennell et al., 2007). Training that considers ways to make learning realistic and relatable for officers speaks to the goals highlighted during the emergence of authentic education.

At the same time, a study on Chicago Police Department's (CPD) training reminds us that the effect of simulations depends on what it aims to promote (Rosenbaum, et al., 2017). While the training was effective at creating more respectful behaviours, improving decision-making skills among officers and reducing their reliance on force, the authors note that it did little to change the officers' attitudes towards procedural justice or impact their communication skills, which was seemingly the focus of the course. Nevertheless, as a method of instilling basic competencies that can be generalized across a range of UOF scenarios, simulations are likely to be a helpful training strategy (Clark et al., 2006).

Democratic Citizenship Education Approaches with Policing

As explained in the earlier part of the chapter, democratic citizenship education is about interaction and collaboration. Similar to teaching and nursing, much of the research on the impact PE has on PP in policing has focused on mentorship. Therefore, I will highlight how mentorship in policing takes a democratic citizenship approach to education and the impact it has on PP.

It is suggested that mentorship can have a positive influence on the experiences of newer officers since they are advised by experienced individuals. We may see the impact of social

learning by looking at a police program that tried to address why recruits were unable to finish basic police training. A police department in Virginia, for instance, introduced a formal mentorship program to address this issue (Edmundson, 1999). According to an analysis of mentorship programs in police agencies, including the aforementioned, not only did the program help to improve basic training completion, it also enhanced police morale and employee retention (Swanson, 2004). These improvements were also linked to increased job satisfaction. By incorporating activities whereby officers are learning through a peer-supportive dynamic, it encouraged officers to have more connections with the profession.

It is also noted in policing research that the key to a successful mentorship program is the selection of the mentor and their ability to *pass* on their wisdom and expertise to newer officers (Bothell, 2005; Inzer & Crawford, 2005). From a standardized education perspective, language like “passing on wisdom” aligns with the idea that experienced officers have knowledge that they can share with new learners, but it also illustrates the impact of collective and collaborative learning of democratic education. If the trainer does not buy into the philosophies of the police agency (e.g., community policing), such philosophies are unlikely to be adopted by recruits (Ford, 2003). On-the-job learning from those who are part of the police culture can help shape the experiences of learners in a way that resonates. As such, compatibility between experienced and novice officers has since been discussed as an important aspect for an effective mentorship program (Hoel, 2019).

On the other hand, the influence of a mentor can be disadvantageous to the learners’ practice. For example, in the same study mentioned at the beginning of this section about mentorship in policing (Swanson, 2004), nearly half of the participants agreed or were undecided that their mentors contradicted learning that happened during their formal education. In this case,

not only can training influence practice because social factors allow the mentor to teach the trainee organizational policies, but the mentor can also counter what was formally taught as part of police curriculum. A contradiction between what educators explain and what learners experience in reality can have its own implications in terms of what the officer learns and applies in practice. Thus, by virtue of an experienced officer, and if their experiences are utilized carefully, the social and contextual implications of a PE program can affect what occurs in PP.

Systemic Sustainability Education Approaches with Policing

Presently, there is ongoing science and evidence-based research on other factors related to training that influence practice (Haberfeld et al., 2012; McKenna, 2018); however, few have looked at teaching and learning through the lens of systemic sustainability education. Recall that systemic sustainability approaches to education incorporate fields such as ecology and physiology to teaching and learning—not *instead of* but *in addition to* psychological, sociological and political factors. Andersen and Gustafsberg (2016) suggest that improving the current state of de-escalation skills and UOF encounters means analyzing police training at a level of how the brain and body work during real police-civilian interactions. In their study, a group of officers were examined by their ability to apply techniques during stressful critical incidents. Results revealed that officers displayed significantly better control, situational awareness, and made correct UOF decisions than other participants. Armstrong et al. (2014) has also explored how UOF training scenarios influence the physiological stress reactions for RCMP officers. Their study revealed that officers were showing heart rate patterns that were consistent with the physiological stress produced during real-world police encounters. This suggested to the authors that providing realistic training environments that replicate what an officer would expect to encounter in a real-life situation should be a primary objective for training. Doing so could

allow officers to focus less on their stressors and more on achieving successful encounters that are taught during training.

Research about the physiological and biological factors in police education has informed an intervention program called International Performance Resilience and Efficiency Program (iPREP), which was developed to enhance health and occupational effectiveness. After viewing the nervous system as a source to understanding how people react to stressful situations, Andersen and Poplawski (2020) argue that improving police performance, resilience and decision-making means a making a paradigm shift in police training and how humans learn. Although it is external to police services, iPREP is an internationally renowned program that provides training for officers. Techniques included within iPREP are being used by instructors to reduce officers' stress and allow for more positive learning experiences (Andersen & Poplawski, 2020). By managing students' stress levels during police training, officers have shown improvements in their performance. This demonstrates that education can impact practice when there are considerations of the internal and external factors that motivate police response. This is also an important aspect of systemic sustainability education because it accounts for the experiences of the learner that go beyond traditional teaching approaches. In other words, it considers the complex layers of education and incorporates them into the educational program. PE can acknowledge other layers of a learning process by addressing physiological reactions to stressful situations while also improving how police manage public encounters.

Considering the limited research described above, the current state of literature shows that there is a need to further explore the effects of PE on PP—especially with respect to Canadian policing. Despite the different strategies and approaches used to train law enforcement on UOF, a researcher such as myself is obliged to ask questions: Are officers learning? How are

they being taught? What meaning and connections are the police and educators making with their training? How might their understanding relate to an effect on practice? Might there be no effect at all? I aim to explore these types of questions and issues by looking specifically at the UOF training documents and the perspectives of police officers and educators. By doing so, my research has the potential to inform discussions on PE and PP in ways that have yet to be explored.

Chapter Summary

Through this chapter, I have provided an overview of existing literature relevant to PE and PP. I started by detailing how these terms, including professions, effect, influence and impact have been defined in literature in order to explain the scope of the study. This was followed by a presentation of a framework to understanding approaches to education literature. I chose to use Davis et al.'s (2015) categorization of moments in education to explain how teaching and learning have been described over time. I then made a connection between existing education literature and examples in the teaching and nursing professions. I subsequently returned the focus of the chapter to the police profession by contextualizing the issue within Canadian research. This made clear that research on police PE and its impact on PP is not as thorough as it is in some other professions, which necessitates the objectives of the present study. As such, I use the remainder of the thesis to further explore how UOF training is designed as well as how officers and educators view their PE in relation to their PP.

Chapter 3 – Research Problem, Focus and Questions

Current Research Problem

Although there is access to information about what officers receive in police education and how they are trained by police services (Cordner & Shain, 2011; Ford, 2003; Hope, 2017), few researchers have examined the impact that professional education (PE) (specifically, training on and about use of force [UOF]) has on professional practice (PP) from the point of view of police officers (Ball, 2018; Davies, 2017; Fyfe, 2002). Even fewer have addressed these issues as it applies to policing in Canada (Arsenault & Hinton, 2014; Musca, 2016; Wyatt & Bell, 2014). Considering that data on police UOF in Canada is scarce and it is difficult to capture trends across jurisdictions, exploring the issue of police UOF is crucially important (Wortley et al., 2021). This is especially true as research makes efforts to understand public perceptions of police accountability (Kwon & Wortley, 2020).

Police UOF, an aspect related to the present research, is a complex phenomenon. It cannot be generalized within policing because data about UOF may look and be addressed differently across law enforcement agencies and government policies. For example, evidence about UOF options such as oleoresin capsicum (OC) sprays or conducted energy weapons (CEWs) from research points out that less restrictive directives in policies result in less force used by officers (Ferdik et al., 2014; Thomas et al., 2010), whereas other research shows that having more restrictive guidelines on other options reduces the use of lethal force (Jennings & Rubado, 2017; White, 2001). Having more or less explicit policies about UOF depends on the types of issues that are faced by a police service. Ultimately, police services establish their own policies that are relevant to the service itself, which is why examining UOF is not easily generalizable (Laming, 2015). Interestingly, scholars who have examined UOF policies have

reported that they are inherently flawed, causing officers to “produce the quantity and severity of force that they currently do” (Obasogie & Newman, 2017, p. 292). Furthermore, some policies have been described as inconsistent, weak and do not offer sufficient guidance for officers (Garrett & Stoughton, 2017). That is, the issues around police UOF are evidently characterized as problematic because the problem stems from the policies. Contrasting conclusions in literature not only illustrate how much UOF is an issue, but also highlight that it is contentious and contextual.

Despite the pre-service and in-service training that law enforcers receive, it is arguable that officers are using force against individuals in discriminatory ways. People are noticeably being significantly harmed and injured during their encounters with the police. Such police-civilian dynamics will unequivocally influence people’s perceptions of the police—especially among racial minority groups (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Owusu-Bempah, 2021). As previously mentioned, there have been at least 460 fatal police encounters across Canada between the years 2000 and 2017, and nearly 2,000 police UOF investigations in Ontario—which is twice as many cases as there were 20 years ago (Marcoux & Nicholson, 2018; Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2018).

Within Ottawa Police Service (OPS) specifically, the number of documented UOF incidents has decreased between 2018 and 2019 (from 767 to 607) and the number of UOF reports has increased (from 529 to 609). In fact, OPS (2019) attributes this increase to different factors and the types of force used. For example, multiple reports may be filed if a single incident is responded to by multiple officers. This would suggest that there were fewer incidents than there were reports in a year. At the same time, a single report may be filed on behalf of all members involved in an incident. As such, the number of reports does not signify the number of

involved officers or the number of incidents in a given year. It would be interesting, however, to compare such statistics with the number of incidents to see if there is a correlation. For instance, I wonder whether officers use higher or lower levels together in groups or individually.

Another element to consider is that from 2018 to, in 2019, OPS saw an increase in the number of situations where firearms were drawn (a 28% increase) and pointed (a 2% increase) by officers. According to OPS (2019), 96% of the 48 reports documented in 2019 included dispatching animals. One incident involved two officers and the discharge of a firearm on a person⁵. These statistics and factors have, nevertheless, drawn attention to what occurs during police-civilian encounters. As a researcher, educator, and everyday citizen, I am left wondering how education may play a role in addressing this bigger societal issue.

While it is evident that the police are often found in situations where they can use force (Klahm & Tillyer, 2010) and although UOF training has evolved over the years to employ different teaching strategies (Wortley et al., 2021), it is unclear to what degree officers think about their training or how strongly their police education influences their practice. In other words, analysis of the effect PE has on PP in the police profession, especially in Canada, is incomplete. Lacking in literature is an understanding of how UOF training is conceptualized and approached in law enforcement agencies specific to Canada. There is also an absence in what police officers perceive, through their own words and observations, about their training and experiences. Furthermore, the current education and policing field have limited considerations for the perceptions of those who facilitate the PE of police officers, namely the UOF training

⁵ As noted on OPS's website, the Ontario Special Investigations Unit ([SIU], 2020) publically released their findings about this incident in 2020. SIU (2022) is a civilian oversight agency in Ontario that is mandated to investigate situations involving the police that have resulted in a death, serious injury, sexual assault allegations or the discharge of a firearm on a person. Another civilian oversight in Ontario is the Office of the Independent Police Review Director (OIPRD, 2022).

instructors. The teaching strategies that they employ during training also have implications for how officers understand and apply their learning. It is through the points of view of law enforcers that we may reflect on Canadian experiences and better comprehend why officers make certain decisions. As such, my study focuses specifically on how individual police officers and educators employed at OPS have construed, interpreted and otherwise internalized education and practices related to UOF. Drawing attention to police officers and educators' perceptions brings focus on the influence that PE has on PP in policing while also striving to enhance police services.

Research Focus

Since police services and standards vary across jurisdictions in Canada, the research focuses specifically on policing in Ottawa, Ontario. Although the police service encourages officers to use minimal force or effective de-escalation techniques when responding to calls, OPS (2020b) has been working on strategies to improve officers' communication approach and their quality of service. With this and a more practical outcome in mind, the present research project intends to support objectives that would be valuable for OPS officers and how they service the community. That being said, I strictly focus on the UOF training that is conducted at OPS. In doing so, the project explores how law enforcers view their training and experiences, while also adding a Canadian context to education and police literature. As a researcher, I take the position that officers have relevant insight and experiences related to police education and practices. I think the value of their perspectives and experiences has a lot to do with their role and frequent interaction with civilians.

In addition, I am a researcher who specializes in education and has a limited background in law enforcement. Those who operate externally from policing are not privy to the knowledge

and expertise that are offered to members who work within the police profession. To better understand the impact PE has on PP and contribute to the current debate in education, this project aims to learn from the training that is provided to officers as well as the experiences and beliefs of those who are at the forefront of policing—namely, police officers and educators themselves. In light of existing research related to education as well as the opinions expressed by the participants, the goal of the present study is to encourage the public, policy-makers and educators specifically to reflect on factors that have implications for education and how such aspects are enacted in practice. With an educational lens, my intentions are to offer scholarly input to the field of education while drawing attention to contexts that have yet to be explored and that cause education to be transformative.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following four questions:

1. How is use of force training conceived and approached in Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) official curriculum for patrol officers?
2. How is use of force defined by police officers and educators at OPS?
3. What are police officers' and educators' experiences of and perspectives on use of force (pre-service and/or in-service) training?
4. How do officers and educators relate such professional education to their experiences during on-the-job encounters with civilians, particularly in instances where such officers use or do not use force?

These questions will be explored using constructivism and social constructivism, which are two theoretical frameworks that shape the analysis of the data gathered. I explain these concepts in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 – Theoretical Framework

Chapter Overview

Creswell and Poth (2018) remind us that in research, we are always bringing certain beliefs and philosophical assumptions to our study. Often, our assumptions are what inform our choices and theories throughout the process. It is therefore important to be aware of our beliefs and decide to what extent such understandings will be incorporated into our research. This includes how we know reality, what we value, and the procedures we take or apply. Philosophical assumptions that have stimulated my thinking and interpretive frameworks that resonate with my beliefs can be found within multiple paradigms but are strongest within (radical) constructivism and social constructivism. In what follows, I describe these interpretive frameworks, my philosophical assumptions and the beliefs that shape the overall process of my research.

Constructivism and Radical Constructivism

First, constructivism explains how people experience and interpret the world (Barab & Duffy, 2012; Fosnot & Perry, 2005). We individually create meaning through what we experience and call this knowledge (Proulx, 2006). Jean Piaget (1954) is recognized as a principle theorist as it concerns constructivism. He argued that learning involves making ongoing efforts to revise one's understanding of the world (Beilin, 1992). Contrary to the way that realists and rationalists understand knowledge (Hamilton, 2002), constructivists do not refer to something in the world for people to discover and store in their mind. Instead, constructivism highlights that knowledge—or better yet, knowing, since it is an embodied process, not a thing—is construed based on learners' experiences and always subjective.

Radical constructivism is an interpretation of constructivism articulated by Ernst von Glasersfeld (1990), who coined the term. Like Piaget (1954), von Glasersfeld (1990) argues that knowledge should be considered in terms of viability. That is, in terms of how an individual continuously evolves and adapts in relation to his or her environment. von Glasersfeld also takes the position that what individuals know is rooted in their experiences and how those moments are interpreted (Schwandt, 2003). Radical constructivism emphasizes that human knowing does not and need not correspond to an objective reality that is uniform for all individuals. Rather, the job of knowing is to help individuals cope with their, often very diverse, experiences. For this reason, learning and knowing are understood as dependent on the individual (Gordon, 2009; Nola, 2003). We do not have a mirror image of ideas or things that are consistent between people because we are constantly in this process of action and interpretation of experiences. What is more important for radical constructivists, like von Glasersfeld, is how people can have similar experiences and different interpretations (Davis et al., 2007).

In terms of the present study, I started speculating that while Canadian police officers are presented with similar content, and use of force (UOF) educators facilitate common learning outcomes through training, their personal experiences and subjective construals have generated individual internal compasses and *knowings* that guide them through the difficult choices they each face. These choices involve using strategies and tactics that shape their decisions during encounters with civilians. Thus, I applied constructivism and radical constructivism as an orienting lens for my research to explain and justify why the perspectives of police officers may offer unique and differing insights (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In turn, this shaped one of the goals of my research, which is to learn from how officers rationalize their decisions in light of the training that they have (Bogden & Biklen, 2007). Similar to other researchers who have used

these theories as theoretical frameworks (Lalor et al., 2015; Molesworth, 2017; Sayer, 2014), constructivism and radical constructivism allowed me to rely on the perspectives articulated by participants and acknowledge their values. Their layered perceptions were beneficial to understanding police education and experiences.

Social Constructivism

Branching from constructivism is social constructivism—which examines the meaning developed jointly by individuals through contact, interactions, and contexts (Phillips, 1995; Thayer-Bacon, 1999). For Lev Vygotsky (1978) what people understand about their experiences generally has a social origin. That is, human thinking occurs first at the social level and then within the individual. In other words, people develop collective knowledge and practices by interacting with one another and their environment. Individuals then internalize this knowledge and practice—in effect, constructing their individual knowledge based on the social processes they participate in (Hibberd, 2005). We co-create meaning and interpret our experiences through language, gestures, and symbols (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010; Roth, 2000). Thus, social constructivism asserts that learning and knowing develop through social activity and internalization because concepts and worldviews are created by individuals in groups (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Lee, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978).

I am more intrigued with meaning that is experienced at the individual level as opposed to the social level; however, I cannot ignore the influence that social activity has in shaping what a person understands of the world. While I am interested in what is construed by individuals within a particular community—namely, officers and educators in the police profession, I am mindful of the role that the internalization of social norms and practices, like UOF training, can play in an individual's experiences and knowledge construction. Exposure to an officer's

understanding of events, moments, or encounters requires exploring their social contexts and activities (Farnsworth et al., 2016). Such aspects would include their education and how they are educated. The police, as is the case with every individual, are shaped by their social context—whether they interpret it this way or not. Although I do not “share membership” with officers in policing (Miller & Glassner, 2004, p. 128), as a researcher external from policing, learning from individuals who are more central to the profession has helped me understand the culture, codes, and customs of law enforcement. This was especially true as I reviewed the OPS’s UOF training materials. By centering on participants’ perspectives, my goal was to understand rather than challenge officers’ experiences and culture (Bogden & Biklen, 2007; Charmaz, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Moustakas, 1994; Wolcott, 2008). I relied as much as possible on my participants’ views, which operate and have been socially negotiated or recontextualized in their life (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Guile, 2014).

While I am aware of the philosophical assumptions that I bring to my research and acknowledge how they shape my study, the next important element to research is determining the procedure to apply and conduct the study. In the chapter that follows, I explain the research design that I used.

Chapter 5 – Research Design

Chapter Overview

In order to determine the most appropriate methodology to use for this study, I turned to the work of Creswell and Poth (2018), who guide researchers through making such a decision. Their book, *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*, was useful for reflecting on different foundational theories and ethical considerations for my research. This chapter presents the qualitative approach that I took to conduct the study. It involves establishing my research as a case study, explaining how I collected and reviewed Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) use of force (UOF) training documents, how participants were contacted, as well as the questions that I asked to gather officers' and educators' perspectives. I also go into detail about the extent to which I used Braun and Clarke's (2006; 2013; 2021) six-step approach to analyzing the data that I collected.

Qualitative Instrumental Case Study

To conduct my study, I used a qualitative instrumental case study (QICS) research design, which is a type of approach that provides insight into a wider issue. A case study is an empirical inquiry into a phenomenon (such as a person, program, group, event, or organization) with real life contexts and boundaries (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2014). I would like to remind readers that although part of the basic constable police training requires that municipal officers learn about UOF at the Ontario Police College (OPC), I focused specifically on what is occurring at OPS. In other words, I collected data solely from one single municipal police service, which is not meant to be representative of the experiences and contexts to policing across Canada. Instead, I focused on the specific yet complex phenomenon of UOF

education and how it is used at OPS. Understanding the uniqueness of a specific phenomenon or issue is an important feature of QICSs (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Stake, 1995).

Structuring research as a case study is arguably the best way to investigate an issue, problem or concern (Taylor et al., 2016). While using theoretical frameworks like constructivism and social constructivism, I looked at the relationship between professional education (PE) and professional practice (PP) by examining UOF education and exploring the experiences of police officers as they recalled them. The boundaries of the research are particular to the education, experience and opinions of current and recently retired OPS officers and educators who facilitate UOF training. Hence, QICS enabled me to explore the impact PE has on PP while gaining an understanding of how it is applied and addressed in policing (Hancock & Algozzine, 2011; Merriam, 1998).

Burnett and Akerson's (2019) study offers a useful example of QICS. It examines a phenomenon experienced by a group of people. In particular, their study explored health care practitioners' reflections on a simulation that exposed them to difficulties associated with poverty, which many of their patients experienced. Burnett and Akerson (2019) discuss choosing QICS as a method that allowed them to investigate an *experience* and analyze written reflection. In another study, the author also uses QICS to explore rural middle school teachers' "intimate thoughts and feelings" about inclusion and differentiated instruction (Benjamin, 2020, p. 32). Rather than gathering numerical data about the lives of the participants outside of the classroom—like a quantitative study would (Yin, 2014)—Benjamin (2020) focused on understanding the teachers' beliefs, values and interpretations. Goldschmidt et al. (2019) also use QICS to provide insight and understandings with respect to the meaning that individuals make of their experiences. Their research explored the perspectives of individuals who were raised

through kinship care during their adolescence—an experience linked to issues such as socio-economic status, well-being and development. Using QICS, the study discusses systemic challenges and implications as a way to contribute to research and policy reform.

Similar to the aforementioned examples, I used QICS to analyze UOF training materials and ask participants about their experiences. I also used QICS to examine their perspectives and understand how PE influences PP within policing. While familiarizing myself with this research design, it became apparent that I needed to develop processes to execute the extensive data collection and drawing of multiple data sources. As advised by scholars who are familiar with case studies (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2014), I used document analysis—which I describe in a later section—in order to individually and systematically examine content and develop themes that were based on the training documents and interviews that I gathered (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The next section discusses the practical components of the research methodology.

Locale

It is important to note that my research focuses on UOF training for officers and educators employed only at OPS. This location was pragmatically chosen for the study as it was feasible to visit the Professional Development Centre (PDC) and retrieve UOF training materials. As mentioned in the literature review, the PDC is a unit within OPS and a rented space within Algonquin College (also located in Ottawa). The PDC is where officers are trained throughout the year. To put into context, OPS (2020a) serves the City of Ottawa and has as a total of 2,096 members. Of that total, 96 individuals were hired in 2020. According to the 2020 annual report, OPS saw its largest class of recruits, having hired 48 recruits in April 2020 and 48 recruits in December 2020.

It is advantageous for the present study that this police service is located within one jurisdiction because it encouraged officers to discuss what was relevant and applicable to a single municipal and provincial mandate (i.e., Ottawa and Ontario). Although specific to one particular city, I do acknowledge that there are other municipal jurisdictions with similar contexts. For instance, regulations that govern the hiring criteria and professional training standards within this police agency are consistent with neighbouring police services and ones with a similar size, like Peel Regional Police (PRP), Toronto Police Service (TPS), and York Regional Police (YRP) however, these police services will have their own policies and organizational needs. Nevertheless, police agencies like PRP, TPS, YRP and others alike can refer to the findings of this study to consider how their service also addresses the issue of PE and PP.

UOF Training Materials

Selection of UOF Training Materials

Recall that my study involves an analysis of UOF training documents. As described in literature about document analysis, it is valuable to collect data starting with publicly available sources at an early stage of the research (O'Connor, 2019). That being said, I used terms such as “use of force,” “training,” and “Ottawa Police Service” to collect online information related to OPS within the last 10 years (which was from 2010 to 2020 at the time). This supplemented my understanding of the historical circumstances leading to present-day UOF training.

In order to know what UOF training materials existed at OPS, I needed to submit a research application to the Service’s Office of the Chief Directorate. I detailed the objectives of my study and the data that I was hoping to obtain. My application went through an internal

review and was approved by the former Chief of OPS—Chief Peter Sloly⁶. This later resulted in a research agreement between OPS and me. While my research proposal indicated that I wanted to examine training materials from the years 2000 to 2020, the committee members who reviewed my application advised that I reduce my window of reference to the last 10 years as it was unlikely that the liaison officer assigned to my project would find material dating so far back. As a result, I agreed to review the UOF training materials that OPS could provide.

I was put into contact with a liaison officer assigned to my file and scheduled a meeting at the Professional Development Centre (PDC). During our meeting, I was given a walk-through of the training site and received an orientation on the materials that the Service had available to me. Such materials included PowerPoint (PPT) presentations, lesson plans, videos, and policies that were related to the UOF content covered in the Service's curriculum. After the liaison officer and I discussed the purpose of my study and the documents I was interested in, we decided it would be practical to examine three sets of UOF training documents. In other words, I looked at training that officers presently undergo and ones that educators have facilitated between 2010 and 2021. As such, I received and examined select training documents (i.e., material from 2010, 2015 and 2021) for specific reasons. For now, and in the sections below, I go into detail about the data that I collected. Readers should note that the level of detail provided is not intended to be analyzed; however, it is merely meant to provide context. I give a more fulsome report of the UOF training materials and interviews in the analysis chapter that follows.

⁶ On February 15, 2022, former Chief of Police, Peter Sloly, announced his resignation from OPS. His resignation occurred during a convoy occupation in the downtown area of Ottawa. The convoy was in protest of the mandates revolving around the COVID-19 pandemic (Dhanraj, Hoff and Zimonjic, 2022).

Recruit Training

2010 Recruit Training

There were three types of documents that I received: the UOF PPT presentation, lesson plans, and the outline for scenarios. The UOF PPT slides covered topics such as rules and conditions, UOF authorities, policy, factors that may affect officers' decisions, as well as human responses to stress and its effect on memory. There were also a number of different lesson plans, covering topics like drills, defensive tactics (which means handcuffing and using a baton), and a simulation lab safety brief. Within the lesson plans, there are details about the learning objectives, instructional methods that the educators were to use, and descriptions of what learners should be doing during the lesson (i.e., listening, observing or practicing). Lastly, I had access to different types of documents related to scenarios. The material would describe the scenario briefing, the set-up, a subject's actions and possible outcomes. Scenarios could take one of three forms:

- Open, which means an instructor would introduce the scenario, allow it to unfold with the role players, and the officer would use their judgment to decide what needs to be done;
- Closed, where the instructors demonstrate exactly what officers have to do and the officers would be expected to respond to the scenario in the same way; or,
- Flash, which are short decision-making scenarios that test the officers' skills and allow instructors to see that officers can demonstrate exactly what is expected.

2015 Recruit Training

The UOF training material for 2015 also had PPT presentations, lesson plans and scenarios. The documents incorporated lectures, demonstrations, videos, questions for discussion, warm-ups, and drills. In 2015, OPS had a PPT presentation on communication and

de-escalation as part of the UOF training. The content focused on tools and common strategies for crisis intervention.

Requalification Training

2021 Requalification Training

To put it into context, all officers go through requalification training once every 12 months. The training that recruits receive in one year will closely align with the requalification material that experienced officers receive within that same year. Put differently, the material should not be significantly different because recruits and experienced officers will be expected to know the same information (perhaps not as thoroughly as recruits because recruits are being certified whereas experienced officers are merely being re-certified).

In terms of the 2010 requalification training documents that I received from OPS, the training materials were mixed among the files targeted towards recruits. In other words, the 2010 UOF training folder had files with titles such as “2010 DT [Defensive Tactics] Lesson Plan,” which framed content as though it were to be taught to recruits; however, the title *within* the document would say “2010 DT Use of Force Requalification,” suggesting that the content covered was used or repurposed for officers completing their requalification. This was not always the case because there were files that clearly indicated which lesson plans were intentionally meant for recruits. For instance, there was a “DT Post OPC Lesson Plan” document, which recruits would complete upon their return from the police academy. The reason why I mention that the recruit and requalification training are closely aligned is because this is truly the case. In other words, what a novice officer received in training in 2010 seemed to be repurposed for an experienced officer receiving their 2010 *re*qualification training—the only difference being the indicators that specified introducing material to the learner as though it were

for the first time. What was problematic in my review of the documentation was distinguishing between recruit and requalification training. The two were not separated by different files—despite the similarities in training content. That being said, the difference between the title of the file and the actual content within the document is, I think, more of an issue of the naming convention. However, it did reveal that there were a limited number of documents strictly meant for 2010 requalification training.

Since there were not many 2010 requalification materials to review, I focused on the 2021 training material, which was more clearly outlined and also included PPT documents, lesson plans and scenarios. According to the OPS liaison officer, the UOF training is broken down into three components and in sequential order:

- Defensive tactics, which covers batons, handcuffs, OC spray, and physical skills;
- Judgment, which incorporated the scenarios; and,
- Firearms, which would take place at the shooting range.

At the end of 2019, there was a global pandemic called COVID-19, which affected many people and services. Public health measures were put in place to ensure physical distancing between people. In 2021, health guidelines and restrictions were still in effect. Given that the UOF training had many physical components, the Professional Development Centre (PDC) worked to revise the training material. Prior to the pandemic, requalification training at OPS was two days. It has since been condensed into one day to respect health safety protocols. The 2021 training still included three components: PPT presentations on policy, administration and de-escalation—all of which I reviewed. I also had access to lesson plans covering the same subjects from years prior and documents on scenarios.

I reviewed the 2010 recruit and requalification training because it was the earliest possible training that I could access and compare against recent documents. In light of the selection criteria

of my participants (i.e., having a minimum of five number of years of service at OPS), I also looked at the 2015 recruit training. I thought it would be beneficial to look at training materials specific to the year that participants were likely to reference during our interview.

Given the questions that I intended to ask participants during our interview (see [appendix D](#) for my interview questions), I did not look at the 2015 requalification training because I did not expect officers to remember the content that was covered and used to recertify them during that year. I thought it would be easier for those hired in 2015 to recall their initial training as opposed to officers who would have had more than just one requalification training since 2015. My objective was to examine what participants could recall of their UOF requalification training to date, rather than test the officers' memory of in-service training that would have been so long ago. Thus, it was not relevant to explore the 2015 requalification training for the study.

Finally, I assessed the 2021 requalification training since it was the most recent education that all officers would have in order to recertify their UOF options. The liaison officer explained that scenarios within the training were the only significant differences between the years of training that I requested. The various scenarios would often reflect the common trends in policing within a given year. With such minimal differences between the training materials, the OPS liaison officer assured me that there was no need to review documents for each year between 2010 and 2020. For this reason, I did not request to see other documents. It should be noted that conversations that occurred between the OPS liaison and I are not intended to be used as data but to provide me, as the researcher, an understanding of the Service's UOF training.

Document Analysis

Using document analysis as a research method involves reading and interpreting patterns in data. By definition, it is the detailed examination of texts, such as newspapers, policies,

artifacts, and visual images (Wharton, 2006). It is also commonly referred to as content analysis and sometimes described as (reflexive) thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Document analysis is the process of locating and analyzing facts or trends in already existing documents (Pershing, 2002). In a recent publication, Braun and Clarke (2021) remind researchers that a lot of analysis is essentially thematic analysis and there is not a singular approach to it in research. Thematic analysis is “a cluster of sometimes conflicting approaches, divergent both in procedure and underlying philosophy” (p. 6). Braun and Clarke (2021) suggest that while (reflexive) thematic analysis is widely used in qualitative research, there is no clear agreement about how it is to be used. Nevertheless, the authors offer one strategy for researchers as they try to be organized during what can be a rigorous process.

Below is an illustration that summarizes Braun and Clarke’s (2021) six-step approach to (reflexive) thematic analysis:

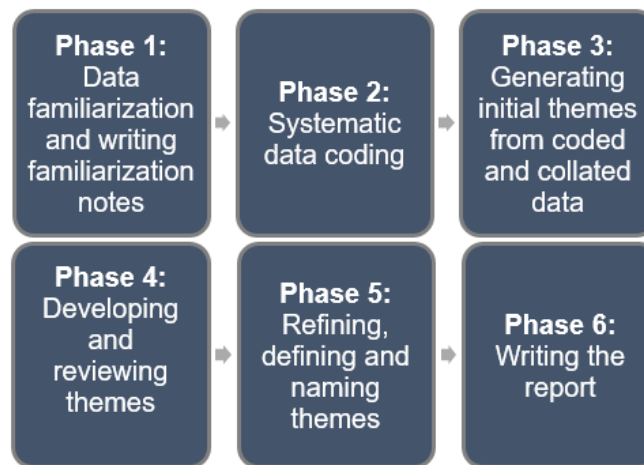


Figure 2: Above is an illustration intended to represent Braun and Clarke’s (2021) approach to (reflexive) thematic analysis.

Given the versatility of (reflexive) thematic analysis and Braun and Clarke’s (2021) model, I decided to use elements of their guideline in my study and refer to my process as document analysis. I added document analysis to my research method so that I could gather and examine

accessible information on OPS's UOF curriculum and related policies. This additional element to my research helps to contextualize the historical circumstances and conceptualization of UOF training. In the section that follows, I explain my process for analyzing the UOF training materials. I do the same in a later section when I talk about the steps that I took to analyze the participant interviews. For now, I will begin with my analysis of the training materials.

Analysis of Training Materials

A document analysis was a significant and lengthy part of my research. I conducted my analysis by primarily taking notes on the UOF training documents that I was provided from OPS. While I did receive an overview of the training materials, I took the time to examine each of the training documents on my own and noted important aspects in a journal. This meant going through the PPT slides and speaking notes, watching embedded videos, reading the lesson plans as well as policy, and instructions for educators so that they could prepare scenarios in the simulation lab. Since many of the UOF topics were consistent across the three sets of training materials, I made sure to review the same topic for each year, one after the other, as opposed to reviewing all of material in one year before proceeding to the next. For instance, when I looked at the lesson plan on handcuffing, I first looked at the 2010 version, then the 2015 version and finally the 2021 version. This allowed me capture the similarities and differences between the lesson plans, which I also noted in my journal.

As I worked to get a fulsome understanding of police PE (UOF training in particular), I looked to see if and how such education evolved over time and which events or policies contributed to such change. As part of my study, I captured how UOF training at OPS adhered to and differed from the learning strategies described in the literature review chapter. When there were elements in the training that related to one or all of the historical moments to education

described by Davis et al. (2015), I jotted a brief description in my journal. When I reviewed all of the training material, I did a scan of my descriptions and grouped similarly expressed ideas. When the descriptions were at stage where I could share them (and relevant examples) with my thesis supervisor, we worked together to reframe my descriptions into more thought-provoking and enticing themes. The resulting themes are presented in the analysis chapter of the paper.

Assessing the UOF training documents adds a layer to my analysis as I examined the theories that were implemented (explicitly and not) and how such strategies were actually carried out in practice. It was important for me to be knowledgeable about this contextual information because it offered opportunities to make connections when participants talked about their police education and experiences. It also proved to be useful as I explained how policing is organized in Canada within the literature review chapter. In addition, exploring how UOF training is approached in OPS's official curriculum addresses the first research question posed in my study.

Doing a document analysis prior to gathering insights from participants also informed discussions that I had with OPS. What was discovered through my document analysis partially structured my conversations with officers and educators as I learned about what was included in their pre-service and in-service training. As I explored the circumstances that led up to contemporary learning and training materials, I was a better and informed researcher during the interviews that I conducted. Reference to my process to analyzing the interviews appears in the analysis of interviews section of this chapter.

Interviews with Officers and Educators

Recruitment of Participants

In terms of gathering perspectives from officers and educators, I needed to identify participants who would fit a particular criterion. To recruit police officers and educators, I started

by making contact with my existing network. I then increased my connections and shared the objectives of the study through word of mouth. A researcher starting from his or her connections is a practical and pragmatic strategy used to collect a range of relevant cases for qualitative research (Taylor et al., 2016). My experiences working as an intern in a program called the *Youth in Policing Initiative* (YIPI) allowed me to connect with officers from different services in Ontario and gather some, albeit limited, awareness of the policing culture. Many of my former colleagues and other officers whom I met along the way were informed about my research and expressed an interest in the goals of the study. I returned to these officers for an opportunity to share my research project and expand my network. This played a key role in connecting me with additional resources.

As I narrowed my research focus, I decided to look into policing in Ottawa. Like other studies that have examined officers' perspectives (Davies, 2017; Donoghue, 2015; Lee et al., 2010), I recruited and collected data by being in direct contact with OPS (see [appendix A](#) for a copy of my recruitment poster and [appendix B](#) for my letter of information). I did so by submitting the formal research application mentioned in the previous section. As part of the terms and conditions of my research, I agreed to connect with an internal liaison officer as my primary point of contact and reduce my interview time from 75 minutes to 30-45 minutes maximum. These terms and conditions allowed me to continue the study with OPS.

Once I was ready to interview participants, the liaison officer sent an email to police officers and UOF instructors who met the participant criteria for the study. Included in the email was an attached copy of the recruitment poster and letter of information. Officers were informed to contact me directly in order to maintain confidentiality. With the list of active and retired officers that OPS contacted, I collected insights from 12 individuals (nine OPS patrol officers

and three UOF instructors from PDC—one of whom was retired) to achieve a sufficient sample size. A description of their demographics is provided in the next sub-section.

Participants

I also considered the purposeful selection of participants. According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), purposeful sampling involves selecting individuals who have information-rich insights related to the objectives of the study. Purposeful sampling also allows for a greater understanding of a phenomenon. The present study required the careful selection of 12 participants—nine of whom are serving officers with at least five years of experience as a patrol officer, as defined in the *Police Service Act* (1990), and three educators who currently lead or formerly led UOF training for OPS officers in the last five years. Although there is no specific number of participants required for a case study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), it is suggested that the researcher stops collecting data when ideas or experiences are saturated or redundant (Charmaz, 2014; Woolsey, 1986). Given the research agreement established between OPS and me, the officers and educators—at least those identified by the service—were chosen to provide a diverse representation of experiences. Efforts were made to ensure that there was a mixed set of qualities and attributes, such as gender, ethnicity, and years of service within the sample pool. At the same time, participation in the study was on a “first-come, first-served” basis.

Being an active or recently retired police officer was required for the study in order to increase the likelihood that participants could draw from contemporary police education and experiences that they encountered. Such criteria made their viewpoint even more relevant. I presumed that having at least five years of experience was a sufficient amount of time for the participant to have training and reflect on their interactions with the public. In addition, I thought it was important that participants were able to recall education on or about UOF that they

received or facilitated through policing at OPS. Being able to recount situations where the officer used or did not use force was also a pertinent screening factor for the study. These aspects were outlined in the letter of consent, which was provided to the participants (see [appendix C](#) for the letter of consent).

I individually interviewed nine officers and three educators via MS Teams. I asked them a series of questions, which can be found under [appendix D](#) of the thesis. Our interviews were semi-structured and covered topics such as the participant's demographics, UOF education, and their perspectives on their police-civilian encounters.

Four of the officers I interviewed identified as female, while the remaining five identified as male. In addition, seven of the officers described themselves as White, while the remaining two identified themselves, respectively, as having a Korean and Armenian background. Among the officers, I spoke with, there was one Inspector, one Sergeant, and six Constables. The oldest officer I interviewed was 55 years old and the youngest was 27. Most of the officers had over five years of service, whereas others had more than 20 years.

With respect to the educators, I interviewed two male and one female participants—all of whom identified as White. Furthermore, each of the educators held a different rank. The oldest educator I interviewed was 57 years old, whereas the youngest was 43 years old. Similar to the officers, the educators ranged in their number of years of service, with one participant having experience from a different police service, prior to joining OPS.

Interview Data Collection

In accordance with qualitative research approaches, I chose to hold open-ended, semi-structured individual interviews with each participant because it is a typical and suitable approach to data collection for case studies (Charmaz, 2014; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The

online interviews required the participants to use their own language conventions while discussing their background, experiences, and opinions. I shared the interview questions with the participants prior to our interview to give them enough time to reflect on their experiences and openly discuss their opinions about PE and PP (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Moustakas, 1994). What the participants verbally communicated and expressed during the interview was documented through audio recordings and later transcribed verbatim. The transcripts assisted with my data analysis.

In order to remain focused on the perspectives of the participants, I chose not to define UOF in my research question because it was important for the officers to explain their understanding for themselves. It is also a term that I looked for through my analysis of the training material. Wording used by participants helped to create context for their thinking and allowed me to ask follow-up questions about how they internalized such meaning.

To gather insights from participants, I needed an approach that would help me ask them to describe specific aspects of their PE and instances where they used or did not use force. *Critical Incident Technique* (CIT) is a type of interviewing approach that helps draw out such explicit examples from participants. It encourages responders to tell their perspectives and choose experiences that are important to them. CIT, as described by John Flanagan (1954), is used to collect comprehensive and detailed descriptions of content from respondents. According to authors who have reviewed Flanagan's work, a critical incident refers to any significant and observable human activity where inferences and predictions can be made (Bitner et al., 1990; Gremler, 2004). It aims to capture portraits of people's real-world examples and experiences (Kain, 2004). Given that CIT relies on observations or self-reports of observable behaviours

(Butterfield et al., 2005), I applied this technique to explore the beliefs that participants shared through our interview (Angelides, 2001; Bott & Tourish, 2016).

While there is a specific process to using Flanagan's (1954) interviewing technique, I used CIT in a modified way so as to draw out participants' opinions through open-ended questions. I used a modified version because the technique requires following five major steps for research, which I did not need to be as rigid for the study. Below is an illustration of the process involved with Flanagan's (1954) CIT according to Schluter et al. (2007):



Figure 3. Above is an illustration of Flanagan's (1954) five-step process to CIT as described by Schluter et al. (2007).

The original purpose of CIT has been to uncover major problem areas that reside within a system. As explained by Schluter et al. (2007), CIT can be modified for specific settings and research questions. The value of using CIT relies on gaining three important pieces of information: the participants' descriptions of an event; the specific actions of the person involved; and the outcome of the event so as to ascertain the effectiveness of the behaviour.

The first step is to identify the aim of the study and the research questions, which I did. The next step is to identify the types of incidents or events that would be collected. In order to gather specific and accurate accounts of behaviours, Flanagan (1954) recommends that such

events are ones that can be measured by effectiveness. In terms of my study, I did not predefine specific events to solely gather accounts of behaviours, nor did I distinguish these incidents by effectiveness. I left this component open-ended for the participants and allowed them to talk about situations that were most important. In accordance with my constructivist theoretical lens, I wanted to ensure that I was exploring my inquiry into PE and PP through interaction with my participants. Instead, what I did was direct the discussion by asking the participants questions that would cause them to reflect on incidents where they used or did not use force.

The third step, which can be done in a number of different ways, relates to the data collection. Whether done through direct observations, open-ended questionnaires, or in-person interviews, the objective is to collect data. In terms of the present study, I chose to do individual interviews, which Perry (1997) argues is a reflective practice that allows for discussion. As alluded to, my main use of CIT was to guide the interview and direct participants to talk about events related to UOF. I only incorporated certain aspects of CIT in my interview protocol. For instance, I did not direct my participants to observe their behaviour during a certain event (i.e. using or not using force), which is typically done before an event occurs. The data collected is based on reflection and derives from our discussion during the interview. Rather than asking participants to observe details prior to an activity or provide them with specific objectives to observe in their learning and decisions (i.e., their education and their practice), I asked participants about their thoughts during our interview and to verbally share their opinions with me. The fourth step involves analysis of the data, which can have various levels of interpretation. My analysis is something that I describe in the next section. Finally, the fifth step is to discuss and report the results of the study (Byrne, 2001), which I have done through the compilation of this thesis. One notable aspect about this final step is that the incidents are supposed to be

unrecognizable (Schluter et al., 2007). To some extent, I have done this by maintaining the confidentiality and anonymity of my participants, however, I am transparent in terms of acknowledging that the study is specific to the context of OPS. By virtue of working with this particular police service, my goal is to disseminate findings that would be relevant and meaningful to OPS.

Although I was selective in my incorporation of Flanagan's (1954) process, where I stayed true to the principles of CIT was in my questions, which aimed to elicit critical incidents and, which helped to ensure that participants were specific about their PE and their decisions using and not using force (Butterfield et al., 2005; Rous & McCormack, 2006 as cited in Schluter et al., 2007). Given the process of using the technique itself, I followed Flanagan's (1954) depiction of CIT by becoming familiar with the aims and objectives of UOF training before proceeding with the interviews. I also specified the types of experiences I was exploring—namely, situations involving civilians and where the participant used or did not use force. I identified these aspects in the study, recruitment process, and participant criteria. I also asked participants for their *wish list*, which is an enhancement to Flanagan's (1954) original depiction of CIT (Butterfield et al., 2009). A wish list can include things such as resources, information or programs that are identified by the participant as not being present in a situation and elements that they wished could have been present during their critical incident (Butterfield et al., 2009). Through the interview, I asked my participants what they wished happened differently during their experiences and the areas in their training that they think could be improved. Such questions are reflected in the interview protocol.

Analysis of Interviews

As previously mentioned, I used document analysis as an approach to analyze my participant interviews. Document analysis allowed me to use inductive reasoning (which means developing codes and themes based on the content of the data) to theorize from the meaning explored, as well as look for similar or contrasting patterns and perspectives (Doody & Noonan, 2013; Woolsey, 1986). I also used document analysis to explore underlying ideas, assumptions and conceptualizations in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). In terms of my interviews, I divided my analysis into three major phases: 1) identifying initial impressions, 2) creating and synthesizing codes, and 3) consolidating themes with the literature and research questions in the study.

First, I made sure to record myself after each interview as I talked about my immediate and initial impressions. As more interviews with participants occurred, I captured what I already noticed were similarities and difference between the participants' perspectives. Documenting my immediate impressions reminded me of some of the new curiosities that I had and wanted to explore with the next participant or in the analysis chapter. These notes were kept in my researcher journal, which I revisited while developing themes and writing the thesis. In an effort to keep the data organized and be methodical in my approach, I returned to Braun and Clarke's (2021) model for (reflexive) thematic analysis. As suggested in the first step, I manually transcribed each interview and familiarized myself with the data. As I was transcribing, I was able to listen to what the participants were saying and noted what I thought were interesting comments to revisit.

What is different in my data analysis of the interviews compared to the training materials is that for the interviews, I used NVivo (a data analysis software) to assist me with the sorting,

coding and development of themes. What I did in my second phase involved using NVivo to highlight text within the transcripts and associate each text with different labels or “codes” to briefly describe what drew my attention. For example, I coded for the participant’s background, UOF definition, police-civilian encounter using force and not using force, learning strategies, and more. It should be noted that I also made a distinction between codes for the participating officers and codes for the educators. Although there is no absolute distinction between codes and themes, Braun and Clarke (2021) explain that codes can be thought of as “entities that capture (at least) one observation [and] display (usually just) one facet”, whereas themes “capture multiple observations or facets” (p. 340). What I observed was captured by the codes that I created. This ultimately made it easier for me to sort the data and view references in the transcript. The analysis process also made it possible for me to go back and forth between coding, analyzing, and interpreting my data.

For the final phase, I grouped the codes and reviewed each reference to determine the similarities and differences between the data. This resulted in developing themes, which my thesis supervisor and I worked on to make captivating. Creating a word cloud in NVivo also helped me in terms of reflection, theory development and visualizing the patterns in the data (Maxwell, 2013). While NVivo assisted with automatically organizing codes, I also considered existing themes explored in literature to deductively develop themes (see Davies, 2017; Lim & Lee, 2015; Paoline & Terrill, 2007; Rajakaruna et al., 2017). However, existing themes in literature did not play as significant of a role as developing my own for the study. Compared to existing literature, I felt as though the themes that I created aligned better with the objectives of my study. As such, the aspects that I focused on were reduced and rewritten to highlight the most interesting points. I also worked to ensure that the codes and themes that I developed aligned

with my research and interview questions. Further details on the themes produced for the present study are included in chapter 6, which is the analysis section of the thesis.

The theoretical frameworks and approaches to education that I discovered through my literature review shaped the lens through which I analyzed my data. For instance, I assessed how UOF training adhered to and differed from the learning strategies in the literature about PE and PP while also examining how educators approached their training. I was cognizant of the fact that constructivism and social constructivism helped me make sense of what officers and educators thought. Such theories influenced what I noticed from the interview transcriptions and what I chose to ignore. What is helpful about the theoretical lens that I used is that they support the fact that I am not looking for objective truths about my participants' opinions or to suggest what they believe is correct. Instead, constructivism and social constructivism helped me focus on how individuals make sense of their beliefs while acknowledging that what they understand has context.

Chapter Summary

Through this chapter, I have shared and explained the strategies that I applied to conduct the study. By using a qualitative instrumental case study (QICS), I reminded readers that my study focuses on exploring the issue of how PE impacts PP. In particular, I concentrate on what is occurring in the police profession. I clarified why I chose to work with a particular police service and how I collected data. I was transparent about the connections that I have made through policing and how conversations with my networks led me to further insights (although I did not use such information as research data). I also detailed how I used document and (reflexive) thematic analysis to analyze the UOF training materials and participant interviews. Finally, I explained how the theoretical framework mentioned in Chapter 4 helped me to

organize and interpret the research findings. This now leads me into the next chapter, which focuses on my research analysis.

Chapter 6 – Analysis

Chapter Overview

In the previous chapter, I presented the training documents that I collected and gave context about the people I interviewed. In this chapter, I explain the themes that I developed as part of my interpretation of the data. I do this through a document analysis of the training materials and interviews. In other words, I focus first on the UOF training materials and explore the similarities and differences between the years of documents that I gathered; then, I follow this with two subsequent sections where I examine my interviews with the officers and the educators. In those sections, I speculate both on what the participants said and the assumptions embedded in their responses. Throughout the chapter, I substantiate each of the themes with direct quotes or paraphrased statements from the data. To conclude the chapter, I draw attention to an unanticipated theme that emerged during my analysis. This unanticipated theme was not specifically explored during the study's development, however, it does have implications that relate to and extend beyond education.

In an effort to be transparent with readers, I would like to mention that I was cognizant of my role as the researcher and the part I played in re-presenting the data and showcasing my analysis—including areas where I would add punctuation to the transcripts or italicize words to emphasize importance. The themes highlighted in this chapter are construed through an educational lens and center on the ideas and perspectives that emerged. By grouping the ideas into themes and capturing the most relevant topics to education, I viewed my role as clarifying rather than challenging the realities of policing or the police officers I interviewed. I chose to rely on, as much as possible, what they shared with me. As previously mentioned, part of my research goal is to ultimately present my findings and to contribute to scholarly literature.

UOF Training Materials

My review of the UOF training material inspired four different themes. The topics focus on educational issues such as the teaching style captured within documents, the learning objectives, the role of the educator, the realities of policing and the relatability of the material covered. Insights that pull the themes together will be explored in the discussion chapter.

Theme 1: Most of the training materials come directly from policy and educators are expected to follow the script.

I noticed that the content of the UOF training is taken verbatim from OPS policy and the *Police Service Act (PSA)* of Ontario. It is included in the PPT presentation slides as a direct quote from provincial regulations. For example, the “2010 UOF PPT presentation” included a slide about UOF equipment and cites Regulation 926 section 9 of the *PSA* (1990). The slide says:

A member of a police force shall not draw a handgun, point a firearm at a person or discharge a firearm unless he or she believes, on reasonable grounds that to do so is necessary to protect against loss of life or serious bodily harm. (OPS, research communication, 2010, slide 8)

Content taken verbatim from OPS policy or reference to Regulation 926 section 9 was also found in the 2015 classroom presentation, and the “2021 UOF classroom part 1: policy and admin” PPT. Not only is this information presented in the PPT slide as though it would be lectured to the learners, but by having this text as the sole content on the slide also assumes that the educators will read the regulation to the officers or follow the lesson plans and scenarios exactly the way that the training content is written. This slide about the UOF equipment does not seem to solicit or encourage discussion from the officers—although possible. The UOF training material therefore maintains traditional and didactic ways of teaching.

The didactic approach to teaching also positions the material as something to be taught consistently among learners. The idea of consistency is made clear with what is included in the

speaking notes, which can be described as a script for the educators. For example, the “2010” and “2021 UOF PPT presentation” include an image of the 2004 provincial UOF model. The speaking notes of the slide include how the model should be explained to learners. It says, “A framework for understanding and articulating the events associated with an incident involving the use of force. The Use of Force Model DOES NOT give authority for the use of force” (OPS, research communication, 2021, slide 2). The notes indicated on this slide are presented as though it should be said exactly how it is written to the learners, regardless of who is presenting the content. Each person who teaches about the UOF model during this part of the training has a statement to read or say to the learners.

By telling the officers what the UOF Model is and what it is not, the objective behind including speaking notes in the PPT slide seems to be about reinforcing what the officers must understand. That is, the UOF model is simply a framework and nothing more. With that said, the training documents are sets of predetermined content that detail what learners should know, while the speaking notes are provided in an attempt to consistently present information to the officers in a manner that is unidirectional. Such methods speak to the educational approaches that reinforce standardization—the first “educational moment” as described by Davis et al. (2015). It does not appear that this training document can be negotiated between the educators and the cohort of learners in the room, as it might be by educators motivated by Davis et al.’s (2015) third moment, democratic citizenship education.

How the UOF reports are presented to the officers in each of the three examined years of documents is another instance of a one-way, standardized approach to education that is conveyed

through the training materials. A UOF report⁷ is a document that officers are required to complete when he or she:

- draws or discharges a firearm;
- uses a weapon (including those that are improvised) on another person;
- uses physical force that results in an injury or the requirement of medical treatment; or,
- deploys or removes a carbine weapon from a police vehicle and that is visible to the public (OPS, research communication, 2015, slide 30).

The slides in the UOF training materials that explain UOF reports are positioned in a way that has the educators telling the learners what they are expected to do. In addition to explaining when UOF reports are required, the PPT presentation explains which sections of the report need to be completely filled out. It also reminds officers about the important aspects to follow, such as not including personal information. Based on the way that the training material is written, it is assumed that if educators provide detailed and unvarying instructions about how to fill out UOF reports, then officers will “acquire” this information in a consistent way and perform accordingly. In other words, since the officers are told what to do, then they, presumably, should and will do exactly as they are told. Such positioning of this part of the UOF content reinforces the idea that knowledge can be gathered and disseminated from one person to another, which aligns closely with standardized approaches.

Theme 2: In many of the lesson plans, the learning objectives lack sufficient detail that would show how learning might be enacted, achieved or measured.

Based on how the learning objectives are written, there is an assumption that if given a lecture or demonstration, officers will understand a concept or how to perform certain skills; however, the learning objectives, do not specify how the learner or educator would be able to

⁷ **Note:** A copy of the UOF reports used in Ontario is publicly accessible and can be found on the Government on Ontario website (2022) or by clicking [here](#).

conclude that a concept is truly understood or that a skill is performed as expected. While useful to aim towards, the learning objectives in the training lack the vocabulary that would illustrate the assessment component. For instance, in the 2021 requalification lesson plan for searching a handcuffed person, the learning objective says,

Given a lecture and demonstration, officers will have an understanding of the correct procedure for searching a handcuffed person. The learner will also be given an opportunity to observe a practical search of a handcuffed person. Given the pandemic, officers will not demonstrate the search component in order to maintain social distancing. (OPS, research communication, 2021, p. 2)

Although taken from the 2021 requalification training, this learning objective was also found in the lesson plans for the other examined years of training. I observed 25 other lesson plans related to UOF training in which the learning objectives were framed in a very similar way. In other words, the 25 other lesson plans had learning objectives that included key words such as “given a lecture,” “demonstration,” or “practical applications,” “officers will have an understanding” or “be refreshed on” the applicable skill.

I made the same comment about the learning objective while reviewing what was written for the scenarios. The lesson plan for the 2021 flash scenarios says:

Officers will be presented with situations where the role player will exhibit a range of behaviors that reflect those found on the Provincial Use of Force Model. Officers will be provided the opportunity to analyse the situation and respond with appropriate levels of force. (OPS, research communication, 2021, p 2)

Although the learning objective sets the context of the activity (i.e., the opportunity to analyze then respond), the evaluative aspect of the objective is not clear. That is, it does not explicitly state what is considered or measured as appropriate. Is appropriateness measured by the provincial UOF model or is it determined by the educator’s observations? In addition, how is the learner’s demonstrated response assessed? The learning objective still does not signify how or if learning occurs and is enacted. In other words, to what extent does an educator know that the

learner can analyze situations and respond with appropriate levels of force? Is being given the opportunity to analyze and respond to a situation an indication that learning is achieved? Does the learning objective for the scenario help to determine that the officer exhibits what is reflected in the provincial UOF model as opposed to merely reproducing what they had observed through demonstration? Recall that in the literature review chapter, I describe behaviourism as a sub-category of correspondence theory, which relates to standardized approaches to education. With behaviourism in mind, educators may frame objectives as a condition to learning. To determine if an objective is achieved, whether it is a condition or not, it is important to indicate how the learning occurrence is measured. With reference to the objectives quoted thus far, the aspect that concerns assessment of learning still seems to be missing. Additional information would help an individual (either the officer or the educator) recognize how or when the learning is achieved.

In addition, the targeted goal is not written in a way that acknowledges the diverse experiences of learners. That is, any cohort of officers working with the training materials will have diverse experiences that shape how they engage with it. As per Davis et al.'s (2015) description of an authentic approach to education, learners are not containers waiting to be filled with information. Rather, they are unique individuals who construe and accommodate their experiences with prior knowledge. Thus, it is important to account for how the officers could have an experience with the training materials that is different from what the curriculum expects of learners. Perhaps it is not enough for a learner to observe a demonstration in order to understand the material or respond with appropriate levels of force in a situation because of the learner's diverse experiences.

Theme 3: Training acknowledges the complex realities of policing and is sensitive to current trends.

I observed that OPS is mindful of the types of calls that officers receive because of the different scenarios that have been used over the years. The training seems to reflect the realities of police work and the range of situations that could transpire during a call. For example, the 2010 scenarios include a number of situations where an officer responds to a call. These situations include a possible break and enter, a suspicious person, a traffic stop, an active shooter, a bar fight, road rage, a domestic dispute, an individual going through a mental health crisis, and more. The scenarios are different and can bring out a variety of responses from the trainees.

Since 2010, the scenarios have evolved to include more cases that reflect current trends. For instance, interacting with people going through a mental health crisis was heavily discussed in the 2015 training materials. The UOF PPT presentation has a slide about emotionally disturbed persons.⁸ Within the speaking notes of the slide, it states:

The other aspect of this training is dealing with Emotionally Disturbed Persons, especially those associated with Mental Illness. We all recognize that calls for service involving these persons are not getting any less, in fact, one might suggest that they are growing in number. (OPS, research communication, 2015, slide 2)

Assuming that the educator who is teaching this portion of the material conveys this message word for word during his or her lecture, the Service—by virtue of the training—is acknowledging an important current reality of policing duties. That is, officers are receiving and responding to calls that concern an individual or groups of people facing a mental health challenge. Calls that involved people dealing with such challenges were not an area of focus in

⁸ The 2021 PPT presentation states that a more inclusive term is *persons in crisis* (PIC).

the 2010 training. OPS has modified the UOF training materials to address the realities of policing as a result of the increase in calls involving people in crisis.

Not only do the UOF training materials seem reflective of the type of calls officers receive, but the 2021 training has also included scenarios that have gotten progressively more complex. In other words, the same scenarios are used to continue exploring different outcomes with the officers. For instance, one officer may go through a scenario with a role player while the other officers observe. The next scene would involve another officer who would go through the scenario with the same context after having seen what occurred in the previous set-up. Certain factors, like a subject being in the room with a firearm, appearing threatening or non-threatening, would be added to and removed from the scene. Take for example, one of the lesson plans for the 2021 flash scenario. It explains that officers are expected to transition between their fatal and non-fatal options. The scenario was also used to practice when a firearm was and was not discharged. What makes scenes such as the one described complicated and complex is what officers must keep at the forefront of their thought process when it comes to UOF decisions. That is to say, they must act according to the UOF model, *PSA*, *Criminal Code of Canada* and OPS's policies—all of which are included in the briefing notes for the educators to explain. In addition, the different factors that are part of the role-play can change what an officer decides to do.

OPS also makes use of open scenarios to train the officers on the complexities of policing. The six documents related to the 2021 open scenarios that I examined, for instance, have five different phases of a scene that progress in complexity. Similar to the flash scenarios, officers are placed in a scene where they must assess the situation and react appropriately. One of the 2021 open scenarios sets the scene as a call to a stabbing where the victim is unable to move, and the person who had stabbed the victim is still in the room. Upon identifying a lead

officer and second officer, who is there as support, the trainees would act out the scene. Some elements to consider would be if the officers entered through the front door or the rear door. Given the set-up of the room, factors such as the visibility of the injured individual and the person with a weapon are not intentionally obvious to the role-playing officer. The lesson plan also allows the officers to practice how they would communicate and evacuate the victim while ensuring safety.

What I am pointing out is that the different components of a police-civilian encounter were not as thoroughly explored in the 2010 scenarios that I reviewed. Instead, the 2010 scenarios describe what officers may do if they are unable to gain compliance. It does not describe the plan as though the officers try different outcomes in the same set-up for training. For this reason, I noted that the 2021 training documents go into more detail than the 2010 materials about a scenario and address the complex realities of policing. The range of possibilities point out the challenges of policing and the implications of officers' decisions.

This more complex exploration of the scenario accords less with standardized education and more with Davis et al.'s (2015) three more recent evolutions in educational approaches: authentic, democratic citizenship and systemic sustainability. For one, the training recognizes that individual responses to the scenarios provides can be diverse among the learners. Second, the set up of the material and learning environment allow for the officers to engage with the tools, resources and role player in the scene—whether that is with the victim, the back-up officer who can be called upon, or even the wall that interferes with visibility. These circumstances allow the officer to interact with the material and get feedback from his or her peers. Finally, it can be argued that the training has evolved since 2010 because of the changes to policing that have also been transformative. It is reflected in the material that OPS recognizes that there are

complex and robust systems that interact with the experiences of the learner and the environment through which they are learning.

Theme 4: There is an attempt to make the training material relatable for the officers with multiple instances of reflection and discussions.

In the 2015 training, learners are challenged to think about their own experiences with the reflection questions included in the training. For example, after the educator asks the officers about their experiences dealing with an “emotionally disturbed person,” officers are asked the following questions:

- What approach did you use?
- What sequence/steps did you follow?
- What de-escalation techniques did you use?
- What training have you had in dealing with an emotionally disturbed person?
(OPS, research communication, 2021, slide 12)

I saw that the training materials had notes for the educators in the event that officers did not have insights to reflect upon. I presume such notes are included to prepare the educator and to help the learners draw links between their experiences and training. The speaking notes on this slide also instruct the educators to compare the solicited answers against using force. In any case, this part of the training seems to make an effort to relate to the officers.

The training also tries to relate to officers by including a video from a seasoned officer. For instance, the 2021 PPT presentation on de-escalation and articulation has a video clip of Charles Ramsey, who is a retired Commissioner, giving a TedTalk to police departments in the United States. He speaks about treating people with dignity and respect. While it is unlikely that the officers personally know the retired Commissioner, and I am not suggesting that knowing the Commissioner is essential, including the video can give the officers some familiarity because of his position and presumed experience. Following the video clips are slides that debrief the video. Debriefing the video also has the potential to help the Commissioner's message resonate with the

officers—especially since the officers are hearing a message from someone who might understand and relate to their experiences. Giving the learners something that they could potentially relate to promotes authentic approaches to education.

Placing reflection questions in training as a teaching strategy was also exhibited in the 2021 PPT presentation. There, officers are asked if they know a particularly “good de-escalator,” “an exceptional interviewer,” or “an effective mediator” (OPS, research communication, 2021, slide 33). The officers are urged to think about how the person or people who he or she thought about do their work. By having the officers reflect on who they know and who can demonstrate effective skills, the training gives the officers space to draw connections to their own experiences and discuss with others in the room. Such an exercise would seem to encourage the officers to view their training as relatable, which speaks to Davis et al.’s (2015) second, authentic approach to education.

The analysis described above refers to the UOF training documents. In the next section, I discuss the participant interviews.

Officer Interviews

After examining the data from my interviews, I developed four themes specific to the officers and five themes for the educators, which I explain in two separate sections. The ideas that I present focus on the participants’ UOF definition, their perspectives on UOF training, as well as how training relates to their experiences.

To maintain the confidentiality of my participants, I designate each officer with a number that distinguishes them from the others. Instances where I refer to what an individual said in order to illustrate the theme is also where I assign the participant a letter and number. For example, O1 represents “officer 1” and will be the same person cited each time they are quoted. I

follow this same practice with the educators, only I use E for “educator” as opposed to O. There are also instances where I use the pronouns “he” or “she” as I relate back to the quote provided. This is only done to expand further on what a participant said. Readers may perceive referring to the participant with pronouns as a breach of researcher-participant confidentiality. For instance, those who are familiar with the participants and are aware of their perspectives, beliefs or the examples referenced in the thesis, may come to realize who the participant is, by association or process of elimination. A breach of confidentiality is not done intentionally. I remind readers of my efforts to keep the participants’ involvement in the study anonymous and confidential with the assignment of a letter and number. I use pronouns only to keep the grammatical aspect of the sentences logical and simple.

Theme 1: The officers have internalized similar understandings of UOF but describe it in different ways.

This theme emerged as a result of my question to the participants about their definition of UOF. To synthesize the words that the officers used to define UOF, I categorize their responses using a word or phrase, which is then followed by one or more quotes.

Control: Two out of the nine officers explicitly described UOF as some form of control. O1 explained that UOF is “...essentially force necessary to subdue a subject,” while O2 said UOF “implies a subject is out of control in some shape or form and we’ve got to gain control—whether it’s verbally or psychologically, whether it’s physically. We’ve got to gain control of this person.” Both officers concentrated on the notion of control, which was also expressed by six of the nine officers.

Range/spectrum: Three officers alluded to UOF as being a range or spectrum. O6 mentioned that police officers “follow a use of force continuum, and the force that [officers] use

is based upon that continuum. It starts with officer presence then it goes to communication and then it goes from there. It escalates.” O9 also described UOF as something that changes with every situation—including the level of force. This was echoed by O2, who explained that UOF “can vary anywhere from a stern look, all the way to use of deadly force. So the spectrum is extremely big.” Each of the officers contextualized UOF as having to do with a range of applied force that varies on a continuum.

Safety and protection: Only two out of the nine officers focused on the safety component of UOF in their definition. O3 said UOF is to “essentially stop a dangerous situation while maximizing human life and safety... [It is] tactics and equipment to preserve human life and property.” O6 also explained UOF as “using whatever force that’s necessary to get to the safest resolution possible in a circumstance when dealing with subjects.” Both officers detailed safety as a component of UOF, while the other seven officers discussed different, yet related, aspects.

Legislated authority to apply force: Three officers made reference to legislation when describing UOF. O7 explained, “use of force is the ability that is given to police officers [...] in the act of their [...] duty, if force is required to invoke the law. It’s allowed to be used but there are governances within that.” O8 also discussed UOF with reference to law by saying it is “the use of legislated and mandated authorities to carry out the duties of a police officer. Those authorities allow for the use of the application of force, if force is required.” O6 actually cited a section of Canadian law to explain what gives officers their authority to use force. She says, “[i]t always has to be justified...we have under the *Police Services Act* or under the *Criminal Code of Canada*—it’s section 25 that gives us our authority to use force.”

Perception/interpretation: When further explaining his UOF definition, O8 said, “it's open to interpretation and it's open to individual sort of experiences and knowledge.” This aligns with what O6 said, which was that UOF is “your perception of threat.” Both participants focused on the individual's point of view, which was not explicitly raised by the seven other officers.

Although the officers did not give the exact same definition as each other, I observed that their descriptions had a great deal of overlap and compatibility. For instance, O6's mention of using whatever force is necessary to stop a dangerous situation is compatible with what O8 describes, which is the authority to use force as required. The participants' responses are similar to each other because they touch upon aspects that signify what UOF means as opposed to describing something entirely different. The fact that the officers describe different aspects of UOF illustrates that the definition is multifaceted. In addition, from a social constructivist perspective, it demonstrates how the officers have internalized the definitions at this point in their career. That is, by participating in the social activity found within UOF training or policing more generally, the participants have internalized collective understandings and practices related to the term UOF and then articulate its meaning through their construals. Although interviewed separately, their definitions happen to be compatible with one another. Given what the participants said, we may deduce that UOF is not just an action like the verb “use” would imply but it is also a process, a response and contingent on what an officer sees or believes. It also has an objective and it is grounded in law. Furthermore, UOF is not always constant because an officer's perception can change. What may start as a safe situation or police-civilian encounter might escalate into something that is unsafe.

What is interesting about the participants' responses is that the officers focused on different but compatible aspects of UOF. This is why I have different categories for their

explanations, even though it can be said that the words used all relate to UOF. For instance, explaining UOF as something that “varies” or is on a spectrum is different from describing it as “a legislative authority,” however, our discussion remained on the topic of UOF. While related to the same term, we may see how the officers focused on different components of UOF.

Theme 2: The officers view realistic scenarios, assessment and improvement of skills as crucial parts of training, although they differ in what aspects should be prioritized.

As the officers and I discussed their perspectives on their UOF training, many of them explained what they enjoyed and valued. I noticed that some of the officers (i.e., four out of nine officers) viewed the scenarios very positively because, for some of them, the scenarios often depicted what the officers would go through during a call. For example, O9 explained that:

The scenarios are usually based on actual calls and they're usually decided based on current trends in what we're seeing [...] I think those have always been the best way for me to be in a ‘real life scenario’—where it’s actually likely to happen. And I find the scenarios are really a way to sort of mimic that adrenaline that comes with that type of scenario [...] that level of being sort of tested does invoke that adrenaline response. So I've always found that to be very helpful.

What O9 shares aligns with observations that I point out in the previous chapter sub-section.

That is, according to this officers, the scenarios are realistic and a reflection of current trends. O7 shared similar values when she said:

I like when we go in [the simulation lab] because it is more real time. It is like it is on the road. And then as a recruit, you don’t know what the road is—you’ve never been there. The scenarios I find are very, very helpful because you’re going to respond the way you are going to respond on the road.

O6 also expressed enthusiasm for the scenarios because she finds that she is “always so involved.” It was easy for her to apply what she learned to the “road” (i.e., her real-time policing duties and experiences outside of training) because she would put an effort into the scene and it would feel so real. These sentiments were also shared by O3, who said, “I find scenario training to be the most rewarding, because you not only learn about yourself, right, and overcome

situations but it forces you to read situations and [do] that transition. So I really enjoyed the scenarios in our training.”

Not all of the officers viewed the scenarios as positively. For one officer, the UOF scenarios do not always capture what officers do day-to-day. Instead, they reflect what the officers encounter on a rare occasion. For example, O1 said:

I know they try to mix it up every year and obviously, a lot of the situations and scenarios that they put us in don't really reflect our day to day operations. Like we don't know if we will ever go to a call where they put us in a [similar] scenario, right. So I understand what they're trying to do, but I also kind of don't understand because very rarely, if you look at the statistics, very rarely do Ottawa Police officers go to a firearm-related call where we have to use our firearm. So I understand that's a worst case scenario, bad day scenario, but I think, I do more enjoy the scenarios where it is more day-to-day stuff and we work on our de-escalation stuff.

What O1 shares speaks to the point I made earlier regarding the diverse responses that the training will evoke from the officers. While training with firearm-related scenarios are useful for the officer, especially as the scenarios relate to firearm-related calls, this type of UOF option is not what O1 finds to be reflective of his everyday encounters, which would be incompatible to an authentic approach to education. For O1, the more enjoyable scenarios are the ones that highlight other de-escalation techniques, which he seems to encounter more daily and reflects his reality of policing. Of course, the challenge here is reconciling what is preferred by O1 with what is preferred by the other officers. One might be tempted to suggest traditional and standardized approaches that encourage uniformity is a solution. However, what occurs through training can be structured in a way that acknowledges and works with learners' diverse interests. More innovative strategies may be just as simple as traditional approaches. I explore this idea of innovative strategies further in chapter 7 (the discussion chapter) as I reflect on ways to

advance literature in education and offer practical suggestions that strive to improve police training and experiences.

Although all of the officers talked about what they valued about training, I noticed that their perspectives and priorities differed when they discussed how their UOF training could be improved. According to two officers, assessment, particularly psychological and fitness testing, should be incorporated into training. O5 explained that “it wouldn't hurt as part of our use of force training to have a mandatory psychological review, every year, to see if your [psyche] is picking up stuff that it shouldn't [...] to see whether or not you're dealing with your stressors properly or efficiently.” Individual upkeep through assessment and training was similarly valued by O4 who believed that physical testing should be mandated. This participant explained that every UOF decision is made easier when an officer is in great shape. According to O4, a lot of the time, using force involves physical strength, power and conditioning. Even though there is not enough time in training allocated to the other aspects of UOF that O4 wished were included, he still advised that physical training should be obligatory.

Rather than prioritizing assessment, other officers focused their response on seeing training as an opportunity to frequently work on skills. For instance, while discussing his perspectives on how UOF training could be improved, O1 said:

I think the use of force should come up with a program where we study, we learn this stuff so it's a) fun, and b) we get to learn a new skill [...] I just kind of think it's repetitive, and I don't really enjoy doing it anymore because there's nothing new and when there's nothing new to learn, like, how are you going to improve?

While discussing requalification training, O6 explained:

I think once a year, personally, is not enough for members. The team does an amazing job and it's not a criticism of them at all, it's just, you know, the fact that we carry a firearm and potentially the only time you use it is once a year to practice on it—it's just my personal opinion—I don't think it's enough. I mean it would be really nice to have it more than once a year.

Both officers alluded to the value of developing skills during their training. Not only should learning be fun and captivating, it should be non-repetitive and take place more than once a year.

The idea that advancing skills and having more training is interesting to consider if we think about the opportunities that exist for officers in other areas of OPS, such as those in the tactical unit. According to O3, the tactical unit officers are always in training and have more skills to advance. O3 says,

Other units that are more use of force-heavy, in the sense that they require even more advance skills [...], have more training throughout the year [...] And as they should, right? Those are the people we call when things are really going sideways. And those units train non-stop. And that should be noted—our specialty units—they train all the time. They definitely have more time and budgeting for higher advanced skill training.

Here, O3 is comparing the skills and frequency of training between patrol officers and those who work in the tactical unit. Perhaps more training is necessary for those who require skills that are important for more advanced situations. Although O3 mentioned that the yearly UOF training is enough, she also expressed that having more training would give patrol officers more practice, exposure and opportunities to develop their skills too.

It is also interesting to see a difference between what the officers prioritized in terms of advancing their skills. For example, O8 explained that training should spend more time on scenarios and less time on handcuffing or striking. For this officer, striking is an aggressive form of dealing with people that he does not expect to be a requirement for employment. Less time on these examples of physical control strategies contrasts what O4 believed, which is that it is important these techniques are incorporated into training (at least on a monthly or bimonthly basis). O8's point of view also differs from O2's perspective because the latter participant thinks that officers need to be immersed in skills like striking or using their hand and feet to put someone to the ground. In an effort to gain control of a situation, officers might use their hands

and feet as part of their physical engagement with civilians. Using hands and feet is another aspect of UOF strategies discussed in training—although, according to some of the participants (i.e., O1, O2, and O4), in a very limited way.

Recognizing that a lot of people are uncomfortable with striking, O2 remarked that as a police officer, being immersed in your hands and foot skills is still important to understanding “that striking beast that’s in you.” During the interview, O2 explained that humans have an innate ability to fight or flight when situations are out of our control. If two people are striking each other and using their hands and feet without recognizing or being aware of their adrenaline and strength, he or she may misuse their “weapon” (i.e., fists, open palm, feet while kicking, so to speak) and cause more harm to regain control than what they actually intended. When in a very high stress situation, O2 adds, using our hands and feet can be what we resort to because it is innate in us. When you do not know what you are doing or how to use your hands and feet properly, serious injuries can occur. Here, O2 emphasized that officers need that focused training on hand and foot skills in order to know what they are dealing with and how to tame innate abilities. He added, “[y]ou have to understand it to control it and immersion is the best way.” As we may already see, immersion can be prioritized differently among the officers given their own unique experiences and diverse developmental stages. This is something that Davis et al.’s (2015) authentic approach to education would recognize and work with.

Theme 3: Officers value learning when educators have deep experience and credibility with respect to what they are teaching.

A common perspective shared among the officers was their admiration for their instructors. I observed that five of the officers mentioned having a lot of respect for the instructors and their supportive nature. When asked about their thoughts on their UOF training

and what they enjoyed or found memorable, the officers also commented on the way that the educators create a positive learning environment. For instance, O5 said:

Our instructors are dedicated people. I have a lot of respect for them because you can tell they really care about what they're doing. And they want us to be as safe as possible. And they are also aware of the liabilities to our actions and they're constantly trying to train us that you need to react appropriately and you have to have justification for everything you do.

This level of care and support was also expressed by O6. For example, she shared her appreciation for the UOF instructors who were “absolutely good with” offering additional support and opportunities to officers who wanted more experience with their shooting skills. She also mentioned that she likes the extra practice with the instructors because they help her feel more comfortable and confident. Such appreciation for the educators and their work was further expressed by O3, who said:

Our instructors are incredible [...and...] genuine people. [...] They're very kind, very thorough [and] they have a curriculum [...]. [N]ot only are they knowledgeable and skillful themselves, like some of them... you watch them and you're like in awe [...]. We do have high quality instructors. [...] I find that they're very supportive, whether they share their own stories or even if they're like 'Hey this is where I screwed up', or 'This is what I could've done differently.' So I do find it is a very supportive environment, and you really see that if someone doesn't do a scenario the way they want to see that, there isn't ridicule or anything. It is just, 'okay let's debrief.'

Notice that O3 also mentioned that the instructors “have a curriculum”. This compliments the point I make in the earlier section on UOF training, which is to say that material is given to the educators as opposed to content that they craft on their own. Nevertheless, O3's remarks illustrate that there is a great deal of admiration and respect for the UOF instructors.

One interesting comment came from O2 who shared his beliefs on the significance of the educators' UOF competencies. The officer talked about his respect for the firearms instructors, who, he believes, most have experience because of their military background. He also described the firearms instructors as “very high level.” The same officer remarked that when it comes to

the physical aspect of containing someone, there is a lack of expertise among most of the UOF educators. This opinion was not something other participants mentioned. O2 made a compelling argument by saying:

If you're going to teach use of force, okay—use of force—if you yourself, you're not competent to use force, how can you teach use of force? [...] What have you done? If you are teaching me knowledge, where are you getting that knowledge from? What's your baggage? Because you're taking out of your baggage and you're giving me that knowledge. If your baggage is very small and empty, well you don't have a lot to offer me, right? That's what I mean, they're great people, they want to help people to have the best tools to do their jobs professionally, but their baggage is lacking. They don't have the background. And this is not all but most.

This entire quote is fascinating because the participant makes a specific point about losing value from the training when the educators do not appear to have a certain degree of proficiency or experience with using force.

What is compelling about what O2 is saying is an assumption that to teach UOF means that the educators have some form of experience with it. A background assumption on the part of the officer here seems to be that an educator without relevant experience would not be able to offer, share or transfer knowledge to learners—an assumption rooted in what Davis et al. (2015) would describe as a standardized approach to education. In addition, O2 seems to be assuming that the UOF educators do not have other relevant experience (e.g., de-escalation, communication, effective stress management or decision-making skills) to “offer” and that could be useful to UOF-related situations. Perhaps there are qualities about the UOF educators (such as their personality, their communication skills, their experiences prior to policing) that OPS has determined are suitable when it comes to teaching officers—regardless of their “inexperience” with using force. In fact, such comments perhaps illustrate neglect for the democratic citizenship approaches to education because the techniques used in the training were not described by the officers as collective and collaborative. Here, I am suggesting that the participating officers

talked about their educators as respectable, high quality instructors with “baggage” to offer. The educators are positioned as people with a high degree of experience and with knowledge to “pass on” for other officers to acquire. This is different from seeing the instructors as co-contributors to the learning experience.

At the same time, maybe having baggage is irrelevant to the credibility that the UOF educators try to project, because the content that the educators teach comes from policy—and policy is consistent among all of the officers, as I alluded to earlier. Granted, the educators may have spontaneously shared their own stories and experiences while teaching the officers, but the UOF training that I reviewed did not signal moments where UOF educators had to share their experience. These are interesting points for us to consider and that I will unpack in the discussion chapter. For now, it is clear that experience and credibility of the educators are integral to the learning experiences for this officer. What the officers seem to be saying is that when educators are teaching, sharing their experiences and they are believable or credible, what they share will be just as valuable, if not more, to the officer who is learning. As such, there is tension here between traditional, standardized and more progressive approaches to education.

Theme 4: Most officers think that training is core to their UOF encounters, while others believe that life experiences play a stronger role and training is merely complementary.

The officers described training as foundational to their experiences and said that it speaks directly to how they would handle a police-civilian encounter. O1 explained that the training *tells* officers what the threshold is for using force. This suggests that the training strongly informs the police how they should respond to difficult situations and make decisions. The fact that O1 said that the training *tells* officers what the threshold is, illustrates the traditional, passive and

standardized tendencies of the educational material. That is, officers go through the training in anticipation that they will be told what to do.

In terms of authentic educational approaches, O6 enjoyed the scenarios because she responds to the training the same way she would while fulfilling her policing duties in reality. The training resonates with her because it allows her to trust her instincts and remember how she would handle a given situation. O7 and O9 also viewed training as relatable to their experiences because they believed it builds both their confidence and muscle memory.

On the other hand, officers also claimed that other factors, particularly life experiences, play a role in their encounters with the public. In fact, O3 mentioned that she thinks it is a personal decision to not use force because it can sometimes depend on an officer's comfort level in a situation. In other words, an officer's perception of his or her own abilities to handle a threat can be different from someone else, thereby making each case unique. This narrative has the potential to explain why an officer chooses tactics that are different from what they are taught in training or what another officer would do—since perception is unique to the individual.

O9 expressed that having travelled in her past has allowed her to connect to people on a personal level and de-escalate situations through verbal communication. In a similar vein, O8 observed that although a lot of the UOF training is integral to officers' experiences, "You can't teach experience [...] you can only learn [experience] and gain it through working." It is for this reason that he also believed scenarios were the best way for him to learn since he is gaining practical experience to learn from. Put differently, the training relates to his experiences in so far as it provides the necessary exposure to understand what he called, the "nuts and bolts" to policing. O2 thought training has obviously taught him the "legal side" of UOF that he did not

learn in his personal life; however, the totality of life experiences are where officers learn, as opposed to strictly or directly from training.

Educator Interviews

Now that I have highlighted key themes that emerged from my interview with the participating officers, I will transition to my interview with the UOF educators. In this section, I will present five themes that emerged from the research data.

Theme 1: The educators have internalized a similar UOF definition that emphasizes the role of the officer.

I noticed that all of the educators used similar terms to define UOF. What is particularly interesting is that their responses focused on the role of an officer in terms of carrying out the definition. I summarize how the educators defined UOF as I did with my analysis of the officers' definition. In other words, I use a word or phrase to group their definition and provide examples with one or more quotes from the data.

Legislated authority to apply force: In their definition, E1 and E2 used the word “authority” or referred to UOF as training for certification and recertification. E3 explicitly stated that “the Criminal Code gives police officers the ability to use force whenever they encounter a situation that may require force.” All of the educators allude to the authority and legal ability of an officer while using force. Put differently, UOF is an ability that an officer *has*.

Spectrum: E3 gives examples of how UOF can be on a spectrum by saying, “It could be anything from just your sheer physical presence up to and including lethal force—so the application of deadly force.” E2 provides a similar illustration by saying, “It can be everything from, you know, even if you're just talking to someone who may be really upset, you're still

having that use of force mind.” Here, the educators are explaining the role of the officer by focusing on what the officer *does*.

Perception/processing: In accordance with the other two educators, E2 provided additional instances where UOF can be applied—only this time, focusing on what *the officer sees and chooses to do*. By detailing the point of view of the officer, E2 said:

I think it boils down to how they take information and decide how they approach a situation—both physically and how they choose to portray themselves given the situation [...], then I think it's how they choose [...] their style of communication [...], then it's how they choose their response to behaviours.

In this case, officers seem to have options to choose from given his or her perception of what is occurring.

Theme 2: The educators think training certifies or recertifies officers and helps to refresh their skills, rather than teaching all new skills.

Before explaining this theme, I would like to remind readers that the second theme from the officer interviews sub-section describes why the participants believe training should provide officers with multiple opportunities to learn and further develop skills. Readers should also recall that O3 mentioned that members in the tactical unit have the time to advance their skills because they receive more training than those who are on patrol. Ironically, frequent training was something that one of the educators really enjoyed during his tenure in the tactical unit. E1 explained:

I think the best training that I ever had was when I was in tactical and we just trained every week—multiple times a week—with live role players [and in] high-stress situations [...]. Overtime you become more comfortable with it. But, you know, the once-a-year requalification is just not enough, you just don't get proficient.

Here, E1 acknowledges the idea that frequent training allows officers to become comfortable with their skills, which is a point that the other participating officers made as well. However, opportunities for more training does not seem to be the reality for all OPS officers. In addition,

multiple training throughout the year seems to be out of the scope for recruits and officers who need to be recertified. Given what I point out earlier, it appears that what the officers believe about skill development and frequent training on a larger, organizational level contrasts what was said by the educators. The general UOF training designed for recruits and officers who need to be recertified does not really focus on developing skills and providing frequent training. Two out of the three of the educators assert that UOF training is meant only to certify and recertify officers on their UOF options. For the educators, this explains what the UOF training is capable of and what it is designed to do for officers. Both educators seem to be consistent about their perspectives on what the UOF training *is*. For example, when talking about the pre-service training, E2 said:

We're doing solely what is mandated by the Ontario Police College and to get that done in a day is that you're coming in, you're showing them what you need to do, why they may do what you're demonstrating and you're having them qualify on it.

When talking about in-service training, E1 explained, “the premise at the very onset is that this is just a refresher. So you can't teach new subjects, you can just try and tweak them to make them better.” Here, the educator is illustrating the traditional and standardized elements of the training because it is reflective of performance standards that are meant to be uniform and internalized by all officer undertaking training. He is also making a distinction between training that advances skills and training that recertifies officers, which differs from what the other participating officers said. For the educators, the objective of training is about meeting provincial standards but it is not about adding additional time or covering material outside of what officers and educators are required—unless, of course, like E3 says, it is mandated. This seems to be contrary to the officers, who look at training as a space to do more than certify or recertify officers. In the discussion chapter, I further unpack the tension between training and certification and offer a suggestion that could be considered if we were to take a more progressive view on approaches to

education. For now, it is clear that the data points to traditional perspectives related to the UOF training that are expressed by the officers and educators.

Theme 3: The educators are challenged with going in-depth about UOF skills, while still staying within the timeframe allotted for training.

All of the educators commented on the challenge of sufficiently covering the standard training material set out by the province, especially when the learners have different levels of proficiency with their UOF skills. When asked about the teaching strategies he uses to facilitate UOF training, E1 acknowledges the differences in skill and comfort levels between learners while also pointing out that educators have to give officers the space to work through their comfort in the training. He says:

People may use different force options given a scenario and you have to allow for that. You have to allow for everybody's comfort level in the scenario. One scenario we have is a person comes out and wants to fight. Some people decide to go with their hands and they feel comfortable with their skills. Some people want to use a taser. Some people want to use a baton. Some people want to use pepper spray and some people want to run in circles until they get back up. But those are all okay—depending on your comfort level. What's not okay is if you shoot them because they are unarmed. That's not acceptable and what's not acceptable is to do nothing and cower but, you know, that range is a wide variety of responses and they're okay because everybody's different.

Although skills and decisions may differ between officers, educators are challenged with allowing learners to fully navigate through their comfort level despite there not being enough time to do this effectively through training. When asked how the UOF training could be improved, E2 responded:

Not everybody learns at the same pace, you know, and for the people who need more time, the time isn't always there [...] There's people who just need more time. People like me. I was like that person. [But] there is an end date for training where [OPS] wants [officers] to be on the road.

E1 also expressed that educators need to take the time to go through difficult scenarios with officers, but in an 8-hour day, with the number of officers in a cohort, there is not enough time to

do this learning thoroughly. With that said, the same educator explained that he would encourage officers who want to work on their hand and feet skills, for instance, to do it on their own, because there is not enough time to do things like this during the training period. This perspective was shared by E3, when he spoke specifically about improvements to the requalification training. He said, “unless the province mandates more training time to police services like they do now [...] that's the only way you're going to get more training into it because, in my opinion, you know, once a year is not enough.” It is clear that the educators share the same perspectives on what they believe are constraints that are present and relative to OPS when it comes to training.

Theme 4: Educators emphasize using teaching strategies that create a safe, judgment-free environment where people can learn.

E3 described using teaching strategies that encourage officers to learn by virtue of others' and their experiences, which touches upon Davis et al.'s (2015) third approach to education: democratic citizenship. For instance, he explained that many of the scenarios in the training come from what officers describe about their police-civilian encounters. E3 says:

When an officer has an incident that, you know, he's had or she's had to use force, and once it's been cleared by SIU [...], we'll bring him in and say, 'Okay what happened? Tell us what happened' [...] in as much detail as the officer wants to provide [...]. We don't want to dig too much into it because some of it is pretty traumatic. What we try to do is we try to take those calls and what we do in the next year's [training is] we will bring those calls in. And if we can, we'll have them in our scenario training. We use what had happened and replicate it in our [simulation] lab [...]. We would add to that and say this is based on a scenario from one of our officers [...].

Rather than judging officers by their decisions, the educators are integrating real experiences into the training so that the person who shared their experience and others could learn and work through the situation in a more controlled pace and environment. The sharing of experiences and

having actual stories integrated into the training promotes authentic, democratic citizenship and systemic sustainability approaches to education. The idea that officers can feel comfortable working with examples that are familiar, and ones that they can grow from, are valuable and progressive methods incorporated into the training. E3 adds, “It becomes kind of a force multiplier because everybody gets to learn from that example [...]. What it allows them to do is develop and learn from what that officer [...] had experienced.”

In terms of trying to create a safe and judgment-free environment for the officers, I find that there is a bit of irony in this messaging. The educators still need to evaluate the learners’ performance, even if they try to make the learning judgment-free. Consider what is mentioned by E2, who is talking about trying to create a comfortable environment when asked about the approach she uses to facilitate the UOF training. She says:

I constantly say it's not that I'm necessarily teaching them anything, I'm just reminding them to do stuff they do all the time [...] You want to put them at ease and let them know that this isn't an evaluation, this is just a proof of what you know. It is a chance in a consequence-free environment where you can practice this, you know, because you don't get to practice these skills unless you're on a call or something.

E1 takes a similar approach to teaching the OPS officers, as he likes to keep things reasonably open and comfortable. He added, “You still want people to participate and achieve what we’re asking them to do, but it’s got to be a comfortable thing that people want to come back to.” In fact, the training standards would suggest that the officers are being evaluated by their decisions. The consequence for not passing their evaluation is the removal of the officer’s UOF option. Such options would no longer be available to the officer until he or she was successfully re-certified. This notion of a consequence-free environment also goes against the points explored in theme two, which talks about training being a matter of certification or recertification. Despite the irony, the key point that the educators are making is that beyond what may be stressful about

evaluations, their intent is to make the officers feel relaxed enough to demonstrate their skills and to do so effectively during training. The educators seem to agree on the value that their approach to teaching has on the individual learner.

Theme 5: As officers, the educators believe that their training gives officers the necessary practice to the point where they are not actively thinking about it during an interaction with the public.

Given the responses, I realized that applying UOF training in the instant moment when police-civilian encounters are happening becomes second nature for the educators. When the educators were reflecting on how their training relates to their experiences, I noticed that all of them questioned whether training was something that they actively thought about or if it was something that they just use. Without suggesting that training does not play a role in their police-civilian encounters, it became apparent that the educators were reflecting on the extent to which training is part of their experiences. For example, when talking about an incident where he did not use force, E1 said,

I don't know if [training] would have helped per se in that situation other than to realize that by delaying taking charge of a situation for fear of it looking bad in the optics, you then increase the options for somebody to get hurt.

Although E1 did not think training would have necessarily helped, training did make him realize the unintended effects of delaying the process of taking charge of a situation. In this case, training relates to experiences because it helps officers become aware of potential consequences.

When explicitly asked how training relates to her UOF experiences, E2 said, “You're just cautious.” She discussed having a gut feeling about a person during an encounter and remembered that her training talked about the interview stance. Although she remarked that the training she has received helped her during the encounter, during our interview, she explained that she was not sure that she was actively thinking about it in the past (i.e., during the

encounter). This would suggest that the content covered in training becomes ingrained in officers' habits to a point where it is unconscious. Perhaps this is the result of a standardized and authentic approach to education which has conditioned the learning so much so that instant responses are viable to the learner. Or perhaps it is more of an authentic approach which embeds the training in their constructed schemas. In any case, she repeated,

I'm just being aware [...]. Just little things like that. Yeah, like I'm definitely referring to my training but you know, when I'm there, am I conscious that this is what I learned in training or is this just what I do?

In response to her reflection E2 added, "I can't say. I think sometimes you just focus on how can I get my objective achieved here as safely as possible?"

E3 recounted an experience where he used an open-handed palm strike on a young woman to stop her from continuously punching her mother in the face. During the interview, the educator reflected on his reaction by asking, "Is that a by-product of my training?" He continued with, "Not really. I didn't think the use of force Ontario model would say [...] deliver an open-handed palm strike [...]. I knew proportionately that I had to separate [the daughter from her mother] and proportionately that was a level of force to use [...], you know, because of my size and my perceived ability to use myself." This suggests that the UOF training has given the educators the necessary practice and resources to make choices during their encounters to the point where it becomes enmeshed with their experiences and handling of situations.

Unanticipated Theme

After reviewing the interview transcripts, I noticed another recurring theme among the officers and educators. This theme concerns the current culture of policing and social media. By "the current culture of policing" I am referring to the attention on the dynamic between police and civilians that have been brought to the forefront following the death of George Floyd, which

I mention in chapter 2. It is a theme that I did not anticipate because I did not inquire about it specifically through my research questions, my literature review, or my interview questions, but it is important because of how the participants discussed its relevance to their PP. Nevertheless, the relationship between policing and social media illuminates topics that I would argue have significant implications to education. This theme was especially important to include as I speculated about the challenges for educators to teach UOF while also acknowledging that the situations that officers encounter are dynamic. The realities of policing are further complicated when an external factor like social media affects and complicates what officers do during police-civilian encounters.

Unanticipated theme: There is tension between what officers learn through training and do in practice because of the current culture of policing and social media.

Upon reflecting over his years of experience as an officer, O5 describes the current state of policing as complex because “the police are constantly scrutinized and being watched on cameras through social media.” Using force in certain situations poses as a challenge for officers because of the often unsolicited and instantaneous feedback officers receive from the public when they are filmed and footage is circulated on social media. O5 also commented on the complexity that he believes social media brings to the future of policing. When talking about the different levels of civilian oversight involved in policing, he said,

That’s why you always have to be thinking. You have to be justified. Always assess, reassess, react appropriately, assess, reassess, you know what I mean? It just gets into a cycle, where you are constantly justifying everything you are doing and ensuring that response to a given scenario is appropriate. It’s complex.

Later in the interview, when asked if there was anything he would like to add, O5 added,

The next generation of officers—their jobs are getting much more complex on a daily basis because of political influence, because of social media responses, because of unfriendly courts [...]. Now, it seems more and more the officer is under a microscope [...]. There’s a credibility issue and that’s all brought about by

pressures from social media [...]. I wouldn't want to start all over again today because it would be a very different job and the next generation out there—like there are cameras everywhere [...]. The decisions you make in an instant can be analyzed by [people] who do not have the full information. You're only getting one side of the story [...]. It's going to be interesting to see how things play out for the next generation.

Considering the constant internal assessment that officers seemingly need to do while feeling the pressures of public opinion, what O5 shared relates to a point expressed by E1, who also observed that because officers are being watched in ways they had not been before, it has resulted in officers using “accommodating force to gain compliance for fear of going overboard.” In other words, there is a sense of fear of doing too much and deciding to use accommodated or minimal levels of force, which seems to be driven by a fear of social media and public scrutiny. Using different levels of force, regardless of it being appropriate or not, is sometimes at odds with what officers are taught in training.

For instance, when asked about a time that stood out to him and when he used force, E1 gave an example where he was patrolling a busy street and a person was accosting people for cigarettes. Instead of wanting to talk when approached, the individual was starting to run away. According to E1, he could tell that the person was confrontational. “There was no other option but to use dominating force on [the civilian], to put him to the ground and handcuff him.” On such a busy street, it may appear to bystanders that the use of dominating force is aggressive. E1 comments further to say that by delaying UOF, officers increase the likelihood of someone getting hurt. In other words, if officers were too concerned about what bystanders perceived, a situation could escalate and the risk to public safety could persist. By delaying the use of effective strategies that would help an officer take control of a situation, “[officers and civilians] end up kind of wrestling back-and-forth and that's when officers are getting hurt—members of the public are getting hurt.”

E2 noted that the pattern of officers resisting their UOF as a result of what is occurring around the world and on social media is an issue across services in Ontario. She added:

If we fail to acknowledge that there are situations where people won't comply and won't listen and you have to actually do something to make them stop hurting people, then we're doing a disservice. To tell recruits that you can talk yourself out of anything and that you're never going to use force is a fallacy.

It is apparent that using force is an essential part of policing and police training. However, the lessons that are taught through training are challenged when officers begin to think that they should not use force or start to hold back because of the possibility that their actions could be captured and circulated on social media.

The sense of fear due to the implications of social media is a sentiment reiterated by O2. Before even delving deep into the interview questions, O2 and I were already discussing the effects of the media. O2 said,

The media is very scary for us because they can easily destroy your name and in my perspective, all we have is our dignity. To do this job, you have to be someone who has dignity and honesty and...or else you don't have credibility. Like the whole interaction with the public, I believe [...] for the most part, it's based on dignity and honesty and [...] good intent and what not. So we're always scared of what's going to come out [...] in the media. Is it going to destroy us? [...] Maybe it's only me, I don't know. Maybe no one else cares, but I do think it's a shared concern.

Based on what the other participants said, the implications of social media are certainly a shared concern. Such implications also call into question the role that training has in supporting officers as they navigate through the tension between education, practice and the pressures of public opinion.

As I listened to the participants and considered that I was learning by virtue of the perspectives that they were sharing with me, I realized that the officers were speaking on an aspect of PE and PP that is impacting the way in which they interact with the public. In other words, there are additional pressures and newer ways that society engages with technology that

shape and influence the way officers interact with civilians—sometimes causing officers to adapt or modify what they learned through PE. As a result of what the participants discussed, I think their insights have the potential to change our understanding of education in a very transformative way. By transformative, I am acknowledging the complexity theories described by Davis et al. (2015), who refer to the adaptive and evolving nature of teaching and learning while describing systemic sustainability approaches to education. This causes me to reflect and ask: what are the unaccounted realities to policing that officers are facing in practice and how are such realities informed in the UOF training materials that they are engaging with?

What is particularly interesting is when O4 expressed that he should technically be using force more often during certain encounters and in ways like his training has taught him. Because of today's social climate, however, it is an easier decision for him to get hurt in the line of duty than use a type of force that would be scrutinized by the media and impact his family. The role of social media and oversight from the public adds a complicated layer to how officers view their training and apply it to their practice. Consider O4's reflection on his UOF training and thoughts about what transpires while on patrol. Earlier in the interview, O4 provided an example of an incident that escalated into a dangerous situation. Put simply, O4 and his partner were called to a residence. Upon arrival, O4 saw a mother in the hallway. According to O4, she had a "blank stare" on her face. Suddenly, she was holding a large kitchen knife to her neck and forcing it into her skin. She started walking towards O4, who drew his taser and gave the mother two warnings—commanding her to drop the knife. She did not respond until O4 used his taser on her. O4 believes that he should have first, drawn his firearm (instead of his taser), waited for his partner to have his firearm drawn too and then switched to his taser. He mentioned, "[f]or all I know, she could've lunged at me at any time. And if my taser would've missed, she would've

stabbed me”. When asked how he thinks his UOF training relates to his experiences, O4 returned to this example of a UOF incident to support his response. While he thinks his training is right—that it makes it “so that [he and his partners] can come home every night,” he points out an aspect to policing that could be problematic. He said:

I find when you use force, the training relates 99% [...]. It's either you do it textbook, as you were trained, or you didn't do it as you're trained... and it might've worked out, but you might've put yourself in danger or you might've put the person in danger. And I'm just going to come back to my example. Like again, I had my taser out. It worked out in this scenario. But if she would've lunged at me, it would've been a whole different thing. And in that case, I didn't follow my scenario. I didn't follow my training.

The connection that O4 seems to be making is that things might have been different if, during this UOF incident, he made a different decision. Instead of drawing his firearm, he put himself at risk and did not follow what he understood about his training. Furthermore, it is an easier decision for him to go against his training in this regard because of the implications that other more lethal options might have after the fact. His comments made me return to what I considered about the challenges of teaching UOF while acknowledging the current state of policing. Retrospectively, his point of view caused me to ask myself the following questions: Is the training right because it prioritizes safety and provides tools for officers to be justified in their decisions? Is there an issue here in terms of finding it easier to make a decision that could be more detrimental than to follow what you've been taught through training? What does it mean to teach, train, or learn as a practitioner when there are external factors, like social media, that greatly complicate what an individual would actually do in practice? Let us not forget officers like O3, O6, O7 and E3 who spoke about buying into the training and using the space to apply what they do in practice to the road. Let us also not forget the officers who utilize other skills that come from extra curricular activities or other forms of training that are outside of their police

service and that have helped them during police-civilian encounters. Nevertheless, as it concerns applying UOF training to police-civilian encounters, does the learning change, become modified, or discarded when an individual knows that what he or she does can be heavily watched from unpredictable angles and dissected by the public?

A response to these questions would seem even more complicated by the idea that UOF, although similarly defined by those involved in the police profession, can still be applied differently among officers. I make this point while reflecting on the stories and examples that the participants of this study shared. I think that what the officers and I discussed touches on an area of policing that is not exclusive to education. As Brown (2016) puts it, access to an unprecedented volume of information and sources has created a new visibility of frontline police work. It is arguably bringing more attention to the way police behave and conduct themselves (Brown, 2020). Civilian oversight and social media have sociological and legal implications that also affect how the police are held accountable in society as well as how UOF is viewed by the public. Here, I am also referring to the legal aspects of UOF such as what is considered reasonable force, excessive force, or justifiable force. As members of society and passing bystanders, we have our perceptions of what we think are reasonable levels of force. We also impose expectations about policing in terms of how we believe officers should serve the public. Yet, a recent study that examined the relationship between stress, training and performance in a highly realistic lethal force scenario suggests that regardless of the amount of training and experience an officer has, the officer will not likely perform flawlessly under the unpredictable and uncontrollable circumstances of a critical incident (Baldwin et al., 2022). The role of social media today seems to be demanding educators to re-examine educational approaches and understandings that relate to learning about UOF and applying it in practice. It is showing that

despite the learning experienced through PE, there is a deeper issue that officers are faced with while making UOF-related decisions. I make this claim in light of the perspectives that multiple officers articulated.

This unexpected finding about social media, learning and practice also makes me re-think about what is considered PE. In other words, if PE refers to the formal or informal approach to learning, training, and preparation of a practitioner (like I point out earlier in the study and in the literature review), then why and how is it that officers are concerned about applying what they have been taught and learned in training to instances that occur in their PP. Why would an officer rather get hurt and go against what he has learned through training if the material is intended to support the relevant application of skills for officers on duty? Are officers using options that are more favourable than what their training suggests? Are there alternative strategies that are being fueled by this fear of social media? In addition, what does this mean for the professionalization of the training? Can the education be within a professional context if learning and experiences are essentially unique? What deeper issues are emerging here and have they been considered by educators? I pose these questions not because I necessarily have solutions but because I think that this unanticipated theme will be important to consider as another significant area of research relevant to advancing literature on education and police UOF. I return to this idea in the concluding chapter.

Chapter Summary

Through this analysis chapter, I have presented themes that synthesize my interpretation of the research data. I explored the similarities and differences among the UOF training materials that I collected from OPS as well as tensions embedded in the interview transcripts that I compiled after meeting with participants. Using examples from interviews with the officers and

educators, I provided direct or paraphrased quotes from the data to further illustrate the themes provided. I then presented an unanticipated theme that emerged and alluded to its relevance to the contributions of this study. At this stage, I would like to remind readers that the present study is done to explore police UOF, training and its effects on practice. I explore these issues further in the discussion chapter, which follows, while drawing educational links that delve deeper into the research questions.

Chapter 7 – Discussion

Chapter Overview

In this discussion chapter, I expand even further on the themes and analysis that were put forward in the previous section. I divided the chapter into four parts and focus on the research questions that were raised for the study—specifically:

1. How is use of force training conceived and approached in Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) official curriculum for patrol officers?
2. How is use of force defined by police officers and educators at OPS?
3. What are police officers' and educators' experiences of and perspectives on use of force (pre-service and/or in-service) training?
4. How do the officers and educators relate such professional education (PE) to their experiences during on-the-job encounters with civilians, particularly in instances where such officers use or do not use force?

For each section, I ground the discussion in educational links to constructivism and social constructivism, which are the theoretical frameworks that have oriented the study. As I unpack the analysis of the data, I refer to the approaches to education explained by Davis et al. (2015) and some of the articles presented in the literature review chapter to support the relevance of the discussion. I also explain perspectives that can be critiqued and make suggestions that I think merit further exploration.

How UOF Training is Conceived and Approached in OPS's Official Curriculum

I have framed a discussion around this key question by focusing on two components: 1) educational approaches embedded in the UOF training and 2) tensions to consider about the learning objectives.

Educational Approaches within the UOF Training

First, I would like to return to the language and vocabulary that Davis et al. (2015) offer in terms of educational approaches to teaching. As I mentioned in my document analysis, the UOF training materials have elements that reinforce standardized approaches to teaching. While the UOF educators teach a diverse set of learners, the same content is used every time training is delivered. In other words, all officers are taught the same concepts, the same UOF provincial model, and the same UOF policies. The officers are also, presumably, asked the same questions because the UOF educators are provided with the content that would guide discussion. By approaching education this way, the UOF training incorporates teaching styles that imply a one-way transaction. That is, the educators are providing an educational opportunity to the officers and the learning ends there. A two-way transaction would suggest that the educators and learners are mutually learning from each other. In other words, the material is negotiated and both the officers and the educators have opportunities to collectively learn. Negotiated learning does not appear to be the case with how the UOF training is designed. Nor is it the case when considering the way that the officers talk about their educators. Here, I am referring to O3 who described the UOF instructors as “high quality” and O2 who said the instructors are “taking out [...their] baggage and [they are] giving [him] that knowledge”. In other words, OPS has structured its UOF training around the assumption that learning is simply a matter of *transferring* information that learners will uniformly *acquire*. These qualities are quite similar to traditional, standardized and didactic teaching approaches.

My point is not to say that standardization and didactic teaching styles are always poor approaches to education. Such techniques may be necessary for consistency and uniformity. After all, standardized approaches to education were influenced by the industrial era and

prepared individuals for the workforce (Davis et al., 2015). During that time, educators were viewed as the source of knowledge and learners were viewed as taking in the information that was provided. Perhaps this approach works for the needs and demands of the police profession. There are, however, implications to designing training with such standardization. Although OPS has incorporated lecture-styled formats in their UOF training, we know through literature in education that passive approaches can be ineffective ways to teach learners (Mugford et al., 2013; Sweller, 2006). Mismanaged learning can be disadvantageous to a professional's practice because it tends to do little to support the learner (Chambers et al., 2010). This is especially true when teaching focuses on *passing on* information to individuals in a one-dimensional manner (Davis et al., 2015). As the literature suggests, traditional teaching strategies often assume that lectures will effectively support officers' learning (Birzer, 2003; Cerpa et al., 1996; Glasgow & Lepatski, 2012).

I would recommend that instructional designers consider moving beyond passive approaches because learning is more fluid than that. Progressive strategies in education show that learning is a reflexive process that continuously reorganizes thoughts and actions of learners (Chiang & Karjalainen, 2021). While OPS's UOF training materials stipulate that officers must *know* the UOF policies through training, these passive techniques can be ineffective when it comes to ensuring that the material has actually been learned or understood. Just because something is presented to a person, it does not necessarily mean that he or she understood it. To understand something means more than just being told information and presuming that it will be acquired. People learn through experience and it shapes their understanding of ideas and concepts.

One consideration might be to position the training as the continuous *recontextualization* of learning, as mentioned in the literature review (Evans et al., 2010; Guile, 2014; Taylor et al., 2010). That is, recognizing and acknowledging the meanings that the learners have brought to the classroom or previously constructed while also working with the context of policing and OPS specifically. Presently, the officers at OPS are going into the training with their own interpretations, experiences and construals about UOF. They are also learning more about UOF and having opportunities to practice or be refreshed on skills covered 12 months prior. Such officers are then ending their training, in most cases, with an opportunity to demonstrate and validate their skills. This is not to say that the validation of UOF skills via certification is not a learning opportunity itself. In fact, the officers would learn whether or not they are meeting organizational competencies or the extent to which they have achieved targeted goals. Based on theoretical frameworks like constructivism and social constructivism, which explain that meaning is individually construed or internalized based largely on joint activities, the training could be structured in a way to support the recontextualization of meaning. Basil Bernstein (2000) explains that concepts change as they move from their origins and into curriculum. Bert van Oers (1998) also discusses how concepts are an integral part of practice and that practice varies from one context to another. The professional and educational aspects of OPS's UOF training explains and establishes a certain context of understanding about UOF for the officers. With these notions in mind, my point is to say that it would be valuable to recontextualize the officers' understandings of UOF in a way that supports them during practice.

Another idea is to consider working with the diverse experiences and perspectives that individuals have and structure learning activities in a way that enhances their collective understandings. Recall what the officers and educators discussed in terms of ways they think

their UOF training could be improved. In the analysis chapter, I quote participants such as O6 and E3 who said, from their perspective, annual UOF training is not enough. This was echoed by other officers and educators during our interview. At the same time, there are officers like O8 who appreciate the scenarios, whereas others like O1 question how the scenarios are a reflection of day to day life. It is interesting to compare this perspective with what O7 expressed which was that the scenarios, for her, are very helpful because “[i]t is like it is on the road.” I am also reminded that O2 described immersion as the best way to master UOF related skills. In addition, E2 commented that “[n]ot everybody learns at the same pace [...] and for the people who need more time, the time isn't always there.”

Here, the officers and educators are speaking from their perspective and experiences and insinuate that if certain elements were incorporated into existing training, then the training could resonate even more and speak to their needs. As per a radical constructivist lens and with authentic education approaches in mind, this makes sense. The needs of learners must be met in order for them to make compatible links with, and reorganize, their understandings. The challenge for curriculum developers and policy-makers is to reconcile these competing priorities and preferences with each other while also ensuring that all officers, regardless of their experiences, are meeting certain benchmarks and performance standards.

I recognize that the suggestions made by the participants are ideas that may seem difficult to work with, given current obligations and constraints within policing. Such constraints might include limited resources, facility space, or the inability to train officers more frequently. However, adopting more progressive and innovative strategies to educate the officers while recognizing their diversities does not necessarily have to mean adding more resources. It also does not have to mean neglecting the realities of policing or the needs of learners. Here, I am

referring to some of the examples that participants of the present study provided (i.e., scenarios that reflect day to day policing, or training that takes an immersive approach). The topic of resourcing and financial priorities may continue to be challenges within the organization. However, with a systemic sustainability approach to education in mind, it is valuable to structure the learning in a way that works with such challenges and diversities.

I also acknowledge that through training, OPS is trying to create a common and consistent experience for officers so that they achieve provincially mandated expectations. By common and consistent experience, I am referring to the fact that the same content is used in training to teach all officers. After all, the training is a reflection of policies and legislation related to UOF that do not change for the individual officer. However, constructivism reminds us that individuals are constantly accommodating their schemas or knowledge to deal with their experiences, which looks different for each person (Proulx, 2006). The reality of individual experiences would thereby suggest that standardization of education should not be a priority. Learning is about a person construing a world that makes coherent sense to that individual (Davis et al., 2015). Officers bring different backgrounds and schemas to the training and their diversities cannot be ignored.

Indeed, diversity can be an asset in progressive education settings. Strategies commonly found with more progressive approaches—such as those that have been explored in literature (Andersen et al., 2018; Andersen & Poplawski, 2020; Haberfeld et al., 2012; McKenna, 2018)—may actually increase the likelihood for officers to learn the content more deeply. I agree with Andersen and Poplawski (2020) when they say we need to shift our thinking towards a direction that examines how humans learn. They seem to have a grasp of more innovative ways to think about training police officers—ways that do not revert back to the shortcomings of lectures and

instruction. Shifting our thinking about education is even more important today if we consider what scholars have argued as an urgent need in research about policing (Bennell et al., 2021). To put it another way, teaching important information like UOF laws and policies is essential, but there are other, more realistic and effective ways to do this than through lectures (Andersen et al., 2018; Armstrong et al., 2014). Teaching strategies can be improved.

With that said, OPS's UOF training does make an effort to actively engage officers by incorporating different scenarios, videos, and discussion. This is illustrated by participants like O6, O7 and O9 when they express what they enjoyed or found to be rewarding about their training. The techniques used align with and demonstrate the value of more progressive authentic and democratic citizenship approaches to education (Davis et al., 2015). As Chambers et al. (2010) point out, learners are more engaged when activities in professional programs are realistic. The training documents that I examined demonstrate that OPS considers and acknowledges the types of interactions that officers may face during their duties—especially by including situations that involve a person in crisis. Research has said that mental health-related emergency calls to the police are increasing and challenging (Iacobucci, 2014). By incorporating different scenarios into the curriculum, including ones that get the police to recognize challenges related to mental health, officers have the chance to develop certain skills by virtue of the training (Berlin, 2014; Kaminski & Martin, 2000).

To expand on the value of scenarios even further, we may consider the studies mentioned in the literature review. Recall that research shows practitioners feel more prepared when they have opportunities to explore and develop practical skills (Hensley et al., 2017; Lotter et al., 2016; Yardley et al., 2012). Scenarios and role-playing are effective training techniques because officers can make mistakes, learn from them, and do better while in practice. Literature on police

training has also seen the value of this technique by suggesting that scenarios and simulations can help officers work through their decision-making skills. According to Lewinski (2019), a focus on decision-making skills currently appears to be underemphasized in training. OPS's use of scenarios in an effort to be relatable with the officers coincides with more progressive and authentic education approaches currently endorsed by educational thinkers such as Davis et al. (2015). These newer approaches highlight personalized learning, diverse developmental stages of the learner, and more realistic understandings. Similar to what has been argued in literature (Clark et al., 2006; Rosenbaum et al., 2017), I think scenarios are helpful for police officers because it gives the police the space to cultivate skills in a controlled training environment rather than for the first time while responding to a call involving the public. However, I am not neglecting the fact that the UOF training does not only consist of scenarios—there are standardized aspects to the training as well.

Considerations for Learning Objectives

Another tension that emerged from the UOF training materials relates to the learning objectives. I will make two points here: 1) OPS's learning objectives lack the detail needed to signify to an educator and learner that they have achieved the intended goal of the course; and 2) a single-minded focus on the achievement of pre-defined learning objectives is itself critiqued in education.

In terms of the first point, learning goals are thought to be useful because they establish the purpose of the content that is included in a course (Adams, 2015). In the field of education, Bloom's taxonomy is a well known and widely used method to classify learning tasks. Educators often use Bloom's taxonomy to write learning objectives because it enables a coherent, logical and organized process to education. It is also used to facilitate the development of learners and

foster their achievement of competencies (Ramirez, 2017). In particular, Bloom's taxonomy assists curriculum developers with identifying verbs that can measure learning outcomes and create criteria for success. Having said that, Adams (2015) implores educators to consider including evaluative language in learning objectives to address how learning will be assessed as individuals work towards identified goals. According to the author, the lack of verbs related to evaluation in learning objectives is a shortcoming in education. Where necessary, evaluative language can help to depict the goals of a course. While many educators in training programs use Bloom's taxonomy to create learning objectives, there tends to be too much emphasis on verbs related to knowledge and comprehension, which neglects language that would indicate assessment (Adams, 2015).

OPS also emphasizes the knowledge and comprehension elements of learning objectives in their UOF training materials. As pointed out in the analysis chapter, the learning objective rarely state how concepts or skills will be assessed. OPS does this by framing the objectives as giving officers lectures, demonstrations and opportunities to observe or practice the topic at hand. It is assumed that the officers will have a general understanding of a task, concept or skill if some or all of these conditions are in place. I argue that learning objectives are not as effective when they are written as general statements. Here, I am referring to the 26 lesson plans from OPS that I reviewed and that often start with "Given a lecture and demonstrations, officers will have a general understanding of..." This framing of a learning objective was also made in the lesson plan that I cited in the previous chapter about searching a handcuffed person. While officers may be given a lecture and demonstration on how to search an individual, instruction and observation do not necessarily mean that the officers understand or know what to do when it comes to performing this task. In other words, it is unclear if the learner will actually have an

understanding of this task in the way that the lesson predicts—even if the understanding only needs to be general. How do we know if an officer has an understanding of searching a handcuffed person? Is it enough to deduce that given a lecture, learners will understand the correct procedure? Framing learning objectives such as the one mentioned makes the target vague.

At the same time, perhaps simply having a general understanding of certain tasks *is* all that OPS expects of officers. That is, maybe general knowledge is all that is required of the officers and OPS aims to achieve this expectation through lectures and demonstrations. In other words, officers only need to be told and shown what to do in order to understand what is expected and how to do it. If that is the case, then the learning objective maintains the assumption that learning is linear and a standardized approach to education is what can achieve this objective. If having a general understanding is not the only objective (i.e., officers need to follow correct procedures), then the question still remains: how is it determined that the learner has “obtained” a general understanding? What signifies that the learner has followed correct procedures and how will this be illustrated? What might occur if an officer is required to search a handcuffed person but does not recall how to do so—even though he or she would have been instructed and observed a demonstration?

Searching a handcuffed person could be a straightforward task for officers, but understanding how to do this task might not be so simple to everyone. Certainly, there is a particular process to follow when searching a person and officers need to understand what they are doing. The process is detailed in OPS’s lesson plan and delivered as a demonstration, whereby officers are listening and observing. However, I am left to wonder how can the educator and learner ensure that he or she understands this part of their duties during training? Although I

am speaking about one of several topics in the UOF training materials, the point I am making applies to all of the other lesson plans that I reviewed as well (i.e., using a baton, an OC spray, completing a high-risk vehicle stop, etc.). Are lectures and demonstrations sufficient approaches to knowing and learning these skills? With that said, I think it is important to consider what is the focus of the lesson plan and how might the learning objective illustrate that certain targets can be achieved through training.

Moving onto the second point, research has actually examined and critiqued the overall purpose behind learning objectives (Erikson & Erikson, 2019; Harris & Clayton, 2019). While formal models for learning objectives allow for transparency among students and educators (Jackson, 2000), there is debate on how accurately such goals can predict the outcome of learners prior to a course, lesson or program occurring (Erikson & Erikson, 2019; Tyler, 2013). As mentioned, learning objectives are valuable to strive for but they also cast doubt on how educators and curriculum developers can truly control where learners will be in their development—whether it is before, during or after a course. Rosiek and Clandinin (2016) argue that curriculum cannot anticipate or predict everything that educators need to plan for, nor can a lesson plan prescribe everything that will happen. In fact, the unpredictable nature of what will occur through training can present different opportunities and outcomes for learning. It also speaks to the diverse construals we have as individuals, like constructivism would suggest, or the meaning that we make jointly, as argued by social constructivists thinkers. To make this point further, let us consider the studies that I presented in the literature review.

Sims (2010) examined the outcome of a course for teachers that talked about a teaching strategies. The point of the training was to have teachers incorporate inclusive and collaborative techniques in their practice. According to the author, training about co-teaching did little to

change the teachers' perspectives on inclusive practices. The lack of change was because the teachers believed that they were already incorporating inclusive strategies into their work. Thus, the goal of the training was ineffective because the teachers had decided for themselves that what they were learning confirmed what they already knew and did. Having considerations for the learning objectives in this case was unhelpful because the aim of the course did not reflect what was achieved. In other words, learning about co-teaching was no longer a relevant objective because the teachers felt this was already learned.

Similarly, in Rosenbaum et al.'s (2017) study, training for police recruits in Chicago did little to change the officers' attitudes towards procedural justice or their communication skills. As mentioned in the literature review chapter, the training did have positive impacts for the officers in terms of developing respectful behaviours and improving decision-making skills, however, these elements were not the focus of the material. Instead, the focus was on attitudes towards procedural justice and communication skills. Trying to create meaningful learning objectives may be important for program designers, yet such efforts are of little use when the learners are reaching other goals. Unexpected developments that happen as learning occurs might still be quite valuable to the goals of education.

As Wise (1976) puts it, the means or route to an objective may be just as important as the endpoint, however, the objective is not always easy or simple to predict. More complex ideas and approaches to education illustrate the limitations in considering learning and objectives as something that are fixed and predictable. As such, scholars have viewed education, including curriculum, as an experiential process (Clandinin & Connelly, 1992; Oyer, 2012; Rosiek & Clandinin, 2012). For instance, William Pinar (2012) describes curriculum as a "complicated conversation" (p. 30). In other words, curriculum is lived, situated and co-produced by educators,

learners, culture and discourse—all of which have diverse experiences to add to the conversation. That being said, it is challenging to pre-determine a conversation that has yet to occur, especially when certain factors and people involved have a range of experiences to contribute. A critique or at least reconsideration of the assumption that learning is a linear and predictable path to pre-set learning objectives is thus something that OPS—and perhaps professional educators more broadly—ought to undertake.

Even if we provisionally accept this assumption, I argue that the learning objectives in the UOF training materials at OPS are not as clearly written as they could be. Nor do they describe how learners and educators can ensure that the learning goals and expectations are reached. Having a pre-set learning objective for activities such as a course or training material is challenging to predict and write in principle. However, if learning objectives are included in educational programming, it is important to consider how such expectations are communicated. Such considerations should also be made for language that focuses on assessment. I think it may be valuable for OPS to revisit the purpose behind including learning objectives to their training and explore what measures are important to indicate. This can help to confirm that the officers have the expected knowledge, skills and abilities through the UOF training.

How Officers and Educators Define UOF

The second research question is about how the officers and educators define UOF. As I referenced in the analysis chapter, the participants described UOF in similar ways. When asked, the officers and educators were able to describe UOF using terminology that did not seem to describe an entirely different concept. It was clear that we were talking about UOF. The only difference in their definitions is that the officers referenced various components of the term while the educators focused their definition on an officer's point of view.

On one hand, the officers explained UOF as being about control, a spectrum, safety, etc. and they touched on many facets of UOF. Even though “gaining control” and “ensuring safety” can relate to one another, the same officer did not express these ideas. While I can assume that what the officers expressed in their response is all that they think about UOF, I believe that the participating officers did not expand further on their definition because what they were saying already addressed different components of UOF.

On the other hand, the educators, who varied in their responses too, focused their depictions on the officer’s abilities, actions and perceptions. Immediately, the educators talked about UOF in terms of the legislative authority, the fact that it ranges on a spectrum, and what an officer chooses to do considering what he or she perceives. While the ideas among the educators were expressed using different words, there is more cohesion in what the educators said compared to what the officers said. Aspects such as the legislation, the continuum and officers’ perceptions all have to do with what is covered in the UOF training. For this reason, I concluded that the educators’ definitions were more focused on the point of view of officers, whereas the officers touched on various aspects. What I am essentially trying to point out is that both sets of participants have construed similar definitions of UOF but use different words and concepts to anchor their thoughts.

What I think is particularly interesting is how much the educators’ UOF definitions echo what is written in legislation. I started to speculate on why this might be the case. I attribute the idea that the educators similarly incorporate terms from legislation to their definition because all of the educators have taught UOF training and have been required to convey the same messaging to officers. As a result, the educators have come to an understanding of UOF from a legal standpoint. Having seen the lesson plans and PPT presentations that educators work with, it is

not surprising that they are able to articulate essential aspects of UOF. I also find that the educators have more experience working with UOF in the police profession than the other participating officers. Although there are officers with over 20 years of service working at OPS, there are UOF educators who have been entrenched in these concepts by working with the UOF curriculum. On top of being educators, the participants are also officers who have encountered some form of UOF in their professional career. With more experience, it is likely that the educators would similarly understand what UOF means—especially if they have had to fill out UOF reports. Hence, it is not surprising that there would be similarities in how the educators describe UOF. Similar to the officers, the differences in their definitions only slightly vary.

At the same time, I realized that both the officers and educators participate in UOF training yearly. Given the selection criteria for my study, having participated in the UOF training yearly means that the officers and educators would have gone through UOF concepts at least five times in the last five years. Yet, I wondered, why wouldn't the officers' and educators' definitions align more closely? Let us return to the theoretical frameworks of the thesis to answer this question.

From a constructivist lens, the difference in what the participants verbalize through their explanations illustrates how learning is about individual interpretations (Piaget, 1954). What the participants have construed about UOF has become viable for them. In other words, they have *adapted* their understanding of UOF to what OPS teaches through training and policy (von Glasersfeld, 1995). Understanding learning as *individual interpretations* is a stark contrast from the traditional approaches to education that I described earlier. Taking into account individual interpretations means not assuming that people can simply transmit information that learners eventually acquire. Instead, people interpret concepts differently, even if there are some parallels

or compatibilities in how their understandings are articulated. In this case, the officers and educators generally have compatible understandings of UOF; however, they use different words to express their understandings because their interpretations are individual and unique to them.

We may also examine the participants' descriptions of UOF through a social constructivist lens—particularly if we consider communities of practice (CoP) (Farnsworth et al., 2016; Lave & Wenger, 1991). Initially, I did not think to use CoP as a theoretical framework for the study. But as I pointed out in chapter 2, it is a theory that derives from the same principles as social constructivism, thus, it is reasonable to relate this point of discussion to CoP. Recall that CoP describes a group of people engaged in a process of collective learning. Through the sharing practices, information and experience as well as the use of accepted tools and language, members move from the periphery of a community to the centre while gaining a recognized level of *expertise* (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2014). With this theory in mind, it is logical to assert that the educators and officers adapt their understanding and articulation of UOF in order to move towards more central participation. It is the public and social performance of the words that they use that matter in CoPs. An individual's internal construals, per se, are less important. Hence, with a CoP perspective, it would not be imperative to understand why the participants' definitions do not align more closely as individuals, because it is more important to observe how the term is conveyed and utilized by members of the profession collectively.

Further to this point on accepted language and movement from the periphery to the centre of a CoP is an idea related to what I had mentioned earlier—which is, compared to the officers, the educators are the more experienced practitioners working with UOF in the police profession. Certainly, the educators' UOF definitions will reflect OPS's policies and the provincial legislation because they have been working with a community developing UOF training and

learning collectively with others at OPS. As such, it makes sense that the educators' definition are similar to each other. Here, I am not suggesting that with more time, seasoned practitioners will have the same UOF definition. I am also not suggesting that the participating officers did or do not spend as much time with these concepts compared to the educators. What I am alluding to is that the educators have had experiences with teaching the UOF training and additional experiences being everyday officers. This does not mean, of course, that the educators necessarily believe the same thing or that they have the same construals regarding UOF. In fact, they do not even have to use the same words to describe UOF. However, their understandings do have to be viable for them to function in the police profession and participate in the CoP. In other words, their understanding of UOF has led them to be more central to the community of policing and articulate a definition that mirrors the UOF policies and legislation.

As a researcher contributing to the domain of education, the responses from the officers and UOF educators reminds us that people may not explain concepts in exactly the same way as they have been taught; however, the notion that training influences what the officers understand of UOF is not lost within the study. Participants had different yet similar UOF definitions because they are accommodating experiences that they gained through training or through their work with their pre-existing knowledge. The officers and educators demonstrate through their definitions that they have created similar meanings but not ones that are explicitly the same as their colleagues. Perhaps it is less important to cite the same exact definition but more critical to deeply understand the term in a way that will lead to more thoughtful action or improvements in police services.

Officers' and Educators' Perspectives on UOF Training

The next topic relates to perspectives on UOF training. While the participants shared a number of insights about their pre-service and in-service training, I focus my discussion in two areas: 1) what the participants deem as priority for training, and 2) their perspectives on the training environment and the credibility of the UOF instructors.

Priorities within UOF Training

The analysis chapter illustrated that scenarios were greatly enjoyed by most of the officers because they often imitated what the police encounter during their patrol. This view was also shared among the educators. However, the participants had contrasting perspectives in terms of where OPS can improve in the UOF training. As mentioned earlier, two officers favoured the idea of integrating psychological and physical assessments to the training, whereas others highlighted the need to further develop de-escalation and firearms skills throughout the year. What is interesting to note is the distinction that the officers make about the type of skills they wish to strengthen. Recall that one officer believed that training should spend more time on scenarios and less time on handcuffing or striking. Another officer felt that grounding techniques, which involves using hand and foot skills, should be heavily emphasized in the training. We may also recall that an educator mentioned that officers often use their hands and foot skills to gain control of a person and situation even though little time is spent on this during training.

For every officer who preferred learning new skills or having more opportunities for training, there were other participants, including educators, who believed that there is not enough time to integrate such exercises into the curriculum. Additional training just does not seem to be feasible, unlike other areas of specialty in OPS that have such capacity (i.e., the tactical unit). In

any case, many of the officers thought that the purpose of UOF training was to improve on or learn new skills. In contrast, the educators felt that the purpose of the yearly certification is to merely refresh the officers on their UOF options. Here, I am pointing out that the officers and educators have different perceptions of the training that they receive. What I observed, which is arguably unfortunate, is that what is mandated for UOF training does not prioritize in-depth skill development or repetition like the officers and educators wish it could. Instead, officers are advised to follow up on their desire to improve their skills with additional training—either in-house or externally. The root of what makes this unfortunate could perhaps be explained by the difference between training and certification. Training and certification are not nuanced in the way that the UOF training materials are presently designed. That is, on one hand, the officers get to practice their UOF skills, yet, there are components of the training where they need to be certified. How can this be reconciled? Should training be a learning activity that is separate from certification?

The link to education that can be made here, based on what the participants shared, is that learning looks different to everyone. From a constructivist perspective, people are unique individuals with different experiences and construals (Proulx, 2006). Training techniques that are effective for one type of person may be ineffective for another, and vice versa (Kalyuga et al., 2003; Paas et al., 2003). It is unrealistic to teach groups of people uniformly and assume that they will, as a result, arrive to the same understandings (von Glasersfeld, 1990). We can see the pertinence of this constructivist insight based on what the officers think is important to them about training. What should be prioritized according to one person may be repetitive, lack emphasis or be just enough exposure to another—because of their differing experiences.

Teaching to the various levels of understandings or proficiency of a group of learners is challenging. As noted in the literature, too much repetition in a professional curriculum can disinterest practitioners and disrupt the learning process, especially when new learning does not occur (DeMink-Carthew et al., 2016; Powell & Bodur, 2019). On the other hand, frequent reinforcement can have positive effects like it did in a study on medical professional education. Specifically, frequent review of case studies in a medical program had increased the quality of patient care (Olander et al., 2018). In any case, there was significant diversity and contention related to training priorities among the participants in the present study. Such diversity and contention are inevitable and not necessarily a problem from a constructivist perspective. Rather, educators must acknowledge and learn to work with these diversities and contentions.

Although I imagine that addressing the competing priorities of the participants is difficult, it may be necessary for OPS to examine more practical ways of facilitating collaborative learning. Doing so may address the needs of multiple officers. This suggestion is also encouraged in literature given the benefits of prioritizing meaningful approaches to teaching. By focusing on the needs of learners, educators could address the differences among individuals while also acknowledging that people have complex and diverse experiences (Blankenship & Ayers, 2010; Kretchmar, 2008; Nsemo et al., 2013). In other words, curriculum designers can make use of approaches in social constructivism and CoP to foster some form of peer teaching.

Now, some readers may ask if this is already being done with the UOF instructors. I would argue that it is not. If the training was already adapting to diverse individual experiences and skills, then the officers and educators might not have made the comments they did concerning the need to shift priorities in the UOF training. If we reframe our thinking and begin

to view diversity and collaboration as playing central roles in training, then educators would be better able to bring forward effective and innovative strategies for learners, while still meeting formal provincial requirements. By doing so, the officers would hopefully see that they are contributing to their own learning process and have the opportunity to gain value from it too. What I am alluding to is the premise that officers are not stagnant learners, but are individuals with diverse needs and who are constantly revising their schemas to adapt to their experiences. By working together in collaboration, there is space in training for their learning to be more than just an individual experience. It can foster a network or community of learners, who lean on each other to navigate through the conceptualization of UOF. This point relates to the learning environment, which I expand on in the next sub-section.

Valued Learning Environment and UOF Instructors

I think that the officers and educators appreciate an environment where people can learn from and with each other because their environment encourages growth and breaks down traditional teacher-student hierarchies. As I point out in the analysis chapter, the officers really held their UOF instructors in high regard because of their experience and the fact that they created a positive learning environment. Such supportive strategies can be seen through the teaching methods employed by the educators, who also described their efforts in creating a safe, judgment-free experience (i.e., a setting where people, including themselves, can learn).

According to social constructivism, we learn because we are participants and co-facilitators of a culture. We contribute to what societies or communities believe and then internalize such beliefs as our own understandings (Michaelsen, 2004; Wenger, 1998). Having experienced practitioners involved in the learning process in a course for training is productive because it often exemplifies best practices that are acceptable and appropriate in that community

or social context. That is, officers can participate and interact with more experienced police practitioners (i.e., the educators) because it is an experience which supports their internalization of best practices within their community.

Although the expertise and credibility of educators are valued in standardized forms of education, their value can also be reframed in more progressive terms specific to social constructivist theories like CoP. As explained by Wenger et al. (2002), access to more experienced practitioners helps the learner to reorganize their own performance so that they can be successful in a CoP. Teachers and medical professionals have described the benefit of learning *through interaction with* those who were more experienced (Durning & Artino, 2011; Tame, 2013). Educational literature has supported the idea that knowledgeable mentors are important for a learner's success (Glazerman et al., 2010). This is also true in police literature, which has shown that mentorship from an experienced officer is important for the learning of newer officers (Bothell, 2005; Hoel, 2019; Inzer & Crawford, 2005).

Perhaps, not surprisingly though, officers draw upon more traditional, standardized notions of learning when describing what they value about their instructors because it is what learners are used to. We often see instructors and educators as individuals who have knowledge for learners to acquire. In having reviewed my analysis of the data, I noticed that the officers would position the educators as individuals who *have* a wealth of credible experience to *pass* on to students, such as themselves. This perspective is different from viewing the educators as skillful professionals who simply play a role in shaping the educational culture and experiences that learners internalize. With the former perspective, the teacher-student dichotomy is structured in a way where the teacher is at the top of the hierarchy and most knowledgeable. With the latter point of view, the hierarchy is not as definitive and the teacher and student are learning together.

As O2 puts it, if the UOF instructors are not “taking from their baggage” and giving officers knowledge, then what are they really offering? O2’s question illustrates that the UOF instructors are viewed as teachers in a traditional sense. In other words, they are telling the students, or in this case, officers, what the threshold is for using force as well as confirming whether or not their de-escalation techniques were appropriate in a scenario. This is despite the fact that the UOF training includes exercises that encourage discussion and collaborative learning between experienced and novice professionals. I raise this point about encouraging discussion because it seems that conversations or alternative strategies to handling a UOF situation cannot stray too far from expectations that are outlined in the UOF training. Here, I mean to say that the UOF instructors would still have to return to or validate ideas that officers debate so that they align with OPS’s UOF policies and what is provincially mandated. Thus, officers will continue to look to their educators as the source of knowledge because they are the people who steer the direction of the learning that occurs through training. Put differently, the onus is on the instructor to determine if the officers sufficiently understand UOF concepts in order to be certified or re-certified. The educators will also continue to be viewed by the officers as people who have “credible” experience to teach novice learners.

Considering the main point of how the officers and educators perceive their UOF training, I am cognizant of the fact that the officers highly respect their instructors. At the same time, I am also mindful that the valuable role of educators can be understood in different ways. Traditional assumptions may inadvertently suggest that the UOF instructors transmit information downward to officers and that the officers are passive learners who acquire what the educators transfer. Having considered constructivism and social constructivism, I have pointed out why viewing learning this way is a limitation.

Furthermore, how the officers view their UOF training contrasts with the type of learning environment that the educators seem to try to create. The instructors see themselves as playing an important role in the officers' training experiences, but they presume that they are creating an environment of shared learning as opposed to being instructors with an authoritative role. For instance, we can consider what E2 said about constantly telling officers that she is not necessarily teaching them anything, only reminding them of what they do all the time. What I find ironic and contradictory is the fact that, at the end of the day, the UOF instructors still have a curriculum to follow and officers still have to demonstrate necessary skills in order to pass provincial qualifiers. In a sense, the shared learning is not as negotiated as it may appear since the educators will still need to evaluate the officers. This is despite the fact that the participants expressed their appeal to a learning environment that is shared and communal—like more progressive approaches to education would endorse.

The UOF training materials default to traditional ways of learning by outlining explicit instructions for the educators and learners; and, it leads me to wonder to what extent the training environment that the participants described truly fosters a space where learning is a mutual experience and supportive for both the educators and the officers. My sense is that it is particularly hard to reconcile standardized approaches with strategies that are more progressive and emphasize diversity, democracy or collaboration (Davis et al., 2015). How might the educators foster a learning environment that is social and mutual when the training materials are based on prescriptive policies and pre-set objectives?

As a researcher examining these issues in the field of education, I believe that if we consider constructivism, social constructivism and related approaches to education, we can explore new and more engaging ways to structure teaching and learning among individuals with

different levels of proficiency while also educating them on what is important in a profession. It is critical to recognize that learners cannot be viewed the same way, nor should they be expected to learn the same way.

Orienting ourselves to understand the diversity among learners could lead to more personal, collaborative and effective educational practices. For instance, scholars have explored different avenues to education by looking at evidence or science-based research on training and practice (Haberfeld et al., 2012; McKenna, 2018). According to research, there have been improvements in performance and reduced UOF errors when the physiological responses of stress among officers (i.e., heart rate and sweat) are considered during training (Andersen et al., 2018; Andersen & Poplawski, 2020). I find managing stress levels during training to be representative of a more authentic approach to education because it accounts for what is occurring within the individual officer. Training can be structured in a way that is more personalized while putting aside factors that impede a learner's success. As Andersen and Gustafsberg (2016) point out, improving training means analyzing how the brain and body work during real police-civilian encounters. In light of what participants shared in my study, I have wondered if there is an opportunity for OPS to structure police PE in more innovative ways. For example, educators can be viewed not simply as authorities who transfer information but also as valuable mentors who, through sharing credible experiences, bring officers from the periphery of a CoP to its centre. Perhaps viewing the educators as mentors would bring about an even more valued learning environment.

How Training relates to Officers' and Educators' UOF Experiences

In this last area of discussion, I wish to focus on the final research question, which can be rephrased with the following: how do the participants relate their PE to their experiences using or

not using force? For both the officers and educators, their experiences have led them to believe that training plays an important role during their encounters—whether they are conscious of it or not. Both sets of participants were confident that a lot of what they learn and do in their professional practice (PP) comes from how they apply their training and their overall life experiences. According to the participants, their UOF education is foundational to their encounters as it often informs their decisions to use and not use force. It also gives them the necessary tools and language to justify their actions or recognize when a situation is getting out of control.

Responses from the officers and educators seem to connote that PE provides learners with *something* that impacts what they do, how they think and what they feel. For instance, most of the officers noted that training helped to build their confidence and muscle memory. It has also taught them the various levels of force and appropriate ways to de-escalate a situation. Similar to the officers, the educators believe that training instills in them a level of awareness that is useful for managing police-civilian encounters. These are “things” and skills that training has instilled in the officers. At the same time, the participants explained that their life outside of training and policing influences and is influenced by their interactions with the public. For example, some of the officers believed that their personality, comfort level or the interpersonal skills they gained through travel has taught them to connect better with people. For others, the time invested in improving their firearm skills or the martial arts classes that they would take were viewed as more meaningful factors. It is important that I remind readers that the research study did not aim to make these distinctions clear for or to the participants. Within the parameters of the thesis, I was more interested in understanding the officers’ and educators’

perspectives. It is remarkable what the participants and I were able to explore through their point of view.

What I also think is interesting to note for this study is how the educators grappled with this interview and research question. From their perspective, training is important but their reaction to a situation can also be described as instinctive, based on their life experiences and validated by principles covered in UOF training. According to the educators, the UOF training has tried to expose officers to various situations so that officers would find their training relatable to their life experiences and something that they could refer to during an encounter. Through a constructivist lens, this assertion about exposure can be described as shaping officers' experiences. That is, training *is* an experience and our experiences *influence* how we navigate in or make interpretations of the world. In other words, training relates to the officers' and educators' police-civilian encounters because it simultaneously expands their interpretations of situations and shapes how they react during interactions. The meaning that comes with training will affect the learner and ultimately manifest through practice.

While considering the issue of PE and PP, which I essentially aimed to explore through the thesis, it appears to me that the participants' responses further illustrate why this topic is a contested terrain. In some ways, training is foundational to the officers' and educators' experience, but it is not everything because of what occurs in conjunction with or outside of training. In other ways, life activities, events, and experiences play a significant (sometimes larger) role. Given that UOF training is something that OPS officers experience, it could be said that training is a life experience that relates to how the police interact with the public—especially when it involves using and refraining from using force. Training causes officers to reflect on their beliefs, attitudes, behaviours and values. Such aspects are essentially entangled with how

individuals interact with one another. Thus, it is evident that training relates to UOF experiences because the two are enmeshed.

Considering the unanticipated theme I presented in the previous chapter, it could be argued that social media also plays an important role in how officers relate their training to practice. Stemming from data used to survey and interview officers and officials from Toronto Police Service (TPS) and OPS, Brown (2016) points out that the visibility of police conduct in social media has impacted operational policing in two significant ways: through the “consciousness of most frontline officers” and through “substantial moderations” in when and how officers use force (p. 295). That is, most officers are well aware of the pervasiveness of filmed and documented police-civilian interactions that circulate on the Internet. As a result, the ability to share and re-share images or recordings of interactions between officers and civilians is having an impact on police behaviour. Conversely, one might argue that today’s visibility of UOF incidents essentially engages a public audience that questions and critiques police conduct (Doyle, 2003; 2011). In fact, some high profile UOF incidents have been investigated *because of* social media and the public’s response. In accordance to Brown’s (2016) findings, the effects of public oversight and social media are profound and his observations are shared by some of the participants within the present study.

However, not all officers view the impact of social media in this way or believe their conduct is any different from how they perform during training. In fact, for some of the participants, what officers do in training is exactly what they do in practice. For others, it is not clear if training is consciously thought about during a police-civilian encounter—even though there is some level awareness among the officers that certain and relevant topics are covered through this form of PE. If the awareness is not blatant, it is difficult for an officer to confirm or

deny that their training relates to their experiences. In addition, if officers are relating their life experiences outside of training to their practice, then it is challenging to measure the effect of their training. In other words, how can their unique personalities and de-escalation techniques be assessed during PE when UOF decisions often depend on the officers' perceived level of threat? To take this a step even further, does the uniqueness of individual officers' responses coincide with the aspects of PE that tend to promote standardization? What I am alluding to here is the debate about the extent to which PE effects PP. This is a point that I initially discussed in the introduction chapter. That is, training can relate to the PP of officers because it unequivocally informs officers about UOF. At the same time, PE can only influence PP in a limited way because experiences outside of training are more influential. I do not mean to suggest that one element is better than the other. However, and as I have already mentioned, knowing that this is a point of view that emerges among the participants' perspectives can be a benefit to research on police education and UOF experiences.

Chapter Summary

This chapter highlighted and synthesized the major educational takeaways that emerged after analyzing the data. It was structured in a way that addressed the four research questions that were central to the study. With reference to the training documents, I started the discussion by explaining the approaches to UOF training that OPS has implemented in their curriculum. This led to questions about the learning objectives in the UOF lesson plans and the tensions that have been explored in education. Throughout the chapter I drew links to theoretical frameworks (i.e., constructivism and social constructivism) as well as approaches described by Davis et al. (2015), which have allowed me to interpret the data. I used these theories to make sense of the participants' definitions of UOF, as well as their perspectives on training and their police-civilian

encounters. This invited other theories, like recontextualization and CoP, which I used to reinterpret the educational connections between the documents and interviews. The debate explored in this chapter also pointed out aspects that can be further examined in future studies. In the following chapter, I conclude the research by returning to the study's main objectives and by emphasizing what it intends to contribute in educational literature.

Chapter 8 – Conclusion

Chapter Overview

This final chapter concludes the study by first highlighting how it contributes to literature. From there, I describe my intentions in terms of pursuing this research topic as well as what I consider are the study's strengths and limitations. In light of the research questions posed, the data collected, and the speculations made, I propose an idea that could be explored in future research. My hope is to inspire ways that can extend the study further.

Contribution to Knowledge

As a continuous learner and researcher, I often reflect on the various factors that have driven my interest in conducting the present study. Before I developed a research plan, I wanted to find out how police officers were taught about something as critical as using force and how they applied what they learned to situations involving the public. As a member of the public, I felt I was reading too many incidents in the media with officers using varying levels of force and in very concerning ways. At the same time, I was intrigued by the cases that I saw online involving officers who were using, what I believed to be, minimal levels or no force in order to de-escalate a situation. I often found myself passing judgments about police training and officers' decisions without truly knowing the complexities of policing for myself. I then remembered an important lesson in Harper Lee's (1960/1982) *To kill a mockingbird*: "You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view..." (p. 34). In this case, I wanted to understand what was happening in policing that left me frustrated and I needed to consider the use of force (UOF) training as well as the point of view of police officers. Given that I believe policing is a profession that consists of officers who go through UOF training, I was grappling with questions like: What does it mean to use force? What do officers think it

means? What are they taught about it? And to what extent does training help officers understand or apply what they learned when they are fulfilling their duties? I wanted to explore these types of questions and I needed a police service that was willing to seek answers with me.

Recall that the study has pointed out that in the last 20 years, the number of incidents involving police UOF has nearly doubled in Canada (Marcoux & Nicholson, 2018). Ottawa Police Service (OPS, 2020b) has reported a decrease in UOF incidents but an increase of UOF reports between 2018 and 2019. For years, researchers have worked to address the issue of police brutality and UOF by drawing links to aspects such as officers' demographics (McElvain & Kposowa, 2008; Porter & Prenzler, 2017; Rydberg & Terrill, 2010); characteristics of civilians under arrest (Ball, 2018); and, places where negative police-civilian encounters often occur (Chapman, 2012). Scholars have since investigated this issue and society has continued to make many calls for action about police UOF—even more so since the year 2020. In fact, leading scholars continue to reiterate the urgency of drawing attention to police research, training, and UOF (Bennell et al., 2021). I justified pursuing this topic by thinking that it was not enough to examine an individual's attributes or other environmental factors to address the problem of UOF. Something else needed to be done. Very few studies had discussed consulting individuals about their perspectives on their UOF education or their policing experiences. I also noticed that even fewer articles explored this subject within a Canadian context. In a field where the majority of studies on policing are specific to the United States (Giacomantonio et al., 2019; Rossler & Terrill, 2017), I ventured into a new direction that adds a Canadian context to education and police literature.

Collaborating with OPS was a timely decision. Former Chief Sloly had announced his commitment to improving OPS's services in 2020. He discussed beginning the process of

reorienting the Service to better align with community expectations, safety, well-being, as well as police values—honour, courage, and service. Part of this effort has involved drafting a budget to include “training on anti-Black, anti-Indigenous racism as well as enhanced mental health and de-escalation training for officers” (Yogaretnam, 2020, p.2). Furthermore, in the Service’s 2020 annual report, Councillor Diane Deans—Chair of Ottawa Police Services Board (OPSB)—wrote about a motion passed to review UOF policies to ensure that the Board was providing “the necessary guidance to the Chief of Police with respect to the Board’s general expectations around de-escalation, use of force and non-force options” (OPS, 2020a, p. 6). Having reviewed OPS’s training materials for recruits and officers more generally, I believe my research would contribute to such efforts and be of value to both the Board and the Service. I encourage OPS and police services overall to consider the perspectives of the officers and educators included in the study.

I also believe the study contributes to a greater sense of knowledge and awareness for the general public. As I have previously mentioned, my area of expertise is in education. I have a limited background in law enforcement, which has gradually increased because of my previous experience as an intern with the police, my professional career and the research that I have conducted. These experiences, however, do not preclude me from learning more about policing or considering the implications that social and cultural contexts have on the realities of civilians and police officers. We live in a complicated world that is constantly changing how we teach, how we learn, and how we relate to each other. It is also redefining the variety of tools and access to resources that surround us. Such resources include social media and technology as well as the way we capture and circulate images of police-civilian encounters or how we view and think about the role of police officers (Brown, 2016, 2020). As explained in Davis et al.’s (2015)

description of the fourth historical moment (i.e., systemic sustainability education), our understanding and approach to education should adapt and evolve with such changes too. In light of the present study, the questions raised and themes discussed, my intent has been to give readers access to insights and considerations that are grounded in scholarship so that when we discuss issues related to professional education (PE) and professional practice (PP) in policing, we are doing so as more informed individuals who reflect on and consider the various forces that impact education and practice. That being said, this study is contributing to knowledge in society by encouraging reflection and deepening our understanding of UOF while grounding the discourse in the field of education.

Not only will the study support our understandings related to education and policing, but it also has the potential to help other practitioners and curriculum developers in other professions. Through the literature review in chapter 2, I drew attention to the relationship between PE and PP in areas like teaching and nursing, but the debate is widespread. The issue of PE and PP can be relevant to other disciplines too. As professions like policing, teaching and nursing illustrate, there are many issues involved with educating practitioners. Such issues are often related to policies, regulations, or licensing requirements, which tend to set the standards and parameters of a course. When thinking about PE that prioritizes policy in order to develop content, it can reinforce ideas such as knowledge transfer or approaches like standardized education. While beneficial from a legislative perspective, practices such as designing training to policy undermines approaches to education that are more engaging, adaptive and transformative. It also tends to neglect the ecology of learning and the realities that practitioners bring to our attention. It would be worthwhile to consider progressive ways to teach in accordance with these important issues without sacrificing educational value for the individual learner. Through this

study, I sought to address and contribute to these ongoing discussions about PE, even if I focused on the specific profession of policing.

In summary, I reflected on an overarching question related to the relationship between PE and PP. As an educator, I understood that despite the traditional approaches to teaching that are often used in professional settings, literature was presenting innovative strategies that continue to gradually emerge and influence what it means to know and learn (Davis et al., 2015). This drove my interest in contributing practical solutions to improving police services while advancing the field of education. As such, I believe that the study adds to literature by exploring the ways through which PE impacts PP while referencing relevant training documents and perceptions of those central to policing.

Strengths and Limitations

The strengths of this research project are found in its uniqueness, research design, and focus on participants' perspectives. With limited access into the culture of policing, I wanted to establish credibility while offering my examination of training materials and the insights expressed by participants. This strategy added to the value and authenticity of the data because the primary sources were provided by OPS and the opinions of officers and educators came directly from what participants shared. In fact, as a researcher seeking answers to a real social problem, I believe that having access to real, trusted sources of data was an important strength of my study. I was continuously transparent about my research goals with OPS as well as the participating officers and educators. I think this fostered a positive and collaborative working relationship. Furthermore, I made my intentions known through my research application to OPS, my letter of information, my letter of consent and during my interviews with my participants. Experienced scholars have discussed the challenges of gaining access to sources of data and

informants. Such scholars have also offered advice in order to encourage cooperative relationships (Feldman et al., 2003; Wanat, 2008). In my case, I think OPS appreciated my motives and was willing to work with me because of my genuine interest to help improve policing from an educational approach.

At the same time, attention to the officers' perceptions can also be seen as a limitation of the study. The memory or recollection of the participating officers and educators might not have been accurate or fully thought out during the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In other words, it is possible that participants did not accurately recall an encounter or fully express their thought process during our interview. However, I did not design the study to verify the legitimacy or authenticity of the participants' memories. I was more interested in what the officers and educators presently thought about their training and experiences as they could recall them. As such, I depended on what the participants and I discussed during our interview as opposed to confirming their perspectives. I did not return to officers and educators to confirm that I accurately captured their insights because I felt that they were sharing their perspectives as their thoughts came to them. To facilitate the authenticity yet spontaneity of our discussion, I did choose to share the interview questions with the officers and educators two days before we met. My intentions were not to catch the participants off-guard but to have them reflect, gather their thoughts, and feel comfortable to share their opinions and experiences with me.

Having said that, it is possible that participants were not comfortable disclosing in-depth details about their experiences, given that high-stress situations can be traumatic (Garbarino et al., 2013; Talavera-Velasco et al., 2018). It was imperative that the police officers and educators felt comfortable while participating in the study. Although I relied on what was conveyed by the participants, participants might have concealed certain aspects of their opinions or experiences to

protect the institution or themselves (Diefenbach, 2008; Polkinghorne, 2007). As a researcher, I had to trust that their perspectives were authentic and not fabricated (Kain, 2004; Schwarz, 1999). If they did not share accurate representations of their experiences or described fictional encounters or training, it would undermine the significance of the research. By being open and transparent with participants about the goals of my research (Berg, 2009; Miller & Glassner, 2004), I believe I avoided this issue and collected valuable data. It was even more important that I sought a variety of perspectives to substantiate my analysis of the data (Doody & Noonan, 2013). That being said, I did have a sample of 12 participants, which is not intended to be a representation of all the officers who work or have worked at OPS. I am curious to know how the participants' perspectives might have differed if I had gathered everyone together to conduct a group interview and discuss UOF, perspectives and experiences. With more resources and future studies, these limitations and new curiosities could be addressed.

Another potential limitation is that I focused on the experiences of patrol officers and educators, as opposed to including officers in areas like the tactical unit—who, according to some of the participants, have more advanced skills and training related to UOF. I am curious to learn about their training, experiences and perspectives in order to explore the issue of PE and PP even further. Having said that, my goal was to address UOF training and experiences that targeted officers on a broader level. Prioritizing the patrol officers as one of the groups of participants helped to manage the practicality of the study.

On another note, recall my research was designed to be a qualitative instrumental case study (QICS) specific to Ottawa, Ontario. As such, my findings are particular to OPS, which cannot necessarily be generalized to other police agencies given the ways that UOF is regulated in different jurisdictions. However, the findings and insights discussed are relevant and invites

other police agencies to review their practices. It would be interesting to apply the research questions that were highlighted in the study to other police services across the country or internationally. Nevertheless, by collecting detailed descriptions of officers' education and experiences, I have shown how the participants' opinions may relate to other contexts (Charmaz, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The study's exploration of PE and law enforcement perspectives can be applicable to the training standards and experiences of those employed in a similarly sized police agency.

Potential Direction for Research

One important idea that the study did not prepare for was officers' rationale for managing police-civilian encounters differently from what they are taught in training. Recall the unanticipated theme included in the analysis chapter, which highlights the relevance of the current culture of policing and social media. While officers have been trained to use appropriate levels of force during public encounters, there are extenuating circumstances that impact what they do in practice. The value of social media, as it relates to policing and public oversight, is nuanced. As Walsh and O'Connor (2019) point out, social media has afforded police services the opportunity to intervene in criminal activity as well as manage public perceptions and impressions of police officers. It has also opened doors for police services to evolve in their communication strategies with the public (Trottier, 2012). Similarly, social media in the field of medicine has facilitated approaches to education in a way that elevates how we relate to new technologies and to each other as a society (Chretien & Kind, 2013). At the same time, the Internet has provided unprecedented capabilities of the public in terms of monitoring the police and empowering individuals to address social issues that are triggered by what officers do. This

has also resulted in complicated pressures for police officers as they reconcile their training with their daily encounters with civilians—especially when it involves using force.

Today, we have more frequent and real-time access to police-civilian interactions when people record situations onto their devices and post them on social media. Such access was not easily available 20 years ago. Readers should note that my point is not to minimize instances where social media has brought attention to significant issues or high profile cases. Instead, I am discussing the value and implications that a new visibility of officer conduct has on policing (Brown, 2016, 2020). As Goldsmith (2010) suggests, the ease of recording and scrutinizing police officers on social media has revived a key debate about UOF—and an interesting point on professionalism in general. What is compelling about the direction we seem to be heading with social media and policing is its implications on training. When certain UOF-related police-civilian encounters occur and it appears in the media as a negative interaction, one of the major questions that is asked by the public is about the involved officer's UOF training. O6 reiterates this point about the significance of training by saying "Training is such an important aspect of our job." Any situation involving injury or UOF always comes back to questions on training. This is complicated even further if we consider the opinions shared by the participants in the present study. That is, life experiences outside of training have also played a role in how the police interact with civilians. As such, I wonder: what role, if any, does PE play in the PP of officers given the contemporary use of social media? How differently do officers apply their training and perform in situations while still operating in accordance to their professional responsibilities?

With an evolving society and certain responsibilities attributed to professionals like police officers, we are left to wonder how differently might people enact their PE in their PP

when they believe that the public is watching their every move. This includes people who are not even physically present during an incident but who are observing because of social media. How might practitioners behave when they feel that their split-second decisions will be heavily judged in the media or affect their loved ones? I am not suggesting that I have answers to such a question, but I am raising it for consideration. It is challenging to navigate these nuances but just as imperative to explore. Like Davis et al. (2015) point out in their description of the fourth historical moment in education (i.e., systemic sustainability education), newer approaches have only recently been considered. It would be interesting to explore the issue of PE and PP while re-imagining the ecology of learning and the implication of tools like social media.

Research Summary

In eight chapters, this study has offered an exploration of an issue important to education and policing. By using constructivist and social constructivist lenses, the research examined UOF training materials as well as the experiences of officers and educators to inform readers about what is occurring within the Canadian police profession and specifically in Ottawa. The results of the study offer empirical insights that can help us better understand how a municipal police service approaches their UOF training, how UOF is defined by participating members, what officers and educators think about their training as well as how such officers and educators relate their learning to their encounters with the public. Despite its strengths and limitations, this Canadian-focused study sought to expand our knowledge about educational approaches to PE and relate it to the PP of police officers who have encounters with the public. Let us use this study to propel ourselves towards a direction that inspires innovation and progression.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Recruitment Poster



Ottawa Police Service Officers and Educators Needed for Research on Professional Education and Professional Practice

- ✓ Are you a serving or recently retired patrol officer with at least 5 years of experience being an officer?
- ✓ Are you a serving or recently retired educator or training instructor who leads or has led use of force training in the last 5 years?

If so, I would like to conduct a 45-minute interview with you online or over the phone.

By participating, you will support objectives valuable to Ottawa Police Service. You will also help inform practitioners, academics, and the public about Canadian police officers' opinions related to use of force training and experiences in practice.

All interviews will be conducted in English.
Participation is voluntary and confidential.

If you have any questions related to this research study, please contact:

Annette Jubril, Principal Researcher University of Ottawa	Dr. Angus McMurtry, Thesis Supervisor University of Ottawa
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 Faculty of Education
uOttawa

Appendix B: Letter of Information

Professional Education and Practice: Ottawa Police Service Officer and Educator Perceptions of Use of Force Education and Experiences - Letter of Information

To whom this may concern,

My name is Annette Jubril and I am a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa. I am researching the relationship between professional education (PE) and professional practice (PP). The purpose of my study is to explore the impact that PE has on PP by examining the perspectives of police officers and educators in the police profession. This project focuses specifically on use of force (UOF) training and officers' experiences using and/or not using force. Your involvement will support objectives valuable to Ottawa Police Service (OPS). It will also help inform practitioners, academics, and the public about of Canadian police officers' opinions about their UOF training and the connections to their practice.

I'd like to have an online or over the phone individual interview of approximately forty-five (45) minutes. The participants I am seeking are:

- a) serving or recently retired OPS patrol officers with at least five (5) years of experience as an officer, and
- b) educators who currently lead or formerly led UOF training in the last five (5) years.

I will ask you about your views on the UOF training that you received before becoming a police officer and/or while working as an officer. I will also ask about your experiences related to using or not using force. For educators, I will additionally ask you about your views on the UOF training that you deliver.

Your participation is completely voluntary and your information in the study will be anonymous. You will not be penalized in any way by OPS for your participation in this research or if you decide to withdraw. Any information collected during the interviews will only be used for the purpose of this study.

If you are interested or have any questions, you can contact me through the information provided below. Participation in the study is on a 'first-come, first-served' basis. Thank you for your time and considerations.

Sincerely,

Annette Jubril
Principal Researcher
Faculty of Education
Phone:
Email:

Dr. Angus McMurtry
Thesis Supervisor
Faculty of Education
Phone:
Email:

Appendix C: Letter of Consent

Title of the study: Professional Education and Practice: Ottawa Police Service Officer and Educator Perceptions of Use of Force Education and Experiences

Research conducted by:**Annette Jubril**

Faculty of Education

Phone:

Email:

Dr. Angus McMurtry

Faculty of Education

Phone:

Email:

Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in the aforementioned research study conducted through the University of Ottawa by PhD candidate Annette Jubril and her supervisor Dr. Angus McMurtry. An Ontario Graduate Scholarship and a University of Ottawa Excellence Scholarship support this research. This project is for Annette Jubril's PhD thesis and is being conducted independently from the organizations and agencies from which participants may be recruited.

Purpose of the Study: The purpose of the study is to contribute to a public and academic discourse on the impact that professional education has on professional practice by examining the perspectives of police officers and educators in the police profession. The study focuses specifically on use of force (UOF) training and officers' experiences using and/or not using force. While adding an Ontario-focused study to education and police literature, the project also aims to better understand:

- how officers define UOF;
- how officers view the training that they receive before becoming a police officer and/or while working as a police officer;
- how educators view the UOF training that they deliver to police officers; and
- officers' experiences related to using or not using force.

Participation: My participation will consist of one audio/video-recorded individual interview session that is expected to take approximately 30-45 minutes virtually through MS Teams (an audio/video conferencing application/software). I will need to communicate my responses in English as the interview and the entire research study is conducted in English. I will be asked open-ended questions about my professional background, training, experiences, and opinions.

Benefits: This study has the potential to inform practitioners, academics, and the public about the professional education that Canadian police officers have and the connections that we make to our professional practice as it concerns UOF. I will have the opportunity to share my thoughts and opinions regarding my professional education and experiences. The results of the study will offer empirical insights that can lead into better understandings of the police profession and suggested areas of improvement. Current and future police officers, including those who develop curriculum or other training materials on UOF can also benefit from the insights I share. My participation can contribute to how UOF is approached as well as meaningful discussions about the relationship between professional education and professional practice.

Conservation of data: With use of an audio/video recording software or a hand-held audio recording device, a copy of my interview with Annette Jubril will be collected as a source of data. Such recordings will be transcribed verbatim. The recordings and transcriptions will be kept in both hard and electronic copy for a minimum and maximum of 5 years following the publication of the final thesis. After this period of retention, data will be safely and securely discarded by deleting files from electronic programs/software and paper shredding of documents. Electronic copies of interview transcripts and hard copies of interview transcripts will be saved as password-protected PDF documents and saved on password-protected personal laptops that only Annette Jubril or Dr. Angus McMurtry have access to. Paper documents will be stored by Annette Jubril in a locked cabinet that requires key access. All of the data will be conserved and stored through password or key protection.

Confidentiality/Anonymity: To guarantee that any identifying information remains anonymous, pseudonyms and fictitious names will be created and replace my real name, including the names of family members, co-workers and other individuals mentioned throughout the data collection. Only Annette Jubril and Dr. McMurtry will have access to the pseudonyms used in the study to link the data to my identity.

Risks: My participation in this study will entail disclosing personal and professional information such as my name, gender, race, place of work, professional position, number of years of experience, professional education, and on-the-job experiences related to the use or lack of force. Since Ottawa Police Service will be identified in the publication of the thesis, it is possible that I may be indirectly identified and socially judged by my peers. It is also possible that I may feel emotional stress, or psychological discomfort (e.g., stress, anxiety) when discussing my experiences and opinions. Although these risks may be present, every effort will be made to minimize such risks as all responses will be kept confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in place of identifying information and contextual details that I provide will be described in general.

Voluntary participation: I am under no obligation to participate in the study since participation is completely voluntary. If at any time I am no longer interested in participating in the study, I may withdraw from the research project without suffering any negative consequences. If I refuse to participate or if I choose to withdraw from the study at any time, I will not be penalized in any way. Upon my withdrawal, all data that had been collected until the time of withdrawal will be destroyed and not used in the study, unless I grant the researchers permission for the use of my data.

Consent: I, (name of participant), have read this consent form. I understand that I am being invited to participate in this study. By providing my signature below, I consent to participate in the above research study conducted by Annette Jubril, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, whose research is under the supervision of Dr. Angus McMurtry, Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa. I also consent to being audio/video recorded during the interview session for the study.

Participant's signature: _____ Date: _____

Researcher's signature: _____ Date: _____

**Please keep a copy of the consent form for your records.*

Contact: If I have any pertinent questions about my rights as a research participant, I may contact:

Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall
550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5
Tel.: (613) 562-5387 or email: ethics@uottawa.ca

If I have any questions related to the research study, I may contact Annette Jubril or Dr. Angus McMurtry using the information below.

Annette Jubril

Faculty of Education

Phone:

Email:

Dr. Angus McMurtry

Faculty of Education

Phone:

Email:

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Professional Education and Practice: Ottawa Police Service Officer and Educator

Perceptions of Use of Force Education and Experiences

Interview Questions for Patrol Police Officers

Participant's background

1. Please describe yourself (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, position/rank, years of service).

Use of Force Definition

2. As a currently serving/former officer, how do you define use of force (UOF)?
3. What do you think is Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) definition on UOF?

Police Education

4. Tell me about the UOF training you received **before** becoming an OPS officer. Tell me about the UOF training you receive **while working** as an OPS officer.
 - a. What are your thoughts on the training (i.e., training methods, memorable and least memorable courses)?

Police-Civilian Encounters

5. Think back to your on-the-job experiences as an officer and when you interacted with a civilian. Of those experiences, tell me about a time that stands out to you and when you **used** force. Then about a time when you **did not** use force.
 - a. What strategies did you use during this encounter?
 - b. What do you wish you had done differently?
 - c. How might training have helped you during this encounter?
6. How do you think your UOF training relates to your experiences when you **use** force? How about when you **do not** use force?

Recommendations

7. In what areas do you think your pre-service UOF training could be improved? How about the in-service UOF training?

Questions

8. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions?

Professional Education and Practice: Ottawa Police Service Officer and Educator**Perceptions of Use of Force Education and Experiences**Interview Questions for Educators**Participant's background**

1. Please describe yourself (i.e., gender, age, ethnicity, position/rank, years of service).

Use of Force Definition

2. As a current/former educator, how do you define use of force (UOF)?
3. What do you think is Ottawa Police Service's (OPS) definition on UOF?

Police Education

4. Tell me about the UOF training you received **before** becoming an OPS officer. Tell me about the UOF training you receive **while working** as an OPS officer.
 - a. What are your thoughts on the training (i.e., training methods, memorable and least memorable courses)?
5. What is your approach to the UOF training that you host for OPS officers?
 - a. What learning strategies do you use, if any?

Police-Civilian Encounters

6. Think back to your on-the-job experiences as an officer and when you interacted with a civilian. Of those experiences, tell me about a time that stands out to you and when you **used** force. Then about a time when you **did not** use force.
 - a. What strategies did you use during this encounter?
 - b. What do you wish you had done differently?
 - c. How might training have helped you during this encounter?
7. How do you think your UOF training relates to your experiences when you **use** force? How about when you **do not** use force?

Recommendations

8. In what areas do you think the pre-service UOF training that you facilitate could be improved? How about the in-service UOF training?

Questions

9. Is there anything else you would like to add? Do you have any questions?

Appendix E: University of Ottawa Certificate of Ethics Approval

Université d'Ottawa

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa

Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

07/07/2020

CERTIFICAT D'APPROBATION ÉTHIQUE | CERTIFICATE OF ETHICS APPROVAL

Numéro du dossier / Ethics File Number

S-06-20-5618

Titre du projet / Project Title

Canadian Officers' and
Educators' Perceptions of Police
Education and Use of Force
Encounters

Type de projet / Project Type

Thèse de doctorat / Doctoral
thesis

Statut du projet / Project Status

Approuvé / Approved

Date d'approbation (jj/mm/aaaa) / Approval Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

07/07/2020

Date d'expiration (jj/mm/aaaa) / Expiry Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

06/07/2021

Équipe de recherche / Research Team

Chercheur / Researcher

Affiliation

Role

Annette JUBRIL

Faculté d'éducation / Faculty of Education

Chercheur Principal / Principal Investigator

Angus MCMURTRY

Faculté d'éducation / Faculty of Education

Superviseur / Supervisor

Conditions spéciales ou commentaires / Special conditions or comments

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

613-562-5387 • 613-562-5338 • ethique@uOttawa.ca / ethics@uOttawa.ca
www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie | www.recherche.uottawa.ca/ethics

07/07/2020

Université d'Ottawa

Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche

University of Ottawa

Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

Le Comité d'éthique de la recherche (CÉR) de l'Université d'Ottawa, opérant conformément à l'*Énoncé de politique des Trois conseils* (2014) et toutes autres lois et tous règlements applicables, a examiné et approuvé la demande d'éthique du projet de recherche ci-nommé.

L'approbation est valide pour la durée indiquée plus haut et est sujette aux conditions énumérées dans la section intitulée "Conditions Spéciales ou Commentaires". Le formulaire « Renouvellement ou Fermeture de Projet » doit être complété quatre semaines avant la date d'échéance indiquée ci-haut afin de demander un renouvellement de cette approbation éthique ou afin de fermer le dossier.

Toutes modifications apportées au projet doivent être approuvées par le CÉR avant leur mise en place, sauf si le participant doit être retiré en raison d'un danger immédiat ou s'il s'agit d'un changement ayant trait à des éléments administratifs ou logistiques du projet. Les chercheurs doivent aviser le CÉR dans les plus brefs délais de tout changement pouvant augmenter le niveau de risque aux participants ou pouvant affecter considérablement le déroulement du projet, rapporter tout événement imprévu ou indésirable et soumettre toute nouvelle information pouvant nuire à la conduite du projet ou à la sécurité des participants.

The University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board, which operates in accordance with the *Tri-Council Policy Statement* (2014) and other applicable laws and regulations, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above-named research project.

Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and is subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions or Comments". The "Renewal/Project Closure" form must be completed four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval or closure of the file.

Any changes made to the project must be approved by the REB before being implemented, except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) only pertain to administrative or logistical components of the project. Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes that increase the risk to participant(s), any changes that 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 or the safety of the participant(s).

Kim THOMPSON

Responsable d'éthique en recherche / Protocol Officer

Pour/For **Barbara GRAVES** Président(e) du/ Chair of the **Comité d'éthique de la recherche en sciences sociales et humanités / Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board**

550, rue Cumberland, pièce 154 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154
Ottawa (Ontario) K1N 6N5 Canada Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 Canada

613-562-5387 • 613-562-5338 • ethique@uOttawa.ca / ethics@uOttawa.ca
www.recherche.uottawa.ca/deontologie | www.recherche.uottawa.ca/ethics