The Effects of Post-Secondary Education on State Troopers’ Job Performance, Stress Levels, and Authoritarian Attitudes

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THE EFFECTS OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION ON STATE TROOPERS’
JOB PERFORMANCE, STRESS LEVELS, AND
AUTHORITARIAN ATTITUDES

by

Carl J. Lafata

A Dissertation
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Dr. Ronald Kramer, Advisor

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The effects of post-secondary education on state troopers' job performance, stress levels, and authoritarian attitudes

Carl J. Lafata, Ph.D.
Western Michigan University, 2007

This project was designed to determine the effects of post-secondary education on police officers' job performance, stress levels, and levels of authoritarianism as measured by Altemeyer's (1996) Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale questionnaire. It involved the analysis of data voluntarily and anonymously submitted via an internet-based survey by 356 of the Michigan State Police's approximately 1,800 enlisted members (those members who are state-certified police officers), along with information collected from informal personal interviews held with a select group of seven of the department's senior leaders. Subsequent analysis of the collected quantitative data revealed no statistical support for the project's first two hypotheses, that higher levels of education improved job performance and reduced stress levels. In fact, there was statistically significant evidence that higher levels of education actually increased job-related stress levels. Statistical support for the third hypothesis, that higher levels of education decreased levels of authoritarianism, was found at the .05 level.
The lack of statistical support for the project’s first two hypotheses was likely the result of having to obtain a convenience sample of enlisted members rather than a random sample, as well as the general operational limitations associated with obtaining personal information from and about government employees. However, this project confirmed previous findings on education’s effect on authoritarian personalities and showed that those who participated in the survey are on average about equal to other populations in their levels of authoritarianism. This project also showed that nearly all of the survey respondents and every department leader interviewed support higher educational standards for all ranks and believe that police officers would benefit from such standards both personally and professionally. Therefore, this project’s findings may not only assist with future department policy decisions regarding hiring and promotional requirements, it may also serve as the foundation of subsequent studies regarding post-secondary education’s effect on police officers in Michigan and the rest of the nation.
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Carl J. Lafata
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The bravery and sacrifices of public safety personnel after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City caused many Americans to see police officers in a new light. They were no longer seen as mere traffic cops. Instead, they were considered this nation’s first line of defense against future terrorist attacks, whether foreign or domestic. The result of this newfound affection was a short-lived infusion of millions of state and Federal dollars into police departments across the country for homeland security equipment and training. This increase in funding was followed by much higher public expectations that extended beyond the realm of traditional policing. Not only did citizens expect police officers to perform their regular law enforcement-related duties such as acting as community counselors, social workers, and lay-psychologists, they were now expected to serve as antiterrorism/homeland security watchdogs.

Given the immense amount of responsibility with which today’s police officers are entrusted, it seems logical that police departments would want to hire the most qualified candidates. Yet, there has been no coordinated state or national movement to establish a uniform minimum post-secondary educational standard beyond the high school level. In fact, a cursory check of law enforcement job postings from around the country confirms that a college degree is seldom required
for entry-level police officer positions. Of those agencies that require some amount of post-secondary education, their preferred candidate is one with a degree in criminal justice, criminology, or similar applied discipline.

For purposes of this study, the term *post-secondary education* refers to any education received from a college or university after graduating from high school or earning a GED. Louis Mayo, director of the nonprofit *Police Association for College Education* estimates that about 40% of police departments in the United States require some college (L. A. Mayo, personal communication, September 18, 2006). Yet only 5% of police departments with more than 100 sworn officers require a four-year degree (Johnson, 2006). In this state, neither the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES), which establishes minimum recruiting, selection, and training standards for new police officers, nor more than a handful of individual police agencies have increased their minimum educational standard for hiring from the current requirement of a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED). As for the Michigan State Police (MSP), the hiring standard has remained this MCOLES-mandated minimum for decades and no change in department policy appears to be on the horizon.

Although many enter police work with some amount of post-secondary education, there again has been no widespread interest by police administrators, politicians, or educators in Michigan or nationally to establish a universal minimum educational standard of a college degree for new police officers. Sharing this indifference toward post-secondary education are the police officers who believe that post-secondary education, especially beyond a bachelor’s degree, is unnecessary for
this line of work. They adamantly believe that if someone with a high school diploma or GED were hired by a police department they should be able to ascend to its highest ranks with nothing more. Further, this type of police officer is also apt to believe that a graduate-level education would not help them in their career, and that it might even be seen as threatening by command officers, thus making future promotion more difficult.

I currently serve as a sergeant in the MSP’s Executive Division and I have not realized any negative repercussions from my choice to pursue a graduate education. On the contrary, my supervisors have been very supportive and have actually gone out of their way whenever operationally possible to accommodate my academic schedule. Even though I do not see my graduate education as a ticket to immediate promotion, I feel that the investment in time and money was well worth the effort. My additional schooling has helped me better perform my previous duties as a road trooper and my current duties as the department’s de facto research analyst. I have met a number of police officers who disagree that post-secondary education is beneficial to them, but I had no current empirical evidence upon which to base any rebuttal. Consequently, I developed a research project to more closely examine what effect post-secondary education actually has on police officer behavior, which was focused on enlisted members of the Michigan State Police. Enlisted members are MCOLES-certified police officers with full arrest authority. In other words, they are department personnel who started their careers as troopers regardless of their present rank.
The fundamental question of whether post-secondary education really makes any difference to police officers is not one that is easily answered because it is complicated by a number of related questions. These include whether police officers should be required to have a college degree before putting on the uniform, or simply to qualify for future promotion, or whether it matters if their post-secondary education is in criminal justice, criminology or some unrelated discipline. Since they cannot all be answered here, this project focuses on the three that are considered to be the most important to this discussion: whether a police officer's level of post-secondary education has an effect on his or her job performance, stress level, and level of authoritarianism. These questions are addressed by the following three hypotheses:

1. There is a causal relationship between a police officer's level of post-secondary education and their job performance as measured by positive occurrences such as the number of awards or commendations received and negative occurrences such as the number of times a police officer has been disciplined by their department or been the suspect in a criminal investigation. The higher their level of education, the more awards or commendations they will have received and the fewer times they will have been disciplined or considered a suspect.

2. There is an inverse causal relationship between a police officer's level of post-secondary education and their self-reported levels of overall and job-related stress. The higher their level of education, the less stress they will report. A police officer's education also has an indirect effect on stress-related incidents such as divorce, suicide, and domestic violence, thus lessening their number.
3. There is an inverse causal relationship between a police officer’s level of post-secondary education and their level of authoritarianism. The higher their level of education, the less likely the police officer will be to display highly authoritarian attitudes, as measured by Altemeyer’s (1996) Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale questionnaire.

Together these three hypotheses were intended to help determine whether post-secondary education has resulted in any measurable effect on the behavior of MSP enlisted members. It was also hoped that the findings would provide information useful to the department’s leaders when making future policy decisions regarding hiring and promotion requirements that best accomplish the department’s overall goal of providing law enforcement services in a manner expected by the citizens of the State of Michigan.

This project should in no way be seen as critical of law enforcement. Police officers have more than their share of critics in the media, politics, and academe. Despite the nobility and dedication to duty displayed by the vast majority of men and women in uniform each day, the public focuses on the few “bad cops” who taint their opinion and cast a negative light on all police officers. Instead, this project was motivated by a desire to determine whether higher educational standards might result in police officers that not only perform their duties better, but also have the training and personality traits necessary to deal with the unique stresses of the job without resorting to reactionary or dictatorial behaviors. In that regard, this information might also help the Michigan State Police and other police departments minimize their chances of hiring those candidates that later become the “bad cop” or those with
personalities that are incompatible with their department’s chosen style of policing. Post-secondary education is not considered to be the panacea for law enforcement’s ailments, but greater knowledge of education’s effect on police officer behavior is needed to address many of those problems. Implementing higher educational standards may also move law enforcement closer to being a true profession if that is indeed the desired goal.
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job Performance

A search for articles on the topic of post-secondary education’s effect on police officers revealed a general paucity of literature. Many of the studies found were produced in the late 1960s through 1970s, and again in the late 1990s through 2000s. As a research topic, the subject has gone in and out of vogue over the years and has not recently been studied with any great effort except for a series of what were essentially opinion pieces in the August 2006 issue of the International Association of Chiefs of Police magazine, The Police Chief, that explored the idea of educated police officers. Although August Vollmer, former chief of the Berkeley (California) Police Department, pioneered the idea of a college-educated and professional police force as early as the 1920s (Wilson, 1953), the idea had only come to the attention of social scientists after the civil unrest of the 1960s. This was a time when all of the law enforcement community came under intense public and government scrutiny and a great deal of academic research was funded to determine what qualities a truly “professional” police officer should have. The 1967 report by the US President’s Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice entitled The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society examined the issues facing law enforcement agencies at that time. Among the more than 200 recommendations made
for the betterment of the criminal justice system was the recommendation that law enforcement agencies immediately begin requiring a bachelor’s degree for police officer hiring and promotion.

As the 1980s approached, government’s focus (and subsequently its research funding) shifted from the professionalization of law enforcement to policing violent crimes and conducting the so-called “war on drugs”. As a result, many of the articles published on post-secondary education’s effect on police officers since then have avoided the costly collection of data. Articles found in trade magazines such as The Police Chief, Law and Order, and the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin tend to include more conjecture and opinion than empirical evidence. Indeed, few scientific or quasi-scientific studies in this area appear to have been conducted at all, especially as of late. Even the aforementioned Commission’s recommendation was solely based on the opinion of its members and not the results of any scientific research project.

The US Court of Appeals weighed in on this issue in the 1985 case of Davis v. City of Dallas, in which the Fifth Circuit upheld college education as a valid prerequisite for police employment. A handful of police departments throughout Michigan, such as the Novi Police Department, have formalized their preference for educated police officers by making a bachelor’s degree a minimum hiring prerequisite. Other departments do so informally through a tacit hiring bias toward those candidates with higher levels of education. Such a bias is not unusual and has, in fact, already been substantiated by other research (Decker & Huckabee, 1999).

If post-secondary education really does make some difference to police officers, then a related question of what future police officers should be required to
learn in the course of their studies arises. This is a question that has been of particular interest to community college administrators in this state because the police academy curriculum provides those institutions with considerable revenue for little investment of academic resources. As far back as the late-1970s, studies were being conducted challenging the community college system of educating police officers (Sherman, 1978; Meadows, 1980). These authors agreed that community college training programs had gotten too far away from actual academics and had become mere vocational training facilities. It was even suggested that community colleges do away with programs that grant an associate’s degree upon successful completion of the police academy and return to a focus on traditional academic coursework as the requirement for such degrees. This is because, depending on how they are structured, traditional criminal justice programs are typically focused on skills-based learning and taught in part by active and retired police officers. It can therefore be argued that they do little to broaden students’ horizons because they are little more than a pre-socialization process.

College and university law enforcement education programs are viewed by some academics as nothing more than trade schools. Lending credence to this assessment is the fact that police trainers and administrators alike resist making academy and in-service training a more cerebral endeavor. They believe that policing-related education should focus more on applied skills, such as driving and shooting than on academic or theoretical material. An examination of the current MCOLES Basic Training Curriculum and Training Objectives, which is the curriculum taught at the MSP Training Academy and all other regional academies...
throughout the state, reflects this bias (Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards, 2006). In fact, the only chapters in which the MCOLES curriculum becomes even somewhat academic are the chapters dealing with criminal law. Those are the chapters often dreaded by recruits because of their reputation for being notoriously boring, especially in comparison to modules involving quintessential police activities such as shooting. Worsening this disparity between academic and applied subject matter, MCOLES is currently in the process of developing a problem-based learning curriculum to replace a large portion of the current academy curriculum’s traditional lecture material with practical role-playing exercises. For example, it has been suggested that material such as “The History of Policing” be eliminated to make room (Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards, 2006). The result of making the basic curriculum even less academic is that doing so further relegates police academies to the status of trade schools.

This trade-school-like focus along with a lack of universal educational standards beyond the high school level causes police officers to be thought of less highly by academics, politicians, and the general public. It also prevents policing from being considered a true profession akin to recognized professions such as teaching, accounting, engineering, or law, which are defined by high academic standards, continuing education requirements, and a focus beyond the basic skills needed to perform their job. Noted police author James Q. Wilson (creator of the “Broken Windows” theory of crime) agrees, adding that policing is a craft rather than a profession because it lacks clearly defined rules, theories, and standards of behavior (Wilson, 1968).
Chief Jim Bueermann of the Redlands (California) Police Department expresses a similar sentiment, stating that:

Low educational requirements not only diminish the prestige of policing but also prevent police from meeting the high expectations of the people [the taxpayers] who invest heavily in each police officer position (Bueermann, 2006, p. 33).

And nearly half a century ago, Myren (1960) wrote about the crisis he saw the lack of educated police officers presenting police managers. In regard to policing becoming a profession, he explained that, "Basic to the concept of a profession is the definition of a core of education, training, and experience which gives all the members of the group a basic common ground" (Myren, 1960, p. 600). He saw no such universal core in American policing and considered its absence to be one of the main reasons why policing was not yet a profession. This is still the case today, and it is clear that regardless of their individual dedication to duty, concern for their communities, personal sacrifices, or professional actions, police officers will never be considered members of an actual profession until they adopt a uniform set of standards to include one requiring that its members possess a college education.

This lack of respect causes police officers to oftentimes be discounted by those in power, and this subsequently translates into a lack of funding. Even after the lessons learned from the September 11th terrorist attacks, politicians on both sides of the political aisle in Michigan and elsewhere overlook police officers' contributions to their communities and refuse to adequately fund their efforts. In fact, according to data kept by MCOLES, Michigan has lost over 1,500 police jobs since the attacks due to retirements, firings, and lay-offs. Similarly, the Michigan Municipal League had
once displayed a countdown clock on their internet homepage (http://www.mml.org) to illustrate that a police officer position in Michigan is lost every 28 hours. However, despite their lack of financial and legislative support, it is not surprising that politicians generally like to be seen by their constituents in front of a wall of men and women in uniform. In such instances it is obvious that police officers are not thought of as professionals, but as proverbial show ponies for politicians to trot out when portraying themselves as “tough on crime”. Still others in positions of power may see police officers as nothing more than a tool they can use to keep “troublesome” groups such as minorities, labor organizers, and political activists in check. In reality, the Michigan State Police was established in 1917 partly in order to quell the civil unrest caused by striking copper miners in the state’s Upper Peninsula. It was only when the country perceived a German threat during World War I that the Michigan State Constabulary, the precursor to the Michigan State Police, was established (Schertzing, 2002).

Those citizens and politicians that do not consider police officers to be anything more than overpaid security guards do not realize how truly complicated police work can often be. Television and movies have convinced them that it is pretty easy work, where in reality police work can be very complex, particularly from a legal standpoint. Police officers are expected to make snap decisions under stress based on law, court rulings, new legislation, Attorney General opinions, and department policies. However, some authors have bought into the misconceptions and negative attitudes surrounding police officers. Academic works such as those by Baro and Burlingame (1999); Chevigny (1969), Germann (1971), and Skolnick and
Fyfe (1993) take a decidedly negative tone. For example, in Skolnick and Fyfe’s 1993 book, *Above the Law: Police and the Excessive Use of Force*, the authors frequently use the pejorative term “cop” instead of police officer throughout. The assertions that authors such as these make about police officers as a population are based on a limited number of extreme cases of misconduct in specific settings, like Chevigny’s work on the New York City Police Department and Skolnick and Fyfe’s focus on the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). They are essentially guilty of the same type of over-generalizing about a population (sometimes referred to as “profiling”) of which they accuse police officers. This bias, regardless of how mild a reader might consider it to be, takes away from a work’s academic value and results in it adding little to the present discussion.

If it is assumed that any amount of post-secondary education is beneficial for police officers, the questions become more specific. For instance, does education measurably improve a police officer’s job performance? This is a difficult question to answer since what constitutes “good” job performance is subjective. Police administrators have traditionally looked at simple quantitative measures (i.e., the number of tickets written or felony arrests made) when assessing an officer’s performance. Some researchers have also focused on a variety of quantitative measures such as the number of citizen complaints, officers’ rates of promotion, and even on-duty vehicle collisions (Bostrom, 2005; Polk & Armstrong, 2001; Sanderson, 1977; Worden, 1990). Still others consider subjective measures of good job performance such as citizens’ perception of safety. It is obvious that there is no consensus, and that there are as many ways to define a good police officer as there is
a good parent. Worden agrees, stating, “Police performance, of course, is difficult to conceptualize and even more difficult to operationalize...” (Worden, 1990, p. 570), going on to explain that prior research has focused on both objective and subjective research with no consensus.

Truxillo, Bennet, and Collins (1998) looked at a number of performance measures when examining education’s effect on police officer job performance and ultimately found that academic training helps police officers in the performance of their duties as well as in earning promotions. Truxillo et al. examined a group of 123 police officers approximately 10 years after they were hired by a large municipal police department. They looked at the effects of education obtained before hiring and afterwards using questionnaires designed to collect academic-related data including respondents’ number of years of schooling, their number of credit hours earned, and their grade point average. Truxillo et al. also examined each officer’s written entrance examination and the information in their personnel files such as supervisory ratings and disciplinary history. Their analysis of this data showed that the possession of a bachelor’s degree was positively correlated with job knowledge, dependability, and promotion. However, Truxillo et al. did not find any statistically significant differences between respondents with a two-year degree, a four-year degree, or simply time spent in college. There was also an inconsistent relationship between education and disciplinary action. According to the authors, these findings suggest that although post-secondary education is predictive of many aspects of a police officer’s performance, it is by no means able to predict them all.
In 1977, Captain B. E. Sanderson of the LAPD considered a number of measures of job performance as well when he examined the records of 150 male police officers hired by the LAPD ten years prior. His data analysis was based on simple comparisons between police officers’ level of education without any effort to determine the statistical significance between variables. Even so, this simple “widget counting” resulted in findings in line with this project’s hypotheses. Specifically, Sanderson found that in their academy coursework those police officers with at least some amount of college outperformed those with no college. They also had fewer sustained complaints against them, a lower rate of absenteeism, had significantly better chances of promotion, and were terminated from the department less frequently. Sanderson concluded that a college education does indeed have a positive effect on police officer job performance. He recommended that the push for college-educated police officers be continued because they are more likely to perform in a manner that is expected of the public, and that will save police department money in disciplinary cases, terminations, and the like.

In their study of 16 large police agencies, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (1976) focused on citizen complaints and found that police officers with a four-year college degree received fewer citizen complaints than those with less education. They also found that among non-graduates, citizen complaints actually increased along with their amount of education. The IACP researchers simply reported this information though, and offered nothing substantial in terms of why this was the case.
On the contrary, Weiner (1974) found evidence that education's effects on police officer behavior may be cancelled out by the realities of the traditional police role, and suggests that education alone cannot change their attitudes. Similarly, Worden (1990) found the effects of college education on the attitudes of police officers to be small, and that those entering the field with a college degree did not perform their jobs substantially better than their less-educated coworkers. Interestingly though, Worden also found that police officers without a four-year college degree had fewer complaints from citizens for discourteousness and apathy, as well as for using poor judgment. Conversely, Worden believed that exposing police officers to college coursework may cause them to better understand the criminal justice process and the legal restrictions on their actions, whereas the non-college-educated police officers may resent those restrictions as unnecessary.

Dissertations by Gerald Griffin (1978), Michael Hooper (1988), and Prahlad Kedia (1985) also looked at post-secondary education's effect on police officers' job performance. Their research designs were similar in that each involved a sample of police officers from one or two local agencies, and collected data on each officer via a questionnaire and/or examination of their personnel files. An examination of performance evaluations for each respondent was a common denominator in each one as well. Regardless of whether the hypotheses in these dissertations proposed a positive or a negative relationship between education and job performance, the findings were the same in that none of the works found support for the idea that better educated police officers performed their duties any better than less educated ones.
Among other things, a police officer's job performance can be affected by how skilled he or she is at exercising their police discretion. Fickenauer (1975) attempted to assess the effect of education on the exercise of police officer discretion by sampling police recruits instead of veteran police officers. He did so in order to minimize what he saw as the contamination of discretionary judgments by department policies and other formal and informal guidelines followed in different police departments. Fickenauer sampled a group of recruits attending training at one of New Jersey's regional police academies, half of which had one or more years of college and the other half of which had a high school diploma or its equivalent. In order to examine the recruits' use of police discretion, they were each presented 10 vignettes and asked to picture themselves as the responding officer. They were then asked to indicate whether their response to the fictional situations would have been any different, and to justify their response in writing. Even though Fickenauer believed that his results tended to support the idea that college and non-college-educated police officers differ in their use of discretion, he admitted that his results were mixed. Only one of the vignettes (the one involving an African-American man attempting to obtain service in a restaurant not initially willing to serve him) had a statistically significant difference. In this case, college-educated recruits were more likely to be satisfied with an informal solution to the problem versus taking a position of strict enforcement.

Carter, Stephens, and Sapp (1989) examined police liability cases and the literature regarding education and police officer behavior that existed at that time. They identified the personality traits of college-educated police officers and posited
that they present less of a liability to departments than non-college-educated officers. Based on their research, Carter et al. claimed that college-educated police officers are more open-minded and therefore more likely to be tolerant of those different from them. They were also found to perform their duties better in terms of being able to resolve conflicts without resorting to force.

Stress

The literature on education and police stress is as ambiguous as the literature on job performance, but still provides some understanding. It is common knowledge that police officers face a multitude of stresses unique to their job. Golembiewski and Kim (1990) list physical dangers, shift work, and organizational pressures among the many distinctive stressors facing police officers. Police stress, like other kinds of stress, can accumulate over time and manifest itself in a number of psychological, physiological, and job-related ways. Golembiewski and Kim add that such stressors result in suicide, alcoholism, and other physical ailments at rates that are often much higher than that of the general population. However, according to the US Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data for 2005, police work was by no means the most statistically dangerous job in this country, and actually did not even break into the top five. Those spots were occupied by such occupations as truck driving, farming, and construction. In any case, police-related deaths and injuries are particularly upsetting because when police officers die or are injured on the job it occurs in the course of helping someone, or rushing to help someone (i.e., a traffic
crash). Plus, according to the BLS data, the cause of death for police officers nearly half of the time was "homicide", whereas the cause of death for the vast majority of on-the-job deaths for other occupations was some form of accident. These occurrences remind us all of the dangers lurking in the shadows, and remind police officers in particular of their own vulnerability and mortality.

Police officers quickly develop an "us versus them" mentality from dealing with an oftentimes aggressive and adversarial public. This causes stress which is exacerbated by the public's lack of understanding as to why police officers respond to situations the way they do. Johnson, Todd, and Subramanian (2005) explain that:

...the highly unpredictable and potentially dangerous persons who cannot dependably be identified in advance, conditions officers to treat each individual with suspicion and caution. This hypervigilence reinforced by a perceived hostility or lack of appreciation from the civilian community, serves to create an "us versus them" attitude. (p. 4)

The public, quite frankly, has no comprehension of the threats and dilemmas police officers face beyond what they see on television shows like _CSI_ or _Law and Order_. This is a problem of modern policing's own creation though, as police officers do a superb job of insulating mainstream society from the deviants and criminals that police officers encounter on a daily basis. People that have never "worked the street" or dealt with a similar clientele in some other official capacity (i.e., probation officer, prison guard) cannot understand why police officers do not just reason with a suspect and convince them to comply with their orders. Despite their stated experience with police officers, even Skolnick and Fyfe (1993) demonstrate their apparent lack of understanding by alleging that police officers routinely take advantage of naïve
motorists who know nothing about their civil rights during traffic stops. Authors such as these make it sound like police officers are merely on safari looking for cars of a particular make and model, or worse yet, drivers of a particular race and/or gender to stop. Again, such accusations of impropriety serve to perpetuate the police stress that comes from an insensitive and unsupportive public.

In reality, police stress comes from both external and internal sources. External sources of police stress are those sources one might commonly think of such as armed/violent encounters, witnessing death and serious injury, shift work, and unplanned overtime. Internal sources of stress are those that come from the police department itself. In fact, a recurring theme in the works on police officer stress reviewed was that the department stresses its police officers as much if not more than any external stressor. For example, Violanti and Aron (1993) found that organizational stressors had 6.3 times the total effect on police officers than that of inherent police stresses such as violence and dangers of the job.

Likewise, Crank’s (1998) discussion of internal police stress, or what he euphemistically refers to as “bullshit”, was the common thread he found among police officers in departments of all sizes. These police officers saw the “bullshit” in their lives as being caused by their bosses; not just their department’s chief and senior administrators, but the sergeants and other middle managers as well. Supervisors were seen as unfair, playing favorites, and developing policies and procedures based on personal whims rather than common sense. Crank explains that police officers learn to cope with such internal stressors through humor, clique formation, and
cynicism. Those who cannot identify and espouse an effective coping mechanism simply resign from policing.

Crank’s (1998) findings are in line with the work of Reuss-Ianni (1983) who explored what she saw as the two cultures of policing: “street cops” and “management cops”. She explained that, “Organizationally generated stress is increased when some group or groups feel that they are being pitted against each other or that some members of the organization are spying on others” (Reuss-Ianni, 1983, p. 87). Reuss-Ianni reported that the NYPD police officers she spoke with saw “management cops” as a group of self-serving people more interested in placating the public than protecting their own. She claimed that in order to cope with “management cop” stress, the “street cops” used tactics such as working slowly, sabotaging equipment, and stealing time (i.e., leaving work early, ditching calls, taking extended lunch breaks).

Lastly, Ayers (1990) stated that police officers’ quest for higher education was a source of stress both outside and inside the workplace. He explained that working towards a college degree is oftentimes a stressor for the in-career police officer because it severely limits recreation and family time. Family members may expect the officer to move on to a better job after graduation, something the officer may not wish to do. At work, a police officer with a college degree (or pursuing a college degree) may become stressed upon finding that they are looked down upon, ostracized, or distrusted by their superiors and fellow police officers. In addition, police officers may experience increased stress when they realize that, as was explained previously, a college education does not guarantee career advancement.
Despite studies that claim to have found a tangible benefit for higher education up to and including graduate studies (Carlan, 1999; Polk & Armstrong, 2001), such findings are by no means representative of what happens in every department. The reality is that those aforementioned barriers to advancement do more to determine a police officers' rate of advancement than any amount of education. For example, even though I joined the MSP with a master's degree in criminal justice administration, I was not eligible to test for promotion to the rank of sergeant until I had the required five years of seniority as a trooper. Similarly, Smith, Locke, and Walker (1967) explained that obtaining a college education causes the police officer to defer vacations, family time, and other means of immediate gratification, and agreed that it was not a guarantee for promotion or other career advancement.

Such barriers to advancement do not reflect an anti-intellectual bias on behalf of the department as much as they do the perceived need for an enlisted member to both abide by institutional rules and show that they have "paid their dues" before promotion. Regardless of the amount of education one has, it is recognized that police officers must demonstrate that they have spent a certain amount of time at one level to accumulate the training and experience necessary to successfully perform at the next. It is generally considered a faux pas in police culture to flaunt one's education or believe it automatically qualifies them for any kind of promotion or special assignment. This is evidenced by the near total absence of diplomas hanging in police officers' offices in any police department, regardless of their rank or position.
Just like educational requirements, the value placed on post-secondary education, tangible or otherwise, varies from department to department. For instance, the only educational benefit the MSP provides its enlisted members is the opportunity to apply for tuition reimbursement in the amount of one-half of one class per semester up to a maximum amount of $700 per fiscal year. In comparison, the Phoenix (Arizona) Police Department currently offers its police officers $3,974 in reimbursement funds each year to pay for tuition, books, and lab fees. According to information posted on the department’s website (http://www.phoenix.gov/police/pdjob4.html), the Phoenix Police Department also offers its police officers a four-tiered “career enhancement” bonus pay program that is based on the accumulation of points derived from an officer’s education, along with their training hours, physical fitness level, firearms proficiency rating, training certifications, specialty assignments, and other skills. The tiers currently provide Phoenix police officers with the following benefits:

- Level 1 (30 points): $152.20 Per Month or $1,826.45 Per Year
- Level 2 (50 points): $304.41 Per Month or $3,652.90 Per Year
- Level 3 (70 points): $456.61 Per Month or $5,479.34 Per Year
- Level 4 (90 points): $608.82 Per Month or $7,305.79 Per year

Even Utica, Michigan, a community that only measures about two and a half square miles, offers their police officers annual pay bonuses based on their level of education.

The education-related rewards for members of the New York City Police Department (NYPD) are neither tangible nor immediate, but according to their department’s website (http://www.nypd2.org/html/recruit/educational.html) there are a number of scholarships and tuition reduction programs available to police officers...
attending colleges and universities in and around New York City. The department also allows its police officers attending graduate school to apply for nine paid educational leave days per semester. While a college education may make it easier for NYPD’s police officers to pass promotional examinations, promotion does not require a college education. However, NYPD applicants must now possess at least 60 college credits with a minimum 2.0 grade point average (or a high school diploma or GED with two years of active military duty) to be considered (http://www.nypd2.org/html/recruit/requirements.html).

Like anyone else, police officers have a variety of stress tolerances and some can take much more than others without succumbing to stress-related problems. Such problems are difficult to spot though, because the stereotypical “street cop” image is pervasive in police culture and if a police officer wishes to live up to it they must display a persona that comes off as tough, emotionless, and unwavering. There should be no situation they cannot handle and no stressor too great. Regardless of whether or not a police officer buys into this image, it is seen as a sign of weakness or shame in most police department cultures to admit that the stress of the job is becoming too much for them to handle. It is an even more serious indiscretion to seek help in such situations. As Clark and White (2003) explain:

Because the culture of law enforcement supports the personality traits and adaptations that LEOs [law enforcement officers] make to cope with the job, peace officers often do not feel comfortable sharing concerns or feelings they may be having even with close friends or colleagues....He or she may be afraid to talk to colleagues for fear of being judged “out of control” or “crazy” (p. 20).
Instead, a police officer who is stressed and needs to “blow off steam” may engage in a number of alternative stress-relieving activities. These activities can be as healthy as physical exercise or as destructive as having extramarital affairs or self-medicating with alcohol. In fact, alcohol consumption is still a part of police culture to a degree that varies from department to department. In the case of the MSP, psychologists employed by its Office of Behavioral Science estimate that approximately 25% of enlisted members will experience some alcohol-related problems in their career. (R. Wolford, personal communication, October 22, 2006)

Psychologist Ellen Kirschman (1997) estimates that the rate of alcoholism among police officers is twice that of the general population. She has worked with police officers and their families for more than twenty years, and explains that police officers face the same alcoholism risk factors as those in many non-police occupations such as, “...high levels of job stress, peer pressure, isolation from the mainstream, a preponderance of young male individuals, and a culture that approves of using alcohol to relax and cope with stress” (Kirschman, 1997, p. 163). She goes on to explain that police officers’ risk of alcoholism is higher though, because of their unique need to control their emotions and the situations around them. Police officers are seen as society’s problem solvers and many believe that they cannot go to someone else for help dealing with their own problems. As a result, alcohol becomes their only means with which to cope. Alcoholism among police officers can also be a symptom of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which involves intense emotional reactions to past stressful events in which the person feared serious injury or death (American Psychiatric Association, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental
Disorders [4th ed.]). Such events are typically out of control, chaotic events that a police officer must have had to handle or die.

Police officers are taught how to escalate their amount of force used to ensure that they maintain control and the subject complies with their directives, and are conditioned to believe that doing so means the difference between life and death. At some point in their training Michigan State Police troopers are taught the phrase "Ask 'em, tell 'em, take 'em.", which refers to the idea that troopers should first respectfully ask a subject to comply with their directive. If the subject refuses to comply, the trooper should order them, and if that does not work, the trooper should physically force the subject to comply. They are taught that to do anything less is to demonstrate weakness by letting the subject control the situation and could result in serious injury or death. Police officers across the country learn this same lesson, with some failing to learn the "ask" part, and many cannot turn off that response when off-duty. Consequently, Kirschman also believes that there is a link between PTSD and domestic violence. In other words, incidents of domestic violence within police families may represent more of a desire to exert control over their lives in all situations than a desire to hurt a loved one. When these police officers meet resistance from their spouse or children, their demeanor shifts, and they may actually use physical force to ensure compliance with their demands.

Neidig, Russell, and Seng (1992) estimate that domestic violence in police families ranges as high as 41%, a figure they obtained through their use of self-report surveys used to determine the rate and severity of violence among police families. Their sample was made up of 425 police officer volunteers from an unidentified
southwestern state attending in-service training and conferences, as well as 115 female spouses of police officers. The respondents were asked to report the number of times over the past year they had engaged in each of 25 conflict behaviors, such as throwing an object, pushing/shoving, or strangling during a disagreement with their spouse, and how many times their spouse had done the same to them. Neidig et al. employed a seven-point scale ranging from “never” to “more than 20 times per year”. The tactics used were divided into three groups: “minor”, “severe”, and “any violence”. The rates of prevalence were based on each respondent’s most severe tactic.

Neidig et al. (1992) found that the overall prevalence of relationship violence as reported by both male and female police officers was between 37% and 41%, and that 8% of male officers reported engaging in an episode of severe violence. Female officers reported only slightly less violent behavior than male officers or their spouses. Neidig et al. also report that these rates are higher than those found in random samples of military and civilian populations, but they agree that the reliability of their information is a weakness because it was obtained from self-reports, in which respondents are sometimes not entirely truthful. Domestic violence is severely underreported in general, but more so in police work because police officers fear professional sanctions for their actions. Plus, some department cultures still support the “blue curtain” or “blue wall of silence” when police officers refuse to report or take enforcement action against their fellow officers (Kirschman, 1997; Neidig et al., 1992).
On the other hand, Johnson et al. (2005) explored violence in police families and also linked it to stressors that are transferred from the job to the home. They surveyed 728 police officers from two large police departments in the eastern United States. However, they found no statistical link between on-the-job exposure to violence and spousal violence. They also found no statistically significant link between alcohol consumption and violence.

As harmful to individuals and families as alcoholism and domestic violence are, the most dramatic and destructive way in which police stress can manifest itself is suicide. Allen Kates, a journalist and member of The American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress has counseled police officers, and written extensively on PTSD and law enforcement. Kates (1999) believes that PTSD is the most significant reason that police officers have emotional problems, and that it is a major contributing factor to rates of police suicide. Like alcoholism and domestic violence though, estimates on police suicide rates vary because it is either not tracked or not accurately reported. For example, the police suicide website, “Tears of a Cop” (http://www.tearsofacop.com), claims that a police officer takes his or her own life every 24 hours, whereas Kates gives an estimate of every 52 hours. Violanti (1996) acknowledges that the suicide rates offered by the “Tears of a Cop” website, Kates, and other sources are oftentimes contradictory, and explains that the validity of such rates are questionable because police suicides, “…may be routinely misclassified as accidents or undetermined deaths” (p. 26). Nevertheless, police suicides continue to occur and highlight the toll that police-related stress takes on those who serve. The
MSP is not immune, as the department has lost two enlisted members and one civilian member to suicide in the past two years.

Kates (1999), Harpold and Feemster (2002), and others report that police officers are more likely to kill themselves than to be killed in the line of duty. Further, Violanti (1995) found an upward trend in police suicide rates from the 1950s to 1990, and cited many of the factors mentioned above as contributing to the increase. He too believes that the unique stress of policing is a contributing factor to police suicide rates, explaining that when officers find themselves unable to cope, they may turn to suicide. Also notable was that in Violanti’s research, as well as in other studies he reviewed, alcohol consumption as a fairly common contributor to police suicides.

Conversely, Hem, Berg, and Eikberg (2004) cite their examination of 20 earlier studies on police officer suicide (13 from North America, six from Europe, and one from Australia) in which they found that police officers as a group had no higher suicide rate than any other group. They contend that if police suicides are considered to be “epidemic” they are likely epidemic in a particular area instead of the entire population of police officers. They also contend that the studies they examined involved very limited samples of police officers in specific departments without adequate acknowledgement of local or regional differences. According to Hem et al., suicide is not any more of a problem for police officers than any other population.

Suicide rates notwithstanding, there is no question that police stress can be very damaging to police officers and their families, but few works have explored ways to relieve it. Rarer still are works on how higher levels of education may relieve
police stress. However, Toch addressed the issue in his 2002 book, *Stress in Policing*. Toch administered a survey to two groups of police officers from different departments. He examined a variety of stressors, both internal and external, and looked at education’s effect on respondents’ stress levels. Toch stated that he found no obvious differences in reported stress levels by education. The otherwise limited amount of research on this area is again believed to be due to resistance of police officers to acknowledge the problem. As was already discussed, for a police officer to admit that he or she does not have a handle on their personal stress level goes against the “tough cop” image of being in control. Further, because police officers are human, each one reacts to stress differently so there can be no universal fix. Approaches to the problem have been varied but there is no research finding or consensus indicating that one approach is better than another.

Authoritarianism

This project’s third hypothesis examines education’s effect on authoritarian attitudes. The study of authoritarian personalities became a topic of great interest to social scientists in the years following World War II. The seminal work on the topic, entitled *The Authoritarian Personality*, was produced in 1950 by Theodore Adorno, Elsie Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel Levinson, and R. Nevitt Sanford. Like Stanley Milgram’s (1974) later studies of obedience, *The Authoritarian Personality* was designed to explain why seemingly decent Germans would be susceptible to the influence of the corrupt and despicable Nazi regime. Their focus was fascism and
they considered being fascist the same as being antidemocratic, explaining that, "...no politico-social trend imposes a graver threat to our traditional values and institutions than does fascism, and that knowledge of the personality forces that favor its acceptance may ultimately prove useful in combating it" (Adorno et al., 1982, p. 1).

Being prejudiced is seemingly seen as the same as being fascist or antidemocratic. As Adorno et al. (1982) also state, "One of the most clearly antidemocratic forms of social ideology is prejudice..." (p. 57).

Adorno et al.'s (1950) project was intended to develop an understanding of the psychology of fascist-leaning individuals. It was also intended to more systematically and scientifically study prejudice and social discrimination, as well as their causes. It incorporated scales designed to measure respondents' potential for fascist behavior. The project dealt with dynamic potentials and not the overt behavior of individuals. In other words, "The forces of personality are not responses but readiness for response," (Adorno et al., 1982, p. 5). Adorno et al. explained that they were limited to identifying only potentially fascist people because respondents would not freely admit to believing in such an ideology or aligning themselves with groups that do.

Adorno et al. (1950) believed that an adult's social outlook, or ideology, is an aspect of his or her personality and strongly influenced its deeper aspects. The personality was seen as being developed in childhood and largely reflective of the character of the family. Social and economic factors were seen as influencing parents' behavior toward their children, which they taught to behave in certain ways. Predictably, Adorno et al. found that people's prejudices are reflective of their parents' attitudes. They also saw authoritarianism as being related to personality
factors such as the need for power. Adorno et al. (1950) acknowledged that the culture and institutional structure of society are also important influences, but they remained contextual and unclear.

It is clear that Adorno et al.’s (1950) project took a decidedly psychological (rather than social psychological) approach to the study of authoritarianism. This was a reflection of the fact that the authors saw themselves as academic psychologists who were trying to operationalize the concepts of psychoanalytic theory and bring it into the mainstream of personal and social psychology through their study of fascism. In fact, *The Authoritarian Personality* is heavily based in Freudian psychology and psychoanalysis. For example, Adorno et al. believe that the authoritarian “syndrome” is tied to an Oedipus complex where members of an outgroup such as the Jews take the place of the father in one’s mind, and are aggressed against in much the same way as Freud conceived that boys aggress against their father when competing for their mother’s affection.

The discussion of ingroups and outgroups is critical to the understanding of ethnocentrism as it relates to authoritarian personalities. Adorno et al. (1950) see ethnocentrism as being different from prejudice. To them, prejudice involves a feeling of dislike against a particular group whereas ethnocentrism refers to a person’s frame of mind against those that are considered outsiders regardless of race. Adorno et al. use the term “group” to refer to any set of people who constitute a psychological entity for a person, and ingroups and outgroups are described as social psychological concepts that are part of one’s ethnocentric ideology. An ingroup is seen as a group that a person identifies with regardless of whether or not they actually belong to it.
Authoritarian members of the ingroup idealize the ingroup and blindly submit to it and see members of outgroups as being less powerful or of lower status, such as immigrants or racial minorities.

Ethnocentrist attitudes about outgroups are based on the idea that they are evil and inferior, and that ingroups are superior. They consequently take a hierarchical and authoritarian view of outgroups, and believe that they should be made to submit to the dominance of the ingroup. The higher the person scores on scales of anti-democratic or fascist tendencies the more likely they are to disregard democratic values and try to segregate, subordinate, or eliminate the outgroup. Democratic values are seen as keeping such ethnocentric tendencies in check. Further, authoritarianism is seen as being rooted in human emotion, with the fear of outgroups serving as the foundation for such attitudes. Consequently, Adorno et al. (1950) believe that in order for fascism to take hold and have a mass basis it must secure the frightened submission and active cooperation of the great majority of the people.

Adorno et al. (1950) used questionnaires to measure respondents’ pre-fascist tendencies. The original fascism questionnaire was based on the finding that responses to their previous anti-Semitism and ethnocentrism scales were not simply reflective of respondents’ opinions, but of their, “…general tendencies with sources, in part at least, deep within the structure of the person” (Adorno et al., 1982, p. 152). They termed this new instrument the F-Scale in order to, “…signify its concern with implicit prefascist tendencies” (Adorno et al., 1982, p. 153). The major purpose of the F-Scale was to yield a valid estimate of fascist/antidemocratic tendencies at the
personality level. The original version was composed of 38 items, with each one addressing one of nine F-Scale variables:

1. **Conventionalism.** Rigid adherence to conventional, middle-class values.
2. **Authoritarian submission.** Submissive, uncritical attitude toward idealized moral authorities of the ingroup.
3. **Authoritarian aggression.** Tendency to be on the lookout for, and to condemn, reject, and punish people who violate conventional values.
4. **Anti-intraception.** Opposition to the subjective, the imaginative, the tender-minded.
5. **Superstition and stereotypy.** The belief in mystical determinants of the individual's fate; the disposition to think in rigid categories.
6. **Power and "toughness".** Preoccupation with the dominance-submission, strong-weak, leader-follower dimension; identification with power-figures; overemphasis upon the conventionalized attributes of the ego; exaggerated assertion of strength and toughness.
7. **Destructiveness and cynicism.** Generalized hostility, vilification of the human.
8. **Projectivity.** The disposition to believe that wild and dangerous things go on in the world; the projection outwards of unconscious emotional impulses.
9. **Sex.** Exaggerated concern with sexual "goings-on."

(Adorno et al., 1982, p. 157)

Adorno et al. did not imply that the nine variables covered all the features of the potentially fascist personality, but simply that they show a fair sample of the ways in which the personality pattern characteristically manifests itself. Authoritarian submission and aggression, although not the specific focus of their study, were considered to be necessary to the existence of prejudiced attitudes. They explained that their research showed:

...a general disposition to glorify, to be subservient to and remain uncritical toward authoritative figures of the ingroup and to take an attitude of punishing outgroup figures in the name of some moral authority (Adorno et al., 1982, p. 157).

This caused Adorno et al. to consider authoritarianism a variable worthy of its own investigation. It should also be mentioned that authoritarian submission and
aggression, along with conservatism, became the basis for Altemeyer’s (1996) later work on right-wing authoritarianism to be discussed further on.

One of the many criticisms of Adorno et al.’s (1950) study was that it was limited in its ability to speak to human nature in general because it only looked at a very specific group of subjects. It relied on a limited number of subjects from largely middle-class backgrounds, yet made sweeping generalizations on potential fascism in all people. However, the middle-class was largely their focus as Adorno et al. believed the potential for fascist behavior was most prevalent in the middle class. Minority populations were not sampled because it was thought that one would need at least a grammar school education to be able to complete the questionnaire, and in the late 1940s minorities did not typically have that level of education. A related criticism was that the project’s first subjects were convenience samples of college students. However, Adorno et al. used students as research subjects for much the same reasons other researchers have done so, including students’ low cost and general willingness to participate. As funding improved, the project was extended to other populations, but the samples and Adorno et al.’s focus remained almost exclusively middle-class.

Adorno et al.’s (1950) work has been referenced in a number of later studies of authoritarian personalities such as Rokeach’s (1960) The Open and Closed Mind, which included his Dogmatism and Opinionation Scale designed to measure personal attitudes toward socialized authority. Bob Altemeyer of the University of Manitoba (Canada) is another scholar influenced by Adorno et al.’s work, and he considers it to be the impetus for his extensive work on right-wing authoritarianism. Altemeyer
(1996) explains that he uses the term in a social psychological sense (versus an economic or political sense) to denote submission to the perceived authorities in one's life. He believes that right-wing authoritarianism involves the convergence of three attitudinal clusters, or, "...orientations to respond in the same general way toward certain classes of stimuli" (Altemeyer, 1996, p. 6). As was mentioned earlier, the three clusters are, in name, three of Adorno et al.'s nine F-Scale variables, which Altemeyer thought of as being the only ones that "hung together empirically" in terms of authoritarianism: authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism (Altemeyer, 1996, p. 51).

To Altemeyer (1996), *authoritarian submission* refers to authoritarians' willingness to submit to what they believe are legitimate sources of authority in their society. *Authoritarian aggression* refers to general aggressiveness directed toward others that is believed to be sanctioned by those authorities. These first two definitions are similar to the definitions Adorno et al. offered for each one, except that in the case of authoritarian aggression, Adorno et al. (1950) believed that aggression was only directed toward those who violated conventional values. Altemeyer's definition of *conventionalism* is also different from Adorno et al.'s. He explains that the term refers to a high degree of adherence to social conventions prescribed by those same authorities, whereas Adorno et al. defined conventionalism as simply adherence to middle-class values. This definitional difference highlights the important distinction that Adorno et al. considered fascism to be a largely middle-class phenomenon while Altemeyer considers the highly authoritarian personality to
be a psychological state that transcends socio-economic strata and is therefore found among all groups. He explains:

Authoritarianism is something authoritarian followers and authoritarian leaders cook up between themselves. It happens when the followers submit too much to the leaders, trust them too much, and give them too much leeway to do whatever they want—which often is something undemocratic, tyrannical and brutal. (Altemeyer, 2006, p. 2)

Consequently, Altemeyer looks at authoritarianism as a psychological response to stimuli that can occur in anyone, and again, not as a political leaning.

Using his three attitudinal clusters (variables), Altemeyer (1996) developed an instrument designed to specifically measure right-wing authoritarianism, which he aptly referred to as the Right-Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) Scale questionnaire. The first version was a 24-item scale created in 1973, and a 30-item version soon followed in 1979. The RWA Scale questionnaire’s items are designed to assess general authoritarian opinions much the same way Adorno et al. (1950) designed their questionnaire’s items to identify beliefs related to fascist or anti-democratic opinions. However, Altemeyer was careful to avoid making the RWA Scale questionnaire look like a religious or political survey by not overpopulating it with items regarding either one. His latest version is a 30-item questionnaire that will be described in detail in the next chapter as it was incorporated into the last section of the internet-based survey administered to MSP enlisted members in the course of this project.

Although the RWA Scale questionnaire has continued to be updated over the years, Altemeyer (1996) has found the same results regardless of the version administered. As a result, he has developed what is essentially a psychological
profile of those who have higher-than-average RWA Scale scores, which he refers to as High RWAs. As one might also expect, those with lower-than-average scores are referred to as Low RWAs. However, like Adorno et al. (1950), Altemeyer does not specifically quantify what constitutes a high or low RWA Scale score.

In general, Altemeyer (1996) found that High RWAs tend to be more submissive than others to what they perceive to be established authority. Obedience to authority is part of how High RWAs define themselves, and is a concept critical to the understanding of the highly authoritarian personality. For example, Altemeyer found that High RWAs believed in evidence “proving” religious events but were not likely to believe the same caliber of evidence regarding other, secular phenomena. This is not because High RWAs are more pious, it is simply because they are more likely to want to win and maintain the favor of others, especially those they see as being in authority over them such as parents, employers, and religious leaders. Although High RWAs do not believe everything that they hear, they again, tend to more readily believe information received from what they feel are legitimate authorities because they strive to gain and maintain the positive evaluations of established society.

Like Adorno et al.’s (1950) fascists, Altemeyer’s (1996) High RWAs see the world as being divided into ingroups and outgroups, us and them. High RWAs consider us to be anyone who professes to believe what they, and thus the established authorities, believe (Adorno et al.’s ingroup), often regardless of whether their actions are in sync with those beliefs. On the other hand, them are simply those that do not profess those same beliefs (Adorno et al.’s outgroup). High RWAs develop a
noticeable “us versus them” outlook that Altemeyer believes comes from their
generally ethnocentric attitude and lack of ability to imagine how members of an
outgroup might feel. Altemeyer found that High RWAs do not necessarily dislike
one particular group. Instead, they dislike anyone that is different, so in that regard,
they are equal opportunity bigots. Furthermore, Altemeyer has found that High
RWAs are more likely than Low RWAs to make the Fundamental Attribution Error:
blaming people’s shortcomings on personality traits. For example, High RWAs
would be more apt than Low RWAs to ignore social factors that may contribute to
poverty and believe that a person is poor simply because they or “their kind” are lazy.

Neither Altemeyer (1996) nor Adorno et al. (1950) claim that highly
authoritarian people suffer from mental illness. Altemeyer also rejects the idea that
people are born with an inherently high or low level of authoritarianism. He has
found no reliable evidence of genetic factors influencing a person’s level of
authoritarianism and considers it to be largely a function of nurture and not nature.
To support this idea, Altemeyer has administered his questionnaire to parents of
college students that had completed it in the course of their psychology classes. By
examining parents’ responses, Altemeyer has been able to better understand his
students’ RWA Scale scores in terms of their parents’ RWA Scale scores, as he found
the two sets of scores to be closely aligned.

Despite an obvious parental influence on freshman college students,
Altemeyer (1996) found that one’s level of authoritarianism changes as one completes
their post-secondary education. Altemeyer administered his RWA Scale to college
graduates that had completed the RWA Scale questionnaire as undergraduates and
found that the university experience had caused them to have lower RWA scores. He reported that, "...authoritarianism had dropped significantly over the interval in all programs, about 11% overall, with the liberal arts students dropping more than the others" (Altemeyer, 1996, p. 85). Interestingly, Altemeyer found that freshman High RWAs showed decreases nearly twice as large as freshman Low RWAs. Contrary to what politically conservative critics of higher education often claim is the influence of politically liberal professors, Altemeyer believes that students' decrease in authoritarianism is the result of the new experiences and exposure to a wider array of people that post-secondary education offers, including members of what they may consider to be outgroups. He explains that, "As long as new learning can occur, new role models can emerge, new circumstances can pop up out of the blue, and new experiences can give us thrills or a poke in the eye, our social attitudes can change" (Altemeyer, 1996, p. 85).

Adorno et al. (1950) found similar education-related results in regard to measured levels of ethnocentrism, which a subset of items in their F-Scale questionnaire was designed to assess. Adorno et al. posited that as a person progressed beyond grammar and high school and received more education, the lower their level of ethnocentrism. Adorno et al. explained that this is because children are initially taught the democratic values in the Constitution and other historic documents, and that these lessons provide the basis for conventional middle-class values. As one progresses beyond high school though, their education becomes more eclectic and broad, and moves beyond the basic values and teachings of good citizenry.
Altemeyer (1996) also found that one’s level of authoritarianism shifts back and forth throughout their life as a result of significant events such as marriage, having children, natural disaster, or threat of attack. Times of stress, uncertainty, and disorganization breed fear, and fear is a critical component of the highly authoritarian personality because it can cause otherwise decent individuals to advocate extremely authoritarian behavior including aggression against those they perceive as the threat. As Altemeyer explains, “High RWAs stand about ten steps closer to the panic button than the rest of the population” (Altemeyer, 1996, p. 100). Two classic American examples of this type of fear-based reaction include forcing Japanese-Americans into internment camps during World War II and the Federal government’s actions against suspected Communist sympathizers during Senator Joseph McCarthy’s “Red Scare” crusade in the 1950s. In both cases, this country’s middle class was frightened into allowing their government much more power than they would have otherwise allowed to combat those perceived as members of an outgroup that threatened the country.

Lastly, Altemeyer (1996) acknowledges that there are left-wing authoritarians as well. He offers a description of left-wing authoritarianism that is similar to that of right-wing authoritarianism, which employs the same three attitudinal clusters with different definitions:

1. Authoritarian submission — a high degree of submission to authorities dedicated to overthrowing the established authorities in one’s society.
2. Authoritarian aggression — a general aggressiveness directed against the established authorities, or against persons who are thought to support those authorities.
3. Conventionalism — a high degree of adherence to the norms of behavior perceived to be endorsed by the revolutionary authorities.

(Altemeyer 1996, p. 219)
Right-wing authoritarianism has to do with a psychological dedication to serving established authorities, whereas left-wing authoritarianism has to do with a dedication to overthrowing them. Authoritarianism is the underlying psychological personality trait, whether it is for or against society's established authority. Consequently, the question of whether right-wing authoritarians are more dangerous than left-wing authoritarians can be argued either way. Keep in mind that left-wing authoritarians are revolutionaries that will become right-wing authoritarians if their efforts are successful and they become the ruling group.

This discussion of the work of Adorno et al. (1950) and Altemeyer (1996) provide the understanding of authoritarian personalities necessary to examine education's effect on that trait among police officers. However, this has also been an area that has been relatively overlooked by previous studies on post-secondary education's effect on police officers. Of the few works identified on the topic are a series of three articles by Smith, Locke, and Walker produced between 1967 and 1970. In the first article from 1967, Smith et al. mention that their review of existing literature at that time failed to turn up any research attempting to explore education's effects on police officer personality traits such as authoritarianism. However, their belief was that police officers taking college classes would have lower levels of authoritarianism than those who were not.

First, Smith et al. (1967) selected two groups of relatively recent graduates of the NYPD police academy. One group was attending college classes at what is currently known as the John Jay School of Criminal Justice, and the other group was not attending any classes. They measured authoritarianism with two scales:
Rokeach’s (1960) Dogmatism and Opinionation Scale and another that was concerned with social workers’ authoritative responses to their clients. Smith et al. explained that they avoided using Adorno et al.’s (1950) F-Scale because of its focus on fascist authoritarianism. They found that the group of police officers attending college did indeed have significantly lower levels of authoritarianism as measured by the combined scales. Interestingly, they also found that there was no difference in levels among non-college-attending police officers under 25 years old and those over 25 years old, but older college-attending police officers were significantly more authoritarian than younger ones. This latter difference might have been explained generationally, but Smith et al. offered no explanation whatsoever.

Smith et al. conducted a follow-up study in 1968 where they compared the authoritarianism levels of civilians with police officers attending college. They sampled a group of NYPD police officers attending the John Jay School of Criminal Justice as freshmen and a group of civilian freshmen in the same academic program. They intended to determine if there was any difference in levels of authoritarianism between the two groups, and again the same scales were employed. This study’s findings showed that the police officers scored significantly lower on the combined scales than the civilian students. Further, when they compared this study’s data from their previous one, they found that the police officer and civilian college students scored significantly lower than the non-college-oriented police officers. These findings indicated not only that college education had a lasting effect on police officers’ levels of authoritarianism, but that their academy training did as well.

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In their third article (1970), Smith et al. looked at the effects of a four-year degree on police officer personalities. This time they wondered if there was a significant difference in levels of authoritarianism between police officers that had completed their baccalaureate degree and those that had not attended college. They looked at a group of 39 police officers that were graduates of the John Jay School of Criminal Justice with an average age of 40.6, and 39 police officers that had not attended college with an average age of 40. The same two scales were used once more. Smith et al. reported findings in this study that were consistent with their two prior studies. Again, those police officers who had attended college had significantly lower levels of authoritarianism on the combined scales than those who had not. Based on the findings in this and the other two studies, Smith et al. also hypothesized that age and education could temper one’s level of authoritarianism, which are ideas consistent with Altemeyer’s later work. However, none of the three articles went into any great detail about the methods used, and they did not offer much in the way of plausible explanations for their findings.

Similar to Smith et al.’s 1968 study, Carlson, Thayer, and Germann (1971) compared a variety of personality traits, including authoritarianism, between two different groups of police officers and one group of college students. One group of police officers was chosen from a police department that was described as being “innovative” because of its “open-minded and socially aware chief”, and the other was described as “traditional” because it was in an area identified as conservative and had a “traditionally oriented chief” (Carlson et al., 1971, p. 564). The last group was made up of college students from a junior-level social psychology class. In order to
measure authoritarianism, Carlson et al. utilized a slightly modified version of Adorno et al.'s (1950) F-Scale instrument because they considered it to be a good measure of authoritarianism. They also used other scales intended to measure attitudes toward law, justice, and the punishment of criminals. Carlson et al. found that there were significant differences between the F-Scale scores of police officers from the innovative and traditional departments, with those from innovative departments showing less authoritarian attitudes. Carlson et al. also found that police officers at the rank of sergeant and higher in the innovative departments scored lower than the line officers in authoritarianism. Not surprising though, they also found that police officers were more authoritarian than students.

Dalley (1975) examined the attitudes of police officers with and without a college education to see if either group deviated from, or adhered to, the stereotypical police working personality that he described as being characterized by, "...rigidity, authoritarianism, conservatism and traditionalism...and resulted in his inability to apply new solutions to present problems..." (Dalley, 1975, p. 458). Dalley, a former member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), examined four groups of RCMP members: recruits and senior personnel with and without a college degree. In order to assess the working personality of each member of these groups, Dalley utilized three different attitudinal scales, one of which was Adorno et al.'s (1950) F-Scale.

Dalley (1975) found that there was no statistically significant difference between the attitudes of junior college graduates and non-graduates, but that there was between senior graduates and non-graduates. This led Dalley to believe that a
university education does indeed prevent the authoritarianism and rigidity that make up the stereotypical police working personality. He further speculated that in personnel in whom that stereotypical personality exists, it resulted from a combination of experience and the lack of a university education. Dalley also found that training tended to make recruits less authoritarian and more likely to exercise police discretion. However, Dalley admitted that all his findings really show is that higher education prevents the development of the adverse attitude, and he was unable to state whether the effects found would have been the same for recruits who had degrees before they entered the academy.

As has been demonstrated in this chapter, the literature on post-secondary education's effect on police officers' job performance, stress, and level of authoritarianism is not only limited, but somewhat contradictory as well. Indeed, it seems that as many studies reported finding an effect as those that did not. The contradictory nature of these findings is likely due to the simple fact that human beings are unique, so it is difficult to predict with any certainty how one might react to a particular stimulus or condition. For example, the chances are good that the findings from this project (or any of the works referenced above) would have been at least slightly different had only a different sample of police officers responded. This lack of consistency is one of the well-known difficulties of conducting social science research. Regardless, this project and the others like it are valuable because together their findings provide an understanding of post-secondary education's range of possible effects on police officers. This is true whether the findings support the hypotheses or not. In addition to benefiting the academic discourse on the subject,
this understanding serves as an important tool for any politician, public administrator, or police leader responsible for policy decisions regarding the hiring or promoting of police officers.
CHAPTER III
METHODS

In order to obtain the information necessary to test this project’s three hypotheses, both quantitative survey and qualitative interview methods were employed. The quantitative survey instrument was comprised of 92 single-answer, multiple choice questions divided into five sections. (Appendix A) The first section collected basic demographic information from respondents such as their age, sex, race, highest level of education completed, completed semesters of post-secondary education, and years of service as a police officer. However, in order to guarantee respondents’ anonymity, none of the questions were designed separately or together to allow for the identification of respondents. This is why questions about respondents’ rank, position, or work site were avoided. The questions in the next three sections collected information about respondents’ personal and professional history, perceived level of stress, and lifestyle. Because of the sensitive nature of some of the questions, respondents were only asked whether or not they had ever experienced a particular occurrence and nothing more. The fifth and final section of the survey was intended to measure respondents’ level of right-wing authoritarianism, and was comprised entirely of Altemeyer’s (1996) aforementioned 30-item RWA Scale questionnaire.
This version of the RWA Scale questionnaire actually consists of 34 items, but the first four are what Altemeyer referred to as "table setters" designed to ease respondents into the format of the questions and are therefore not scored (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, September 6, 2006). The remaining 30 items are divided evenly between protrait and contrait statements, each of which is designed to test two or all three of Altemeyer's attitudinal clusters of authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, and conventionalism. Further, because those with high RWA Scale scores tend to be more fearful of others than those with low scores, a few of the RWA Scale questionnaire items were worded to reflect some sort of imminent danger/peril. In a personal e-mail correspondence, Altemeyer recommended that I also add his similar Social Dominance Orientation Scale items to the survey because it measures the dominating person, whereas the RWA Scale assesses the authoritarian follower. (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, May 4, 2005) However, I did not do so because it is already known that police officers have to have at least somewhat of a dominant personality or they could not function in the job. Besides, the survey was already quite lengthy, and had it been any longer it would have been much more difficult to convince the department to allow its enlisted members participate. Plus, there would have been more of a chance that respondents would be called away for an emergency before they finished, or simply given up.

Internet administration of the survey was chosen because of the vast geographic area of the state, as well as the cost savings when compared to other methods. For example, paper surveys would have had to be mailed out with self-addressed, stamped return envelopes. Therefore, the survey subscription fee was

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considerably less expensive than postage would have been. Because of both its features and ease of use, I chose the services of the internet surveying company, WebSurveyor, a company based in Virginia that is used by a number of universities as well as prestigious corporations such as American Airlines and BMW. A welcome byproduct of choosing to administer the survey via the Internet was that doing so also facilitated the processing of responses, as coding errors were all but eliminated. Informed consent was also obtained as part of the online survey. When respondents clicked on the web link they were greeted with an informed consent statement (Appendix B) that described the project in detail. As the statement made clear, informed consent was obtained from each respondent the moment they chose to participate by clicking on the “Next Page” button at the end of the statement to continue on to the survey items. There was no way for respondents to circumvent this system and begin the survey without viewing the statement.

After the project proposal was approved by my dissertation committee and Western Michigan University’s Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB), it was presented to the commanders of the MSP’s Executive and Human Resources Divisions. Through them, the project proposal was presented to the Director at that time, Colonel Tadarial Sturdivant, and he subsequently gave me permission to conduct my research project. In fact, Colonel Sturdivant allowed enlisted members to participate in the survey on duty. As a courtesy, the collective bargaining organization for the department’s troopers and sergeants, the Michigan State Police Troopers Association (MSPTA), was also given an opportunity to review and comment on the project proposal. However, despite the Human Resources
Division Commander's repeated attempts to contact them, the association's president at that time never responded. My division commander then instructed me to conduct my research without their input, and no objections were subsequently received from the MSPTA.

At the time the web-based survey was announced there were 1,814 enlisted members in the department, and all of them were invited to participate in the survey regardless of their rank. As was previously explained, enlisted members of the department are MCOLES-certified police officers with full arrest authority. They should not be confused with the department's civilian members or its non-enlisted enforcement members: Motor Carrier Officers and State Properties Security Officers. The former group's powers and responsibilities are limited to commercial motor vehicle enforcement and some limited criminal incidents (i.e., drunk driving enforcement), and the latter group only has enforcement powers on state-owned property. Because these groups go through different training and have very different responsibilities, they were excluded from this project.

Enlisted members were invited to participate in the survey via an official department memorandum posted on the department's intranet that included a clickable link to the survey's webpage (Appendix C). The memorandum was posted on October 28, 2005, and informed readers that the survey would be available until November 30, 2005. The response was initially modest but slowed to a trickle after a few weeks. So with the permission of both the department and HSIRB, I sent a reminder via e-mail (Appendix D) to the 1,438 enlisted members that had department e-mail accounts at that time. This reminder caused another spike in responses, and
the combination of notification methods ultimately resulted in 362 completed surveys, or a response rate of roughly 20%. Of those responses, six had to be discarded because they were very incomplete and therefore unusable, which left 356 responses.

It must be noted that no attempt was made to obtain a representative sample of enlisted members, as ensuring the generalizability of its findings was not this project's intent. In other words, there was no intent to use the results of this project to predict similar effects in other groups of police officers in Michigan or the rest of the country. The question of external validity is whether the understanding of the effects of an experimental condition helps us to understand similar effects among different populations and settings. Such an understanding can be obtained regardless of whether the sample is representative, and a project can have external validity without generalizability. Because this project was intended to foster a theoretical understanding of how post-secondary education effects MSP enlisted members, the project had external validity even though its findings were not able to be generalized beyond the sample itself. Similarly, Adorno et al.'s (1950) work was not intended to predict fascist tendencies in all populations, but instead to gain a general psychological understanding of such tendencies.

A few months after the internet survey was administered, I conducted personal interviews with the department's Executive Council (which is made up of the department's Director, Deputy Directors, and Executive Division Commander) and Human Resources Division Commander. The interviews loosely followed a nine-question script (Appendix E) and were intended to collect qualitative information that
would allow for an idea of how the department's policy makers would steer the department on the issue of education requirements if given the opportunity. It was also hoped that the rich data obtained from these interviews would help with the interpretation of the collected survey responses. The interviews were audio taped, not for purposes of transcription, but for later review if needed. A nearly identical informed consent statement to the one presented to the online survey respondents was given to those interviewed (Appendix F). Before each one was conducted, interviewees were asked to read and sign the statement as a means of formally giving consent. The tapes of each interview and the signed informed consent statements have been retained in a secure file at the Western Michigan University Sociology Department, along with other project documents and a CD-Rom containing the data set.

After the survey's data collection period had ended, the information was downloaded from the WebSurveyor server as a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and coded. Items with responses ranging from “a” to “e” were generally coded from one to five, or zero to four if one of the responses was “None”. Responses of “Yes”, “No”, and “Not Applicable” were coded one, zero, and two respectively. There were only a handful of “Yes/No” questions found without responses, and those were coded as one and zero. Responses to Altemeyer's RWA Scale questionnaire items ranged from -4 (very strongly disagree) to +4 (very strongly agree). Responses to protrait questions were coded from one to nine and responses to contrait questions were coded from nine to one, as is illustrated in the following table:

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Altemeyer instructed that skipped items were given the score of five (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, September 5, 2006). For both protraits and contraits a score of 5 corresponds with a selection of zero for an RWA Scale item, indicating that the respondent feels exactly neutral about it. If non-responses were coded any other number it would skew the results one way or the other depending on whether the skipped item was a protrait or contrait item. Altemeyer also recommended deleting respondents that skip eight or more items of the RWA scale (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, September 5, 2006). There were four such respondents, and they were among the aforementioned six that had been deleted. A respondent’s RWA Scale score was made up of the sum total of the scores for the 30 items of the questionnaire. A separate column was added to the spreadsheet for each respondent’s
total RWA Scale score, and then the spreadsheet was imported into the computer for statistical analysis.

The data were first examined for basic patterns and trends, as well as the demographic makeup of the respondents. A Cronbach’s alpha was then performed on the responses to the 30-item RWA Scale questionnaire in order to test inter-item correlations. Cross-tabulation analyses were also performed between pairs of variables in an effort to determine if there was any statistical support for this project’s three hypotheses. The results of these analyses will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.
CHAPTER IV
FINDINGS

Before conducting a statistical analysis of the collected survey data, the items relating to demographic information were reviewed in an effort to develop a general profile of respondents. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, obtaining a representative sample of the department's enlisted members was never a specific goal of the project. But as it turned out, the group of respondents was actually rather representative of the department's enlisted members as a whole. In other words, the sample included respondents from a mix of genders and races that very closely mirrored the demographic makeup of the entire department. For example, the group of respondents was made up of 73% male Caucasians (259 male Caucasians out of 356 respondents), while male Caucasians made up 74% of the department's enlisted members as a whole when this survey was administered. Of the remaining 41 males, there were 22 African-Americans, one Asian/Pacific Islander, seven Hispanics, and 11 identified as "Other". There were 56 female respondents, and of them, 51 identified themselves as Caucasian, three as African-American, and one as "Other". One respondent gave their race as Caucasian but chose not to provide their gender. Again, it was found that the proportion that each gender and racial group made up of the group of respondents was similar to the proportion each group made up of the department's entire enlisted membership.
Looking beyond race and gender, the data showed a near equal distribution of respondents among time-in-service categories, as well as duty responsibilities and shifts. This means that respondents came from a variety of facets of the department and were not simply Monday-to-Friday staff people on the day shift with more of an opportunity to participate in surveys, or road troopers on a slow midnight shift looking to "kill some time". Also of note was the fact that respondents seemed to have an overall traditional middle-class background and lifestyle, with more than 80% reporting that they were married and nearly the same proportion with children. Further, the overwhelming majority reported being raised in a two-parent household and never having experienced their parents divorce.

The most important trait that respondents shared was their support for post-secondary education. Although the sample was diverse in regard to race, gender, duties, shifts, and general areas of the state represented, it was clear that respondents had a pro-education bias. Only 10 respondents (approximately 3%) reported never taking any college classes whatsoever and over three-quarters of respondents had some level of college degree. The largest group of college-educated respondents was the group of 173 respondents (66%, or 48% of the sample) with a bachelor's degree. This was followed by 66 respondents with an associate's degree (24%, or 19% of the sample) and 32 respondents with a graduate degree or Juris Doctorate (12%, or 9% of the sample). Those respondents whose highest degree earned was a high school diploma or GED made up only 24% of the sample. Additionally, all but two respondents stated that they would encourage their children to get a college education.
The vast majority of respondents have experienced a traditional college education in the sense that 88% of those with college degrees had completed them without using distance education credits. Further, only 15% of college graduates had to complete a police academy to earn their degree, and 9% purchased "life experience" credits in the course of doing so. Of particular note in regard to education is the fact that 59 respondents have increased their education level since joining the department, with two reportedly going from a high school diploma to a graduate degree.

Respondents also appeared to support continuing education. Approximately 84% stated that they would go back to college if the department or a government program offered to fully reimburse them. Further, over half of respondents believe that a bachelor's degree should be required for promotion to the rank of lieutenant and slightly more than 20% believe that the requirement should at least be an associate's degree. Given this information, it is also not surprising that nearly three quarters believe it will help them advance in their career.

Respondents' obvious affinity for higher education is a likely source of bias that has affected the following statistical analyses, and will be important to the interpretations of this project's findings in the Discussion chapter to follow. But here it must be determined whether there are statistically significant relationships between the variables intended to support this project's three hypotheses. Because of the survey's design and generally ordinal responses, cross-tabulation was believed to be the most appropriate statistical method. Statistical significance was determined by
the Pearson Chi-Square (a measure of association for categorical variables) for each cross-tabulation computed.

As was mentioned above, the first hypothesis had to do with education's effect on job performance but since there is no consensus in the law enforcement community as to what constitutes "good" police officer job performance, the number of awards and commendations received was selected as an indicator of good job performance. Conversely, the number of times a respondent had been disciplined by the department and the number of times they had been the suspect in a criminal investigation were selected as indicators of "poor" job performance. These indicators were chosen out of necessity and not because they were considered to be the best ones. I did not have access to official department records, so I had to rely on respondents' self-reports. This brought with it concerns about accuracy and truthfulness, concerns that were exacerbated by the fact that I work for the Executive Division at the department's headquarters. As a result, some respondents may have been reluctant to answer the rather sensitive questions truthfully out of fear of negative career repercussions. Nevertheless, this self-report information was all that was available to me.

A cross-tabulation analysis between respondents' highest degree earned and their highest degree earned when first hired and the awards or commendations they received was performed. However, because a minimum expected count of at least five was needed in each cross-tabulation cell to compute a proper chi-square, both measures of education had to be recoded. They were recoded into three groups, with those respondents with a high school diploma or GED making up one group, those
with an associate's degree making up another, and those with a bachelor's or graduate
degree making up the third. The five categories of awards or commendations earned
were also regrouped into the three categories: zero, one to two, and three to four
awards or commendations earned. No statistically significant relationships between
the measures of education level by degree earned and the number of awards or
commendations received were found. A cross-tabulation was also performed using
the same recoded measures of education level by degree and the number of times a
respondent had been disciplined for violating department policy and been the suspect
in a criminal investigation. The responses to the questions on discipline and criminal
charges also had to be recoded into three categories each: zero, one to two, and three
to four occurrences. Regardless of the combination of variables examined, no
statistically significant relationship was found here either.

Lastly, a cross-tabulation was performed using the number of semesters of
post-secondary education completed with the three measures of job performance.
Before doing so this variable also had to be recoded because only a few of the
respondents reported completing few or no semesters of post-secondary education.
Therefore, the following three categories were used: those that had completed zero to
three semesters of post-secondary education, those that had completed four to six
semesters, and those that had completed seven or more semesters made. Because of
the way this question’s responses were written, this categorization gives the best
incremental representation of respondents’ education level. In other words, whether
some had little to no post-secondary education, completed an associate’s degree or a
good portion of a bachelor’s degree, or likely finished a bachelor’s or a graduate
degree can be compared to the other variables. However, no statistically significant relationships were found between respondents' number of semesters completed and any measure of job performance.

This project's second hypothesis had to do with post-secondary education's effect on respondent's reported stress level. Like job performance, stress is a difficult variable to measure as it is rather subjective. Everyone reacts differently to a set of circumstances or a situation, and something that might severely stress one person may have little effect on another. Therefore, it was felt that the most accurate measure of respondents' stress level, at least for the purposes of this project, was their personal assessment. Two stress-related questions were developed. One asked respondents about how often the demands of their job stressed them and other asked them to report their overall level of stress. Respondents were also asked other stress-related questions designed to assess their reactions to, or means of dealing with, stress. These included their frequency of alcohol consumption, relationship problems, and religious service attendance.

The cross-tabulation analysis of stress and education level data began by recoding both measures of stress in order to again ensure that each cross-tabulation cell had a minimum expected count of five. Both measures of stress were recoded into two groups. For the question regarding stress from the demands of one's job, "Never" was considered one group and the remaining responses were considered the other, indicating that a respondent either felt job stress or they did not. Similarly, for the question regarding how stressed one feels on any given day, the categories "I Don't Know/No Comment" and "Not at all" made up one group and the remaining
responses made up the other, again indicating whether the respondent felt stress or not. In this case, it was also necessary to recode the two measures of respondent's education level by degree earned into two categories representing whether or not respondents had a college degree when they were hired or when they took the survey.

The chi-squares computed for each cross-tabulation analysis revealed very strong relationships between both recoded measures of education by degree earned and job stress that were contrary to this project's second hypothesis. The relationship between the possession of a degree when hired and job stress was statistically significant at the .001 level, and the relationship between the current possession of a degree and job stress was statistically significant at the .000 level. The gammas for both comparisons showed a positive relationship, indicating that the more education one has the more likely they are to feel job stress. This information is summarized in the following computer output tables:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Stress</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% within Possess a Degree When Hired</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.00</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% within Possess a Degree When Hired</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>241</td>
<td>96.4%</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% within Possess a Degree When Hired</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>106</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Computer Output – Cross-Tabulation Between Job Stress and Possession of a Degree When Hired
### Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>11.370b</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
<td>9.835</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>10.240</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher’s Exact Test</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>11.338</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a. Computed only for a 2x2 table
- b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 6.85.

Table 3: Computer Output – Chi-Square Tests Between Job Stress and Possession of a Degree When Hired

### Symmetric Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Asymp.Std. Error</th>
<th>Approx. t</th>
<th>Approx. Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma</td>
<td>.606</td>
<td>.141</td>
<td>2.728</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 4: Computer Output – Symmetric Measures Showing the Gamma Between Job Stress and Possession of a Degree When Hired

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Crosstab

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Currently Possess a Degree</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Stress</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.00</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Currently Possess a Degree</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Currently Possess a Degree</td>
<td>84.7%</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within Currently Possess a Degree</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Computer Output – Cross-Tabulation Between Job Stress and Current Possession of a Degree

Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (2-sided)</th>
<th>Exact Sig. (1-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>14.417</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity Correction</td>
<td>12.561</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>12.156</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisher's Exact Test</td>
<td>14.377</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table
b. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.49.

Table 6: Computer Output – Chi-Square Tests Between Job Stress and Current Possession of a Degree

64
Symmetric Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Asymp. Std. Error</th>
<th>Approx. T</th>
<th>Approx. Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>.650</td>
<td>.127</td>
<td>2.804</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 7: Computer Output – Symmetric Measures Showing the Gamma Between Job Stress and Current Possession of a Degree

Again, these findings are contrary to the project’s second hypothesis and will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

It should also be mentioned that the cross-tabulation between respondents’ number of semesters of post-secondary education completed and job stress was statistically significant at the .001 level, and that the direction of the relationship was also positive. However, one third of the cells had a minimum expected count of less than five. To recode the number of semesters of education into any fewer groups to deal with this problem would result in the variable simply becoming a measure of whether or not they completed classes. Such a comparison would reveal no more about education’s effect on respondents’ level of job stress than the other two cross-tabulations, so it was not performed. Also, no statistically significant relationships were found between the three measures of respondents’ education level and respondents’ reported level of overall daily stress.

Because stress can manifest itself in a number of negative ways such as divorce, domestic violence, and substance abuse, it was posited that a secondary benefit of post-secondary education would be lower levels of stress resulting in fewer

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incidents of such stress-related behaviors. Consequently, a cross-tabulation analysis was performed examining the relationship between both recoded measures of stress and responses to questions designed to measure divorce, domestic violence, and alcohol consumption. First, the question regarding the number of times a respondent had been divorced was recoded into two groups indicating that they had either been divorced or not. No statistically significant relationships were found between stress level and divorce. Second, the crime of domestic violence is seen here not only as a crime of control, but also as the product of an overload of personal stress. It is not illogical to assume that some police officers might become overly stressed and lash out at their family. However, given the fact that only two respondents admitted to ever having been charged with the crime of domestic violence, it was not unexpected that an attempted cross-tabulation analysis comparing the measures of stress with reported charges of domestic violence revealed nothing of note.

Finally, alcohol consumption has already been discussed as being as much a part of off-duty police culture as coffee consumption is of on-duty police culture. Responses to questions regarding the frequency of alcohol consumption and the amount consumed were recoded before being compared to both recoded measures of stress. For instance, because the amount of alcohol consumed by respondents per day was relatively moderate, there were few respondents in the highest alcohol consumption categories. Therefore, the responses to that question were recoded into two groups simply representing those that drank alcohol on a daily basis and those that did not. The distribution of responses was wider for questions regarding the number of drinks respondents consumed each week and how many days each week
they consumed alcohol, so responses to these questions were able to be recoded into three categories each. The recoded categories for the number of drinks per week were zero, one to three, and seven or more, and the recoded categories for the number of days per week one drank were zero, one to two, and three to seven. A cross-tabulation was performed using these recoded variables and both recoded measures of stress but again no statistically significant relationships between any of the combinations were revealed.

The third hypothesis explored the idea that education had an ameliorating effect on respondents' level of authoritarianism, as measured by their scores on Altemeyer's RWA Scale questionnaire. The first step in the analysis of respondent's RWA scale scores was to perform a Cronbach's alpha to test inter-item relationships. Although the questionnaire actually includes 34 items, as was explained earlier, the first four items are simply what are referred to as table setters and are not counted. The alpha calculations were therefore performed using the responses to the remaining 30 items and resulted in a .94 alpha indicating very strong inter-item relationships.

The next step was to calculate each respondent's RWA Scale score, as well as the overall average score for all respondents. Each completed RWA Scale questionnaire was scored and summed as described in the preceding chapter. RWA Scale scores ranged from a low of 30 to a high of 255, and respondents' average score was 143. A check of average score by highest degree earned showed there to be a general decrease in average scores as respondents' level of education increased. For instance, the one GED holder's RWA Scale score was 175, and the associate's, bachelor's, and graduate degree holders averaged 147, 144, and 131 respectively.
Interestingly though, the average score for those with a high school diploma averaged 144, which is lower than the overall average score for those with an associate's degree and identical to that of those respondents with a bachelor's degree.

A cross-tabulation analysis was then performed in order to determine if there was any statistical support for the hypothesis, as was indicated by the simple averaging of scores by education level. However, because RWA scale scores represent interval data, much like IQ scores, the scores first had to be recoded into ordinal categories. Three categories, low, medium, and high, were chosen. Low scores were considered to be those from 30 (the lowest score reported) to 105, medium scores were those from 106 to 180, and high scores were those from 181 to 255 (the highest score reported). For this cross-tabulation, both highest degree earned and the highest degree earned when hired were again represented by three categories, with high school diploma and GED holders making up one group, associate's degree holders making up another, and bachelor's and graduate degree holders making up the third. In neither case was there a statistically significant relationship found between variables, but of note was the fact that the cross-tabulation column percentages revealed that the overwhelming majority of respondents have RWA Scale scores in the "medium" category regardless of their education level.

A cross-tabulation was then performed using the recoded number of semesters of post secondary education completed and RWA Scale scores. This analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between the two variables at the .05 level, and a check of the gamma revealed the direction of the relationship to be
negative. These findings support the third hypothesis and are summarized in the following computer output tables:

Table 8: Computer Output – Cross-Tabulation Between RWA Scale Score and the Number of Semesters of Post-Secondary Education Completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RWA Scale Score</th>
<th>Semesters of P-S Education</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>% within Semesters of P-S Education</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% within Semesters of P-S Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9: Computer Output – Chi-Square Tests Between RWA Scale Score and the Number of Semesters of Post-Secondary Education Completed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chi-Square Tests</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>10.091a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>9.735</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>.045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linear-by-Linear Association</td>
<td>1.980</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.63.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symmetric Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ordinal by Ordinal Gamma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a. Not assuming the null hypothesis.
- b. Using the asymptotic standard error assuming the null hypothesis.

Table 10: Computer Output – Symmetric Measures Showing the Gamma Between RWA Scale Score and the Number of Semesters of Post-Secondary Education Completed

This finding supports the hypothesis that the higher a respondents' education level the lower their RWA Scale score.

It was also believed that police officers would score higher on the RWA Scale than the general population, as assimilation into a traditionally conservative social-control institution was thought to have such an effect on respondents. However, the findings do not support this idea, which instead raises the question of how affiliation with some other social institutions might be reflective of respondents’ RWA Scale scores. The results from the survey were mixed, with statistically significant relationships found between RWA Scale score and some social institutions but not others. For example, there was no significant relationship between RWA Scale score and veteran’s status, but there were between RWA Scale score and marital status and religious service attendance that were significant at the .000 level. Religious service attendance was recoded into three categories, indicating that the individual did not attend religious services, attended them monthly or only a few times a year, or attended them on a weekly basis or more frequently. Similarly, marital status was
recoded into two categories representing that respondents were either married or widowed or not. The gamma and cross-tabulation for both variables indicated a positive relationship, that the higher the respondent’s RWA Scale score the more likely they would be to attend religious services and participate in the institution of marriage. Given what Altemeyer (1996) and others have learned about highly authoritarian personalities, such findings came as no surprise.

In order to gain a greater understanding of this issue than could be obtained from the analysis of quantitative data alone, personal interviews with the department’s Executive Council and Human Resources Division commander were conducted. Specifically, the interviews were intended to provide an idea of the department leadership’s perspective in regard to post-secondary education. The interviews were taped but not transcribed, and in order to preserve interviewees’ anonymity further none of them will be directly quoted in this narrative. All nine questions on the aforementioned script were addressed at some point in each interview, but the interviews took on the characteristics of casual conversations rather than a mechanical “question and answer” exercise. The discussions rambled and digressed at times, but the focus of each interview remained the issue of post-secondary education and policing.

Overall, the interviews were extremely successful in showing that the department’s senior leaders share a progressive view regarding the idea of enhanced educational requirements for new police officers. They each voiced their support for an entry-level education requirement of at least an associate’s degree for new enlisted members and also believed that post-secondary education would benefit them both
personally and professionally. Further, those interviewed all agreed that some level of post-secondary education should be required for promotion, although there was disagreement regarding the level that should be required for each rank. Their opinions ranged from a bachelor’s degree for promotion to the rank of lieutenant and higher to an enlisted member simply having to demonstrate that they had attended some classes, academic or otherwise, since their last promotion.

Those interviewed also agreed that, aside from slightly better report writing skills, they saw no major difference in the job performance of college-educated versus high school educated enlisted members. They considered the skills developed in the course of obtaining a post-secondary education to be distinct from the skills, “street smarts”, and common sense possessed by “good troopers”. These traits were seen as being developed through training and experience and not simply picked up by taking a college course or two. They also disagreed with the idea that better-educated police officers presented management problems.

Any significant changes to the department’s education requirements for hiring or promotion were not seen as likely to occur in the immediate future primarily because of cost. Although those interviewed felt that an associate’s degree requirement for new hires was an achievable goal, none of them could foresee the day when the MSP joins the Illinois State Police in requiring that all potential applicants (with no prior law enforcement experience) have a four-year degree. In addition to the financial cost of attracting and retaining a better-educated work force, all but one of the interviewees voiced their concern about the requirement for college-educated applicants hindering minority recruitment. Finally, when asked why the MSP,
MCOLES, or more than a handful of police departments in Michigan had not moved toward increasing the educational standards, there was again consensus. Their shared explanation was that there are simply more pressing issues to attend to, especially since the September 11th terrorist attacks. The issue of educational standards for police officers has just not been seen as particularly important by comparison.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

The comparison of respondents' education level by degree earned to measures of good and poor job performance produced no statistically significant results. In retrospect, it is believed that the selected variables pertaining to job performance were not the best measures because they relied exclusively on self-reported information, which typically suffers from inaccuracies (Kihlstrom, 2004). Furthermore, this project's measure of "good" job performance, a respondent's number of awards or commendations earned, is now considered to be an imprecise measure mainly because the department’s awards process has been somewhat inconsistent over the years. Changes in personnel on the department’s Board of Awards, along with work site/unit commander discretion, have caused some enlisted members to believe that awards are granted merely on a whim rather than the policies established in the department’s Official Orders.

Whether or not an enlisted member receives an award first depends on how significant their commander considers their actions to have been. This in turn determines the level of award for which the member is initially recommended, as well how much effort their commander puts into writing the recommendation. The Board of Awards then considers the commander's recommendation, the incident report, and other supporting documentation when making their decision as to whether or not the
member's actions are worthy of recognition, and at what level. Despite improvements to the procedure in recent years, most every enlisted member could probably recall a time where someone did not receive an award that they felt they should have been granted, or where two seemingly equivalent events received disparate awards simply because of the subjective opinion of the Board.

It is also likely that enlisted members with higher levels of education are promoted out of street-level positions much faster. Unless they are one of the few sergeants and above in detective, specialist, or investigative/undercover assignments, once an enlisted member is promoted beyond the entry-level rank of trooper they are essentially administrative personnel. This all but eliminates any chance of them becoming involved in situations where awards or commendations can be earned. This assumption is supported by Weiner's (1974) findings that of the police officers in his study, those with more education held higher ranking positions. He also found that those with a college degree stood a better chance of becoming command officers than those with a high school diploma. However, in order to preserve the anonymity of this project's respondents, they were not asked their rank or specific duty assignment so there is no way to confirm whether enlisted members with college degrees actually occupy higher-ranking positions more often.

There were also no statistically significant relationships found between the three measures of education level and the measures of "poor" job performance: the number of times a respondent was disciplined for violating department policies and the number of times they were the suspect in a criminal investigation. This could have been because respondents were not comfortable disclosing such information to a
researcher who works at the department’s headquarters, or they might have mistakenly reported a situation where they were charged with a crime as one where they received department discipline, vice-versa, or both. In addition, police administrators have an interest in keeping such incidents quiet, and some MSP administrators over the years could have avoided disciplining a poorly performing enlisted member in order to spare the department from embarrassment, or to keep from placing it at a disadvantage in any civil suits resulting from the member’s improper behavior. For these reasons, it is clear that these were probably not the best measures of job performance either.

It is believed that statistically significant relationships could have been found between enlisted members’ levels of education and the selected measures of job performance if more accurate data were available. For example, the analysis would have likely been more telling if it were possible to cross-reference the department’s Internal Affairs Section files with its personnel files and compare the backgrounds of those enlisted members investigated. Even with the promise of confidentiality though, a request for access to such sensitive information would not have been well received by the department, the MSPTA, or Western Michigan University’s HSIRB. Consequently, this project was left with only self-reported information, which likely contributed to this lack of statistical support.

This project’s second hypothesis surmised that higher levels of education reduced the amount of stress that respondents reported experiencing. However, a cross-tabulation analysis only found statistical evidence that the opposite was true in regard to job stress. As was reported in the preceding chapter, the relationship
between the possession of a degree when hired and job stress was statistically significant at the .001 level, and the relationship between the current possession of a degree and job stress was statistically significant at the .000 level. This finding again calls to mind the assumption that those respondents with higher levels of post-secondary education likely serve in higher-level, more complex and demanding positions. They therefore experience more internal stress than those assigned to patrol duty. As the works of Crank (1998) and Reuss-Ianni (1983) referenced earlier explained, such stress is more prevalent and detrimental than the external stress experienced in the course of field assignments. Again, because respondents were not asked to disclose their rank or specific duty assignment, a direct test of the assumption was not possible. However, because respondents were asked if they served in an administrative, supervisory, or field assignment, or a combination of those assignments, the responses to this question were looked at as a possible means of indirectly testing the assumption. The responses were first recoded to indicate simply whether or not respondents served in any kind of administrative/supervisory capacity. A cross-tabulation was then performed comparing this recoded variable with the three previously recoded measures of education, but no statistically significant relationships were discovered.

Another way of testing the assumption that respondents with some amount of post-secondary education are assigned to more challenging positions was to compare respondents' education level with their own assessment of whether their job was easy or routine. First, a simple count of affirmative answers to the survey question pertaining to this assessment by highest degree earned showed that the proportion of
respondents who felt that their job was easy decreased as education level increased, with 48% of those with a high school diploma or GED feeling that way, compared to 45% of associate’s degree holders, 42% of bachelor’s degree holders, and 37% of those with a graduate degree or juris doctorate. However, a cross-tabulation comparison of this variable with the three measures of education produced no statistically significant findings.

Like the independent variables in the tests of the first hypothesis, the variables measuring job stress and overall stress relied on self-reported data that could be misrepresented because of distrust (i.e., the department will find out they are stressed and send them to a psychiatrist or disqualify them from certain duty assignments), or effected by extraordinary events. Reis and Gable (2000) used self-reported stress as one of their examples when explaining how internal psychological processes tend to bias responses on self-report questionnaires. They stated that sources of self-report bias include recency, salience, sense-making, and state of mind. Recency refers to the fact that more recent events are more easily and accurately recalled and likely to influence retrospection. With salience, the more distinctive, emotional, or unusual events are seen as more influential. Sense-making causes people to reinterpret past events in light of later developments, and one’s state of mind at the time of their participation in a survey could also influence their responses to self-report questions. In this case, a respondent’s reported level of stress could have been influenced by their receipt of a particularly good or bad performance evaluation or a big assignment that initially seemed overwhelming. It could also be a reflection of their dissatisfaction with some aspect of the department, or even because of a rough
commute into work that day. In other words, any number of events could have influenced respondents' perceived job and overall stress, so there is no way to tell if this project's findings are the result of each respondent's individual level of education or of some unknown intervening variable. Concerns regarding this project's internal validity are discussed in greater detail below.

When it came to respondents' RWA Scale scores, Altemeyer considered their overall average score of 143 to be within a "normal" range (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, November 18, 2006). He also stated that the average RWA Scale score for adult non-students that had recently completed the same version of the RWA Scale questionnaire was approximately 136 (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, September 6, 2006). Respondents' "normal" overall average score and their wide range of individual scores (from 30 to 255) indicate that the department has recruited an ideologically and psychologically very diverse group, whether or not it did so intentionally.

The Cronbach's alpha among RWA Scale questionnaire items was found to be .94 showing very strong inter-item correlations. Altemeyer stated that he typically sees alphas in the .88 to .92 range, so an alpha as high as .94 could indicate that respondents had very strong verbal abilities, that they had taken a great deal of care in answering the survey, or that there was a wide range of levels of authoritarianism in the sample (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, November 18, 2006). It is of course unknown whether respondents had taken a great deal of care in completing their questionnaires, but it is a safe assumption that respondents possess strong verbal abilities given their reported education levels and the amount of reading and writing
each one’s duties require on a daily basis. Also, as was previously mentioned, there is no question that the aforementioned range of respondents’ RWA Scale scores was broad.

This project’s third hypothesis, that respondents with higher levels of post-secondary education have lower levels of authoritarianism as measured by their RWA Scale scores, found some statistical support. Although no statistically significant relationships were found between respondents’ degree earned and their RWA Scale score, a cross-tabulation analysis performed using respondents’ number of completed semesters of post-secondary education revealed a negative relationship that was statistically significant at the .05 level. This finding supports the hypothesis and, although it is not definitive, it is in line with previous findings in the works of Adorno et al. (1950) and Altemeyer (1996).

It is believed that the number of completed semesters of post-secondary education was a better measure of a respondent’s education level for the test of the third hypothesis than their highest degree earned because the responses were able to be recoded into three categories, “low”, “medium”, and “high”, just as respondents’ RWA Scale scores were recoded. In comparison, the other two measures of education level, highest degree possessed when hired and highest degree earned, had to be recoded to the point that they simply indicated whether or not a respondent had a degree either when they were hired or at the time they had taken the survey. The number of completed semesters of post-secondary education could also have been a better measure of education level because it could have reflected respondents’ ongoing or more recent commitment to education. This better coincides with
respondents' RWA Scale scores because the scores measured respondents' level of authoritarianism at the time they completed the questionnaire.

Although this finding is not robust, it offers some support for the idea that post-secondary education relieves authoritarian attitudes, which is particularly important from a public service perspective. Highly authoritarian police officers are more likely to behave in ways that are inconsistent with the public's expectations of a customer-service oriented police officer. The explosion of community policing programs over the past twenty years has demonstrated that the public typically demands a police officer who is focused on serving their community and has the ability to maintain order using a problem-solving approach rather than brute force. I worked as my MSP post's community service officer for over two years and saw firsthand the strong public demand and support for initiatives such as community liaison and school resource officer programs. MCOLES has had this same realization and, as was explained above, is responding by creating a problem-based learning police academy curriculum to replace the traditional lecture-based curriculum. Their stated intent is to develop an academy capable of producing problem-solving police officers (Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards, 2006).

In truth, what politicians, police administrators, and academics refer to as community policing is nothing more than old-fashioned police work where officers get out of their patrol cars and interact with the citizens they serve outside of an enforcement situation. The fact that community policing is seen as somehow revolutionary symbolizes just how far modern police work has drifted from this style of policing. That having been said, police officers today are left with performing their
duties in basically one of two ways: by dealing with the obvious violation of the law and making an arrest, or by working in a community policing capacity and attempting to actually solve the problem that caused them to be called. Sometimes a police officer does not have a choice and must make an arrest (i.e., in the case of a serious violent crime), but many times a little extra effort can help solve a persistent problem (with or without an arrest) and eliminate the need for repeat visits. Over the years, authors have proposed a variety of types of police officers (Hochstedler, 1981; Kuykendall, 1988; Muir, 1977; White, 1972; Wilson, 1968), but modern policing seems to have been reduced in recent years to just two types: the enforcer and the social worker.

The dominant style of policing in this country arguably remains the enforcer style represented by the type of police officer who is focused on arrest, control, and punishment, rather than the social worker style represented by the type of police officer who is focused on community service and problem solving. The enforcer style reflects the traditional stereotype of police culture, and is generally accepted by police administrators and police officers alike as the correct way to do business despite seldom permanently resolving any problems. Conversely, the social worker style of policing is less readily accepted because it is so different from the enforcer style and is often seen as coddling and too time consuming. Even though it is not applicable to every law enforcement situation, the social worker style oftentimes results in long-term solutions to minor property crimes or dispute situations, which as Walker’s (2001) “criminal justice wedding cake” model indicates, comprises the bulk of the criminal justice system’s caseload.
The information presented throughout this paper's literature review demonstrates that police officers with highly authoritarian personalities are likely to possess personality traits inconsistent with the social worker style of policing. For example, highly authoritarian police officers are more likely to be bigoted and to make the Fundamental Attribution Error. These police officers may also see themselves as soldiers fighting a war against who they perceive to be members of an outgroup threatening their society. Highly authoritarian police officers may be inclined to see members of an outgroup as disgusting and vile, and may in fact derive pleasure from inflicting punishment on them. (Altemeyer, 1996) Consequently, highly authoritarian police officers are likely to adopt a policy of strict enforcement and are more prone to resort to informal methods of social control such as intimidation and beatings. Altemeyer agrees explaining that highly authoritarian people, “…tolerate and even approve of governmental abuse of power, they are relatively willing to cast aside constitutional shields against such abuse, [and] they are indifferent to human rights issues…” (Altemeyer, 1996, p. 22).

Those who score high on the RWA Scale might seem controlling but, as was previously explained, they are very submissive to what they consider to be legitimate sources of authority. Altemeyer states that highly authoritarian police officers would have a willingness to do unethical things just because a superior tells them to (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, 11/18/2006). They may therefore be slow to question an improper directive, if they question it at all. On the other hand, police administrators could lose control over a rogue group of police officers, such as those in a specialized unit that no longer consider their supervisors or department policies to
be legitimate sources of authority and instead embrace the unit's philosophy or "way" as such. This was the case with the LAPD's Rampart Division Community Resources Against Street Hoodlums (CRASH) gang unit scandal in the mid 1990s, and the LAPD is still suffering from the negative public perception and millions of dollars in litigation that resulted (Public Broadcasting Service, 2001).

Lastly, Altemeyer (1996) found that authoritarian tendencies are apt to be more pronounced, and rates of authoritarianism higher, whenever there is a perceived threat to society. The MSP should be particularly concerned about this personality trait because of the department's responsibility to deal with such threats as civil disturbances and other large-scale statewide emergencies. Using the 2003 Benton Harbor riots as an example, highly authoritarian police officers would have been more likely to react to the disturbance with aggressive tactics that would have further fueled the violence and resulted in additional injuries or deaths. Luckily, the department's leaders took a less authoritarian approach to the situation. Even though their solution involved a show of overwhelming force (more than 250 uniformed police officers in a city measuring just over four square miles), there was also a demonstrated willingness to work with the community to address their concerns through forums and meetings with citizens and local leaders. This approach was met with complaints from some troopers that lamented what they saw as the department getting "soft". However, it effectively calmed the situation without additional injuries or deaths sustained by police officers or civilians. Again, a more aggressive, fear-based reaction may have exacerbated the situation, prolonged the violence, and resulted in unnecessary physical harm, death, and financial liability.

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On the other end of the authoritarianism spectrum, those who score lower on the RWA Scale would likely be better suited to the social worker style of policing, as they tend to be fairer and show more interconnectedness with their thoughts, words, and actions (Altemeyer, 1996). They are also usually less reactionary. However, those scoring very low on the RWA Scale may not be right for police work either as they have more of a “do what you want” attitude. As opposed to refusing to question their superior’s directives as the highly authoritarian police officer might, they may question the directives when it is not necessary or appropriate to do so. They are also more likely to allow their personal beliefs to prevent them from consistently enforcing the law. In fact, Altemeyer (1996) found that those with both high and low RWA Scale scores will develop double-standards if their actions are in conflict with something they believe in. Consequently, it may behoove police administrators to avoid hiring candidates from either authoritarianism extreme.

Police administrators must be aware of the style of policing expected in their community. If their citizens demand the arrest-heavy and admittedly reactionary enforcer style of policing, which could be described simply as “You call, we haul, that’s all,” they should look to hire more of the traditionally authoritarian-leaning police officers hired by police departments in the past. However, if the community prefers the social worker style of police officer that is able to look beyond the arrest and solve problems whenever possible, then a new approach to recruiting and selection must be adopted. This is where consideration of a candidate’s level of post-secondary education comes into play. In this case, police administrators should try to hire police officers with some amount of post-secondary education, as many of the
studies mentioned earlier have found that they are likely to have personalities more accepting of this policing style.

When examining the survey’s findings for each of this project’s three hypotheses, the question of internal validity arises. An experiment possesses internal validity if it can demonstrate that a causal relationship is present between two variables absent the influence of other variables. For example, this project would have internal validity if it was certain that higher levels of post-secondary education by themselves caused respondents’ higher levels of job stress or lower levels of authoritarianism. However, Jones explains that, “The success of an intervention is not necessarily evidence for the hypothesis on which the intervention was based. You have to be able to rule out any and all plausible alternatives first.” (Jones, 1996, p. 212) Certainty in a study’s findings is typically the result of the careful prescreening or random selection of participants, but as was explained, this project’s sample is essentially a convenience sample of enlisted members. As a result of the project’s design, there is no way to confirm whether variables other than the independent variable of education had any effect on respondents. Consider that Weiner believes that instead of college education reducing levels of authoritarianism, “...those policemen who are oriented to college are those who are already relatively less authoritarian” (Weiner, 1974, p. 318). Further, since over three-quarters of the department’s enlisted members refused to participate in the survey, those that did so might have shared some unmeasured trait that influenced both their decision to participate and their responses. The influence of this unknown trait could have been
controlled by random or quasi-random assignment of participants, but the absence of such assignment only leaves questions regarding the project's internal validity.

Although the interviews did not reveal any information that assisted in the interpretation of the collected quantitative data, they did confirm that the department's senior leaders support the concept of requiring post-secondary education for both hiring and promoting enlisted members. However, the primary concern with doing so expressed by all but one of those interviewed was that higher educational standards would reduce the number of eligible women and minorities. This belief is a fallacy however, as higher standards would likely have no detrimental effect. Theron Bowman, Ph.D., an African-American and Chief of the Arlington (Texas) Police Department (APD), claims on the contrary that establishing a college degree requirement actually improves minority recruiting. He explains:

One partial explanation for the recruiting success is that, in general, minority police officers tend to be first-generation college students. Many of these first-generation college students have come from a family environment that has stressed education. These students want to work somewhere that values their hard-earned degrees (Bowman, 2006, p. 23).

College-educated women and minorities interested in police work are therefore going to look for departments that share their values regarding education, and that will reward them accordingly in terms of money, prestige, and advancement opportunities.

Furthermore, there is no shortage of college-educated women and minorities. According to the US Department of Education (2006) there were over 17 million students enrolled in colleges and universities nationwide in 2004. Of those, 9,884,782 were females and only 7,387,262 were males. And even though white
males and females still make up over half the population of this nation's college students, the numbers of African-American, Hispanic, American Indian, and Asian students have steadily increased between 1990 and 2004 whereas the number of white males has stayed nearly the same. The point is that the student body at colleges and universities in Michigan and throughout the country has become increasingly diverse over the years and continues to become more so. This means that there will be no shortage of college-educated women and minorities for the MSP and other police departments to recruit and subsequently promote.

Another concern shared by those interviewed was the cost associated with a more educated workforce. Many questioned whether the department would be able to afford to pay the kind of salaries that better-educated police officers might expect to receive, or could receive elsewhere. A similar concern was echoed in a recent article in the newspaper *USA Today* exploring the topic of college education for police officers, which questioned whether college graduates would be attracted by police salaries (Johnson, 2006). However, those going into policing typically do not do so for the money. Besides, the increased costs of a more educated police department are by no means automatically realized. For example, the amount of pay and benefits received by the MSP's troopers and sergeants is not directly correlated with each member's level of education. Rather, it is the product of bargaining between the State of Michigan and the MSPTA. Their concerns aside, those interviewed made clear that they would strongly consider establishing higher educational standards for both hiring and promotion once the department's budgetary situation improved.
Ultimately, the question of whether or not to require post-secondary education for hiring or promotion has more to do with how police officers wish to see themselves. If they are content with policing residing somewhere on the career scale near a "job", where the focus is on the exercise of applied skills, they need do nothing more. However, if police officers wish for policing to be considered a true profession, defined as, "...a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation" (Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 1993), they must be willing to make the necessary adjustments in their recruiting and selection processes. This of course includes establishing an educational requirement of at least an associate’s degree for new hires. Robert Friedmann, a professor of criminal Justice at Georgia State University agrees, stating, “Police officers need the degree, not only for what it brings to individual officers and their departments, but also for what the degree brings to policing as a profession” (Friedmann, 2006, p. 24). Friedmann further states that, “Requiring a degree for police officers is the first step in ensuring that...policing is taken seriously as a profession (Friedmann, 2006, p. 25). If such standards are not established, police officers will not be seen by the public as professionals, but as skilled tradesmen. For example, some may consider the job of a police officer to be more of a profession than that of a barber. However, state law (Michigan Compiled Laws, 1979) requires those seeking a barber’s license to complete a minimum of 2,000 hours of training at a licensed barber college, while MCOLES (2006) only requires the completion of a minimum of 562 hours of training at a regional police academy. Any argument that policing is a profession rather than a
craft or skilled trade is hamstrung by the realization that it takes nearly four-times the training to become a state-licensed barber.

Even if they are not members of a profession by definition, police officers can still act professionally. In fact, most police officers do indeed perform their duties in a professional, courageous, and admirable manner every day. Semantics aside, the concept of policing as a profession conflicts with the traditional police culture that tends to value physical strength and toughness more than other traits. There are certainly times when a heavy-handed approach is warranted, but brutal and atavistic methods of law enforcement reflect a myopic view of the police officer's role in society as being merely to keep people in line. This view not only ignores the service aspect inherent in policing, it reflects a lack of knowledge and an inability to find other solutions to problems.

Of course, higher educational standards should not be seen as the solution to all of policing's problems, as education sometimes causes more problems than it solves. First, there is the issue of the educated idiot in law enforcement that gives college-educated police officers a bad name. This is the police officer that excels in their academic pursuits but lacks the so-called street smarts and common sense needed to survive a full 25-year career. Second, higher educational standards cannot ensure that police officers do not betray the public trust. Without question, there are educated police officers around the state and throughout the country that engage in misconduct everyday. So perhaps improved leadership and supervision, rather than increased educational standards, are the keys to ensuring professional behavior among police officers. Wilson (1968) agrees, contending that the way to ensure that police
officers behave professionally and as the law requires in a given situation is to bureaucratize the police and subject police officers to more rules.

In order to ensure professional behavior and lessen the incidents of police officer misconduct, police administrators must also ensure that clear policies and standards of behavior are in place. They must then select strong leaders for the middle-management ranks that are willing to enforce those standards by holding their subordinates accountable. Likewise, upper-management must also be willing to hold middle-management accountable in the same way if the standards are to have any meaning. Increased supervision could also be achieved via technological means such as the installation and required use of in-car video cameras and Taser Cams, which are small devices added to Tasers that record audio and video from each weapon's perspective. Skolnick and Fyfe (1993) even go so far as to recommend that police departments regularly videotape their actions during the most critical incidents (i.e., civil disturbances and raids) where excessive force may be more likely to occur. Although this makes sense from a risk management perspective, police administrators must be careful that increasing the level of supervision does not stifle or eliminate officers' use of discretion, because the absence of police officer discretion would cause the criminal justice system to grind to a halt. A balance would therefore need to be maintained between too much supervision and too little.

Policing is by no means factory work where employees can just show up, "punch the clock", and do the bare minimum to keep the line moving. To do the job properly takes a dedication to duty and a concern for those they serve, but this
mindset is starting to wane largely because of the advent of police unions that have
done little to promote the public service aspects of the job. Like this nation’s
automotive industry unions, police unions were established because of the prior
abuses of management, so their relationship with management has historically been
adversarial. As a result, it was anticipated that the MSPTA would be the biggest
obstacle to any attempts by the MSP’s policy makers to require post-secondary
education for hiring or promotion.

The current MSPTA President, Trooper Mike Moorman, was contacted for the
association’s official position on the issue of higher educational standards. He stated
that although the MSPTA would support efforts to enhance the department’s existing
tuition reimbursement program or to establish some sort of degree pay incentive plan,
it would not support increasing the educational standards for hiring or promotion. He
also stated that the MSPTA would consider a post-secondary education requirement
for new hires to be potentially exclusionary, as it might prevent an otherwise excellent
applicant from being hired simply because they lacked a college degree or certain
number of credit hours (M. Moorman, personal communication, 01/04/2007). However, by resisting the establishment of a post-secondary educational requirement,
the MSPTA preemptively weakens any future arguments to have its troopers and
sergeants considered and compensated like members of a profession.

Compared to recognized professions such as teaching, engineering, and law,
modern policing is more like a skilled trade. Again, this is not to imply anything
negative about police officers or discount the difficult and dangerous job they do.
This realization simply highlights the fact that a high school diploma or GED is
considered by most police officers, policy makers, and others to be qualification
enough for the order-maintenance duties associated with the seemingly dominant
enforcer style of policing. On the other hand, the more complex problem-solving
social worker style of policing requires the personality traits and critical thinking
abilities associated with college graduates. As was explained previously, if this latter
style of policing is desired by the citizens, then police administrators must be willing
to establish and maintain a post-secondary education requirement for both hiring and
promotion.
CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the cross-tabulation analyses performed did not show statistical support for two of this project’s three hypotheses, there was at least some statistical support found for the third, that post-secondary education lessens police officers’ level of authoritarianism. The only other statistically significant finding was one that was contrary to the second hypothesis, which showed a positive relationship between respondents’ level of education and their reported levels of job stress. This lack of statistically significant findings is believed to be due to a combination of factors including survey design limitations, self-report bias, taking a convenience sample of enlisted members rather than a random sample, and respondents’ apparent bias toward education. This does not necessarily mean that the first two hypotheses were incorrect though, it just means that the relationship between the variables in question is no more likely due to chance than reality. Given a larger or random sample of the department’s enlisted members, it is entirely possible that these hypotheses might find statistical support. Therefore, this project’s findings not only add to the existing information on post-secondary education’s effect on police officer behavior, more importantly, they will serve as the impetus for further research on this topic.

It is also hoped that the MSP’s policy makers will consider the information presented in this paper when making future policy decisions regarding hiring and
promotion. The MSP has always thought of itself as being a leader in Michigan’s law enforcement community, but as local police and sheriff’s departments continue to grow and evolve many have come to rival the MSP. As the department works to retain its leadership position, it must determine which style of policing is best suited to both its current and future roles, along with the personality traits best suited to that style. It must then appropriately modify its recruiting and selection efforts, as well as its training curricula. If the aforementioned community-oriented social worker style of policing is determined to be the most appropriate, the department’s policy makers may wish to consider the following three recommendations, which are based on this project’s literature review and, to a limited extent, its findings.

First, it is recommended that the department partner with Michigan’s colleges and universities to develop both on-site and correspondence academic curricula for enlisted members of all ranks, as well as civilian members if space and funding allow. This program could be near zero-cost and self-sustaining through resource sharing with the academic institutions. Charging non-department members for their participation in classes held at MSP facilities could also serve as a viable way of offsetting the program’s cost.

It is assumed that a program to provide free or discounted education would be warmly received by those members who want to take additional classes but feel that the department would not support them in their endeavor. Breci’s (1997) finding that the majority of police officers in his study would continue their college education if their police department provided some incentives supports this assumption, as does the fact that more than 80% of survey respondents indicated that they would continue
their education if there were a program that reimbursed them for their tuition. Little can be done in the current fiscal climate to relieve the job stress enlisted members reported feeling, as it (at least anecdotally) stems from the fact that everyone seems to be doing the work of two to three people. However, acknowledging the value of education is an easy way for the MSP to improve morale, as well as send a message that education is a valued part of the department’s culture. Plus, it would ensure that all enlisted members had the opportunity to earn a college degree and remain competitive for future promotion. Follow-up studies could then be conducted to determine if such steps actually reduced stress.

Second, it is recommended that the MSP determine which style of policing it should embrace. If the social worker style is chosen, the department should add some measure of applicants’ level of authoritarianism, such as Altemeyer’s (1996) RWA Scale questionnaire, to its battery of prescreening psychological tests. Even though the RWA Scale questionnaire is not a foolproof predictor of an applicants’ performance as a police officer, an applicant’s RWA Scale score could provide a better idea of their general psychological suitability for the job as it is defined by the department’s leaders. Altemeyer cautioned though, that a problem with an instrument like the RWA Scale questionnaire is that word can informally “get out” to some applicants as to what constitutes the “correct” answers (B. Altemeyer, personal communication, 11/18/2006). Each applicant’s measured level of authoritarianism would therefore have to be looked at in comparison with the results of other assessments to determine if they are consistent with one another. If done correctly, incorporating a measure of authoritarian attitudes would allow the MSP to more
accurately select those applicants with personalities best suited to a more community-oriented style of policing.

Finally, it is recommended that the department’s cultural diversity training curriculum be modified to ensure that it is effective on enlisted members of all levels of authoritarianism. The current curriculum relies on a rational appeal to treat others fairly and without regard to their race, gender, and so on, because it is simply the right thing to do. This approach works well with those with low to moderate levels of authoritarianism, but highly authoritarian people are not typically swayed by such appeals. Adorno et al. (1982) explain that:

Rational arguments cannot be expected to have deep or lasting effects upon a phenomenon that is irrational in its essential nature; appeals to sympathy may do as much harm as good when directed to people one of whose deepest fears is that they might be identified with weakness... (p. 477)

In other words, emotional appeals extolling the rightness of a lack of prejudice are unlikely to have an effect on highly authoritative enlisted members. However, appealing to their sense of conventionality or reminding them that a legitimate authority (i.e., state law or the Official Orders) wants them to behave a certain way may have a greater chance of success. Elements of the current approach to diversity training should still be retained though, so that the curriculum is still able to speak to those with lower levels of authoritarianism. Regardless of the department’s chosen style of policing, such changes will help to alleviate the detrimental effects that some aspects of the general culture of policing have on police officers’ level of cynicism. Plus, a welcomed side-effect of this effort to modify on-duty behavior could be a similar change in off-duty behavior.
This project was only able to provide limited statistical evidence for its third hypothesis that post-secondary education results in lower levels of authoritarianism. This finding was neither definitive nor absolute as it only applied to the number of completed semesters of post secondary education and not degree earned. It has been shown that the existing literature on the topic of post-secondary education and police officers is inconclusive as well. However, in sum it appears as though police officers with higher levels of education would be less likely to engage in improper, overly aggressive, or otherwise unacceptable behaviors. It is therefore believed that hiring this type of person would reduce the department’s risk of financial loss due to civil litigation, which would free up money for much needed personnel and equipment to help them handle their ever-increasing workload. What’s more, a greater understanding of post-secondary education’s effects on police officer behavior allows police administrators to tailor their hiring, promotion, training, and department policies to accommodate the style of policing their community expects. Police officers must keep in mind that they get their power and authority from the citizens, and if they prove themselves unworthy of this responsibility through misconduct or dereliction of duty, their power and authority will be taken away. Whether police administrators hire more educated police officers, improve their training curriculum, or impose stricter supervision, their efforts to preserve the public’s trust will secure the future of their department and ensure that its police officers live up to their sworn duty to preserve, protect, and defend the lives and property of those in their community.
REFERENCES


*Davis v. City of Dallas, 777 F.2d 205* (5th Cir. 1985).


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APPENDIX A

Quantitative Survey Questionnaire
Section I
In this section you will be asked to provide basic information about yourself.

1.) What is your gender?
   a. Male
   b. Female

2.) What is your age?
   a. 21 – 30
   b. 31 – 40
   c. 41 – 50
   d. 51 – 60
   e. 61+

3.) What is your race (choose only one)?
   a. African-American
   b. Asian/Pacific Islander
   c. Caucasian
   d. Hispanic
   e. Other

4.) Are you a veteran of the armed forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard)?
   a. Yes
   b. No

5.) What is your marital status?
   a. Single – Never Married
   b. Single – Divorced/Separated
   c. Single – Currently living with boyfriend/girlfriend.
   d. Married
   e. Widowed

6.) Do you have any children?
   a. Yes
   b. No

7.) With which political party do you most closely identify?
   a. Republican
   b. Democrat
   c. None
   d. Other
8.) If post-secondary education is defined as any academic classes taken at a college or university after graduation from high school (or completion of a GED), how many total semesters of post-secondary education do you have?
   a. None
   b. 1 – 3
   c. 4 – 6
   d. 7 – 9
   e. 9 semesters or more.

9.) What is your highest degree earned?
   a. GED
   b. High School Diploma
   c. Associate’s Degree
   d. Bachelor’s Degree
   e. Graduate Degree or Juris Doctorate

10.) What was your highest degree earned when you first started working as a police officer?
   a. GED
   b. High School Diploma
   c. Associate’s Degree
   d. Bachelor’s Degree
   e. Graduate Degree or Juris Doctorate

11.) What is the approximate cumulative GPA (on a four-point scale) from all of the post-secondary classes you have taken?
   a. 2.0 or lower.
   b. 2.1 – 2.7
   c. 2.8 – 3.4
   d. 3.5 – 4.0
   e. Not Applicable

12.) Was your degree earned by completing distance education or correspondence courses?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not Applicable

13.) Have you purchased any military or life-experience credit hours towards the completion of your college degree?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not Applicable
14.) Did you have to successfully complete a police academy to receive your degree?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not Applicable

15.) What type of continuing education do you think is most beneficial to department personnel at all levels?
   a. Tactical
   b. Academic/Theoretical
   c. Leadership/Management
   d. All of the above.

16.) Do you believe that time spent on tactical training is more important to the successful performance of your duties than time spent learning theories about crime and criminals?
   a. Yes
   b. No

Section II
In this section, you will be asked a few questions about your lifestyle.

17.) Do you have any close friends who are not police officers?
   a. Yes
   b. No

18.) How often do you engage in 20 minutes or more of physical exercise?
   a. Never
   b. Once or twice a week.
   c. Three or four times a week.
   d. Everyday
   e. More than once each day.

19.) How many cups of coffee do you normally drink each day?
   a. None
   b. 1 – 2
   c. 3 – 4
   d. 5 – 6
   e. 7 or more.
20.) If a drink is defined as a beer, a shot of liquor, a cocktail, or a glass of wine, how many drinks do you have in a typical day?
   a. None
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3
   e. 4 or more.

21.) How many drinks do you have in a typical week?
   a. None
   b. 1 – 3
   c. 4 – 6
   d. 7 – 9
   e. 10 or more.

22.) How many days a week do you have at least one drink?
   a. None
   b. 1 – 2
   c. 3 – 4
   d. 5 – 6
   e. 7

Section III
In this section you will be asked for information about your police career, as well as your attitudes about policing in general. Please answer each question as best you can, and remember that your responses will be anonymous. Also remember that you can choose not to answer any question, and that no one from the department, other than the researcher, will see your individual responses.

23.) How many total years of experience do you have as a state-certified (Michigan and other states) police officer?
   a. 1 – 5
   b. 6 – 10
   c. 11 – 15
   d. 16 – 20
   e. 21+

24.) What type of area does your work site primarily police?
   a. Rural
   b. Urban/Inner-City
   c. Suburban
   d. Combination (i.e., As in the case of a large post area or specialty CID team, where your jurisdiction includes each of the above types of areas.).

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25.) What best describes your primary duty responsibilities?
   a. General Patrol and/or Traffic
   b. Criminal Investigation
   c. Supervision
   d. Administration
   e. A combination of any of the above duties.

26.) What shift do you typically work?
   a. Days
   b. Afternoons
   c. Midnights
   d. Other

27.) What shift do you prefer to work?
   a. Days
   b. Afternoons
   c. Midnights
   d. Other

28.) Do you feel excited when getting ready to go to work each day?
   a. Yes
   b. No

29.) Considering your overall job and its duties, what percentage of each day would you consider to be boring?
   a. 1 – 15%
   b. 16 – 30%
   c. 31 – 45%
   d. 46 – 60%
   e. 61%+

30.) Do you feel that you are overqualified for your current position?
   a. Yes
   b. No

31.) Do you feel that your work has become easy or routine?
   a. Yes
   b. No

32.) Will you (or if you do not have children, would you) encourage your child to become a police officer?
   a. Yes
   b. No
33.) If so, will you (or if you do not have children, would you) encourage them to apply to the Michigan State Police?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. Not Applicable

34.) Have you ever seriously contemplated a career change?
   a. Yes
   b. No

35.) How often do you feel “stressed out” from the demands of your job?
   a. Never
   b. Seldom
   c. Occasionally
   d. Often
   e. Frequently

36.) All things considered, how stressed out do you feel on any given day?
   a. Extremely
   b. Somewhat
   c. I don’t know. / No comment.
   d. Not much.
   e. Not at all.

37.) What do you think the minimum educational requirement should be for new police officer applicants?
   a. GED
   b. High School Diploma
   c. Associate’s Degree
   d. Bachelor’s Degree
   e. Graduate Degree or Juris Doctorate

38.) Do you believe that it is beneficial for a police department’s percentage of women and minorities to match the percentage of women and minorities in the community they serve?
   a. Yes
   b. No

39.) Do you believe that police officers should “practice what they preach” and live personal lives that are free of criminal activity?
   a. Yes
   b. No
40.) Do you consider police work to be a “job” or a “profession”?
   a. Job
   b. Profession

41.) If the department, or a government program, offered to fully reimburse your tuition expense, would you go back to college for another degree?
   a. Yes
   b. No

42.) Will you (or if you do not have children, would you) encourage your child to obtain a college education?
   a. Yes
   b. No

43.) Do you believe that having any kind of degree will help you to advance in your law enforcement career?
   a. Yes
   b. No

44.) What do you think the minimum educational requirement should be for promotion to the rank of lieutenant and above?
   a. GED
   b. High School Diploma
   c. Associate’s Degree
   d. Bachelor’s Degree
   e. Graduate Degree or Juris Doctorate

45.) How many awards/commendations (i.e., Professional Excellence, Meritorious Service, Bravery, Lifesaving, etc.) have you received from the department over the course of your career?
   a. None
   b. 1
   c. 2
   d. 3
   e. 4 or more.

Section IV
In this section you will be asked questions regarding personal information of a more sensitive nature. Please answer each question as best you can, and remember that your responses will be truly anonymous. Also remember that you can choose not to answer any question.
46.) How many times have you been married?
   a. Never
   b. Once
   c. Twice
   d. Three times.
   e. Four or more times.

47.) How many times have you been divorced?
   a. Never (Still Married)/Never Married
   b. Once
   c. Twice
   d. Three times.
   e. Four or more times.

48.) Are/were your biological parents divorced, separated, or never married?
   a. Yes
   b. No

49.) Is your mother deceased?
   a. Yes
   b. No

50.) Is your father deceased?
   a. Yes
   b. No

51.) Were you raised in a single-parent household?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. For part of my childhood.

52.) Have you ever sought professional psychological counseling either through your employer or on your own?
   a. Yes
   b. No

53.) How often do you attend religious services?
   a. Every few days.
   b. Weekly
   c. Monthly
   d. A few times a year.
   e. Never

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54.) Have you ever gone to a religious leader (i.e., priest, pastor, reverend, deacon) for counseling?
   a. Yes
   b. No

55.) How many times, if ever, have you been disciplined (i.e., received verbal or written counseling, been suspended) for violating your department’s general/official orders?
   a. Never
   b. Once
   c. Twice
   d. Three times.
   e. Four or more times.

56.) While serving as a police officer, how many times, if ever, have you been charged with the crime of domestic violence?
   a. Never
   b. Once
   c. Twice
   d. Three times.
   e. Four or more times.

57.) How many times, if ever, have you been directly involved in an incident in which you or a partner had to use fatal force?
   a. Never
   b. Once
   c. Twice
   d. Three times.
   e. Four or more times.

58.) While serving as a police officer, how many times, if ever, have you been the suspect in a criminal investigation?
   a. Never
   b. Once
   c. Twice
   d. Three times.
   e. Four or more times.
Section V

Note: In this appendix the contrait questions are bolded. They were not identified in the survey presented to respondents.

This section of the survey will attempt to measure your general opinions on a variety of social issues. These statements may appear to represent ideological extremes, and you will likely find that you agree with some of the statements and disagree with others to varying extents. Please select one of the following responses for each statement:

-4 if you very strongly disagree with the statement.
-3 if you strongly disagree with the statement.
-2 if you moderately disagree with the statement.
-1 if you slightly disagree with the statement.
0 if you feel exactly and precisely neutral about a statement.
+1 if you slightly agree with the statement.
+2 if you moderately agree with the statement.
+3 if you strongly agree with the statement.
+4 if you very strongly agree with the statement.

You may find that you sometimes have different reactions to different parts of a statement. For example, you might very strongly disagree (-4) with one idea in a statement, but slightly agree (+1) with another idea in the same item. When this happens, please combine your reactions and write down how you feel “on balance” or overall (in this example, -3).

59.) Life imprisonment is justified for certain crimes
60.) Women should have to promise to obey their husbands when they get married.
61.) The established authorities in our country are usually smarter, better informed, and more competent than others are, and the people can rely upon them.
62.) It is important to protect the rights of radicals and deviants in all ways.
63.) Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy the radical new ways and sinfulness that are ruining us.

64.) Gays and lesbians are just as healthy and moral as anybody else.

65.) It is always better to trust the judgment of the proper authorities in government and religion than to listen to the noisy rabble-rousers in our society who are trying to create doubt in people's minds.

66.) Atheists and others who have rebelled against the established religions are no doubt every bit as good and virtuous as those who attend church regularly.

67.) The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas.

68.) There is absolutely nothing wrong with nudist camps.

69.) Our country needs free thinkers who will have the courage to defy traditional ways, even if this upsets many people.

70.) Our country will be destroyed someday if we do not smash the perversions eating away at our moral fiber and traditional beliefs.

71.) Everyone should have their own life-style, religious beliefs, and sexual preferences, even if it makes them different from everyone else.

72.) The "old-fashioned ways" and "old-fashioned values" still show the best way to life.

73.) You have to admire those who challenged the law and the majority's view by protesting for abortion rights, for animal rights, or to abolish school prayer.

74.) What our country really needs is a strong, determined leader who will crush evil, and take us back to our true path.

75.) Some of the best people in our country are those who are challenging our government, criticizing religion, and ignoring the "normal way things are supposed to be done."

76.) God's laws about abortion, pornography, and marriage must be strictly followed before it is too late, and those who break them must be strongly punished.
77.) There are many radical, immoral people in our country today, who are trying to ruin it for their own godless purposes, whom the authorities should put out of action.

78.) A "woman's place" should be wherever she wants to be. The days when women are submissive to their husbands and social conventions belong strictly in the past.

79.) Our country will be great if we honor the ways of our forefathers, do what the authorities tell us to do, and get rid of the "rotten apples" who are ruining everything.

80.) There is no "ONE right way" to live life; everybody has to create their own way.

81.) Homosexuals and feminists should be praised for being brave enough to defy "traditional family values."

82.) This country would work a lot better if certain groups of troublemakers would just shut up and accept their group's traditional place in society.

83.) It would be best for everyone if the proper authorities censored magazines so that people could not get their hands on trashy and disgusting material.

84.) There is nothing wrong with premarital sexual intercourse.

85.) People should pay less attention to the Bible and the other old forms of religious guidance, and instead develop their own personal standards of what is moral and immoral.

86.) What our country needs most is discipline, with everyone following our leaders in unity.

87.) A lot of our rules regarding modesty and sexual behavior are just customs that are not necessarily any better or holier than those which other people follow.

88.) The facts on crime, sexual immorality, and the recent public disorders all show we have to crack down harder on deviant groups and troublemakers if we are going to save our moral standards and preserve law and order.

89.) It's better to have trashy magazines and radical pamphlets in our communities than to let the government have the power to censor them.
90.) The situation in our country is getting so serious, the strongest methods would be justified if they eliminated the troublemakers and got us back on our true path.

91.) It is wonderful that young people today have greater freedom to protest against things they don't like, and to make their own "rules" to govern their behavior.

92.) Once the government leaders give us the "go-ahead," it will be the duty of every patriotic citizen to help stomp out the rot that is poisoning our country from within.
APPENDIX B

Qualitative Personal Interview Questionnaire
1.) Do you feel that higher levels of post-secondary education are beneficial for police officers? Why or why not?

2.) Do you feel that police officers with undergraduate or graduate degrees perform their duties any better than those officers with an associate's degree or without a degree? If so, in what way?

3.) Do you think that having a better-educated group of police officers causes any unique management problems?

4.) Does having a better-educated group of police officers result in any unique logistical/fiscal problems?

5.) Why do you feel that the state-mandated minimum education requirement of a high-school diploma or GED has remained unchanged for so many years?

6.) Why do you think most police departments in this state have not voluntarily implemented higher minimum educational requirements for police officers?

7.) If it were solely up to you, what would you prefer to see the department's minimum educational requirement for troopers become? Why?

8.) Do you think that the department should establish educational requirements as a prerequisite to promotion? Why or why not?

9.) What do you think has been the greatest obstacle to increasing the educational standards for hiring police officers? What about for promoting police officers?
APPENDIX C

Survey Announcement Memorandum
DATE: October 28, 2005

TO: All Enlisted Personnel

FROM: Sgt. Carl J. Lafata, Executive Division, Policy, Planning, and Research Unit

SUBJECT: Education Survey

The department has agreed to allow interested enlisted members to voluntarily participate in a research study through Western Michigan University that will explore how different types of training and education effect police officers' attitudes, duty performance, and their ability to deal with job stress. I am conducting this research study as part of my doctoral dissertation project. The first part of the study is the collection of survey data in which you are invited to participate. The survey is Internet-based, and can be accessed from any computer at any time without having to log in or otherwise identify yourself. It is designed to anonymously collect information on troopers' personal and professional experiences, as well as their attitudes toward education and some social issues. All enlisted members are encouraged to participate in the survey, but must remember that doing so is strictly voluntary. Members are by no means required to participate and cannot be ordered to do so.

A number of steps have been taken to ensure participants' complete anonymity. First, the survey items have been specifically designed to collect the information of interest without collecting information that would make it possible to later identify participants. Second, because the survey website can be accessed from any computer anywhere, without having to log in, there will be no way to determine who is completing the survey or from which computer they are doing so. Finally, the collected data will be codified and entered into a spreadsheet that will be returned to me. The spreadsheet will contain a mass of numerical data and nothing more, and no one other than me and a very small group of my colleagues at Western Michigan University will have access to it. The data will not be shared with your supervisors, department administrators, the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES), or any other entity outside of Western Michigan University.

Although the department has not specifically endorsed this research project, the Director has given work site commanders permission to allow their enlisted subordinates to participate in the survey while on duty, which should take no more than 45 minutes. The survey can be found at the following website address:

http://websurveyor.net/WSB.dll/39262/mspeducationsurvey.htm

It is currently online, and will be available until November 30, 2005.

Again, all enlisted members are invited to take a moment out of their busy schedules to benefit their chosen profession by participating in this research project. Your willingness to honestly convey your knowledge and opinions are crucial to its success. Please feel free to e-mail or call me at 517-336-6216 if you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your cooperation, time, and effort.
APPENDIX D

Survey Homepage Informed Consent Message
Dear Survey Participant:

This survey is intended to provide you with an opportunity to voluntarily share information about yourself that will help determine the benefit of post-secondary education to those in the law enforcement profession. The term “post-secondary education” refers to any education received at a college or university since graduating from high school or earning your GED. This is a short-term study in which all enlisted members of the department have been invited to participate.

The researcher, Sgt. Carl J. Lafata (Executive Division, Policy, Planning, and Research Unit), is conducting this study as part of his doctoral dissertation project. Its purpose is to shed light on how different types of training and education affect police officers’ attitudes, duty performance, and their ability to deal with stress. Exploring this issue is important because as society continues to demand more from its police officers it is necessary to determine what will help them meet these ever-increasing demands. The survey contains a number of items designed to collect general information about you, and other items designed to collect specific information about your behavior, attitudes, and background. Some items may seem as though they have nothing to do with education, police work, or stress, but you are asked to please try and answer every item as instructed on the survey because each has been written to help address a particular issue.

Your responses will be completely anonymous. There is no way for the researcher or anyone else to determine your identity from your responses or the computer you are using. Although your supervisors have given permission for you to participate in this survey while on duty, they will in no way be involved in its administration, nor will they be involved in the analysis of the collected data.

Again, your participation is completely voluntary. Even though the Michigan State Police has authorized you to participate in this research project, the department is in no way sponsoring or endorsing it, and is therefore not requiring you to do so. Also, you can choose to skip individual survey items with which you are uncomfortable, and you can choose to stop the survey at any time and close the browser window. However, your cooperation and honesty in completing this survey are critical to the study’s success.

Questions or comments may be directed to Sergeant Lafata via e-mail (lafatac@michigan.gov) or telephone at 517-336-6216. You may also wish to contact the Western Michigan University faculty researcher, Dr. Ronald Kramer, via telephone at 269-387-5284, the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 269-387-8293, or the Vice President for Research at 269-387-8298 if problems arise during the course of the study. Please do not participate in the survey until you are satisfied that all of your questions have been answered. Submitting your responses to
the survey questions indicates your consent to having them used in the research project.

There are no foreseen risks to participants other than the approximately 45 minutes it will take to complete it.

This protocol was approved by the Western Michigan University Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) on October 24, 2005. Do not participate in this study after October 24, 2006.

Click the “Next Page” button below to proceed to the survey.
APPENDIX E

Interview Subject Informed Consent Letter
Dear Interview Participant.

This is an opportunity for you to voluntarily share information about yourself that will help determine the benefit of post-secondary education to those in the law enforcement profession. The term "post-secondary education" refers to any education received at a college or university since graduating from high school or earning your GED. This is a short-term study in which all enlisted members of the department have been invited to participate in an internet-based survey. In addition, members of the department’s senior leadership have been selected to be invited for one-on-one interviews. The information collected from these interviews will be used to help explain the survey results.

The researcher, Sgt. Carl J. Lafata (Executive Division, Policy, Planning, and Research Unit), is conducting this study as part of his doctoral dissertation project. Its purpose is to shed light on how different types of training and education affect police officers’ attitudes, duty performance, and their ability to deal with stress. Exploring this issue is important because as society continues to demand more from its police officers it is necessary to determine what will help police officers meet these ever-increasing demands.

Your responses to the questions you will be asked will be kept completely confidential, and there will be no way for anyone to use them to determine your identity. Although the interviews will be tape recorded to aid in future transcription, the tapes and other collected data will be secured on campus and will not be shared with your supervisors, department administrators, the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES), or any other entity outside of Western Michigan University.

Again, your participation is completely voluntary. Even though the Michigan State Police has authorized you to participate in this research project, the department is in no way sponsoring or endorsing it, and is therefore not requiring you to do so. Also, you can choose not to answer particular questions with which you are uncomfortable, and you can choose to stop the interview at any time. However, your cooperation and honesty in participating in this interview are critical to the study’s success.

Questions or comments may be directed to Sergeant Lafata via e-mail (lafatac@michigan.gov) or telephone at 517-336-6216. You may also wish to contact the Western Michigan University faculty researcher, Dr. Ronald Kramer, via telephone at 269-387-5284, the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board at 269-387-8293, or the Vice President for Research at 269-387-8298 if problems arise during the course of the study. Please do not participate in the survey until you are satisfied that all of your questions have been answered.
This consent document has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB) as indicated by the stamped date and signature of the board chair in the upper right corner. Do not participate in this study if the stamped date is older than one year.

Have you read the above statement? Yes: ______  No: ______

Signature: ____________________________  Date: ______________
APPENDIX F

Survey Conclusion Message
You have reached the end of the survey. Please click the “Submit Survey” button below to submit your responses. Upon doing so you will be redirected to the department’s Internet web site.

Again, please feel free to contact Sgt. Carl J. Lafata via e-mail (lafatac@michigan.gov) or telephone at 517-336-6216 with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your participation. Take care and stay safe.
APPENDIX G

Reminder E-Mail
Subject: Education Survey Reminder

Dear fellow enlisted member:

It has been about two weeks since I posted a memorandum on the department’s “Correspondence” Intranet page inviting all enlisted members to participate in a web-based survey. As I stated then, this survey is part of a research project on the value of post-secondary education to police officers that I am conducting as part of my doctoral dissertation. If you have already taken the survey, I wish to express my sincere thanks.

For those of you who have not yet had the chance to participate, the survey will remain online until November 30, 2005. I again encourage you to participate in order to help provide a greater understanding of the effects that post-secondary education has on enlisted members’ job performance, ability to deal with job stress, and overall attitudes. The more responses I receive the more accurate my analysis will be.

Remember, if you are interested in voluntarily participating, you may do so while on duty or off using any computer. Simply click on the following link:

http://websurveyor.net/wsb.dll/39262/mspeducationsurvey.htm

If you had previously started taking the survey but had to abandon it before you were finished for whatever reason, and are still willing to participate, I ask that you please retake the survey from the beginning. Because there is no way for the system to identify you, there is no way for you to continue where you left off.

Again, participation in this survey is strictly voluntary. Although the department has allowed you to take the survey while on duty, you cannot be ordered to do so by a supervisor. However, I ask that you please take a brief moment out of your busy schedules to assist me with this project.

The aforementioned memorandum has been attached to this e-mail for your convenience. It, as well as the statement on the survey’s home page, explains the project in great detail. I am also available via e-mail or telephone if you have any questions, concerns, or feedback. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Sgt. Carl J. Lafata
Executive Division
Policy, Planning, and Research Unit
APPENDIX H

Research Protocol Approved by the Western Michigan University
Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (HSIRB)
Date: November 9, 2005

To: Ronald Kramer, Principal Investigator
   Carl Lafata, Student Investigator

From: Mary Lagerwey, Ph.D., Chair

Re: HSIRB Project Number: 05-09-08

This letter will serve as confirmation that the change to your research project "The Effects of Post-Secondary Education on State Troopers' Job Performance, Attitudes, and Ability to Assimilate Stress" requested in your memo dated November 8, 2005 (e-mail reminder regarding the web survey to be sent to all enlisted members of the Michigan State Police) has been approved by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board.

The conditions and the duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University.

Please note that you may only conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: October 24, 2006