

Millennials in Policing: Recommendations for Reshaping the Workplace to Recruit and Retain

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Approved: Dr. Susan Hilal

Date: 12/04/2018

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December 2018

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This seminar paper was completed in fulfillment of the requirements for the author's Master of Science (M.S.) degree in Criminal Justice at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville. The author was advised by Dr. Susan Hilal. Special thanks to my wife, Staci Chevremont, Dr. Hilal, and the department staff at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville for their support and guidance in preparation of this article.

Abstract

Purpose

As older generations of police officers retire, an increasing number of police officer vacancies are emerging. The millennial generation, however, does not appear interested in law enforcement as profession thereby creating a critical officer shortage for law enforcement agencies across the United States. Based on the increasing demand of law enforcement, this has placed a large amount of stress on law enforcement agencies and their administrators. The purpose of this paper was to understand this problem through an examination of the generational preferences of millennials and how they relate to the law enforcement profession so as to provide practical recommendations on how to address the officer shortage.

Methods

Through analysis of empirical research, similarities and differences between the law enforcement profession and millennial preferences were identified. Using this information, recommendations were made so as to better align millennial occupational preferences and the internal environment of law enforcement. This was done using Herzberg's Two-Factor theory as a framework to increase motivation and decrease dissatisfaction of those millennials within policing or considering it as a profession.

Key Findings

Three major aspects of the internal law enforcement agency were found to be in direct contradiction to millennial preferences; the traditional police structure, police culture, and police leadership. It was postulated that "flattening" police structure, creating an inclusive work environment, and implementing transformational leadership would motivate millennials to consider policing as a profession thereby addressing the officer shortage.

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Section I: Introduction

Testimony by several prominent United States law enforcement officials to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations within the House of Representatives on May 17, 2017 presented a bleak picture of law enforcement staffing in the United States. James McDonnell, Sheriff of Los Angeles County, stated the current generation does not find policing appealing due to the current political climate surrounding law enforcement. Chuck Canterbury, President of the Fraternal Order of Police, testified the challenges of the occupation and inability to provide adequate pay and benefits has discouraged many from becoming officers. Finally, Alonzo Thompson, Chief of Police for Spartanburg (SC) Police Department, summed up the problem by theorizing that as baby boomers are retiring, fewer working aged people are replacing them in the ranks. He went on to say, “The inherent dangers of the profession and its intense scrutiny and harsh criticism discourage some from entering and/or remaining in law enforcement while others pursue more lucrative, less stressful and safer career fields. (*Challenges Facing Law Enforcement in the 21st Century*, 2017)”

Problem

In short, policing in the 21st century has changed drastically, challenging the status quo for current and prospective police officers. Increased scrutiny, negative media coverage, a lack of public trust, and increased violence has created a challenging environment in which to work. In addition to this, increased education requirements, increased demands to specialized knowledge, decreasing benefits, and a strong private sector have made policing an unattractive profession to

many (Smith, 2016). This can be seen in the shrinking numbers of those applying for entry level police officer positions or those choosing to stay within the law enforcement field.

Rogers (2018) reported the Houston Police Department was short 2,000 officers. The Economist (2017) claimed the Los Angeles Police Department was short 100 officers and that the Philadelphia Police Department had 350 vacancies. Boone (2017) stated the Atlanta Police Department was short 266 officers. Similarly, McCullough (2017) reported that the Dallas Police Department was short 525 officers. It is clear by these and other similar reports by reputable media outlets that there appears to be a potential pattern of police shortages. This is not a surprising phenomenon as Jensen and Graves (2013) forecasted this on police personnel issues into the year 2020.

Based on these reports, it could be argued that in the United States the supply of qualified prospective police officers is not large enough to meet the demand of the law enforcement agencies (Smith, 2016). As such, this has created a large gap of unfilled, entry-level positions within the law enforcement profession. Exacerbating the problem, the generation of workers needed to fill these positions, the millennial generation, does not appear interested in considering law enforcement as a profession. When viewed in the framework of Manneheim's Theory of Generations, this generation can be described as having unique characteristics and worldviews that are very different from previous generations. These worldviews and characteristics play a major role in how the millennial generation approaches careers and the workplace. Therefore, as means to solve the human resource crisis, law enforcement managers must embrace this generation and consider new ways to shape the workplace to recruit and retain millennials in the field.

Purpose of the Paper

It is the aim of this study to define and analyze the millennial generation as a means to understand their general worldviews, motives, and approaches to professional careers within the framework of the Theory of Generations. Using this information and the broad application of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation, recommendations for reshaping the law enforcement workplace will be made to attract and retain more millennials in the law enforcement field, thereby closing the employment gap.

Methods

This paper will utilize secondary research and statistics to locate and explore relevant information on characteristics of the millennial generation. This research will be reviewed to identify positive and negative correlations between the millennial generation and the contemporary law enforcement profession and workplace. From there, comprehensive analysis of positive correlations will be used to make recommendations to adjust or change the law enforcement workplace to recruit and retain the millennial generation.

Assumptions

In this paper, some assumptions will be made. The first assumption that must be made is that the millennial generation is anyone born in the early to mid-1980s to the early 2000s. As of 2016, there are approximately 71 million millennials in the United States and they are projected to be the largest generation by 2019 (Fry, 2018a). As a percentage of the work force, millennials are currently the largest generation at 35% of the labor force (Fry, 2018b). This is projected to grow to 50% of the labor force by 2020 (Nolan, 2015). Considering the large population that this includes, it must be understood that the characterization of the millennial generation is a generalization and does not describe each and every individual. This assumption includes the

idea that the Theory of Generations is correct. The group characterization is meant to provide a more practical means to make recommendations for law enforcement managers as they work with and hire those in this particular generation.

Another assumption is that all law enforcement agencies are facing the same or similar external and internal challenges that potentially make law enforcement an undesirable profession. It must be realized that these factors will vary from community to community, thereby forcing each agency to take a unique approach to their recruiting and retention needs. The final assumption is that the Two-Factor Theory of Motivation is correct and that law enforcement agencies have control over the several motivation and hygiene factors described within the theory.

Limitations

As such, there may be some limitations to this paper. Many of the assumptions stated above create generalizations that may diminish the impact of the paper as law enforcement managers will have to find ways to address their unique needs and the individuals they desire to retain or recruit. In addition to this, many of these recommendations will need further research to determine whether their implementations will indeed increase recruiting and retention in law enforcement. Much of the current research revolves around private sector jobs that have fewer demands than law enforcement. Finding ways to apply private sector ideas to the public sector will undoubtedly have challenges and may not completely transfer.

Significance

Ultimately, a law enforcement agency must have appropriate staffing in order to fulfill its basic roles. As older police officers advance or retire, law enforcement managers must be able to fill the entry level positions to continue their mission. This is a major concern in the law

enforcement profession that needs to be addressed. It can be argued that failure in current recruitment methods is the result of a challenging operational environment and failure for law enforcement agencies to appeal to the millennial generation

Despite some limitations, this paper could be one of the first to directly analyze the barriers that are discouraging millennials from joining law enforcement. By compiling research on millennials in the workforce, understanding how the private sector is addressing their needs, and applying it to the unique needs of law enforcement agencies, practical recommendations on how law enforcement managers can change the workplace will be made. As a result, this could make a direct and immediate impact on the current human resource crisis, but also, modernize the law enforcement workplace to attract and retain future generations.

Section II: Literature Review

Central to the understanding of the employment gap within law enforcement is the belief that millennials are not considering law enforcement as a job or profession to the extent that other generations have. This, however, leaves several questions including why and how are millennials different from previous generations. As a means to understand this, Mannheim's Theory of Generations will be reviewed and applied to millennials as a means to define the general characteristics of this particular generation. The generational preferences of millennials will then be compared to the current law enforcement working environment to show that the current physical structure of law enforcement agencies as well as formal and informal cultures is incompatible with millennial generational preferences.

Mannheim's Theory of Generations

In order to understand the fundamental context of this paper, Mannheim's Theory of Generations must first be defined. Established in 1923, Mannheim developed the theory as a

means to explain differences between generational cohorts and to analyze changing life cycles in society. He described generations as being a cohort of people passing through a particular time in history that exhibit similar emotions, attitudes, perceptions, preferences and dispositions as shaped by their experiences in their youth (Eyerinan & Turner, 1998). These experiences may include cultural attitudes such as parenting styles, political events, demographic changes, economic influences, and/or worldwide conflict that together create a shared consciousness or collective memory (Dunham, 1998). This shared consciousness in turn affects how those of a particular cohort view and approach the external environment as they navigate the world as adults, resulting in societal changes.

It must be understood, however, that the length of time for a cohort is not defined within the theory. Although often lasting approximately 20 years, a generation is defined less by time than the shared historical variables experienced within the formative years; generally, when those historical variables change, so does the generation (Aboim & Vasconcelos, 2014). Another important note is that not everyone within a generation is defined by the overall shared consciousness. Several different subgroups within a particular generation may be identified, thereby creating confusion in the definition of a generation (Dunham, 1998). Nonetheless, general viewpoints, themes, and preferences often times can be identified to establish the overall identity of a generation, especially within the realms of political and intellectual thought (Aboim & Vasconcelos, 2014). It is these overall concepts that can help anticipate future social movements and change that will also create future generations (Milkman, 2017). As such, the labor force is also impacted by this concept of generational differences. Generational preferences can determine what jobs are desired, how companies manage employees, and overall career progression. This is challenge for many organizations because currently there are four major

generational cohorts within the workforce that have different views of employment. These generations are the silent generation (born between 1925 and 1945), baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964), generation X (born between 1965 and 1980), and generation Y, otherwise known as millennials. Organizations must be careful not to alienate the more senior cohort while attracting younger cohorts to their organization. In addition to this, the social and professional dynamic between cohorts can create conflict within the workplace that managers must be able to manage by finding common ground in their established generational preferences. If organizations are not able to adapt and manage the challenges created by the many generational cohorts within the workforce, organizations risk losses and possibly closure (Moss, 2017).

Although debate over the validity of the Theory of Generations is outside the scope of this paper, its general acceptance can be noted by support in sociological research and has been argued as one of the “strongest sociological accounts of generations...” (Pilcher, 1993). It must be noted, however, that some have argued that the major flaw with the Theory of Generations is that it lacks validity outside of western societies. This is because most of the research has been done within the United States or modern European nations (Vandegrift, 2016). That being said, the overall focus of this paper is on millennials within the United States thereby diminishing at least one potential issue brought forth by critics of the Theory of Generations. With general consensus in support of the Theory of Generations, the millennial generation within the United States can go on to be defined.

Millennial Demographics and Preferences

As stated the above, the birth years of the millennial generation often vary within research, but many consider it to be those born between 1981 and 1996 (Dimock, 2018).

Demographically, they are the most diverse generation within the United States in terms of ethnicity and race (Pew Research Center, 2018). Approximately 44% of the population is considered to be a racial minority. A vast majority of millennials reside in metropolitan areas or are relocating to metropolitan areas and have had stints living with their parents as adults. In addition to this, more millennials are in poverty compared to previous generations in early adulthood even when considering that millennials are generally more educated in terms of formal degrees (Frey, 2018). Graf (2017) found that four in ten millennials have bachelor's degrees, including 29% of men and 36% of women (Fry, Igielink, & Patten, 2018). Another critical demographic is that only 4% of millennials have served in the military compared to 47% of those within the silent generation (those born before 1946) (Fry, et. al., 2018). Although this may be related to the utilization of the military draft in previous generations, military experience can play a major role in changing individual perceptions and dispositions professionally and personally. In regards to family, millennials are also getting married and having children at later ages than past generations. Frey (2018) found that the median age of marriage was between 27 and 29 years of age with the general age of childbearing following suit. Religiously, millennials are less affiliated to traditional religious organizations and subscribe less to the major religions of the world (Fry, 2018). These characteristics, when compared to previous generations, establish the foundational framework for the experiences of the millennial generation as they grew up. From there, major world events further shaped the millennial disposition.

The large time frame established for the millennial generation presents a large number of political, economic, and historical events that would influence millennials as they grew. Economically, millennials have experienced, if not through their parents, a strong economy in the 1990s and the large economic downturn of 2008. Politically, they have witnessed the

testimony of the Monica Lewinsky scandal, as well as the election of the first African American President. Historically, they have seen the fall of the Soviet Union, military victory in Operation Desert Storm, as well as witnessed the tragedy of September 11th, 2001, starting the ongoing War on Terrorism. Other tragedies include multiple large storms such as Hurricane Katrina, the spill from the Deep Water Horizon, and the growing number of active shooters such as the one that occurred at Sandy Hook Elementary (Milkman 2017). Most importantly, though, millennials were the first generation born into a massive technological boom that witnessed the takeoff of the World Wide Web and social media. This has not only shaped how millennials obtain and process information, communicate, connect with others, and entertain themselves but also provided them with the “natural” ability to successfully use and understand current and emerging technology (Andrea, Gabriella, & Timea, 2016). It can be argued this technological savvy provides many benefits to society while also presenting challenges if abused.

Such historical events highlighted many ongoing societal issues for the millennial generation. The economic swings only seemed to widen the gap between rich and poor, which in turn highlighted racial and gender disparity within the United States, including sexual minorities and immigrants (Barak, Leighton, & Cotton, 2015). The perceived dysfunction of government along with ongoing scandals highlighted the distrust of authority. In addition to this, the increasing number of active shooters has reignited the debate over gun rights. Corresponding with these major societal issues are major movements that have developed because of the historical events experienced in their youth. Millennials are at the forefront of the Black Lives Matter Movement, Occupy Wall Street Movement, Me Too Movement, and Dreamers Movement; all strengthened by the millennials understanding of communication through new and emerging technological platforms (Milkman, 2017).

Although millennials tend to identify less with formal political parties, 59% lean or prefer the Democratic Party and have increasingly liberal views (Pew Research Center, 2018). This means that there is more support for larger government control, increased government spending, and larger social programs. Politically, the legalization of marijuana is supported, along with tighter gun control, loose immigration policies, and universal healthcare (Pew Research Center, 2018).

As supported by the Theory of Generations, the demographic, sociopolitical, and historical events that millennials experienced in their youth has provided them a unique worldview that has set them apart from previous generations (Milkman, 2017). This can be seen in their overall political views and participation in social movements. Such experiences do not exist in a vacuum, however. These attitudes and perceptions play a critical role in how millennials act within the labor force as they look for employment or navigate their professional careers.

Millennials in the Workforce

At this point, millennials have been in the workforce for more than a decade and are growing in number. This growing dominance in the workforce and their stark contrast with other generations within the workplace has created a dichotomy experienced at the personal level that has, at times, led to conflict within the workplace, as well as drawn the interest of researchers in many fields. As researchers have studied the millennial generation they have come to the general consensus that the millennial generation has several strengths and some weaknesses that will present new challenges to managers and employers (Allen & Sawhney, 2015). Some of these strengths include an understanding of technology and its application, stronger critical thinking skills, and personal loyalty. On the other hand, millennials are often seen as uncommitted to

organizations, confrontational, and lazy by other generations (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). It can be personal perception and each particular context that determines whether the general traits of the millennial generation are positive or negative. For example, the millennial generation was the first generation born into the technological boom. This has created a natural acceptance, understanding, and reliance upon technological communications that continue to advance each day (Allen & Sawhney, 2015). These technologies have made work, often times, more effective and efficient allowing for their adoption by many employers across the United States. In terms of communication, technology has made it simpler, faster, and more convenient to reach out to others around the world. Supported by smartphones, tablets, and many other devices, coupled with rapid social media development, these technologies have become a part of everyday life even outside of the workplace (Allen & Sawhney, 2015). Some may argue this provides millennials an advantage in the workforce. Their ability to apply technological skills makes them better suited for the workplace of the future (Andrea, et. al, 2016).

To older generations such as the silent generations, baby boomers, and generation X, this may be perceived as a weakness. Perpetuated by the use of millennials as technological trainers for older cohorts, many argue that this over-reliance on technology and social media has broken down personal communication and relationships while alienating cohorts that are more senior (Griffin, Phillips, & Gully, 2017). This has led to the inability to resolve conflicts personally, often times leading the shirking away from unwanted conflict resolution discussions. Also, some may argue that the immediacy of technology has made millennials come to expect instant feedback on the job along with direct connection to the upper echelons of a particular organization. Without this feedback or the ability to directly link with top managers, millennials

are more likely to be dissatisfied with their job and more likely to leave (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

A similar comparison can be made in the millennial generation's ability to critically think and challenge the status quo. Much of this can be attributed to the generally higher levels of education that the millennial generation has compared to previous generations. Strengthened by their unique worldviews, millennials are able to see the world through a different lens, challenging the norms found in many organizations and presenting solutions to problems that would have never been thought of before with current management. Educational success and initial workplace experiences quickly translate to a higher sense of confidence leading to more demands for autonomy, discretion, and control (Andrea et al., 2016). They also strive for challenging work environments where they can apply their education and ability to critically think to fix problems rather than just react to situations as they arise (Maier, Tavanti, Bombard, Gentile, & Bradford, 2015). Increased education and perceived critical thinking skills also means that millennials are less willing to remain in entry-level positions while demanding for quick advancement to positions of power and/or rank. Smith and Galbraith (2012) found that 58% of millennials believed that they should only be in an entry-level position for one to two years, while 22% expect promotions every two to three years.

To older generations and management, this can be perceived as over-confidence, arrogance, disrespect, as well as entitlement (Andrea, et al, 2016). Through their extensive education, millennials were often taught to challenge authority, challenge the status quo, and break down barriers. This translates in the workplace where millennials are less willing to "pay their dues" doing menial work (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010). This presents conflict in the work environment where management expects subordination and older generations demand respect.

Millennials, however, want to be seen as colleagues and are willing to directly or indirectly challenge those who will not accept this notion. As a result, millennials are more willing to become confrontational to senior employees and management as a means to state their case when decisions or rules are seen as unfair or wrong (Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2017). In short, the “do as I say,” formal or informal chain of command is not accepted by the millennial generation (Allen & Sawhney, 2015).

However, when millennials are treated with respect and seen more as equals, they have the tendency to establish strong bonds with managers and exhibit strong loyalties. Participative styles of leadership tend to produce more positive results in terms of managing and leading millennials. Nolan (2015) found that when working with millennials, egalitarian and value-centered leadership led to a 788% increase return on investment in terms of productivity, absenteeism, and retention. This means that millennials want to apply their education and skills in open, collaborative environments where they are seen more than just as employees.

Workplaces and workplace culture that apply these concepts will often find more motivated millennial employees, thereby potentially influencing the stat that two in three millennials plan on leaving their current position, and seven in ten are not behaviorally committed to their employers (Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2017). A key distinction in this idea, though, is that these loyalties are to other individual employees and managers, not to the organization (Myers, & Sadaghiani, 2010).

In addition to this, committed loyalties to managers and employees will not influence the millennial generation to work more than the required number of hours. This, however, does not mean that millennials will be willing to work more often. Millennials view on work is that it is meant to support their lifestyle and not be their whole life (Myers, & Sadaghiani, 2010). Smith

and Galbraith (2012) found that only 8% of millennials chose pay as a reason for staying with an organization. Millennials prefer job environments that are open, inclusive, and challenging while providing an element of flexibility in scheduling and freedom to pursue outside passions (Maier, et al., 2015). To older generations and managers this can be perceived as laziness and a lack of dedication leading to negative workplace consequences. Rather, millennials tend to compartmentalize work and leisure, focusing strongly on work while at work (Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2017).

Millennials and Police Organizational Characteristics

These millennial preferences are having an impact on the modern day law enforcement agency. Those within the older generations (the baby boomers and generation X) are coming to the end of their law enforcement careers and retiring (Wilson & Heinonen, 2012). In addition to this, law enforcement jobs are projected to grow 7% from 2016 to 2026 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). As a result, large numbers of entry-level positions are opening within law enforcement agencies even as budgets are shrinking and the emphasis on local public safety decreasing (Wilson & Heinonen, 2012). Although there is limited research on millennial police candidates or millennials within policing, based on the reported hiring difficulties and perceived problems testified to the Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations within the House of Representatives, millennials do not appear interested in these employment opportunities or staying within them if already hired. In order to understand this problem further, one must compare the previously stated generational preferences to the current structure and culture of American law enforcement agencies.

Millennials often have the required education needed for the law enforcement profession. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2018) states that usually only a high school diploma is required

to become a police officer in the United States. Often times, however, law enforcement agencies will require more. For example, Minnesota requires a two or four-year degree from an approved program, while Wisconsin requires any bachelor's degree or at least 60 credits specific to law enforcement schooling. Additional requirements include the completion of a police academy, good physical health, no previous felony or domestic charges, and are at least 21 years of age (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). Based on the statistic above indicating that increasing numbers of millennials have bachelor's degree, it can be assumed that the millennial generation has the needed formal education to become police officers. In addition to this, the critical thinking skills possessed by millennials are desirable to current policing techniques such as problem-oriented policing and community policing. This shows that it is not the entry requirements into the profession that is not stopping millennials from entering law enforcement, rather something else is dissuading them from policing.

In order to identify what is making policing undesirable for millennials, one must be able to find unique characteristics of law enforcement when compared to the private sector. Police, generally get paid an average wage, receive average benefits, and are provided higher numbers of time off when compared to a private sector job (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). In addition to this, the job functions themselves can be rewarding and meaningful, something millennials desire (Smith & Galbraith, 2012). Unique to policing, though, is the internal environment in which police operate. The paramilitaristic structure and masculine culture exasperated by authoritarian leadership are unique to the profession. It is argued that law enforcement agencies are the epitome of the seniority-based, centrally structured hierarchy and masculine culture that millennials do not want to work within. It can be speculated that it is this incompatibility that is pushing millennials from the law enforcement profession. In order to understand this, though,

one must understand the general structure and culture of a law enforcement agency in order to understand its incompatibility with the ideals of the millennial generation.

Sir Robert Peel and the Metropolitan Act of 1829 is often credited with the establishment of the modern police force. Modeled after the military, police forces took on a paramilitaristic structure as a means of ensuring effectiveness and efficiency (Peak, 2015). Following the Wickersham Commission of 1929, created to rid American police forces of corruption and abuses of power, August Vollmer further embraced the paramilitaristic, centralized organizational structure as a means of furthering the professionalization of the police. This meant that formal rigid hierarchies were established in most police agencies where power and decision-making was limited to the few in power (Roberg, Novak, Cordner, & Smith, 2015). It often had a chief in command with one or more assistant chiefs, a few captains, some lieutenants, and several sergeants in charge a vast majority of the staff. It must be noted, though, that every law enforcement agency has a different structure due to staffing but generally fall along this hierarchy. In addition to this, those at the bottom of the structure were fragmented into bureaus that had a narrow scope of operations thereby increasing control in the upper echelons of the structure. Also, the individual officer was limited in discretion and decision-making as it was taken over by the centralized command and control element (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010). As a matter of tradition and culture, such structures are still in place today and continue to dominate the law enforcement profession while struggling to address the complex and emerging trends in society. At the same time, the limiting of discretion and roles within law enforcement agencies continues to turn away millennials who are seeking challenging work environments where they can collaborate with coworkers on unique and possibly unorthodox solutions to community problems without micromanagement from upper management.

As a result of such a rigid, centralized structure, managers are presumed to have leadership abilities. Allen and Sawhney (2015), however, suggests, that often times managers are usually promoted within as a result of time served within an organization, community election, appointment, or internal political relationships. Although managers may be good at managing human resources and telling other what to do, it does not mean that they are capable of motivating others in achieving the agency's goals. This often leads to autocratic leadership style that is defined by the "do as I say" mentality with a one-way avenue of communication that is highly focused on officer productivity (Stojkovic, Kalinich, & Klofas, 2015). This is in direct opposition the millennial preferences where millennials generally question established authority, seek input on organizational decisions, and desire positive relationships with their supervisors (Nolan, 2015).

Protecting these established institutions is the strong police culture experienced by many within law enforcement. Research suggests there is consensus that the traditional police culture protecting the structure is universal and it is not limited geographically or internationally. Even in the face of policing reforms, police culture remains consistent (Brough, Chataway, & Biggs, 2016). It is further defined as a "clan culture" where there is a high level of internal focus, control, and stability that is often determined by a commitment to tradition (Jablonowski, 2017). Focused on masculine tenants of group pride, solidarity, isolation, as well as individual bravery, police culture is highly selective, influential, and secretive (Dunham & Alpert, 2005). More in line with the crime fighting persona shown in media, police culture can appear to be uninviting, abrasive, and unchangeable to those outside of the culture. This often creates barriers between police and the community they serve. In essence, this places the sheltered police culture at odds with what the modern inclusive and diverse culture that society, as well as millennials, are

embracing. Often times, when officers do not subscribe to these masculine ideals or become fully immersed in the culture, they are seen as outcasts, weak, or ineffective as officers thereby protecting the status quo. In all, the police culture is a conservative, masculine culture that supports the formal hierarchal structure and limits outsider interference, resulting in a dissuasion of millennials as they seek open and inclusive environments in which to work.

As older generations advance or retire, the law enforcement profession needs the millennial generation to step into those entry-level positions and remain committed to the organizations in order to maintain basic staffing needs and better serve the community. The research indicates, however, that generational preferences of millennials do not align or are not compatible with the current organizational characteristics of law enforcement agencies (Hilal, Densley, & Jones, 2017). This is contributing to the large number of policing vacancies being experienced around the United States. It is up to law enforcement managers to find ways to change the internal environment of law enforcement agencies, so as to motivate millennials to apply for positions within law enforcement and remain in law enforcement as a career. In particular, organizational structure, police culture, and leadership are of primary concern to create a modern work environment that will attract the newest generation to the profession. Failure to do so will result in the inability to recruit and retain millennials, ultimately leading to inadequate police services to communities around the nation.

Section III: Theoretical Framework

In order to make recommendations for law enforcement agencies to adjust their work environment, it is important to look at applicable theory. One theory in particular that is appropriate for the law enforcement setting is Herzberg's Two-Factor theory of Motivation,

otherwise known as Motivation-hygiene theory. It provides a practical way for law enforcement leaders to prevent dissatisfaction and motivate employees or future employees.

Developed in 1959 by Frederick Herzberg, Motivation-hygiene theory, posits that particular job factors or variables can be classified as hygiene or motivational factors that can determine satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Whereas hygiene factors can determine the level of dissatisfaction with a job or career (ranging from dissatisfaction to no dissatisfaction), motivational factors determine levels of satisfaction (ranging from satisfaction to no satisfaction). According to the theory, Hygiene factors do not motivate employees but are essential in preventing dissatisfaction and retaining employees whereas motivational factors will increase productivity and attract potential employees (Griffin, et. al, 2017). Together these factors can attend to an employees' "higher level" needs as way to motivate them and provide meaningful careers. As a result, employees will be more productive, more willing to stay in the profession. In short, the theory focuses on job enrichment as a way to create employee or potential employee motivation.

Hygiene factors include working conditions, coworker relations, supervision as well as supervisor relationships, salary, status, job security, company policy and administration (Allen & Sawney, 2015). In general, these factors are required at every workplace and may be external to the work itself. This means that the presence of these factors is expected and their variation will help in determining one's level of dissatisfaction to include no dissatisfaction. Otherwise known as maintenance factors, these factors can assist in retaining employees but will not motivate them to increase productivity (Griffin, et, al., 2017). In terms of policing, hygiene factors are often outside of the control of law enforcement leaders and are may be more difficult

to manage. Hygiene factors, however, cannot be ignored and should be positively addressed when possible (Thibault, Lynch, & McBride, 2001).

Motivator factors, on the other hand, are related to the work itself and address the career growth desire of employees. These factors include the work itself, recognition, responsibility, achievement, personal growth, advancement possibilities, and feedback (Allen & Sawhney, 2015). These factors are more internally present and capable of being addressed by law enforcement leaders. By addressing these factors in a positive manner, law enforcement will have more motivated officers and motivated candidates thereby leading to increased productivity and interest in the profession. Thibault, Lynch, & McBride (2001) suggest that law enforcement leaders focus on these factors when managing employees.

There is some debate on the validity of Herzberg's Two-factor theory. Some argue that the theory ignores individual and situational variables that important in determining satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Griffin, et, al., 2017). For example, while some individual may positively respond to a particular job with certain enhancements related to motivational factors, others may interpret those enhancements negatively leading to less satisfaction (Stojkovic, et, al., 2015). Also, the theory does not address the context of the work and may not always be applicable. For example, the theory may not transfer to non-western communities or communities experiencing high levels of poverty (Evans & Olumide-Aluko, 2010). Although this may be true, the debate about the overall validity of Herzberg's Two Factor theory is outside of the scope of this paper. The overall theme of the theory is widely accepted and provides for a practical means to analyze the internal workplace environment of law enforcement agencies so that police administrators and create job enrichment strategies that will attract millennials to the profession. Such efforts should begin with the modernization of the police agency structure, police culture, and police

leadership approach as they are some of the strongest factors that create the police work environment.

Section IV: Recommendations for Law Enforcement Managers

Previously a desirable profession that provided above average benefits, a meaningful career, and prestige, law enforcement has been challenged by the economic conditions and social movements of today (Challenges Facing Law Enforcement in the 21st Century, 2017). As a result, fewer members of the newest working age generation, the millennials, are considering it as a viable career leading to the aforementioned human resource crisis. It is no longer acceptable for law enforcement managers to assume that individuals will be attracted to the career and apply for open positions. Administrators must be able to adapt to the changing times and proactively address the factors that are discouraging those from becoming police officers. Supposing most external variables are outside of the law enforcement leaders “hands,” modernization of several internal factors such as department structure, department leadership, and department culture are crucial in changing law enforcement to a modern work environment that will attract and retain millennials. This section will provide suggestions on how law enforcement managers can address these internal characteristics so as to deal with the pattern of critical staffing shortages being experienced nationally.

Police Agency Structure

One of the first factors that law enforcement administrators can change is the physical structure of a police agency thereby addressing several hygiene and motivator factors. From the literature, one can determine that millennials prefer an organizational structure that is decentralized and composed of several interconnected teams. Such a structure represents more of a network rather than a hierarchy. Millennials prefer this because it evenly distributes power,

allows for increased collaboration, and facilitates open communication that is usually hindered by ranks and the chain of command (Jensen & Graves, 2013). . This also provides millennials more input on the direction of projects as well as the organization itself. Having more at stake within the organization will create a sense of connection with the department thereby potentially increasing organizational loyalty, a trait the millennial generation lacks (Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010).

Millennial organizational preferences are in stark contrast to the traditional paramilitaristic structure many police agencies embrace. As stated above, police organizations in the United States are defined by a formal centralized command structure that concentrates power to those few in the highest ranks. In addition to this, law enforcement agencies are often segmented into several different bureaus that further hinder communication, teamwork, and efficiency (Shane, 2010). To address this discrepancy between police agencies and millennials, police leaders must first emphasize the importance of patrol units and empower the patrol officer to be more than a reactive unit.

Patrol units are the basic “unit” of a police agency and are the entry level position within local law enforcement. Patrol officers are the uniformed officers in marked squad cars that are envisioned when outsiders think of police, making them the “face” of any given agency (Schmallegger, 2009). In the typical police agency, they consist of 66% of the officers within a department (Gaines & Miller, 2015). Patrol officers traditional job duties include responding to calls for service, traffic enforcement, and addressing general public safety issues (Gaines & Miller, 2015). In the traditional police structure, patrolmen, especially new patrolmen, would be the lowest rank with the least amount of power and influence inside and outside of the police

agency. This presents a unique dilemma for police agencies where those with most exposure to the citizens have the least amount of power and discretion within the agency.

Police managers can address this issue by increasing the number of patrol officer and decreasing the number of bureaus, specialized positions and/or administrator roles. This will have several advantages; it will take tiers out of the highly structured hierarchy, remove barriers between bureaus, and increase communication as well as collaboration between units (Maloney & Moty, 2002). Currently, extraneous specialized units and bureaus with different ranks and titles create divisions within an agency. It impedes communication between units and inhibits collaboration to solve problems as required by modern policing approaches such as community policing (Shane, 2010). By eliminating unneeded supervisor or specialized positions, and reorganizing those positions to patrol, the basic unit of the agency will have more people with an equal share of power at the base of structure. This can be done through an analysis of supervisory and specialized positions to identify their job descriptions and determining whether roles and tasks are unnecessarily being duplicated or could be done by citizens. An example of this could be to hire trained citizens to handle the evidence department or hiring citizens to supervise civilian clerical staff. This will allow for more information to flow between patrol units as well as up those leading the department. It will allow more patrol officers to work together and be comfortable providing input to team problems. In essence it will place more power with the individual patrol officers to critically think, work with others, and communicate their ideas to those at the top (Jensen & Graves, 2013). Altogether, the patrol division will also have increased power to balance distribution of power within an agency. As a result, the organization will represent the “network” millennials desire and increase millennial satisfaction through adjustments of hygiene factors related to supervisor/administration relations and motivator

factors of increased responsibility. This will decrease dissatisfaction for those millennials within profession and motivate those outside of it to consider it as a career. From there, the internal department culture should be addressed.

Police Culture

Similar to police organizational structure, police informal organizational culture is not in alignment with millennial generation preferences. As stated above, millennials are one of the most diverse generations with increasing numbers of women and minorities obtaining higher levels of education, thereby opening up more employment opportunities for these populations, law enforcement included. This can be seen in the increasing diversity of police agencies across the United States. Approximately 27% of officers in 2015 were of a racial or ethnic minority. This is an increase of 12% since 1987. Similarly, about 12% of officers were female compared to 8% in 1987 (Reaves, 2015). Such patterns can be found throughout the workforce and emphasize the millennials preference to work in diverse work environments that are accepting, inclusive, and respectful. This is in direct opposition to the masculine culture that can discourage some from policing while also alienating those already in the profession (Hilal, et. al, 2017).

Although some “ethos” of the informal police culture are positive such as bravery, whereas isolationism and excessive solidarity can be negative and create divides between the community, fellow officers, and others when violated (Dunham & Alpert, 2005). The masculine police culture has been shown to cause stress to black officers within law enforcement (Dukes, 2018). In addition to this, it has made women feel relegated to “soft” roles that are not as masculine such as community police officers or school resources officers (McCarthy, 2013). It is up to law enforcement managers to manage their formal and, more importantly, their informal culture to improve hygiene factors such as working conditions and coworker relationships. In

addition to this, it could influence motivator factors such as personal growth needed to motivate those to join law enforcement while decreasing dissatisfaction of those already within law enforcement.

It is recommended that law enforcement managers address this issue by redefining and strengthening their organization's formal values, mission, and goals so as to diminish the strength of the informal police culture. These values, missions, and goals should embrace diversity in people and ideas. They should also try to avoid negative connotations related to the traditional informal culture maintained within many agencies. Once established, these formal goals should be taught through training, shown in hiring, and displayed in promotions. Law enforcement managers should look to promote and advance diverse individuals to further create role models for younger millennial officers or those considering law enforcement. By creating an inclusive culture that is led by those that think and act like them, it will encourage more people consider law enforcement as a career. Police leaders should then recognize and reward those that embrace this new culture that will, overtime, "outweigh" the traditional police culture that creates a barrier from millennials joining law enforcement (Griffin, et. al, 2017). None of this, though, is possible without strong leadership.

Police Leadership Style

Related to the traditional structure and traditional culture is the implementation of an authoritarian leadership style where rank-and-file officers, especially new officers, are to do what they are told. Such leadership styles originate from the establishment of the militaristic "mindset" established by Sir Robert Peel and advanced as policing entered the reform era where crime fighting was the major goal (Roberg, et. al, 2015). Again, this is in direct opposition to millennial generational preferences. Millennials are more apt to question authority and resist the

“do as your told” mentality. Millennials have been taught to critically think, apply their education, and make independent, educated decisions rather than just responding as directed. This disposition can create stress between the supervisor and the millennials they supervise in turn negatively influencing their professional relationship. Confounding this, millennials tend to see their supervisors or administrators as equal partners rather than superiors. If this relationship sours, then millennials are more likely to seek employment elsewhere as they generally direct loyalties towards individuals in which they have positive relationships rather than those leaders in which they have negative relationships or organizations (Maier, et. al, 2015).

Enhancing police leadership styles begins with the adoption of a transformational leadership style (Maier, et al., 2015). Transformational leadership is a leadership style that elevates subordinates and their needs so as to create an environment that can allow subordinates to perform at a higher level (Stojkovic, et. al, 2015). It focuses on four dimension; inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, idealization influence, and individualized considerations. Inspirational motivation means that the leader is able to motivate millennials by creating a shared vision together and establishing a line of communication that will enable the team to achieve these goals. Intellectual stimulation refers the way in which leaders challenge millennials to reframe problems, encourage critical thought, and test creative ways to address these problems. It gives millennials an active, decision-making role within the agency. From there idealized influence addresses how leaders should act as role models and place the needs of their subordinates above their own. Finally, transformational leadership incorporates the concept of individualized considerations where leaderships take that role model and form it around their subordinates’ personal needs. This means that the leader should act as a coach, mentor, counselor, teacher, and more that will be able to provide immediate feedback (Allen & Sawhney,

2015). In the end, the adoption of transformational leadership will create an environment that allows millennials to have a say in the direction of the agency while creating a close relationship with their individual supervisor increasing the likelihood of individual loyalty (Maier, et al., 2015).

Transformational leadership should not only be relegated to supervisors and administrators. It should also be adopted by senior officers, most importantly field training officers. Field training officers are tasked with training new officers that come from the academy. They oversee officers' first real world experiences and ensure new officers understand the formal aspects of the job such as the laws, department policies, and tactics. This also includes the socialization of new officers in the police culture and other informal aspects of policing (Gaines & Miller, 2015). They also provide for direct feedback to those new officers. Field training officers are often the first officers to develop professional relationships with new, millennial officers, thereby putting them in a crucial position of influence. It should be noted, these officers are often some of the older, more experienced officers, which can result in conflict due to generational differences if older officers are not prepared to work with millennials. Agencies should look to train these officers in understanding millennial preferences as well as transformational leadership so as to better train millennials as well as establish strong bonds with them, improving coworker relations. This will not only increase productivity as these officers work together but it will also increase personal loyalty between millennials and their coworkers which may assist in retaining those officers. In addition to this, if a change in police culture is desired, it will also assist in changing that traditional culture to the more diverse and open culture desired by millennials (Stojkovic, et, al., 2015).

It is important to note, however, that transformational leadership is not innate. It should be adopted by the organization as a whole and trained to those in leadership positions. Leaders must hold each other accountable in forwarding this leadership style and those incapable to implementing transformational leadership should be considered for other positions (Stojkovic, et al, 2015). The inability to do this would otherwise place the department at risk of losing millennial officers or discouraging others from applying thereby exacerbating any potential human resources gaps.

In all, millennials are not accepting of authoritarian styles of leadership. They seek leadership that allows them to participate, think, and act independently while at the same time providing immediate feedback. Transformational leadership allows that further addressing hygiene factors such as supervisor quality and co-worker relations while at the same time increasing personal growth and responsibility which will decrease dissatisfaction while increase motivation in staying in or joining law enforcement.

In the end, these recommendations are not the only changes an agency can and/or must do to attract and retain millennials. Agency structure, agency culture, and agency leadership, however, are the foundation in creating an internal environment that is conducive in a creating a workplace in which millennials will want to work; something many private sector organizations have been able to capitalize upon. Failure to make changes at these critical agency attributes will likely continue the trend of manpower shortages currently being experienced in the law enforcement profession.

Section IV: Summary and Conclusion

The law enforcement profession is at a critical crossroads. Several external factors including a changing political environment, new social movements, the economy, and decreasing

benefits have made the profession unappealing to the millennial generation. This has created a critical manpower shortage of the law enforcement profession. As older generations are retiring, fewer millennials are looking for positions in law enforcement thereby creating this shortage that must be addressed. As the law enforcement profession looks to navigate these challenges, unique and novel concepts must be tried as a means to recruit, hire, and retain millennials. Such concepts, though, should not be haphazardly administered as they may not appeal to the generation, be a detriment to the organization, and cost the taxpayer thousands of dollars. Any and all changes must be grounded in established research and theory. This paper did this, as well as provide law administrators ideas on how to address the police officer shortages being experienced across the nation. These recommendations, however, were based on several assumptions and also may have some challenges. Due to this, there must be a call for more research on the issue as a means to help direct law enforcement leaders.

Critical Assumptions

As stated in Section I, there were several assumptions that were made during this paper. The first assumption was about general characteristics of millennials. It is clear that there is not an absolute defined time period in which the millennial generation was born. In addition to this, the time period is rather expansive, ranging from the 1980s to potentially the early 2000s. This makes it challenging to determine or establish an absolute set of historical markers that shaped millennial youths. For example, some may remember particular impactful events; others may not, potentially changing their future dispositions. If this is the case, then the Theory of Generations would find some challenges. This issue also raises challenges when comparing research on millennials. Discrepancies may arise if research data points are established from different definitions of millennials as well as their ages. It is suggested that a common time

period be established for millennials to further align research so as to identify trends and patterns.

Similarly, the attitudes and beliefs of millennials were assumed to be the same as a means of establishing the recommendations. Earlier in the paper, it was stated that there are subgroups of millennials that are different from others. This is significant because it can be argued that those entering policing or considering it may have different attitudes and beliefs from others. There is a large amount of research on the police officer's "working personality" (Dunham & Alpert, 2005). Skolnick (1966) provided an influential paper that described the police "working personality" found among many officers of the time. In this paper, police officers are described as seeing their profession as a way of life rather than an occupation. It goes on to say that this personality revolves around the concepts of danger and authoritarianism that helps them navigate the dangerous and unpredictable world of policing. Skolnick (1966) goes on to say that officers embrace and sometimes enjoy violence, see themselves as superior to outsiders, and favor authoritarianism as a means of coping with stress; all of which are clearly different characteristics from the millennial generation. This leaves several questions. Is such a "working personality" innate, thereby attracting only those with similar personalities to the job and establishing those individuals as a potential subgroup of the millennial generation? Otherwise, is the "working personality" learned, thereby indicating that policing in some way shapes those who enter the profession? Understanding whether the police personality is natural or learned is critical, as it will assist administrators in determining where to focus their recruiting and retention efforts on a particular subgroup of millennials that are predisposed to law enforcement careers, or the generation as a whole.

Challenges

Other issues arise when one reviews the research on the millennial generation. Although there is a large amount of research on the generational preferences of millennials, very little of that research is focused on law enforcement. Studies on millennials as students, librarians, marketers, and other private sector professions are extensively studied and researched. This paper analyzed much of that research to develop the above recommendations. These suggestions, however, would have limited affects if these preferences do not apply to those considering law enforcement. There must be more research on the preferences of millennials considering the profession, in training for the profession, and already within it as a means to further determine whether these recommendations would have an impact.

In addition to this, some of the recommendations may not be possible due to the unique nature of law enforcement. For example, creating a flatter, less centralized organizational structure may be easier for the private sector than a law enforcement organization. This is because current social movements have demanded for more police accountability. As a way to address this, many organizations have maintained or become more tiered with a formal, centralized command structure as a means to control the actions of their officers. By “flattening” the structure as recommended, a police agency may be going against the wishes of the community, in turn losing trust and credibility within community they serve. In addition to this, police response to critical and dangerous situations often requires a defined command structure to make quick decisions and issue orders. Having a decentralized structure makes this more difficult as leadership is less clearly defined (Chappell & Lanza-Kaduce, 2010). This is just one example of how private sector ideas may not transfer to the law enforcement profession. Finding ways to incorporate private sector methods of millennial recruitment while maintaining the

ability to respond to the community will remain a challenge for the law enforcement administrator.

Some of the most difficult challenges to the implementation of the recommended strategies will come from the older generations and police unions. The traditional culture of policing coupled with one's natural inclination to resist change creates an environment in which the status quo is difficult to change. To some older generations they find that change is threatening to their careers and individual experience. It also can make them uncomfortable and unhappy. For example, older generations believe that new people should bide their time at the bottom of the rank structure, stay quiet, and do as they're told. Millennials prefer actions and behaviors that are in direct contradiction. Millennials want rapid advancement, to be part of a team that has a say on important decisions, and questions authority. This creates open conflict between the generations, resulting in more animosity if managers appear to choose one generation over the other (Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2017). In order to address this, Jensen and Graves (2013) suggests conducting multigenerational training that will teach older and newer generations about each other. It should be focused on finding common ground and similarities between the generations, establishing mentor and mentee relationships, as well as defining the organization's role in ensuring these relationships are strong.

Similarly, unions may formally resist changes through complaints, grievances and arbitration. This is of concern because police unions have a major influence on the operations and decisions made within a police agency (Thibault, et. al, 2001). In the context of the recommendations above, police unions may be the biggest obstacle to the implementation of structural and cultural change strategies. Police unions may prefer the current structure as it may have more supervisor or detective positions that pay more. In terms of the police culture, the

police unions may see this as a means to reign in their control within the ranks (Stojkovic, et al, 2015). Overall, those within the police union may see policy and organizational changes to improve millennial recruiting and retention as a threat. This perception can create conflict between the union and the administration. So as to avoid this conflict, administrators should look to include unions and union members in discussions on how to change an organization so as to create an environment that can recruit millennials. These discussions should be open and honest to gain a comprehensive result; however, if results are not created, administrators have the right to establish department work assignments, reorganize agencies, set hiring standards, and change department policy without consulting with the police union (Thibault, et al., 2001). Although not the preferred method, administrators must make the necessary changes to ensure they can attract millennials, fill officer positions, and provide services to the community.

Although there are several different established processes to makes these organizational changes, two-way communication is the key that will overcome any resistance and ensure the change is effective. This communication must explain to the rank-and-file officer why these changes must happen, as well as allow for older officers to communicate their concerns. From there, a mutual interpretation of the problem must be established. Finally, officers must be allowed to participate and contribute to these change efforts, creating a sense of ownership in the changes (Men, 2016). In general, change, especially in law enforcement, will take time. Managers must take time to communicate any change and make those changes incrementally to be sure to not alienate those who may disagree with or are suspicious of the change.

Future Research

In order to better understand how millennials perceive law enforcement as profession, more research must be done. This should include those in the profession, in training for the

profession, and those interested in the profession. As stated above, this research should look to understand millennials' personalities, occupational preferences, as well as their motivations and professional desires. This will better link millennials with the law enforcement preference to improve recruiting and retention efforts. In terms of organizational changes, departments that implement decentralized organizational structures, limit the traditional police culture, and adopt transformational leadership styles should be studied. Such studies would be able to find relationships between officer satisfaction, the influence on officer candidates, and their overall effect on millennial recruiting efforts. Quantitative approaches such as surveys and data reviews could provide for a broad understanding of many of these relationships; however, these methods would ignore the more detailed human experiences of millennials. Qualitative research such as case studies and interviews would help alleviate this issue and help researchers understand those broad concepts at a more personal level, thereby showing the individual impact of law enforcement on millennials and millennials on law enforcement (McDavid, Huse, & Hawthorn, 2013). Together these quantitative and qualitative approaches to research would provide a more complete picture of the relationship between law enforcement and millennials. This would allow for those relationships to be further established and empower the law enforcement administrator to make informed choices on recruiting and retention strategies.

Research could go even further and study other methods or recruiting millennials outside of just structural changes, culture change, and leadership changes. Recruiting tools such as the promotion of flexible scheduling, relaxed grooming standards, an acceptance of tattoos, on-site childcare, and free healthcare clinics have all been tried in many private sector industries with varying levels of success. These strategies may also be ideas to recruit and retain millennials in law enforcement. It could be argued that success in the use of these recruitment tools in the

private sector may have some carryover to the public sector and law enforcement which increase the number of options administrators have to motivate employees to stay within law enforcement or join the ranks. In the end, research must be able to identify factors that would motivate millennials to join law enforcement, determine what methods could be implemented to increase success in recruiting and retaining millennials, and provide law enforcement administrators practical recommendations to fill their ranks. Only then will the law enforcement profession be able to solve this human resource crisis and provide adequate staffing to best serve their respective communities.

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