EXAMINING LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY TRAINING STANDARDS AND ATTITUDES ON SEXUAL MINORITY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/ INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

by

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ABSTRACT

BREANNA LEE HANEY. Examining law enforcement agency training standards and attitudes on sexual minority domestic violence/ intimate partner violence.
(Under the direction of DR. JENNIFER L. HARTMAN)

Despite recent strides taken by legislation in *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), research investigating police attitudes and law enforcement training on domestic violence/intimate partner violence disputes involving sexual minorities is largely unexplored. Given the overwhelming prevalence and uniqueness of sexual minority domestic violence/ intimate partner violence as well as the failure of law enforcement to historically address incidents as such, these individuals may not be receiving the legal protections put forth by the U.S Supreme Court. Using an original survey to Chief Executive (or designee) roles within municipal, county sheriffs, or tribal police agencies in the United States, this study aimed to better understand law enforcement agency perceptions and examined training standards related to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence. Through a progression of analyses, findings revealed that although a large proportion of agencies have implemented domestic violence/intimate partner violence training specific to the sexual minority populations, police perceptions toward such incidents are poor. More research is necessary to understand the ability of training to improve law enforcement response to these incidents and affirm the legal protections granted by the 2015 case, *Obergefell v. Hodges*. Study limitations, policy implications, and guidance for future research are discussed.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Although domestic violence/intimate partner violence is a public health concern, abuse involving sexual minority couples has received far less attention from law enforcement. In 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional and required states to recognize marriage rights. This ruling allowed those individuals that identify as members of a sexual minority to now celebrate marriage legally in any state. While this seminal case redefined marriage, this ruling also created new policy implications within the criminal justice system. Previous studies have found a general consensus that domestic violence/intimate partner violence rates among the sexual minority population are comparable and occasionally even higher to those in the heterosexual community. Therefore, to properly assist this population reform geared to address potential biases and disparities in law enforcement procedures is required (Russell & Torres, 2020). This study aims to better understand the attitudes/knowledge of and training standards of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence among municipal, county sheriffs and tribal law enforcement agencies in the United States toward sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence. Further, a look into the possible challenges of current training and what barriers hinder an agency's absence of training on the topic will be made. It is the goal of this paper to update the current literature and emphasize the role that law enforcement agencies have in ensuring that their response to training sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence is appropriate to confirm the legal protections granted by *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015).

As a note regarding nomenclature, for the purposes of this thesis, domestic violence and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) are defined as violence that occurs in a romantic relationship (i.e., between spouse, ex-spouse, partner, ex-partner, girlfriend/boyfriend, ex-girlfriend/boyfriend

or child in common). That is, excluding familial violence. A sexual minority (also referred to as LGBTQIA) couple is defined as individuals that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual that are in a sexual or romantic relationship (including child in common) at the time of police contact (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2022). A heterosexual couple is defined as individuals of the opposite sex that are in a sexual or romantic relationship (including child in common) at the time of police contact.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Road to Sexual Minority Marriage Legislation

The road to sexual minority marriage legislation is not necessarily something new nor has it taken a linear path. For example, the legal rights and protections of same-sex couples has been on the docket for over three decades, when the Supreme Court of Hawaii ruled in *Baehr v. Miike* (1993) that prohibition of same-sex marriage violated the constitution (Isaacson, 2015). While Hawaii was not successful in granting same-sex-sex unions as it required a classification of sex which was susceptible to scrutiny under the Hawaii constitution (Hermann, 2015) this set precedent for discussions and future action on the issue. Although not in favor of same-sex marriage, the federal government and President Bill Clinton enacted the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) in 1996 to define marriage as one man and women and asserted that states were not able recognize same-sex unions that were discerned under another state's legislature and that these couples would be afforded the same the federal law benefits as opposite-sex couples (Clarkson-Freeman, 2005). The General Accounting Office noted that 1,049 federal laws were impacted by DOMA including denied access to a spouse's employment benefits, joint tax returns and exemptions, or the denial to reside together in collegiate or military housing (Clarkson-Freeman, 2005; Cornell Law School, n.d.). However, *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health* (2003) changed the dialogue when Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage (Gates & Brown, 2015, Hermann 2015). Following Massachusetts, several states followed suit in legalizing same-sex marriage such as Connecticut in 2008; Iowa, New Hampshire, Vermont, and District of Columbia in 2009; New York in 2011; Maine, Maryland, and Washington in 2012 (Pew Research Center, 2015).

In fact, the landmark decision in *Windsor v. United States* (2013) 570 U.S. 744 set forth that the federal government was required to recognize same-sex marriages and granted some federal benefits to those couples that resided in states that did not honor their marriage, ultimately ruling that aspect of DOMA as unconstitutional (Gates & Brown, 2015; Hermann, 2015; Isaacson, 2015). Specifically, the Court held that Section 2 of the DOMA which denied federal recognition of same-sex marriages, was a violation of the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment. In response to *Windsor v. United States,* in 2013, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Minnesota, and Rhode Island, New Mexico and New Jersey issued rules that permitted same-sex couple unions (Pew Research Center, 2015). By 2014, 34 states had legalized same-sex marriages leaving 16 states with constitutional bans on such marriages (Pew Research Center, 2015).

In 2015, *Obergefell v. Hodges* ruled that the constitutional Fourteenth Amendment required all states to grant a marriage license between two same-sex partners and to recognize such when performed in another state (Isaacson, 2015). The opposing dissent included Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. argument that although same-sex unions could be a fair practice, it is not the constitution's duty to address it and should rather be up to state voters and electoral will to decide whether same-sex marriage licenses are recognized (Hermann, 2015; Oyez, n.d.). Justice Clarence Thomas and Justice Samuel A. Alito, Jr. also argued against the minority, that the right of marriage among same-sex couples is not conveyed in the constitution and the decision to deviate from the traditional form of marriage should be reserved for state legislature (Hermann, 2015; Oyez, n.d.). Justice Clarence Thomas further claimed that the opinion of due process rights via the Fourteenth Amendment altered democratic process by violating religious freedoms by taking the decision away from individual states (Oyez, n.d.).

The Court ultimately concluded in a 5-4 decision in favor of the minority that there is no difference in a same-sex union and an opposite-sex union therefore the exclusion of same-sex partners was a breach of the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment (Oyez, n.d.). An analysis of the fundamental liberties protected by the Fourteenth Amendment is applicable to same-sex partners in the same fashion as the traditional opposite-sex couples. Responding to Justice Thomas' comment, the Court declared that the First Amendment does provide protections to religious institutions to honor their principles but does not grant states to deny same-sex couples a marriage license (Oyez, n.d.).

Although, from a legal standpoint, this landmark case addressed the national controversy that captured discussion and debate for decades, the Court's decision does not identify any form of equality beyond a marriage license. Little attention was given to provide further claims of rights and protections to these individuals. Further, Hermann (2015) highlights that the decision does not include any additional claims for protections relating to discrimination in employment or accommodations, and argued in this paper, potentially by law enforcement.

2.2 Prevalence of Sexual Minority DV/IPV

Much like heteronormative relationships, research has shown any relationship between two people presents a unique risk of domestic violence/ intimate partner violence (Kimmes et al., 2019). Undoubtedly intimate partner violence was occurring prior to the *Obergefell v. Hodges (2015)* decision, however now sexual minority couples are granted the right to expect legal protections therein. Research has highlighted the prevalence of domestic violence/intimate partner violence among sexual minorities even suggesting that it is as common or *more* rampant than heterosexual couples (Brown & Herman, 2015; Decker et al., 2018; Edwards et al., 2015; Greenwood et al., 2002; McKenry et al. 2006; Messinger, 2011; Walters et al., 2013). The 2010

National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) disclosed that the prevalence of lifetime intimate partner violence was 43.8% for lesbian women, 61.1% for bisexual women, 35% for heterosexual women, 26% for gay men, 37% for bisexual men, and 29% for heterosexual women (Walters et al., 2013).

Additional research echoed this sentiment in a meta-analysis of 42 existing studies ranging from 1989 to 2015 that analyzed the prevalence of intimate partner violence among the LGBT population (Brown & Herman, 2015). Findings revealed that lesbian and bisexual women, gay and bisexual men, and transgender individuals report a lifetime prevalence of intimate partner violence just as high or higher as heterosexual individuals (Brown & Herman, 2015). Specifically, of the studies examined, between 25% - 40% of lesbians and between 25% - 33% of gay men reported experiencing lifetime intimate partner violence in comparison to approximately 33% of women and 28% of men in the general population lifetime (Brown & Herman, 2015).

Contemporary research using the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) began asking about respondents' sexual orientation in 2016 (Martin et al., 2023). Since documentation of such, Flores et al., (2020) verified that rates of violent victimization perpetrated by intimate partners reported in the 2017 NCVS, the first national examination of victimization of sexual minorities, was substantially higher among sexual minorities. Violent victimization that was perpetrated by a well-known offender, specifically by an intimate partner, was 16.2 per 1000 persons among sexual minorities vs. 2.4 per 1000 persons for non-sexual minorities (Flores et al., 2020). Although research provides persuasive evidence that sexual minorities are indeed at a high risk of experiencing domestic violence/intimate partner violence, it is estimated that less than half of these incidents are even reported to police, therefore it can be assumed that these

rates are actually considerably higher than what is officially reported (Kuehnle & Sullivan, 2003).

2.3 Peculiarity of Sexual Minority DV/IPV

Mistrust of Police

Some scholars have indeed identified similarities in the nature of same-sex and opposite sex domestic violence/intimate partner violence (Pattavina et al., 2007; Renzetti,1992), however there are a number of reasons why domestic violence/intimate partner violence differentially impacts sexual minority couples (Brown, 2008, Rollè, et al., 2018). Granted, the underreporting of domestic violence/ intimate partner violence is often a concern for all, sexual minorities often grapple with additional barriers when reporting as opposed to their heterosexual counterparts (Addington, 2020; Kimmes et al., 2019). It has been consistent in research that sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence victims are reluctant to call the police (Decker et al., 2018). Specifically, due to the traditionally turbulent relationship with law enforcement, sexual minorities have a mistrust of police in that they fear that law enforcement will discount their victimization as a mutual conflict and have an insensitive response (Addington, 2020; Tesch et al., 2010). Likewise, research has established that sexual minorities perceive the police to not be helpful and an overall negative experience when reporting their victimization (Brown & Herman, 2015; Mallory et al., 2015). A national study of gay and bisexual intimate partner violence victim's opinions on the effectiveness of police response in their case found that 59% viewed police as less helpful towards them rather than heterosexual women victims (Stephenson et al., 2013). This notion is supported by research as officers do consider intimate partner violence more severe when involving a heterosexual couple (Russell & Sturgeon, 2018). Further, officers

reported female heterosexual victims suffer from the most severe injuries (Russell & Sturgeon, 2018).

Fear of Discrimination

These misunderstandings, either reflective of personal beliefs of homophobia or that women are perceived to be more vulnerable in these incidents, make it challenging to identify violence involving sexual minority couples (Arnott, 2000; Russell & Sturgeon, 2018; Trujillo & Ross, 2008). Historically, victims report experiencing discrimination and harassment by law enforcement via profiling, homophobic and transphobic attitudes (Berrill, 1990; Berrill & Herek, 1990; Mallory et al., 2015; Martin et al., 2023 Ritchie & Jones-Brown, 2017). The fear of discrimination associated with being a sexual minority may be a driving force and challenge for victims of sexual minority intimate partner violence to seek assistance from any service provider and arguably to report incidents to law enforcement (Brown, 2008).

Societal Barriers

Legally sexual minority couples are granted the same marriage protection, although socially it is seemingly not as accepting. Reporting their dispute and victimization would be an "outness" stressor. That is, contacting law enforcement would force them to "out" their sexuality to law enforcement officials but also to their family and friends (Kimmes et al., 2019). Some victims refer to the possibility of their sexuality being revealed in tandem with their victimization of intimate partner violence as "re-victimization" (Tesch et al., 2010).

Especially in a society accepting of male aggression the expectation for men to defend themselves, intimate partner violence among gay or bisexual men may be dismissed as simply an expression of Connell and Messerschmidt's (2005) ideology of hegemonic masculinity that men assert power to achieve status, making a victim less likely to seek assistance (Duke & Davidson,

2009; Rollè, et al., 2018). Men are socially taught to defend themselves in violent situations and being observed as a victim could be construed as a sign of weakness and that they are unable to uphold their masculinity (Tesch et al., 2010). Further, an abuser may challenge their victim's status as a "real" man in society and manipulate their partner so that no one will believe that they were abused by a man (Duke & Davidson, 2009). In the same sense, women are socially viewed as perpetrators of violence and rather are seen as passive in romantic relationships.

A victim of sexual minority intimate partner violence may also experience what scholars refer to as internalized oppression, distress and low self-esteem as a result of societal oppression, as leverage to assert control (Duke & Davidson, 2009). That is, the victim begins to assume the harmful societal image of them and believe that they are deserving of the abuse (Duke & Davidson, 2009). Additionally, sexual minority individuals are also at greater risk due to minority stress from homophobic discrimination to such extent that their perpetrator can coax them to not report or seek assistance because it would reveal their sexuality; exacerbating the struggle of being a victim (Kimmes et al., 2019; Messinger, 2011).

2.4 Police Response to Sexual Minority DV/IPV

Prior to the 1980's domestic violence was viewed as a private matter and unsuitable for law enforcement attention (Gover et al., 2011). However, more recently domestic violence/intimate partner violence has been acknowledged as a serious area of concern and discussion for law enforcement agencies and victim services (Pattavina et al., 2007). If contacted, police are the first responders to domestic violence/intimate partner violence incidents and judgements, decisions and assessments of risk at the scene likely play a role on the likelihood of further violence (Blaney, 2010; Trujillo & Ross, 2008). In response, many agencies nationwide have responded with a widespread change in policy and enhanced training standards

and resources in the study of the nature of violence (Pattavina et al., 2007; Russell & Sturgeon, 2018; Saunders et al., 2016).

Specialized DV/IPV Units

Numerous strategies have been developed with the goal of enhancing police response to domestic violence/ intimate partner abuse specifically by the emergence of specialized police domestic violence units (Blaney, 2010). Specialized domestic violence policing units began as early as the 1990's when the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) in 1994 communicated to law enforcement agencies that domestic and intimate partner violence was a crisis in need of attentiveness and thus provided grant funding to be used in the response to such violence (Exum et al., 2014; Jennings et al., 2021). VAWA funding largely contributed to the enactment of specialized domestic and intimate partner violence units and specialized training for officers (Jennings et al., 2021). These units can provide an array of specialized professionals ranging from trained officers and investigators to respond to the case and emphasis on a coordinated community response assuring victim legal assistance and counseling (Exum et al., 2014; Regoeczi & Hubbard, 2018). Law enforcement agencies acted promptly, and within ten years, a national survey in 2005, of 14,000 agencies revealed that 11% of departments had a specialized domestic violence unit with 56% of those agencies with 100 or more officers reported having a unit (Townsend et al., 2005). In terms of general domestic violence training, 74% of agencies required all patrol officers to receive domestic violence training, with 24% only a part of recruit training, 11% a part of in-service training and 63% to both recruit and in-service training (Townsend et al., 2005). Of those agencies with an officer requirement of domestic violence training, 65% included topics of primary aggressor determination, 68% including state domestic violence laws, and 51% covering social cultural differences (Townsend et al., 2005).

In 2013 the U.S Department of Justice concluded that 92% of sheriff's offices and 89% of local police departments had a domestic violence specialized unit, dedicated personnel, policies or training (Reaves, 2017). Specifically, 11% local police departments reported having a specialized unit with full time personnel, 14% reported having dedicated personnel and 58% addressed the issue with policies and training (Reaves, 2017). Seventeen percent (17%) of sheriff's offices reported having a specialized unit with full time personnel 18% reported having dedicated personnel and 52% addressed the issue with policies and training (Reaves, 2017). A more recent examination revealed that 69% of local police departments had personnel assigned to domestic violence specialized units, with the majority being larger agencies (Goodison, 2022).

The development of specialized domestic violence courts has also been a judiciary response to increased domestic violence related cases (Gover et al., 2007). Domestic violence courts have assumed the responsibility of responding to all domestic violence cases in one court and emphasized collaboration among all parties to ideally address both the needs of the victims and defendants alike. Theoretically, this approach would result in a better grasp and consensus on the motivations of such cases (Gover et al., 2007). Interviews with 50 victims and 50 defendants who were attending a specialized criminal domestic violence court in Lexington County, South Carolina reported that the existence of this specialized court indeed positively impacted all parties involved (Gover et al., 2007).

Failure of Inclusiveness

In spite of the federal funding granted to assist in appropriate response and the growing concern of domestic violence/intimate partner violence, the goal of such specialized units and training has largely centered on heterosexual couples and failed to be inclusive of sexual minority victims. Far less attention and emphasis has been devoted to educating officers to

respond to domestic violence/intimate partner violence incidents involving sexual minority groups and ensuring the legal protections of these victims (Addington, 2020).

In contrast, some research has suggested that the response to domestic violence/intimate partner violence is uniform thus, invalidating the need for specialized training for sexual minorities. In fact, Gover et al. (2011) reported that the majority of officers (77%) in their sample of 307 officers from a large urban police department reported that same-sex and opposite-sex domestic violence happened for the same reasons and 79% agreed that law enforcement policy and laws should ensure protection for homosexual partners. However, it is known that officer's struggle to discern the victim's actions (Gover et al., 2011), and arguably in a same-sex dispute, the struggle is even more difficult. This can result in an inaccurate response to domestic violence incidents (Gover et al., 2011; Toon & Hart, 2005).

2.5 Limited Research

Despite policy changes over the last three decades and strides taken by federal legislation more recently seeking to advance attention to sexual minority domestic and intimate partner violence, empirical research investigating law enforcement training and police perceptions involving same-sex domestic violence/intimate partner violence disputes is scarce (Franklin et al., 2019; Russell & Sturgeon, 2019). Much research and training standards dedicated to law enforcement response to domestic violence and intimate partner violence has consisted of heterosexual couples and lack guidance on sexual minority incidents (Hamel & Russell, 2013; Pattavina et al., 2007). Prior to 2013, only 3% of published studies on domestic violence/intimate partner violence were inclusive to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender individuals (Edwards et al., 2015). In regard to police perception of these such incidents, research examining the police perception of domestic violence in general is scarce (Gover et al., 2011), much less perceptions

of cases involving sexual minority couples. This gap in research is particularly concerning given that the sexual minority population experience higher rates of domestic violence and risk factors compared to heterosexual individuals (Martin et al., 2023). Of those that have briefed the topic, they have largely consisted of examining officer homophobic beliefs (Bernstein & Kostelac, 2002; Franklin et al., 2019; Lyons et al., 2005; Younglove et al., 2002), the "heteronormative lens" of intimate partner violence (Baker et al., 2013; Franklin et al., 2019; Peterman & Dixon, 2002), and mandatory arrests outcomes between same sex and opposite sex couples (Durfee & Goodmark, 2020, Pattavina et al., 2007).

Limited studies addressed the topic on the analysis of training protocols pertaining to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence disputes and nonetheless, all have shortcomings in examining the issue. In 2010, Tesch et al., accessed the knowledge, experience and training of police officers relating to same-sex domestic violence by surveying 91 active police officers in 5 different police departments in the suburban Chicago areas. Respondents were asked about their experience with encounters of same-sex domestic violence, departmental training on same-sex domestic violence, and respondent's opinions on their department's handling of same-sex domestic violence cases. Findings revealed that 90% of officers reported that they had responded to a sexual minority domestic violence case during their career in law enforcement, 81% of officers reported that their agency did not have an established procedure specifically dedicated to sexual minority domestic violence while 17% reported that they were unsure if their department had training available. Further, 25% reported that they did receive training that would be applicable to the sexual minority population and 29% reported that they were provided with training specific to sexual minority domestic violence (Tesch et al., 2010). Attitudinal measures asking about officers' opinions on their agency's handling of sexual

minority domestic violence revealed that 82% believed their agency was doing an adequate job, 17% shared they believed their agency's approach was inadequate, and 32% stated that their agency could be doing more (Tesch et al., 2010). These authors emphasized how future studies should draw from a more diverse socio demographic area (broader range of locations, urban and rural) and how demographic characteristics impact response to better understand how police departments respond to same-sex domestic violence (Tesch et al., 2010). As Tesch et al., (2010) was groundbreaking in the study of law enforcement approach to same-sex domestic violence, the study lacked generalizability and was limited methodologically.

Additional research used other metrics to determine police training effectiveness on domestic violence cases. Hamel and Russell (2013) analyzed the content of 16 training manuals from police departments representing 23 states with dominant aggressor laws to determine if law enforcement training and response was acting on empirical research. Eight states included a power and control wheel representative of heterosexual domestic violence, only 1 state included a gender-neutral power and control wheel, there was no discovery of a power and control wheel for heterosexual female abusers, lesbians, gays, or transsexuals. It was discovered that only one of the manuals had guidance specific to sexual minorities and concluded that law enforcement practices lack information relative to domestic violence by female abusers, male victims, or same sex couples (Hamel & Russell, 2013).

More recent research assessed how officers perceive same-sex and opposite-sex intimate partner violence incidents and how their experience as well as frequency and recency of required intimate partner violence training influences their evaluation (Russell and Sturgeon, 2019). The authors surveyed 309 police officers representing 27 states using a hypothetical scenario of IPV and fairness first developed by Finn and Stalans (1997). Demographic variables including officer

age, race, education, rank, years of experience responding to domestic violence, and if their department had required training on domestic violence (as well as how frequent said training was). In terms of officer characteristics, years of experience had a correlation with only a few variables: providing informal advice, mediation, and asking one partner to leave the premises (Russell and Sturgeon, 2019). This contributes to the dissensus on how officer demographic characteristics influence their response to domestic violence calls for service. Earlier studies stated that an officers' age, race, rank, years of service served as no indicator of the likelihood of arrest (Saunders, 1995). Logan et al., (2006) determined that less experienced officers were more likely to respond more positively than more experienced officers. Although Russell and Sturgeon (2019) addresses the topic of agency training protocols, their findings reveal that recency and frequency of training had no effect on an officer's evaluation of incidents and it was not specific to domestic violence training for sexual minority populations. In fact, research affirmed that additional examination *is* needed on the type of training that the officers receive, distinctively stating that LGBT-inclusive training possibly varies from traditional training standards (Russell & Sturgeon, 2019).

Addington (2020) recognized the unexplored area of concern and examined the police response to intimate partner violence using arrest data from the 2016 National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) given the timely legalization of same-sex marriage. At the time 37% of law enforcement agencies reported to NIBRS, resulting in a total of 297,400 cases of intimate partner violence cases (Addington, 2020). Findings reveal similar arrest patterns across all dyads (male victim/female offender, female victim/male offender, male victim/male offender, female victim/female offender). However, for those arrests involving male victims, especially highest involving an opposite sex couple, male victim/female offender (Addington, 2020). When using

arrests as a signal of perceived seriousness of the incident, intimate partner violence cases involving female same-sex couples are viewed as less serious (Addington, 2020).

In sum, research focusing on domestic violence/intimate partner violence training protocols specific to sexual minority populations is lacking with only two studies examining training and perceptual attitudes of officers toward domestic violence/intimate partner violence officers after Obergefell v Hodges (2015). Additionally, Hamel and Russell (2013) is the only study that is fully inclusive to all sexual minorities. That is, the majority of the literature only examines same-sex relationships, excluding transgender individuals.

2.6 An Optimistic Outlook

Training Can Play a Role

The foregoing discussion has emphasized that officers have biased and incorrect assumptions toward domestic violence/intimate partner violence incidents involving sexual minority individuals, however researchers have affirmed police attitudes are susceptible to change and that specialized training can dispel these biases and misunderstandings (Garner, 2005; Toon & Hart, 2005). Trujillo and Ross (2008) advised that there are three distinguishing factors that influence an officer's response to a domestic violence dispute. Of importance in this study, one of the three include officer beliefs and assumptions about domestic violence/intimate partner violence. Gover et al., (2011) echoed this sentiment in that attitudes and beliefs toward such are going to impact an officer’s decisions and response.

Other Strides in Law Enforcement Policy

Although changes in DV/IPV training toward sexual minorities are seemingly absent in national policy, law enforcement agencies have responded accordingly to other pressing issues making their communities vulnerable such as mental health and use-of-force. The National

Conference of State Legislatures provides a public database of law enforcement legislation in all 50 states and the District of Columbia (last updated December 2022). The legislation in this database include policing bills and executive orders on topics of data, training, technology, executive and legislative orders, certifications, etc., (National Conference of State Legislatures, n.d.). A keyword search of sexual minority, LGBT, transgender, same sex, domestic violence and intimate partner violence was conducted for years 2020-2022 (only these years are provided by NCSL) and returned 0 results. Although several results were returned for searches for domestic violence related to training and curriculum – 2021 AR H 1721, NY A 10577, UT H 301, these results did not pertain to, or were inclusive of, sexual minorities (National Conference of State Legislatures, n.d.).

Ritchie and Jones-Brown (2017) examined policies at 36 police departments across the United States to determine if (and which) departments had adopted policies pertaining to 6 topics including interactions with LBGTQ individuals. It was revealed that 30% of departments had a policy outlining sexual orientation discrimination. Only 5% had training detailing how to accurately engage with LGBTQ suspects in custody such as, 14% prohibited searches to assign gender based on anatomy, 9% ensured safe placement in detainment, and only 2 spoke to access hormonal treatment while in custody (Ritchie & Jones-Brown, 2017).

Research has established that changes in domestic violence/ intimate partner violence policy have taken place only after sustained effort over a significant period of time. It could be argued that not enough time has passed to adapt to the *Obergefell v. Hodges* ruling, however, law enforcement agencies have implemented other policy changes addressing other legislative issues. For example, legislation has taken strides in addressing the mental health crisis. In 2015, California State Bill 29 and Pennsylvania HB 221 as well as Oklahoma SB 1202 in 2016

required its officers to be trained to ensure that they are able to successfully respond to calls of service and de-escalate situations individuals with a mental or intellectual illness/disability (National Conference of State Legislatures, n.d.). Likewise in 2015, Illinois HB 4112 required the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board to design a curriculum on police response to mental health crises (National Conference of State Legislatures, n.d.).

Furthermore, use-of-force standards and legislation have been implemented in response to the death of Michael Brown in 2014, President Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, and succeeding the murder of George Floyd in 2020, the National Conference of State Legislatures (n.d.) reported that at least 22 states enacted more than 40 laws addressing use of force by law enforcement officers between 2014 and April of 2020. These laws included a combination of data collection requirements, new training and standards, and creation of investigation systems (National Conference of State Legislatures, n.d.). Specifically, Connecticut HB 7103 (2015) demands that their police training programs include instruction on use-of-force, cultural sensitivities and bias-free tactics (National Conference of State Legislatures, n.d.). Similarly, Utah HB 355 (2016) granted authorization for a training center and available resources for their officers regarding legal use-of force (National Conference of State Legislatures, n.d.).

Admittedly, use of force issues were far more mortal than training on sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence in that law enforcement had to respond accordingly to unjustful deaths. However, their return of heightened training protocols sets an optimistic outlook that agencies do acknowledge the pressing issues making their communities vulnerable.

2.7 Current Study

Research into police perception of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence and the adoption of training protocols toward such violence is understudied, outdated,

and not inclusive of the change in legal landscape for same-sex unions. For these reasons, this exploratory project focuses on law enforcement attitudes toward sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence and whether law enforcement agencies have taken steps to evaluate their response in efforts to appropriately protect and serve the needs of these individuals.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

3.1 Research Objectives

This thesis aims to better understand the extent of training standards and attitudes of law enforcement leaders toward sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence. Four research questions will be addressed, all of which have been neglected in prior studies about police evaluation and perceptions of of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence.

As it is the goal of this study to update the literature on law enforcement's attitudes toward and training on sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence, it also aims to address limitations of previous works. In doing so, the study will attempt to bridge the gap in several areas. First, additional characteristics of the respondent such as, sexual orientation will be captured (noted by Tesch et al., 2010) as well as a further examination of the nature of the training (noted by Russell & Sturgeon, 2019). Second, to provide as much generalization and understanding as possible, the study will include a nationwide sample from varying range of locations and in both rural and urban areas as literature devoted to policing intimate partner violence occurring in rural areas and small towns is devoted (Schafer & Giblin, 2010; see Franklin et al., 2019). Typically, agencies in rural agencies have less demographic diverse personnel and have smaller budget amounts which often results in lower standard of training (Schafer & Giblin, 2010). Third, as it has never been done before on the topic, the study will be inclusive to all sexual minority couples, as previous works on the topic have limited research to same-sex, including transgender and bisexual individuals (see Addington, 2020). Understanding police response to all sexual minorities is especially crucial as transgender and bisexual

individuals are frequently missing in national records of crime and victimization (Addington, 2020).

The research questions are as follows:

1. To what extent have law enforcement agencies implemented training on sexual minority domestic violence /intimate partner violence in the recent past (since *Obergefell v. Hodges* 2015)?
2. To what extent do individuals within law enforcement agencies perceive the status (training or no training) in terms of aspects of the occupation that relate to effectiveness, beneficence, adequacy, and preparedness?
3. To what extent does the existence of sexual minority domestic violence /intimate partner violence training and various demographic variables influence predict perceptions and knowledge among individuals within law enforcement agencies toward such incidents?
4. What are the challenges of current sexual minority domestic violence /intimate partner violence training and what barriers hinder an agency's absence of training on the topic?

3.2 Data

To address the research questions, data were collected by disseminating an online survey via Qualtrics to Chief Executive (or designee) roles, older than the age of 18, and employed within municipal, county sheriffs, or tribal police agencies in the United States. Using the 2020 National Directory of Law Enforcement Administrators (NDLEA) database, email addresses of chief executives from the above agencies were obtained. A total of 12,108 surveys were

disseminated (and after 1,712 invalid emails and 51 were duplicate emails), a total of 1,188 surveys were returned, resulting in a response rate of 9.81%.

3.3 Survey Instrument

An original survey was created to access the research questions for this project. Prior to survey creation, research was examined to gain an understanding of the development of policy and training within law enforcement agencies and the issues related to domestic violence/ intimate partner violence within the sexual minority population. Consultations were had with applied experts in the law enforcement field who have first-hand knowledge of the issues as well as a member of the sexual minority population, in an effort to examine the construct and face validity. A copy of the survey items was shared with these individuals, feedback was considered and adjustments were made accordingly prior to deploying the survey. It was the goal to ensure that the terminology used were understandable by the respondents and that the survey items were perceived as they were intended to allow for correct and accurate conclusions to be drawn. Additionally, a review of the questionnaire before dissemination verified that the survey items were considerate and not overly burdensome to the respondents. In further efforts to maximize validity, definitions of domestic violence/intimate partner violence, LGBTQIA+, and heterosexual were provided.

Despite the possibility of a lower response rate of online surveys on policing related topics, than other methods of research, this study does incorporate recommendations put forth as limitations by Gover et al., (2011), by using a larger sample of officers resulting in more representative and generalizable findings. To minimize the concern of a considerably low response rate, strategies put forth by Dillman et al., (2014) on internet survey design and use will be utilized. Specifically, an option to designate another employee within the agency that is best

suited to complete the survey was offered. Additionally, survey definitions and instructions for each section were provided with the response path rather than at the beginning of the questionnaire. The survey was designed to be mindful of the demands of the policing profession and was anticipated to be completed in approximately 10 minutes.

Before recruitment began, the University of North Carolina at Charlotte Institutional Review Board granted ethical permission for the survey (IRB-23-0426). Participants were initially contacted via email, briefed on the objectives of the study, informed of their rights as a participant in the study, and invited to participate in the survey (link to Qualtrics survey provided). The survey instrument was designed and directed for Chief Executive's (or their designee) within municipal, sheriff, and tribal police agencies that respond to domestic violence/intimate partner violence. An initial screening question was used to determine eligibility to participate, including the participant was 18 years of age or older and the participant's position of a chief executive (or designee) within a municipal, sheriff, and tribal police agency in the United States.

The electronic survey was delivered via email by Qualtrics on February 20, 2023. It was live for 28 days and participants that have not responded after 7, 14, and 21 days were sent a reminder of their invitation to participate. In addition, for tribal agencies, an additional reminder was sent 16 days after the initial invitation as a means to increase their participation (see Appendix A for all recruitment scripts). Although the American Indian (AI) and Alaska Native (AN) populations that comprise the Indigenous Tribal reservations equate to a small proportion (.09) of the U.S. population, among other ethnic groups, their rates of domestic violence are *higher* (Hartman, 2021; Jones et al., 2020; U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). Four in every ten AI and AN women surveyed in the National Intimate Partner Sexual Violence Survey in 2010 have been

a victim of violence by an intimate partner during their lifetime (Basile et al., 2011; Hartman, 2021). Law enforcement and other authorities dedicated to domestic violence concerns report that their lack of accessible services and training limit them for providing culturally appropriate support that AI and AN victims need, likely deterring these victims from reporting their victimization (Hartman, 2021; Wahab & Olson, 2004).

The survey was designed specifically for individuals within law enforcement agencies who have duties responding to domestic violence/intimate partner violence. The survey captured demographic information about the agency and respondent as well questions that measures respondent knowledge and attitudes towards domestic violence/intimate partner violence involving sexual minorities. Further, questions about the existence and extent of training toward sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence and perception of the status of training either in aid or hindrance of performing their job were asked. Respondents were also prompted to discuss the challenges of existing training and the barriers in implementing training. The survey instrument utilized skip logic in that participants received different follow-up questions based on their response to the initial question about sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence training (see Appendix B for survey items).

3.4 Measures

The survey included demographic items, questions about agency training on sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence and attitudinal questions to measure several criteria. Items were selected based on items previously researched in literature to be influential and those that have been neglected in research. Two newly constructed scales were used to measure general domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge and sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge. Each are described below.

Agency Demographics. A series of demographic questions were asked to capture information about the agency. Agency type was coded as (1) Municipal Police Department, (2) County Sheriff Office, (3) tribal police department, and (4) other. Agency state was coded as (1) Alabama – (51) Wyoming and the U.S. region was coded using U.S. Census classifications derived from the agency state variable (1=northeast, 2=midwest, 3=south, 4=west). The size of the department was measured using two items and categories put forth by the Bureau of Justice Statistics: jurisdiction population (*1= 0-2,499 2,500-9,999 3=10,000-24,999 4=10,000-24,999 5=50,000-99,999 6=100,000-249,999 7=100,000-249,999 8=500,000-999,999 9=1,000,000 or more*) and the number of full-time sworn officers (*1= 1-4 2= 5-9 3= 10-24 4=25-49 5=50-99 6=100-249 7=250-499 8=500-999 9=1,000 or more*).

Respondent Demographics. A series of questions were asked to capture the demographics of the respondent. Gender was coded as (1) male, (2) female, (3) non-binary, (4) other. Identifying as a sexual minority was measured as (0) no, (1) yes, and (77) not sure. Race/ethnicity was measured according to the categories: American Indian or Alaska Native (1), Asian (2), Black or African American (3), Hispanic or Latino (4), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (5), White (6), or Other (7). Rank of was coded as (1) Chief, (2) Sheriff, (3) Deputy Chief, (4) Captain, (5) Major, (6) Commander, (7) Lieutenant, (8) Sergeant, (9) Corporal, (10) Detective, (11) Officer, (12) Deputy, (13) Other. The number of years of experience at the current agency and in totality were both measured by the following categories: (0) Less than 12 months, (1) 1 year, (2) 2 years, (3) 3 years – (60) 60 years, and (61) more than 60 years.

Agency Sexual Minority DV/IPV Training. Whether the agency provides training to officers about responding to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence at the time of the study was asked to the respondent as *0=no, 1=yes, 77= Not sure*. For the analysis,

agency training was recoded as a dichotomous variable as (0) no and yes (1); not sure was recoded as missing.

Characteristics of Agency Sexual Minority DV/IPV Training. If the respondent answered "yes," a series of follow-up questions are asked to obtain further information about the extent and characteristics of the training. Respondents were asked if they had participated in the training (0 = no, 1 = yes). The year the training was first occurred was an open-ended question and was coded by each year provided by the respondent and then further by pre- *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015 or earlier) or post- *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2016 or after). The motive for implementation and hours of completion were open-ended questions and were coded according to the responses provided by the respondents. Respondents were asked about the requirement, process, location and trainer of their agency training. All items were measured according to categories with an "other" option and were recoded to include responses provided by the respondent.

Perception of Sexual Minority DV/IPV. Eleven attitudinal questions were asked to access the perception of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence of the respondent. Three attitudinal questions were asked to access the respondent's/agency opinion of their response to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence. The questions were measured on a six-point Likert scale *(1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=somewhat agree, 5=agree, 6=strongly agree).* Some items were reverse coded so that a higher score indicated a higher awareness of and high comfort level (i.e., no struggles) responding to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence. There is not a uniform assessment of police perception of such incidents therefore, it was the goal of the thesis to develop original items were developed from research as well as adopted from Gover et al.,

2011. Sample questions include the following: “LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs at a higher rate than in heterosexual relationships,” “LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims do not report their victimization to police in fear that it would reveal their sexuality, “It is necessary to incorporate gender-neutral language in DV/IPV written policies,” “My agency encounters struggles when identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.”

Perception of the Status of Sexual Minority DV/IPV Training. Likert scale questions measured how the status of training (training or no training) is perceived by the respondent in terms of aspects of the occupation. Respondents that reported that their agency does provide training on such as are asked to indicate if they believe the training is effective, beneficial, adequate and if it makes them or less prepared to identify and respond to LGBTQIA DV/IPV *(1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=somewhat agree, 5=agree, 6=strongly agree).* For those that reported that their agency does not provide training on sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence are asked to indicate potentially how effective, beneficial, and how more or less prepared training on identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV would make them *(1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat disagree, 4=somewhat agree, 5=agree, 6=strongly agree).*

General DV/IPV Knowledge Scale. The original scale included six Likert-style perceptual items, each anchored with Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (6), to measure respondents' domestic violence/intimate partner knowledge. Original items were developed from research as well as items adopted from Gover et al., 2011. Some items were reverse coded, consistent with literature, so that a higher score indicated a higher knowledge of domestic violence/intimate partner violence. The items, summarized in Table 1 appear to have good face validity and a moderate level of reliability (alpha = .572).

Sexual Minority DV/IPV Knowledge Scale. The original scale included eight Likert-style perceptual items, each anchored with Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (6), to measure respondents' sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner knowledge. Original items were developed from research as well as items adopted from Gover et al., 2011. Some items were reverse coded, consistent with literature, so that a higher score indicated a higher knowledge of domestic violence/intimate partner violence specifically related to sexual minorities. The items, summarized in Table 1 appear to have good face validity and a moderate level of reliability (alpha = 601).

Challenges and Barriers of Sexual Minority DV/IPV Training. Open-ended questions were asked in regard to potential challenges that are associated within agencies that do provide training and the potential barriers that limit agencies that do not provide training. Thematic coding was used to examine responses provided by respondents.

Table 1. DV/IPV Knowledge Scale

Scale Items	Mean (1=Strongly Disagree, 6=Strongly Agree)
Most DV/IPV incidents stem from abusers' need for power and control over victims.	4.73
DV/IPV is best handled as a private matter, rather than by the police. [+]	5.33
A mandatory arrest policy is the best approach to DV/IPV.	4.47
DV/IPV calls take too much of officer's time and effort without reducing future reoffending. [+]	4.64
Many DV/IPV victims could easily leave their relationships, but don't. [+]	4.30
Convicted DV/IPV perpetrators should be denied the right to own a weapon.	4.79
Minimum possible score:	6
Maximum possible score:	36
Scale range:	11-36
Scale mean:	28.27
Scale standard deviation:	3.94
Scale median:	29
Alpha:	.572

Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority.
[+] Reverse coded.

Table 2. SM DV/IPV Knowledge Scale

Scale Items	Mean (1=Strongly Disagree, 6=Strongly Agree)
LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs for the same reasons it does in heterosexual relationships. +	2.16
LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs at a higher rate than in heterosexual relationships.	2.84
Heterosexual DV/IPV victims are more likely to report their victimization to police than LGBTQIA couples. +	3.34
LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims perceive police to be helpful when they need assistance.	3.33
Male on male victimization is more serious than female to female victimization in DV/IPV cases.	2.21
LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims do not report their victimization to police in fear that it would reveal their sexuality.	3.61
Responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV is more difficult to respond to than heterosexual couples.	2.58
Identifying the primary aggressor at a DV/IPV call is more difficult with LGBTQIA couples than with heterosexual couples.	2.27
Minimum possible score:	8
Maximum possible score:	48
Scale range:	8-34
Scale mean:	22.35
Scale standard deviation:	4.21
Scale median:	22
Alpha:	.601

Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority.
Note: 4 items were excluded due to lack of validity.
+ Reverse coded.

3.5 Analytic Plan

The statistical analysis was completed in SPSS and in multiple stages to answer each of the research questions. In the first stage, univariate statistics are presented to explain the extent and characteristics of law enforcement training standards on sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence. The next stage examined responses to attitudinal questions

toward sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence incidents. Results were assessed using independent t-tests comparing the views of those respondents that reported agency training vs. those that reported no agency training in regards to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence. Further, univariate statistics are presented on how the status of training (training or no training) in terms of their job duties (e.g., effectiveness, beneficence, adequacy, and preparedness). The next stage is an exploration of the two scales (DV/IPV knowledge, and SM DV/IPV knowledge) using a multivariate regression analysis. While the primary dependent outcome of interest is domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge specific to sexual minorities, a scale measuring domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge in general was also created and used in a regression model first as an index. Based upon previous research, predictor variables included respondent gender, race, rank, total years of service, as well as agency size based on the number of full-time sworn officers, whether the agency has a specialized DV/IPV unit, and DV/IPV written policy directives. Additional variables included monthly DV/IPV calls for service involving a sexual minority couple (as a measure of interactions with the population), and informal and formal discussions about sexual minority concerns (as a measure of agency awareness of concerns among the population), were included in the sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge regression. To access the qualitatively measured research question, thematic coding was used to

reveal emergent themes and patterns among responses of challenges and barriers of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence training.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Sample Characteristics

Responding agencies were predominantly from municipal police departments (78.9%), followed by county sheriff offices (18.6%), tribal police agencies (1.0%), and other (1.5%) (e.g., campus police; township; city sheriff; public safety). Forty-nine U.S. states and the District of Columbia were represented with the majority of agencies from the Midwest (38.0%), 31.7% from the south, 18.6% from the northeast, and the least participants (11.7%) reported being from the west. The sample predominantly consisted of small-medium sized agencies as 86.6% of agencies served a population less than 50,000 residents and 91.9% reported to have less than 100 full-time sworn officers. Most agencies (79.3%) reported they did not have a specialized domestic violence/intimate partner violence unit or personnel, 15.7% reported to have dedicated personnel but no specialized unit, and 5.0% reported the existence of specialized unit and dedicated personnel. Eight percent of agencies said to have written policy directives on domestic violence/intimate partner violence and 92% said they did not. Agency demographics are available in Table 3.

Males made up 91.1% of the sample, whereas 7.8% were female and 0.6% responded as "other." Overwhelmingly the sample largely consisted of those that do not identify as a sexual minority (97.7%) while only 2.0% reported to identify as a sexual minority and 0.3% reported "not sure." In terms of race/ethnic status, respondents were predominantly White (90.9%), followed by Hispanic/Latino (3.2%), Black/African American (2.7%), American Indian or Alaska Native (1.3%), Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (0.4%), Asian (0.2%), and Other (1.3%). In terms of rank, a large majority were Chief Executive Officers as 68.9% were chiefs and 13% were sheriffs, whereas 3.7% were sergeants, 3.3% were deputy chiefs, 3.1%

were lieutenants, and the remaining were captains, majors, commanders, detectives, officers, deputies, or "other." The respondents had an average year of service at their current agency of 17.56 (SD = 10.65) and an average total year of service of 28.01 (SD=9.07). Respondent demographics are available in Table 4. Sample sizes for each variable are also presented and any differences are due to non-response of the survey items.

Essentially, the sample demographics of this study are similar with national demographics of law enforcement agencies. The most recent report from the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 2018 stated that 67% of state and local law enforcement organizations were local police departments, 17% were sheriff's offices, and 15% were special jurisdictions including tribal police agencies (Gardner & Scott, 2022). Demographics among officers and chief executives in local police departments and sheriff's offices also follow a similar pattern of predominantly white males. In 2020, 86.5% of full-time sworn officers in local police departments were male whereas almost 13.5% were female (Goodison, 2022). It is estimated that local police chiefs nationwide comprise 3.6% of females and 96.4% male. Eighty seven percent of police chiefs in local police departments were white, compared to 5.5% black, 3.8% Hispanic, and 3.5% Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races. Similarly, among full-time sworn officers in local police forces, approximately 69% of white officers, nearly 11.6% were black, 14.2% hispanic, and 4.1% were of another race (Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races) (Goodison, 2022).

Similar trends are seen within local sheriffs' offices in 2020 as 85.6% of full-time sworn officers were male and 14.4% were female (Brooks, 2022). Sheriffs are documented to be 98.7% men and 1.3% women (Brooks, 2022). Roughly 71% of officers were white, 14% of full-time

sworn officers were Hispanic, 10% were black, and 3% were members of other races (Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races) (Brooks, 2022). Approximately 87% of sheriffs were white, 6% were Hispanic, 4% were black, and 3% were other races (Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaska Native, or two or more races) (Brooks, 2022).

Table 3. Agency Demographics

Item	%	n
Agency Type (N=1,1,53)		
Municipal police department	78.9%	910
County sheriff's office	18.6%	214
Tribal police agency	1.0%	12
Other	1.5%	7
Region (N=1,1,53)		
Northeast	18.6%	215
Midwest	38.0%	438
South	31.7%	365
West	11.7%	135
Agency Jurisdiction Population (N=1,147)		
0-2,499	25.7%	295
2,500-9,999	29.9%	343
10,000-24,5000	20.1%	230
25,000-49,999	10.9%	125
50,000-99,999	7.1%	81
100,000-249,999	4.6%	53
250,000-499,999	0.8%	9
500,000-999,999	0.3%	4
1,000,000 or more	0.6%	7
Agency Size (N=1,133)		
1-4	19.4%	220
5-9	18.8%	213
10-24	26.8%	304
25-49	17%	193
50-99	9.9%	112
100-249	5.1%	58
250-499	1.9%	22
500-999	0.5%	6
1,000 or more	0.4%	5
DV/IPV Specialized Unit/Personnel (N=1,106)		
No specialized unit or personnel	79.3%	877
Dedicated personnel but no specialized unit	15.7%	174
Specialized unit and dedicated personnel	5.0%	55
DV/IPV Written Policy Directives (N=1,110)		
Does not have written policy directives	8.0%	89
Has written policy directive	92.0%	1021

Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority

Table 4. Respondent Demographics

Item	%	*n*
Gender (N=1,125)		
Male	91.1%	1025
Female	8.3%	93
Other	0.6%	7
Sexual Orientation (N=902)		
Does not identify as LGBTQIA+	97.7%	881
Identifies as LGBTQIA+	2.0%	18
Not sure	0.3%	3
Race/Ethnicity (N=1,120)		
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.3%	15
Asian	0.2%	2
Black or African American	2.7%	30
Hispanic or Latino	3.2%	36
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.4%	4
White	90.9%	1018
Other	1.3%	15
Current Rank (N=1,121)		
Chief	68.9%	772
Sheriff	13%	146
Deputy Chief	3.3%	37
Captain	2.9%	32
Major	0.5%	6
Commander	0.7%	8
Lieutenant	3.1%	35
Sergeant	3.7%	41
Detective	0.7%	8
Officer	0.4%	5
Deputy	0.1%	1
Other	2.7%	30
Total Years of Service (N=1,121, $x\bar{x}$ = 28.01)		
Less than 28 total years of service	47.1%	528
28 or more total years of service	52.9%	593

Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority.

4.2 Agency Sexual Minority DV/IPV Training

Characteristics of the training

As indicated in Table 5, findings reveal that approximately half of the agencies (51%) reported that they provide officers training on identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV. Of those that provided the training, the majority of respondents (94.7%) said they had participated in this training. Police municipality respondents were found to implement training on the topic at a higher rate (85.5%) than compared to County sheriff's office (13.3%), Tribal police agencies (0.7%) and other (0.5%). Most of the agencies created training standards on the topic after Obergefell v. Hodges (71.2%) while 28.8% reported that they had training before the seminal case in 2015. While there were differing motives for implementation, of importance for this project, 10.1% reported that they created training on the topic to increase officer education, knowledge and/or awareness, 3.5% reported that they had an noticed an increase in LGBTQIA population and/or incidents, 2.8% sought out training standards to adhere to legislation/policy change, and 1.3% reported that significant nationwide trends encouraged them to provide training. Sixty-nine percent of agencies reported that they revised an existing standard to include training on LGBTQIA DV/IPV compared to 31% that revised an existing standard to include LGBTQIA DV/IPV training. Hours to complete the training ranged from less than 1 hour to 40 hours, with an average of 3.94 hours. The training is largely mandatory to officers (90.6%) and is predominantly offered as a part of continuous education requirements (82.3%). In terms of the location of the training, 48.9% said the training was conducted at the agency, 33.2% conducted the training at an outsourced/third party location, and the remainder reported to conduct the training at other locations such as online, at the academy or at varying locations. A large

proportion (58.8%) of the agencies said to use an outsourced/third party trainer, 22.4% used an agency trainer, and the remainder used trainers from the academy, online trainer, etc.

Table 5. Characteristics of Sexual Minority DV/IPV Agency Training

Item	%	*n*
Training (N=811)		
Agency provides training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	51%	414
Agency does *not* provides training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	49%	397
Participation (N=414)		
Respondent has participated	94.7%	392
Respondent has not participated	5.3%	22
Agency Type (N=414)		
Municipal police department	85.5%	354
County sheriff's office	13.3%	55
Tribal police agency	0.7%	3
Other	0.5%	2
Year Created (N=198)		
Pre-*Obergefell v. Hodges* (before or during 2015)	28.8%	57
Post- *Obergefell v. Hodges* (during or after 2016)	71.2%	41
Motive for Implementation (N=317)		
Officer Education/Knowledge/Awareness	10.1%	32
Accreditation Purposes	1.9%	6
Increase in LGBTQIA population and/or incidents	3.5%	11
Significant nationwide trend	1.3%	4
Adhere to legislation/policy change	2.8%	9
Already apart of training standards	22.4%	71
Nothing particular/unique	54.3%	172
Other	3.8%	12
Structure (N=316)		
Implemented training exclusively for LGBTQIA DV/IPV	31%	98
Revised an existing standard to include LGBTQIA DV/IPV training	69%	218
Hours to Complete (N=292, $\bar{x}$ = 3.94)		
Less than 1 hour	0.7%	2
1 hour	14%	41
2 hours	27.4%	80
3 hours	5.1%	15
4 hours	34.6%	101

5 hours	1.4%	4
6 hours	2.1%	6
8 hours	12.3%	36
12 hours	0.3%	1
16 hours	1.4%	4
40 hours	0.7%	2
Less than 4 hours	47.3%	138
4 or more hours	52.7%	154
Requirement (N=342)		
Mandated to officers	90.6%	310
Voluntary to officers	9.4%	32
Process (N=355)		
During academy training to new hires	5.9%	21
As apart of continuing education training	82.3%	242
During both academy and continuing education	7.9%	28
training	3.9%	14
Other		
Location (N=352)		
Conducted at an outsourced/ third-party entity	33.2%	117
Conducted in-house at the agency	48.9%	172
Conducted at the academy	1.7%	6
Conducted Online	6.5%	23
Varies across location	6.8%	24
Other	2.8%	10
Trainer Type (N=340)		
Conducted by an outsourced/third party trainer	58.8%	200
Conducted by an in-house agency trainer	22.4%	76
Conducted by an academy trainer	1.8%	6
Conducted by an online trainer	2.9%	10
Trainer varies	7.4%	25
Other	6.8%	23

Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority.

4.3 Perception of Sexual Minority DV/IPV

The survey included a series of six-point Likert-style items, each anchored with "Strongly disagree (value = 1) and "Strongly Agree" (value = 6), to address the research questions about law enforcement officer perceptions of sexual minority domestic violence

/intimate partner violence. Table 6 illustrates the results of the analysis of each of the attitudinal questions asked about sexual minority domestic violence /intimate partner violence. When asked if LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs for the same reasons (*x̄* = 2.16) and at a higher rate than in heterosexual relationships (*x̄* = 2.84), contrary to the abundance of literature that would agree with the statements, most respondents disagreed. Similarly, respondents disagreed that heterosexual DV/IPV victims are more likely to report their victimization to police than LGBTQIA couples (*x̄* = 3.34). However, on the other hand, the majority of respondents did disagree that LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims perceive police to be helpful when they need assistance (*x̄* = 3.33), aligning with extant research. Respondents largely disagreed that with the statement that male on male victimization is more serious than female to female victimization in DV/IPV cases (*x̄* = 2.21). In general, respondents disagreed that responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV is more difficult to respond to than heterosexual couples (*x̄* = 2.58) but agreed that law enforcement respond to LGBTQIA DV/IPV in the same manner as heterosexual couples (*x̄* = 2.21). Respondents disagreed that incorporating gender-neutral language in DV/IPV written policies was necessary (*x̄* = 3.56). When asked if identifying the primary aggressor at a DV/IPV call is more difficult with LGBTQIA couples than with heterosexual couples (*x̄* = 2.27) respondents largely disagreed. According to respondent responses, there was agreeance that DV/IPV laws should provide equal protections to LGBTQIA victims (*x̄* = 5.30) and that responding to DV/IPV calls for service involving a LGBTQIA couple makes them uncomfortable (*x̄* = 5.16). As most respondents disagreed that they feel comfortable using they/ them pronouns when interacting with transgender DV/IPV couples (*x̄* = 3.58), the majority also agreed that their agency encounters struggles when identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV (*x̄* = 4.71).

Impact of Training on Perceptions of Sexual Minority DV/IPV

Table 6 also presents results when responses are separated based on the status of their agency's training standards on the topic. Independent sample t-tests indicated that there are very few significant differences in officer attitudes toward sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence according to whether their agency has training standards on the topic. Generally speaking, respondents that reported that their agency provided officers with training on responding to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence had similar attitudes toward such incidents that did not report to have training. Significant differences in responses based on training on the topic vs. with no training were found in four of the 14 attitudinal items. Respondents who reported having training were significantly more likely than those who did not report to have training to agree with the statement, "It is necessary to incorporate gender-neutral language in DV/IPV written policies" (*x̄* = 3.38 for no training vs. *x̄* = 3.79 for training, t = -4.177, p < .001). In the same sense, those that reported having training were significantly more likely to agree that DV/IPV laws should provide equal protections to LGBTQIA victims (*x̄* = 5.21 for no training vs. *x̄* = 5.45 for training, t = -3.939, p < .001).

Although those that reported to have training on the topic were significantly more likely to support the sexual minority community on two items, they were significantly more likely to report that responding to such incidents involving a LGBTQIA couple made then uncomfortable than those that did not report to have training (*x̄* = 5.10 for no training vs. *x̄* = 5.29 for training, t = -2.932, p < .01). However, those that reported to have training were significantly more likely to agree that they felt comfortable using they/ them pronouns when interacting with transgender DV/IPV couples (*x̄* = 3.45 for no training vs. *x̄* = 3.75 for training, t = -2.953, p < .01).

Table 6. T-test for Perception of Sexual Minority DV/IPV and Training
(1=strongly disagree, 6=strongly agree)

Item	Mean (SD)	Trained Mean (SD)	Untrained Mean (SD)	t value (Significance)
LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs for the same reasons it does in heterosexual relationships. +	2.16 (.82)	2.13 (.82)	2.16 (.83)	.494 (.311)
LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs at a higher rate than in heterosexual relationships.	2.84 (.96)	2.83 (1.10)	2.83 (.94)	0.21 (.492)
Heterosexual DV/IPV victims are more likely to report their victimization to police than LGBTQIA couples.	3.34 (1.18)	3.33 (1.24)	3.36 (1.14)	.376 (.353)
LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims perceive police to be helpful when they need assistance. +	3.33 (1.08)	3.36 (1.12)	3.31 (1.04)	-.613 (.270)
LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims do not report their victimization to police in fear that it would reveal their sexuality.	3.61 (1.07)	3.62 (1.12)	3.64 (1.02)	.325 (.373)
Male on male victimization is more serious than female to female victimization in DV/IPV cases.	2.21 (.97)	2.16 (1.01)	2.24 (.93)	1.138 (.128)
Responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV is more difficult to respond to than heterosexual couples.	2.58 (1.07)	2.57 (1.01)	2.58 (1.06)	.155 (.438)
Law enforcement respond to LGBTQIA DV/IPV in the same manner as heterosexual couples.	4.81 (.94)	4.86 (.90)	4.77 (.94)	-1.305 (.096)
It is necessary to incorporate gender-neutral language in DV/IPV written policies.	3.56 (1.42)	3.79 (1.41)	3.38 (1.39)	-4.177* (<.001)
Identifying the primary aggressor at a DV/IPV call is more difficult with LGBTQIA couples than with heterosexual couples.	2.27 (.99)	2.20 (.99)	2.30 (.99)	1.382 (.084)
DV/IPV laws should provide equal protections to LGBTQIA victims.	5.30 (.91)	5.45 (.77)	5.21 (.95)	-3.939* (<.001)

Responding to DV/IPV calls for service involving a LGBTQIA couple makes me uncomfortable. [+]	5.16 (.93)	5.29 (.87)	5.10 (.91)	-2.932* (.002)
I feel comfortable using they/ them pronouns when interacting with transgender DV/IPV couples.	3.58 (1.43)	3.75 (1.43)	3.45 (1.42)	-2.953* (.002)
My agency encounters struggles when identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV. [+]	4.71 (.94)	4.77 (.92)	4.67 (.93)	-1.549 (.062)

Significance: * = $p < .05$
[+] Reverse coded.
Note: Chi-squared analysis was computed on each item to confirm significance.
Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority.
Note: Trained refers to those that reported that their agency provides training on LGBTQIA DV/IPV.
Note: Untrained refers to those that reported that their agency does not provide training on LGBTQIA DV/IPV.

4.4 Perception of the Status of Sexual Minority DV/IPV Training

Despite the limited significant differences in respondent attitudes toward sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence according to whether their agency has training standards on the topic, there is a general consensus among respondents that when the training occurs, the training is reported as successful. Table 7 shows that the majority of officers that reported to have training on the topic agreed that it was effective ($\overline{xx}$ = 4.77), adequate ($\overline{xx}$ = 4.74, beneficial ($\overline{xx}$ = 4.83), and better prepared ($\overline{xx}$ = 4.87) them for identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV. Of those that reported to not have training on the topic, the majority felt like training would be successful in responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV but only in terms of some aspects, beneficence ($\overline{xx}$ = 4.02) and preparedness ($\overline{xx}$ = 4.01). When asked if training on the topic would effective, most of the officers disagreed ($\overline{xx}$ = 3.93).

Table 7. Perception of the Status of Sexual Minority DV/IPV Training
(1=strongly disagree, 6=strongly agree)

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation
Trained		
The training is *effective* in preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	4.77	.66
The training is *adequate* in preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	4.71	.73
The training is *beneficial* in preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	4.83	.71
The training makes my agency *more prepared* for identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	4.87	.69
Untrained		
Training on preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV would be *effective.*	3.93	1.18
Training on preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV would be *beneficial.*	4.02	1.16
Training on identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV would *better prepare* my agency.	4.01	1.20

Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority.
Note: Trained refers to those that reported that their agency provides training on LGBTQIA DV/IPV.
Note: Untrained refers to those that reported that their agency does not provide training on LGBTQIA DV/IPV.

4.5 Predicting DV/IPV and Sexual Minority DV/IPV Knowledge

While the independent t-test analyses revealed minimal variation in the perception of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence based on the existence of training, regression analyses were conducted in efforts to reveal effects of other variables influencing respondent's perception/knowledge of such. The multivariate regression model aimed to first predict domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge and then domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge specific to sexual minorities. Table 8 presents the OLS results for predicting domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge when considering respondent gender, race, rank, total years of service, agency size, whether the agency

has a specialized DV/IPV unit, and DV/IPV written policy directives. The regression model explains 6.6% of the variance in the DV knowledge outcome (adjusted R squared = .066). Results indicate that if an agency had written policy directives on DV (b = 1.738; $p < .001$) was the most predictive measure of DV/IPV knowledge, followed by respondent gender (b = -1.133; $p = .013$), if an agency had a specialized DV unit with dedicated personnel (b = .861; $p < .001$), and agency size (b = .350; $p < .001$). Respondent race, rank and total years of service were not significant predictors of domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge.

Table 8. Ordinary Least Squares Regression Predicting DV/IPV Knowledge

Variable	*B*	S.E.	t value	Significance
Gender	-1.133	.457	-2.480	.013*
Race	.446	.412	1.081	.280
Rank	.084	.067	1.256	.290
Total Years of Service	-.026	.014	-1.822	.069
Agency Size (# of full-time sworn officers)	.350	.088	3.989	<.001*
DV/IPV Specialized Unit	.861	.248	3.477	<.001*
DV/IPV Written Policy Directives	1.738	.463	3.750	<.001*
Adjusted R Square	.066			
F	11.236			
Significance	<.001			

Significance: * = p < .05
Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.

Table 9 presents the OLS results for predicting domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge specifically sexual minority couples when considering respondent gender, race, rank, total years of service, agency size, whether the agency has a specialized DV/IPV unit, and written policy directives on DV/IPV, monthly DV/IPV calls for service involving a sexual minority couple, and informal and formal discussions about SM DV/IPV concerns. The

regression model explains 1.8% of the variance in the SM DV knowledge outcome (adjusted R squared = .017). We find that only total years of service, agency jurisdiction, and informal discussions about sexual minority concerns are significant predictions of SM DV/IPV knowledge. Results indicate that agency informal discussions about SM DV/IPV concerns (b = .685; *p = .026*) had the highest impact on predicting SM DV/IPV knowledge, followed by agency size (b = -.290; *p = .014*), and respondent total years of service (b = -.053; *p = .005*). Respondent gender, race, rank, if the agency had a DV/IPV specialized unit and written policy directives, monthly DV/IPV calls for service involving a sexual minority couple, and formal discussions about SM DV/IPV concerns were not significant predictors of domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge relating to sexual minorities.

Table 9. Ordinary Least Squares Regression Predicting SM DV/IPV Knowledge

Variable	*B*	S.E.	t value	Significance
Gender	-.540	.583	-9.27	.354
Race	.016	.512	.031	.975
Rank	.009	.082	.106	.916
Total Years of Service	-.053	.019	2.833	.005*
Agency Size (# of full-time sworn officers)	-.290	.188	-2.453	.014*
DV/IPV Specialized Unit	-.136	.311	-.438	.662
DV/IPV Written Policy Directives	-.854	.593	-1.442	.150
Monthly SM DV/IPV Calls for Service	.015	.054	.275	.783
Formal discussions about SM DV/IPV	-.166	.265	-.626	.531
Informal discussions about SM DV/IPV	.685	.307	2.227	.026*
Adjusted R Square	.018			
F	2.433			
Significance	<.001			

Significance: * = p < .05
Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.

4.6 Challenges and Barriers of Sexual Minority DV/IPV Training

Tables 10 and 11 illustrate the potential challenges that are associated within agencies that do provide training and the potential barriers that limit agencies to not provide training. Of those that reported to have sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence training and provide an associated challenge, the majority (23.85%) mentioned access to quality resources/trainers /curriculum. Approximately 18% mentioned time and staffing challenges, 14.68% stating that they have limited or no interaction with sexual minority populations, 13.76% referenced funding, and 27.52% listed another associated challenge. Of those agencies that reported to not have sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence training and provided a barrier, the majority (45.3%) indicated that funding limits their agency from implementing training on the topic. Approximately 43% suggested that access to quality resources/trainers/curriculums, 23.20% referred time and staffing barriers, 11.86% stated that they have limited or no interaction with sexual minority populations, and 12.37% listed another associated barrier.

Table 10. Challenges to Existing SM DV/IPV Training (N=109)

Barriers	*%*	*n*
Access to quality resources/trainer/curriculum	23.85%	26
Time and Staffing	18.35%	20
Limited or no interaction with SM individuals	14.68%	16
Funding	13.76%	15
Other	27.52%	30

Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority.

Table 11. Barriers to Implementing SM DV/IPV Training (N=194)

Barriers	*%*	*n*
Funding	45.3%	88
Access to quality resources/trainer/curriculum	43.3%	84
Time and Staffing	23.2%	45
Limited or no interaction with SM individuals	11.86%	23
Other	12.37%	24

Note: DV/IPV = domestic violence/intimate partner violence.
Note: LGBTQIA refers to sexual minority.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Overall Findings

This study was aimed at studying the perceptions, attitudes, and training standards of Chief Executive Officers (or their designee) within municipal, county sheriffs, or tribal police agencies in the United States with regard to sexual minority domestic violence /intimate partner violence. Four research questions guided the study. First, to what extent have law enforcement agencies implemented training on sexual minority domestic violence /intimate partner violence since *Obergefell v. Hodges* 2015? Second, to what extent do individuals within law enforcement agencies perceive the status (training or no training) in terms of aspects of the occupation that relate to effectiveness, beneficence, adequacy, and preparedness? Third, to what extent does the existence of sexual minority domestic violence /intimate partner violence training and various demographic variables influence and predict perceptions and knowledge among individuals within law enforcement agencies toward such incidents? Fourth, what potential challenges are associated within agencies that do provide training and what potential barriers limit agencies to not provide training?

This study was exploratory given the scant prior research on the topic. As such, the findings are descriptive but the data affirmatively answer the first and second research questions. Approximately half of the sample reported to provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV with 71.2% of the training occurring first in 2016 or after (post- *Obergefell v. Hodges).* Additionally, the majority of respondents reported that they viewed the training on the topic as successful in that it was effective, beneficial, adequate and better prepared them in identifying and responding to sexual minority domestic violence /intimate partner violence.

The exploration of the third research question confirms and both contracts what is pronounced by prior literature. In one sense, the responses to the attitudinal questions regarding sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence largely confirm and are consistent with literature indicating that officers have misunderstandings and incorrect assumptions toward domestic violence/intimate partner violence incidents involving sexual minority individuals (Garner, 2005; Toon & Hart, 2005). Consequently, these perceptions contribute to the continued likelihood that contact between sexual minority couples and the police will result in negative experiences and thus the legal protections granted by *Obergefell v. Hodges* are not confirmed.

However, the examination of the differences in perception based on the status of training has more nuanced, but notable, findings. There were minimal significant differences in perceptions of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence based on if their agency provides training on the topic. That is, training did not greatly alter the perceptions and attitudes toward sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence among respondents and thus questions research that has affirmed police attitudes are susceptible to change and that specialized training can dispel biases and misunderstandings (Garner, 2005; Toon & Hart, 2005).

When considering other variables to predict domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge in general and specifically involving sexual minority couples are both encouraging and concerning. Individuals tend to have a sound understanding of domestic violence/intimate partner violence in general and to what would be expected, but still noteworthy. As the law enforcement population is predominantly comprised of male individuals, it is concerning that males have significantly lower levels of domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge than females. Though, as one may expect, individuals from larger agencies with more sworn

officers, with more specialized units and written policy directives on domestic violence/intimate partner violence have higher levels of knowledge on the topic. However, predictors were *not* as consistent when modeling domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge specifically involving sexual minorities. Although total years of service and agency size are significant, it is unforeseen that more experienced individuals with more years of service and individuals from larger agencies have less knowledge on sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence, unlike domestic violence knowledge where larger agencies have more knowledge.

Regarding the years of experience, research would suggest that most mandatory training involving diversity related topics and guidance on how to interact with minority groups, are usually delivered only to new recruits (Casey, 2000). Therefore, if training has been created in the recent past and only offered to all individuals within the agency, such as only during academy training to new recruits, it is plausible that more experienced officers did not receive the training and thus have less knowledge on the topic. Further, these individuals who may not have had much exposure to or knowledge of sexual minority groups are not as susceptible to the progressive advances in legislation as younger recruits. In regard to the lower level of knowledge for individuals for larger agencies with more sworn officers, there are several possible explanations for this interesting finding. First, it is also shown that informal discussions (i.e., in the breakroom with another officer) about concerns about sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence may only be possible within smaller agencies where more informal, intimate conversations are feasible and stronger bonds are made within agency individuals. A second explanation is directed toward the measurement of domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge both in general and specific to sexual minorities. As affirmed by the consistent and expected findings, officers seemingly have an accurate and

clear grasp on domestic violence/intimate partner violence. However, when considering knowledge unique to sexual minorities, findings are less reliable. This suggests that while the six items that measured domestic violence/intimate partner violence in general may be a true measure of the concept, the 8 items that measured domestic violence/intimate partner violence specific to sexual minorities measured their knowledge may not be. For example, "LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs for the same reasons as it does in heterosexual relationships" and "LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs at a higher rate than in heterosexual relationships." In essence, the questions were worded so that respondents were comparing incidents of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence to those involving a heterosexual couple. Therefore, comparing their knowledge of domestic violence/intimate partner violence in general to their knowledge on the topic specific to sexual minority couples based on the design of the questions is not a sound inference, which may explain the coefficient direction change in relation to general domestic violence/intimate partner violence knowledge. As previously described, there is not a uniform measure of law enforcement perception/knowledge/ response to domestic violence/intimate partner violence incidents involving sexual minority couples. Efforts were taken in their study to best measure the concept by using prior literature to develop original items. However, it is evident that more research is needed and the subsequent section will address how future research can overcome this measurement obstacle.

5.2 Guidance for Future Research

There are several important considerations for future research efforts. First, to adequately measure domestic violence/ intimate partner violence knowledge involving sexual minority individuals, future research could use the items that were used in the domestic violence/intimate partner violence general knowledge scale (see Table 1) and ideally make them applicable to

sexual minorities by adding the terminology. For example, “Most DV/IPV incidents *involving LGTBQIA couples* stem from abusers’ need for power and control over victims,” and “DV/IPV *involving LGTBQIA couples* is best handled as a private matter, rather than by the police.”

Second, this study aimed to reveal the extent at which sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence training exists; however, future research should investigate the quality of the curriculum content. Qualitative methodology could yield rich insights of the topics and objectives of the training by either conducting interviews from both the trainer and law enforcement participant or a content analysis of the curriculum. Research would indicate that police attitudes are susceptible to change, therefore a deeper look into the information presented in the training would reveal whether content is indeed adequate enough to dispel biases among officers and emphasize the additional risks (i.e., outness stressors, homophobia discrimination) that these individuals experience.

Another potential area of future research originates from research in that individuals who identify as members of the sexual minority population tend to do so with more empathy and awareness of the major problems that the community is facing (Miller et al., 2003). It was the goal of this study to capture demographic information about the respondent’s sexual orientation and explore differences in their perception and knowledge of domestic violence/intimate partner violence involving sexual minority couples. However, due to the minimal variation and small percentage of individuals in the sample that identified as a sexual minority, inferences and predictions were unreliable. Future research should aim to explore samples with greater sexual orientation diversity.

Moreover, this study largely focuses law enforcement's response to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence primarily victimization, as do most of the literature

on the topic (Decker et al., 2018). However, future research should examine the collective criminal justice response, especially pertaining to how offenders that identify as sexual minorities enter and progress the criminal justice system. Just as sexual minority victims experience additional barriers, so do the perpetrators of such violence. Law enforcement is only one element of the larger collective criminal justice response, and it is evident that police embrace varied assessments of IPV based on sexual orientation and gender, which may affect how they respond to victims and perpetrators alike (Blaney, 2010). Research has confirmed the importance of training among all sectors of the criminal justice system (law enforcement, lawyers, prosecutors, judges, and victim service personnel, etc.) to guarantee that all parties can be aware of one another's roles rather than counteracting each other. Literature to inform law enforcement on how to provide culturally sensitive processing of these offenders, such as holding them in the appropriate cell based on their sexuality, to best recognize the rights of these individuals put forth by legislation is vital.

5.3 Practice and Policy Implications

The foregoing discussion has emphasized that some respondents have biased and incorrect assumptions toward domestic violence/intimate partner violence incidents involving sexual minority individuals. Although additional research is needed on the topic, several practice and policy implications are revealed in this study. If criminal justice professionals are to contribute to the solution, the issue must receive more attention, and more needs to be done to change attitudes.

Creating Training Standards

First, speaking to those agencies that did not provide training relevant to sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence, approximately half of the sample, have failed to

address these biases and emphasize the importance of ensuring equal legal protections by educating officers on the additional risks for sexual minority victims and responding appropriately. This is problematic since recruits may begin their policing careers with biased notions that may likely result in improper response if they haven't participated in training and are unaware of the unique risks minority groups encounter (Miles-Johnson et al., 2021). Further, police may be reluctant to conduct thorough investigations in cases of domestic violence/intimate partner abuse because they lack the necessary training. In the case of ongoing training, police officers may be more able to comprehend victims' behavior and issues from their perspective, especially relating to sexual minorities (Blaney, 2010).

In terms of the frequency of training for those agencies that have taken strides in providing the training, offering training at the police academy as well as reiterated and refreshed on a regular basis and on ad-hoc basis given change in policy and legislation will ensure that officers are continually receiving training content and provide consistent job performance. If training was only offered in the academy to new hires and established after *Obergefell vs. Hodges* in 2015, it is likely that a large proportion of officers have not received the training given that the average years of service in this sample is 28 years.

Increasing inclusiveness within the police force

A second recommendation stems from the finding that respondents who reported that their agency had training on the topic showed very minor significant differences in their perceptions toward such incidents than those that did not report to have training on the topic and from the significant predictor of agency informal discussions about SM DV/IPV concerns on sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner knowledge. Therefore, it is suggested that law enforcement agencies create more inclusive police forces in efforts to aid in creation of

applicable curriculum and policies, quality training and addressing the possible lack of officer susceptibility to the topic. The hiring of individuals from diverse sexual orientation backgrounds into the police force is one approach that can lower levels of police bias within police organizations (Miles-Johnson et al., 2021). Police who identify as members of the sexual minority population tend to respond to situations more empathetically and are more aware of the serious issues facing the community (Miller et al., 2003). As Stevenson notes in his book, "*Just Mercy*," being proximal to an issue may increase one's empathy, viewpoint and understanding (Stevenson, 2014). Moreover, agencies can specifically recruit LGBTQIA community liaison officers to talk about and enhance police-community interactions and play a role in recommending solutions to improve community relations and officer susceptibility to training on the topic (Owen et al., 2018). Giving instructors the chance to discuss their own biases and how they might affect how police officers intervene in cases of intimate partner abuse with their own trainees has proved to be beneficial (Blaney, 2010). Ideally, these specialized officers can ensure that the concerns of the officers are addressed in the training and that the guidance put forth is fluent and digestible to be employed in practice. Moreover, these officers might work with the sexual minority population groups to create curricula, which could also increase officer understanding of problems crucial to communities. Addressing the prevalence and especially, the uniqueness of such incidents, is critical for responding officers to reduce barriers of encouraging help-seeking among sexual minority victims (Edwards et al., 2015). Additionally, a more diverse police force can advocate for inclusive policies, especially those that include gender-neutral language and not as a problem that solely affects heterosexual people, signal to the sexual minority community that their law enforcement agency is an ally to them (Edwards et al., 2015). Further, the agency's commitment and dedication to addressing domestic violence/intimate

partner violence involving sexual minority individuals is key to better susceptibility on the topic and the likelihood that officers' misunderstandings will be influenced (Blaney, 2010).

5.4 Study Limitations

While this research provides paramount findings regarding law enforcement response to domestic violence/intimate partner violence cases involving sexual minority couples, it has limitations. Methodological research surveying police officers presents distinctive challenges such as gaining access to the population; understanding the close-knit nature and the confidential aspect of law enforcement work; and legal policy and procedures presents challenges (Nix el al., 2019). Response rates are declining for surveys administered via mail, phone, and online (Nix et al., 2019). Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the response rate of online surveys of police officers, including this one, could potentially be low (Nix et al., 2019). Although strategies were used to increase participation and completion, this study may have further present strain on the response rate due to the seemingly sensitive topic at hand, their fear of a breach of confidentiality considering their responses to attitudinal questions, and no incentive benefit.

Additionally, the using a 2020 NDLEA database in 2023 may have presented a lower response rate than expected as emails may have been outdated and invalid. The study’s ability to be generalizable is unknown. Using a larger sample would allow for greater generalizability especially relating inferences made of officer attitudes toward such incidents.

As the study was successful in capturing responses of Chief Executive Officers as 81.9% of responses were from Chiefs or Sheriffs however, it is acknowledged that a supervisor role in a law enforcement agency may not respond to these incidents and thus their perception and opinion of training may not be as valuable as a patrol officer viewpoint. However, respondent ranks were used in the regression models for both domestic violence/intimate partner violence

knowledge in general and specific to sexual minorities and significant differences were not detected.

5.5 Conclusion

There are many takeaways from this study that can guide future research on this subject and the findings of this study shed some light on the existence of training standards on intimate partner violence/domestic violence involving sexual minority couples and understanding attitudes toward such. The broad conclusion of this thesis – and one that has a role in informing law enforcement agencies in their training efforts and scholars in future research – is that law enforcement agencies have misunderstandings and biases toward domestic violence/intimate partner violence incidents involving sexual minority couples. This project confirmed that training beyond the traditional and generalized forms of training is indeed needed.

Given these findings, the challenge for research scholars, policy-makers, researchers and law enforcement officials moving forward is to research and evaluate their training standards and structure to best improve officer response and future help-seeking efforts from sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence. The criminal justice system is not complete without the work of law enforcement and the beliefs and attitudes of individuals within are crucial to afford equal rights to sexual minority victims of domestic violence/intimate partner violence. Enhancing training on intimate partner violence involving sexual minorities has the potential to enhance police responses for all intimate partner violence survivors who bravely report their victimization. Specifically, training that focuses on the barriers and cultural differences among marginalized groups such as, sexual minority groups and Indigenous peoples ensures that all victims are provided with equal legal protections and offenders in these incidents are recognized (Blaney, 2010). It is the intent to emphasize that by regular and frequent training for law

enforcement on the topic of sexual minority domestic violence/intimate partner violence and increasing inclusiveness of the police force will aid in eliminating ambiguity in policies and practices involving the sexual minority community and assist in increasing knowledge to respond to such incidents.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

Initial Email Recruitment: Monday, February 20

Good morning,

My name is Breanna Haney, a Master's student in the Criminal Justice and Criminology department at University of North Carolina at Charlotte. I am writing to invite you to participate in a short survey. My project is to better understand law enforcement agencies' training standards dedicated to domestic violence/intimate partner violence (DV/IPV).

As the Chief Executive of your agency, if you believe you are not the best respondent to the survey, please feel free to share this email and the survey link with a designee within your agency.

- The survey is estimated to only take about **10 minutes** to complete.
- As this is a nationwide survey, your **privacy** will be protected and **confidentiality** will be maintained, that is, neither your identity or agency's identity will be revealed in this survey.
- Participation is **voluntary**: You may choose not to take part in the study, and you may start participating and change your mind and stop participation at any time. No incentive will be provided for your participation, nor is there any cost to you.
- I hope you will participate in the survey as your response is very **valuable**.

If you have questions concerning the study, you can contact me by email at bhaney3@uncc.edu. Additionally, you can contact the faculty supervisor, Dr. Hartman at jhartman@uncc.edu. If you have further questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, contact the Office of Research Protections and Integrity at (704) 687-1871 or uncc-irb@uncc.edu.

Thank you very much for your time, please see the link below to participate.

Breanna Haney
Master's Student
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Follow-up 1 Script: Monday, Feb 27

Hi, last week I sent an email inviting you to participate in my short nationwide survey about law enforcement agencies' training standards dedicated to domestic violence/ intimate partner violence (DV/IPV). If you haven't had a chance to complete the questionnaire yet, I hope you will consider participating as your response is **very valuable**. Your **privacy** will be protected and **confidentiality** will be maintained, that is, neither your identity or agency's identity will be revealed in this survey.

As the Chief Executive of your agency, if you believe you are not the best respondent to the survey, please **feel free to share this email** and the survey link with a designee within your agency.

Thank you so very much for your time and help with my project, please see the link below to participate or complete your survey.

Breanna Haney
bhaney3@uncc.edu
Master's Student
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Follow-up 2 Script: Monday, March 6

Hello, I am writing to follow up on the message I recently sent asking you to participate in a short survey about law enforcement agencies' training standards dedicated to domestic violence/ intimate partner violence. If you haven't had a chance to complete the questionnaire yet, the survey will draw to a close on Sunday, March 12, 2023. I so hope you will consider participating as your response will be **very helpful** to my project.

Your **privacy** will be protected and **confidentiality** will be maintained, that is, neither your identity or agency's identity will be revealed in this survey.

As the Chief Executive of your agency, if you believe you are not the best respondent to the survey, please **feel free to share this email** and the survey link with a designee within your agency.

Thank you so very much for your time and help with my project, I am so grateful for your time. Please see the link below to participate or complete your survey.

Breanna Haney
bhaney3@uncc.edu
Master's Student
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Follow-Up (only to Tribal agencies): Wednesday, March 8

Háu kola,

I hope you are well. I am following up on a request I recently sent asking you to participate in a short survey about law enforcement agencies' training standards dedicated to domestic violence/ intimate partner violence. If you haven't had a chance to complete the questionnaire yet, the survey will draw to a close on Sunday, March 12, 2023. I so hope you will consider participating as your responses will be **invaluable** to my project.

Your **privacy** will be protected and **confidentiality** will be maintained, that is, neither your identity or agency's identity will be revealed in this survey.

As the Chief Executive of your agency, if you believe you are not the best respondent to the survey, please **feel free to share this email** and the survey link with a designee within your agency.

Thank you so very much for your time and help with my project, I am forever otsaliheliga! Please see the link below to participate or complete your survey.

Wado, U-we-hno^{n}

Follow-up 3 Script: Monday, March 13

Hello, some participants have asked for a few extra days to complete the survey. If you have not had a chance to complete the survey yet, I would be grateful for your participation as your response would be a **tremendous help** to my master's thesis project about law enforcement agencies' training standards dedicated to domestic violence/ intimate partner violence.

Please take the short nationwide survey by Wednesday, March 15, 2023.

As a reminder, your **privacy** will be protected and **confidentiality** will be maintained, that is, neither your identity or agency's identity will be revealed in this survey. As the Chief Executive of your agency, if you believe you are not the best respondent to the survey, please **feel free to share this email** and the survey link with a designee within your agency.

I am so appreciative of your time and help with my project. **Please see the link below to participate.**

Breanna Haney
bhaney3@uncc.edu
Master's Student
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Start of Block: Informed Consent

I am 18 years of age or older and am employed in a Chief Executive position (or I am a designee) within a municipal, county sheriff, or tribal police agency in the United States. I have read and understand the information and consent to participate in the study. Please click **continue** to proceed to the survey.

- ○ Continue to survey

End of Block: Informed Consent

Start of Block: Agency Demographics

Please provide the following demographics about your current agency.

Select the agency type that best describes your current agency.

- ○ Municipal police department
- ○ County sheriff's office
- ○ Tribal police agency
- ○ Other _____

Select the state that your agency is located in from the dropdown menu.

- ○ Alabama
- ○ Alaska
- ○ Arizona
- ○ Arkansas
- ○ California
- ○ Colorado
- ○ Connecticut
- ○ Delaware
- ○ District of Columbia
- ○ Florida
- ○ Georgia
- ○ Hawaii
- ○ Idaho
- ○ Illinois
- ○ Indiana
- ○ Iowa
- ○ Kansas
- ○ Kentucky
- ○ Louisiana
- ○ Maine
- ○ Maryland

- ○ Massachusetts
- ○ Michigan
- ○ Minnesota
- ○ Mississippi
- ○ Missouri
- ○ Montana
- ○ Nebraska
- ○ Nevada
- ○ New Hampshire
- ○ New Jersey
- ○ New Mexico
- ○ New York
- ○ North Carolina
- ○ North Dakota
- ○ Ohio
- ○ Oklahoma
- ○ Oregon
- ○ Pennsylvania
- ○ Rhode Island
- ○ South Carolina
- ○ South Dakota

- ○ Tennessee
- ○ Texas
- ○ Utah
- ○ Vermont
- ○ Virginia
- ○ Washington
- ○ West Virginia
- ○ Wisconsin
- ○ Wyoming

What county is your agency located in?

_____

What is the **estimated population of your agency's jurisdiction** (number of residents for which your agency has primary law enforcement responsibility)? 0-2,499

- 2,500-9,999
- 10,000-24,999
- 25,000-49,999
- 50,000-99,999
- 100,000-249,999
- 250,000-499,999
- 500,000-999,999
- 1,000,000 or more

Approximately how many **full-time sworn** officers are employed in your agency?

- 1-4
- 5-9
- 10-24
- 25-49
- 50-99
- 100-249
- 250-499
- 500-999
- 1,000 or more

End of Block: Agency Demographics

Start of Block: Respondent Demographics

Please provide the following demographics about you as the respondent of this survey.

Please select the option that best describes your **gender.**

- ○ Male
- ○ Female
- ○ Non-binary
- ○ Other _____

Please select the option that best describes your **race.**

- ○ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ○ Asian
- ○ Black or African American
- ○ Hispanic or Latino
- ○ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ○ White
- ○ Other _____

Please select the option that best describes your **current rank** in the agency.

- ○ Chief
- ○ Sheriff
- ○ Deputy Chief
- ○ Captain
- ○ Major
- ○ Commander
- ○ Lieutenant
- ○ Sergeant
- ○ Corporal
- ○ Detective
- ○ Officer
- ○ Deputy
- ○ Other _____

Please indicate how many years of service in law enforcement in **totality** (across multiple agencies, if applicable) you have from the dropdown menu. Less than 12 months

- ○ 1 year
- ○ 2 years
- ○ 3 years
- ○ 4 years
- ○ 5 years
- ○ 6 years
- ○ 7 years
- ○ 8 years
- ○ 9 years
- ○ 10 years
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- ○ 56 years
- ○ 57 years
- ○ 58 years
- ○ 59 years
- ○ 60 years
- ○ More than 60 years

Please indicate how many years you have been employed at your **current agency** from the dropdown menu. Less than 12 months

- ○ 1 year
- ○ 2 years
- ○ 3 years
- ○ 4 years
- ○ 5 years
- ○ 6 years
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- ○ 58 years
- ○ 59 years
- ○ 60 years
- ○ More than 60 years

End of Block: Respondent Demographics

Start of Block: Specialized Units

This survey identifies domestic violence and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) as violence that occurs in a romantic relationship (i.e., between spouse, ex-spouse, partner, ex-partner, girlfriend/boyfriend, ex-girlfriend/boyfriend or child in common). That is, excluding familial violence.

Does your agency have a specialized domestic violence/intimate partner violence (DV/IPV) unit or dedicated personnel?

- ○ My agency **has a specialized DV/IPV unit with dedicated personnel**
- ○ My agency **has dedicated personnel** but **not** a specialized DV/IPV unit
- ○ My agency does **not have a specialized DV/IPV unit or dedicated personnel**
- ○ I'm not sure

Does your agency have **written policy or procedural directives** on domestic violence/intimate partner violence?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I'm not sure

The following questions will ask about your perception of **domestic violence/intimate partner violence (DV/IPV)**. Please select the option that best describes your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Most DV/IPV incidents stem from abusers' need for power and control over victims.	○	○	○	○	○	○
DV/IPV is best handled as a private matter, rather than by the police.	○	○	○	○	○	○
A mandatory arrest policy is the best approach to DV/IPV.	○	○	○	○	○	○
DV/IPV calls take too much of officers time and effort without reducing future reoffending.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Many DV/IPV victims could easily leave their relationships, but don't.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Convicted DV/IPV perpetrators should be denied the right to own a weapon.	○	○	○	○	○	○

End of Block: Specialized Units

Start of Block: LGBTQIA Domestic Violence/ Intimate Partner Violence

Heterosexual couples are defined as individuals of the opposite sex that are in a sexual or romantic relationship (including child in common). LGBTQIA couples are defined as individuals that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual that are in a sexual or romantic relationship (including child in common) at the time of police contact.

The following questions ask about your perception of **LGBTQIA or heterosexual domestic violence/intimate partner violence (DV/IPV)**. Please select the option that best describes your general opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs for the **same reasons** it does in heterosexual relationships.	○	○	○	○	○	○
LGBTQIA DV/IPV occurs at a **higher rate** than in heterosexual relationships.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Heterosexual DV/IPV victims are **more likely** to report their victimization to police than LGBTQIA couples.	○	○	○	○	○	○
LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims perceive police to be helpful when they need assistance.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Male on male victimization is more serious than female to female victimization in DV/IPV cases.	○	○	○	○	○	○
LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims **do not report** their victimization to police in fear that it would reveal their sexuality.	○	○	○	○	○	○

Transexual DV/IPV victims have the same concerns as LGBTQIA DV/IPV victims.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV is **more difficult** to respond to than heterosexual couples.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Law enforcement respond to LGBTQIA DV/IPV in the same manner as heterosexual couples.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Responding to DV/IPV calls for service involving a LGBTQIA couple makes me uncomfortable.	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel comfortable using they/ them pronouns when interacting with transgender DV/IPV couples.	○	○	○	○	○	○
It is necessary to incorporate gender-neutral language in DV/IPV written policies.	○	○	○	○	○	○

My agency encounters struggles when identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	○	○	○	○	○	○
Identifying the primary aggressor at a DV/IPV call is more difficult with LGBTQIA couples than with heterosexual couples.	○	○	○	○	○	○
DV/IPV laws should provide equal protections to LGBTQIA victims.	○	○	○	○	○	○

Describe any specific struggles that your agency encounters identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV?

_____

Training designed to enhance the police response and awareness of cultural differences for the following groups within society would be helpful to my agency. Please select the option that best describes your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Lesbian/ gay population	○	○	○	○	○	○
Transgender population	○	○	○	○	○	○
Indigenous/tribal populations	○	○	○	○	○	○

In **one month**, how many times do **you** respond to a domestic violence/intimate partner violence call for service involving a LGBTQIA couple? 0

- ○ 1
- ○ 2
- ○ 3
- ○ 4
- ○ 5
- ○ 6
- ○ 7
- ○ 8
- ○ 9
- ○ 10
- ○ 11
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- ○ 51
- ○ 52
- ○ 53
- ○ 54
- ○ 55
- ○ 56
- ○ 57
- ○ 58
- ○ 59
- ○ 60
- ○ More than 60. _____

Do you know of **other sworn officers within your agency** that have responded to a domestic violence/intimate partner violence call for service involving a LGBTQIA couple?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I'm not sure

Do **you** identify as a member of the LGBTQIA community?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I'm not sure

Do you know of **other sworn officers with your agency** that identify as a member of the LGBTQIA community?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ I'm not sure

The following questions will ask if or how often your agency has discussions about concerns relevant to the LGBTQIA population. Please select the option that best describes your opinion.

	Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
How often does your agency have **formal (i.e., agency/departmental meetings or briefings)** discussions about concerns relevant to the LGBTQIA population?	○	○	○	○	○
How often does your agency have **informal (i.e., in the breakroom with another officer)** discussions about concerns relevant to the LGBTQIA population?	○	○	○	○	○

Describe any **formal (i.e., agency/departmental meetings or briefings) or informal (i.e., in the breakroom with another officer)** discussions your agency has about concerns relevant to the LGBTQIA population?

_____

The following questions ask if your agency provides training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domestic violence/intimate partner violence.

Does your agency provide **training** to officers about identifying and responding to **LGBTQIA domestic violence/intimate partner violence**?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

Have **you** participated in this training?

- Yes
- No

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

And Have you participated in this training? = Yes

What **year** did you **most recently** participate in the training?

_____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

What is the training called or referred to as?

_____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

Was there anything **specific or unique** (i.e., particular event, trend, etc.) that motivated your agency to implement training on LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence?

_____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

To you knowledge, what **year** did this training for LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence **first occur**?

_____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

How **often** is this training offered?

- ○ Every month
- ○ Bi-annually
- ○ Annually
- ○ Every 2-3 years
- ○ Every 4-5 years
- ○ I'm not sure

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

Estimate how many **hours** in totality does this training take to complete?

- ○ Please type the number of hours in the textbox below.

  _____

- ○ I'm not sure

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

Select the option that best describes the **structure** of your agency's LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence training.

- ○ My agency implemented a **specific** training dedicated exclusively to LGBTQIA domestic violence /intimate partner violence.
- ○ My agency **revised an existing training** to be applicable to LGBTQIA domestic violence /intimate partner violence.

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

Select the option that best describes the **requirement** of your agency's LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence training.

- ○ The training on LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence is **mandated** to **officers.**
- ○ The training on LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence is **voluntary** to officers.

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

When is your agency's LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence training provided to officers?

- ○ During academy training to new hires
- ○ As apart of continuing education training
- ○ Other _____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

Where is your agency's LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence training conducted?

- ○ Conducted at an outsourced/ third-party entity.
- ○ Conducted in-house at my agency.
- ○ Other _____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

Who conducts your agency's LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence training?

- ○ An outsourced/third party trainer
- ○ An in-house employee of my agency
- ○ Other _____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

The following questions will ask about the **effectiveness** of your agency's LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence (DV/IPV). Select the option that best describes your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The training is **effective** in preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The training is **adequate** in preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The training is **beneficial** in preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The training makes my agency **more prepared** for identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV.	○	○	○	○	○	○

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

To your knowledge, does your agency receive funding for the LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence training?

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

What **challenges** exist to your agency's current LGBTQIA domestic violence/intimate partner violence training?

_____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = Yes

Do you have **suggestions** on improving your agency's current LGBTQIA domestic violence/intimate partner violence training?

_____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = No

The following questions ask if you believe training on LGBTQIA domestic violence/ intimate partner violence would be effective to your agency. Select the option that best describes your opinion.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The training on preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV would be **effective**.	○	○	○	○	○	○
The training on preparing my agency in identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV would be **beneficial.**	○	○	○	○	○	○
The training on identifying and responding to LGBTQIA DV/IPV would **better prepare** my agency.	○	○	○	○	○	○

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = No

What are the **barriers** for your agency in implementing LGBTQIA training of this nature (i.e., funding, resources, etc.)?

_____

Display This Question:

If Does your agency provide training to officers about identifying and responding to LGBTQIA domesti... = No

What **suggestions** do you have to help initiate training of this nature within your agency?

_____

End of Block: LGBTQIA Domestic Violence/ Intimate Partner Violence

Start of Block: Final Remarks

Is there anything else you would like to share?

_____

End of Block: Final Remarks