

BSc Professional investigation
Module BMPI6000 - Project Proposal

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Research Question (1 sentence max.)

A critical analysis of the occurrence of sexual predatory behaviour perpetrated by officers in South Wales Police Service and the pertinent features that characterise it.

Literature Review (700 words max)

Using a review of peer-reviewed journal articles and other academic sources, provide a rationale for your research project.

The aim of the research is to identify whether officers exhibit sexual predatory behaviour within South Wales Police. The study will determine whether there is evidence that police officers misuse their position by sexually exploiting vulnerable people they meet while on duty, as well as what strategies may be developed to help eradicate this behaviour. Burger (2016) found that the public has lost faith in the police because of their involvement with criminal behaviour and misuse of power.

Participating in Predatory behaviour within the police organisation can affect victims whilst also undermining the function of their colleagues (Anti-Corruption Commission 2015). Sexual Predatory behaviour towards vulnerable people of any nature is likely to go unreported according to studies undertaken by UN Women (unwomenuk.org 2021). 97 percent of young women have experienced some form of sexual harassment in their lives, however, only 4% reported it. 96% stated they had little confidence that their complaint would

be thoroughly investigated. Their research, although not connected directly to Police officers suggests that lesser offences, such as indecent exposure or voyeurism, can lead to more serious acts. This is supported by research undertaken by the Independent Police Complaints Commission's (2012) following a criminal investigation whereby a police officer was jailed for life for sexually assaulting women he met whilst on duty. This research also concluded that it is difficult to determine the exact number of people who have been victims of police officers abusing their authority. They said there was no evidence that this behaviour was widespread, but they weren't sure if all cases of misconduct had been reported. This is corroborated by Harris's (2014) research, who indicated that the measure of misconduct relies on complaints made against officers. In relation to the murder of Sarah Everard. Wayne Couzens, a serving police officer, committed two indecent exposure crimes prior to Sarah's rape and murder. All allegations involving police officers, according to Wright (2021), must be thoroughly investigated, including not only incidents of domestic violence, harassment, and sexual offences, but also lower-level offences. Police misconduct, even minor breaches, has a significant detrimental influence on the Police service (Newburn 2011). The Anti-Corruption Commission (2015) research suggested appropriate supervision and management standards are critical for ensuring acceptable behaviour and eliminating predatory behaviour.

According to Duemig's research (2022), defining predatory behaviour as a single act is difficult. It's usually a course of action that goes unnoticed but can swiftly develop into pursuit-like behaviour if not prevented. This has the potential to become a dangerous situation. The way the behaviour occurs is subjective and unique to the situation and individuals involved, which may explain why it is difficult to define and why it goes unreported (Duemig 2022).

It would be extremely advantageous to use research to provide police organisations with the ability to identify and recognise potential predatory behaviour. It would allow police organisations to develop efficient and targeted preventive strategies. This would reduce police corruption and promote public trust. There has been substantial research on police misconduct. Police officers' ability to measure self-control was investigated by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), Self-control, according to Piquero (2009), is a "predictor of crime and deviance." The Continuum of Compromise was developed by Gilmartin and Harris (1998) as a guide for understanding how the move from the "honest officer" to "compromised officer" may occur. It

illustrates how acts of omission lead to acts of commission, comparable to Punch's (2003) "slippery slope" concept. According to Sherman's (1985) research, officers who engaged in criminal activities felt a sense of entitlement, as though they were deserving of or due special privileges. This research can be analysed alongside Officers who display and perpetrate sexual predatory behaviours. Skolnick's (2008) study is useful in understanding why 'Predatory' behaviour may not be reported within the police organisation if it is witnessed by co-workers. The Code of Silence refers to a police officer's reluctance to report a colleague, even if they are engaging in inappropriate behaviour. Even though there is a great deal of research on police deviant behaviour, there is little research on how to manage and prevent these "predatory" behaviours. Future criminal behaviours could be prevented if such officers could be identified early in their careers and their behaviour stopped (Harris, 2014).

Method (500 words max)

Aim(s): Identify the key aim(s) of this study in a sentence or two.

The aim of this research project is to identify whether predatory police behaviours exist within the South Wales Police organisation and if so, whether these behaviours can be recognised or predicted. This would enable the police organisation to devise and implement effective intervention measures

It is apparent from the research that there is a difficulty in predicting whether officers will engage in sexually predatory behaviours. Not identifying these behaviours until it is too late is problematic. Being able to understand and recognise when officers may become involved in deviant activities can enable policing organisations to develop targeted intervention programmes aimed at reducing and preventing these behaviours. According to Prenzler (2009), targeted interventions can be highly effective in reducing police misconduct.

Objective(s): Bullet points of what you need to achieve to succeed in your aims

- To identify whether sexual predatory behaviour exists within South Police.
- To critically analyse issues relating to victims reporting sexual predatory behaviours and co-workers reporting sexual predatory behaviour that they have witnessed. Analysing issues around reporting will help in understanding how and why this behaviour is allowed to continue and exist.
- To examine data gathered from questionnaires and academic research on the subject to formulate a proposal strategy for reducing predatory behaviour within the police force.

Design: Quantitative or qualitative? Survey or secondary data approach?

A survey and secondary approach will be taken to gather the information. Questionnaires will be sent out to officers to complete anonymously. Most of the questionnaire will consist of closed questions, the findings obtained from these questions will be demonstrated by a chart. Also, a small number of open questions will be asked. The data gathered from these questions will be critically analysed by identifying themes. The data received from these quantitative and qualitative methods will be analysed against academic research.

Sample: Who/what, how many, where from, sampling method.

Police Officers will be asked to complete anonymous questionnaires. People are far more likely to share truthful and accurate information if they are asked to provide their information anonymously (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2007)

The questionnaires will be sent out to police officers via email and messages via SWP Facebook pages. By using both platforms the questionnaires will reach a wide number of officers from various parts of the organisation, including Uniform officers and officers in specialised Departments. This is supported by

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2007) who advised for a successful questionnaire that it is sent out to a large sample of staff.

Survey Monkey will be used to collect the data. This is easy to use, and the questions can be presented in many ways.

Ethics: Briefly cover any ethical issues that you need to consider.

Participants will be treated with respect.

Consent will be obtained

Participation will be voluntary, consent can be withdrawn at any time during the study.

Expectations of the research will be explained.

Explanations provided as to how the data will be stored and used.

Participants will be assured that the questionnaires are anonymous and will be treated with confidentiality, their identify will not be revealed.

The research methods and findings will be transparent.

The author will maintain objectivity whilst analysing the research.

Involvement in this study should not cause any harm. The questions/answers will not use offensive, discriminatory or unacceptable language.

Contact details for the professional standards and welfare department will be provided should the participant completing the questionnaire feel the need to discuss the matter further.

Analysis: What will you do with the data when you have collected it and why?

The data obtained from the questionnaires will be analysed. Charts will be devised from the quantitative data obtained and themes developed from the qualitative data will be analysed and summarised. This research will be compared against another available academic research on the subject. The

analysis will be used to identify ways to predict sexual predatory behaviour and to understand why there is a reluctance to report concerns.

At the conclusion of the project the data will also be forwarded to professional standards department in South Wales Police. Further work could then be carried out to identify ways to combat any issues identified.

Proposed Timeline (not included in word count)

Insert table or figure/flow chart to depict your proposed project timeline of key events.

Dates	Proposed project timeline
31/3/2022	Submit Proposal/Ethics form
April 2022	Devise questionnaire questions and send out to participants to answer.
April 2022	Research – Literature review
May 2022	Research – Literature review
31 st May 2022	Deadline for questionnaires to be returned
June 2022	Analyse data from questionnaire
July 2022	Analysis of results and literature review
August 2022	Analysis of results and literature review
September 2022	Findings and conclusion
October 2022	Findings and conclusion
1 st November 2022	Submit Dissertation

Anticipated Outcomes (300 words max)

Briefly explain what you hope to achieve with this research project (i.e. could your findings influence practice, policy, or training?)

Identifying that some police officers engage in sexual predatory behaviour could have major consequences for South Wales Police. Learning about the scale of police deviance is critical (Klockars Ivkovic and Haberfeld 2003). It is anticipated that some level of sexual predatory behaviour is perpetrated within South Wales Police. This research sets to identify the scale of this is and what can be done to eradicate it. The research will assist in the development of effective prevention and/or interruption strategies. If police deviant behaviour is predicted, evidence-based measures can and should be used to ensure that suitable preventative measures are implemented. Strategies should be in place to properly educate people on how to recognise and understand sexual predatory behaviour (Fleming, 2009)

According to McDowall et al. (2015), there is evidence to support the importance of ethical training. Ensuring that police officers are aware of the traits and indications of predatory behaviour and know who to contact if they have any concerns. Understanding the traits exhibited by officers enables supervisors to intervene to eradicate these behaviours.

Word count - 1495

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