

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the researcher analysed existing literature on factors affecting Police TRT. From this, recommendations have been suggested to improve the achievement of TRT. The researcher identified the new 20mph speed law in Wales, which opens up a distinct gap in the research available and how this will impact TRT. This chapter aims to explain how this research has been undertaken.

Research Methods

When considering the research techniques for this study, the 'research onion' by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2019, p.130) has been used. The model identifies the approach the researcher has taken when conducting the study. Action research was considered for the study, however, Burnes (2004) mentions that this involves a lengthy process where actions are formed from the research, which lead to the evaluation and then more research. Consequently, an alternative research method was chosen as this method was deemed unsuitable.

Positivist and Interpretivist

Positivist research focuses on measurable and predictable data that is known to be true and is not influenced by unpredictable human behaviours (Lin, 1998). This approach has been adopted when working towards achieving objective three via robust data analysis of internal databases of Gwent Police.

Interpretivist research, on the other hand, concentrates on presenting data in the form of words, such as different opinions from participants (Chapman and McNeil, 2005, p.19). This style of research, carried out within the Police Force which encompasses staff of all ages, backgrounds and experiences, will result in varying views, therefore, making outcomes subjective. An interpretivist researcher can interpretate and validate the different perspectives of participants (Greener, 2008, p.17). This approach has been adopted when working towards achieving objectives one and two.

Mixed Methods

To develop an understanding of a problem or situation, both quantitative and qualitative research can be used; this is known as Mixed Methods research (Cresswell, 2020). Researchers find that mixed methods provide flexibility that is a vital advantage to the research (Tashakkori and Cresswell, 2008).

Qualitative Research

Due to the achievement of objectives one and two being reliant on human interaction, the researcher has carried out qualitative research in the form of a survey. This style was aimed to gather the thoughts, experiences and behaviours of humans whilst exposing patterns and themes in the responses which can be complex to quantify (Tenny, Brannan and Brannan, 2022). In addition, the researcher has incorporated questions within the survey to assist in achieving objective three.

Quantitative Research

To achieve objective three, the researcher also conducted data analysis by interrogating internal Gwent Police databases. Radeff (2023) suggests this type of research allows large amounts of data to be analysed quickly, reducing processing time.

Based on the different styles of objectives set, both methods of research have been used by the researcher to obtain more comprehensive results. Although surveys are officially categorised as quantitative research (Ponto, 2015), the survey has been designed to include a mixture of qualitative and quantitative questions.

Data Collection and Analysis

Purposive Sampling

During the study, the researcher has undertaken purposive sampling. This included a particular set of people who were selected to obtain information from, that was not available from others. Despite the findings of this type of research being difficult to generalise to a wider population, Taherdoost (2016) considers this type of sampling as extremely cost and time effective.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis has been used to identify themes within the participants responses. The process the researcher has used to familiarise themselves with the responses is known as open coding. Braun and Clark (2006) describe this approach to qualitative data analysis as flexible and accessible. By reviewing the participants responses, the researcher has identified and generated themes which are presented in the findings chapter, along with descriptive statistics.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria of the research were as follows:

Inclusion Criteria:

- Force Contact & Control (FCC) Staff
- FCC Supervisors
- Response Police Officers
- Response Supervisors

Exclusion Criteria:

- Armed Response Units (ARU)
- Community Support Officers (CSO)
- Criminal Investigation Department (CID)
- Dog Handlers
- Force Intelligence Officers (FIO)
- Licensing & Nighttime Economy Department
- Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT)

- Proactive Neighbourhood Enforcement Team (PNET)
- Professional Standards Department (PSD)
- Public Protection Unit (PPU)
- Roads Policing specialist Operators (RPSO)
- Rural & Wildlife Crime
- Serious Collision Investigation Unit (SCIU)
- Serious Organised Crime Unit (SOC)
- Special Constables (SC)
- Any other non-front-line department

A survey was created using *Microsoft Forms* and was distributed via Gwent Police internal communications such as e-mail and the Gwent Police intranet page, 'The Beat'. A blank copy of the survey can be viewed in (*Appendix X*). A total of X survey responses were received.

Sampling Considerations

Limiting the survey to the included audience allowed the data to be gathered from Gwent Police Officers and staff who are directly responding to G1 and G2 calls. The excluded departments are not expected to have a full insight on what is impacting TRT currently, as they are a step removed from front-line policing. Specialised departments such as RPSO and ARU's, who are Advanced Driver trained, are not restricted to Gwent Police's speed exemption policy when responding to emergencies as mentioned in the previous chapter.

Limitations

This research only includes Police Officers and staff who are either in a response or FCC role. The researcher has chosen these select participants as they have the most up-to-date information and knowledge on factors impacting Gwent Police's TRT to G1 and G2 calls. Due to time constraints, this research only incorporates Gwent Police employees.

Ethical Considerations

When completing the survey, each participant was asked to consent to taking part, and acknowledge their right to withdraw at any time. The purpose of the research was explained, as well as the anonymity involved. However, for the researcher to identify correlations in responses and make recommendations, it was stated within the survey description that respondents' base, rank and role would be requested.

No vulnerable groups participated in the research, however, as internal data was interrogated, ethical approval was obtained from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David.

Conclusion

This chapter has identified the most suitable research and analysis method for this particular study. The following chapter will evident the findings of the research.

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