

This next chapter will introduce and assess the methods of data collection that will be used within this study, focusing on the main question of the dissertation, do police officers and staff take the mental health support offered to them following a critical or major incident. With the gathering of this information, it will address the second question within this dissertation, do police officers and staff find the help offered effective in dealing with their mental health. The study will be undertaken to correlate the gaps within the literature reviewed, in which it was highlighted that police officers tend to depreciate with their mental health as they progress through their careers. The literature suggests that depreciation of mental health still exists even with the intervention of systems put in place such as the TRIM management to help officers and staff with their mental health following a critical or major incident. From reviewing the literature relating to officers and mental health it is still unclear why officers' mental health depreciates even with such systems being put in place. There is little study identified to correlate these two issues and this is why this review will aim to identify if the systems in place are taken by police officers to help with their mental health, followed by if police officers find the help offered to them useful in dealing with any mental health issues sustained.

Fleetwood (2018) finds that research is the consideration of a particular subject using scientific methods to address the subject. Tiwari (2022) writes that "research is a process of systematic inquiry that uses the collection of data and documentation of critical information". What the research within this study aims to find is how police officers and staff feel about mental health support offered to them. Research is described as either quantitative or qualitative. Streefkerk (2019) compares these two research models by stating that "quantitative research deals with numbers, figures, and statistics whereas qualitative research deals with words and meanings." As well as defining quantitative and qualitative research Streefkerk (2018) in another paper wrote that primary sources provide first hand accounts whereas secondary sources provide second hand information ie from an article or book.

For this research dissertation it was identified that a survey would be the best way to collect data from current serving police officers and staff in order to ascertain if they have been offered mental health support following a critical or major incident, and if the participants find the offering useful. The use of a survey will provide the dissertation with quantitative research from primary sources. Qualtrics (2021) define a survey as a method of gathering information using questions relevant to a particular subject, given to a sample group with objectives of collecting data from the questions asked to establish correlations or differences between the group's answers. The survey will aim to target the questions highlighted within the literature review as to if police officers take mental health support offered to them and if they find the mental health support beneficial. From addressing these questions, it will be possible to identify if the mental health support offered to police officers and staff is sufficient or if more needs to be done to help protect individuals' mental health following critical or major incidents. The main benefit of the survey will be that results of each participant can be compared, to establish the main questions of this dissertation. As mental health issues still hold a stigma in even today, the survey allows participants to remain anonymous within the research process. The anonymity allows participants to answer truthfully and fully without the worry that their answers will identify them as having, or have had, mental health problems.

As previously mentioned at the start of this chapter, this dissertation will be using current serving police officers and staff as its participants. For this research target sampling was considered for its participants. Resonio (ND) identify that targeted sampling is a sampling style where researchers identify specific participants through their characteristics and experiences that can provide insight to

the research question asked. As this research specifically relates to police officers and police staff, asking if they have experienced any mental health issues following a major or critical incidents and if they have taken any mental health support offered to them following a critical or major incidents; the sampling target for this research paper will specifically rely around persons who have been or are current serving police officers or police staff members in order to answer the research questions raised. For the sampling population the dissertation will be using current serving police officers and staff working within the Newport city area.

To truly analyse the findings several yes or no answers will be incorporated into the survey that will be given to police officers and police staff. Also included in the survey will be scaled answers. For example, have you received mental health support following a critical or major incident? Answered yes or no. Followed by, on a scale of 1-5 how effective do you TRIM referrals have been for you following receiving one? 5 being very effective, 1 being ineffective. The response of yes and no answers as well as scaled answers will allow the research to put its findings into graphs and percentages to show a visual representation of how police officers and staff felt about the mental health support offered following critical or major incidents. With the answers to the survey being put into graph form or into percentages, it will be easy to identify any themes concerning mental health support offered to police officers and staff following a critical or major incident. The themes identified will provide a narrative for how officers and staff feel about mental health support offered to them answering to its effectiveness.

There are a few limitations identified with the sampling group from the Newport area. Firstly, the sampling group will be used from the same area, meaning there is a likely hood that a lot of officers and staff have shared experiences in dealing with critical and major incidents. This does not necessarily mean all suffer with mental health problems but, could result in similar answers if officers and staff have dealt with the same incidents. Secondly, due to staff turn around within the Newport area, current officers tend to be a lot younger in service, this will mean that within the sampling group there will not be as many officers nearing the ends of their careers; In the literature review it was identified that officers nearing the end of their careers have more tendencies to have mental health problems. This will limit the true reflection of the results as newer officers may not have attended many critical or major incidents, or being younger in service, have not seen a negative effect on their mental health. Similarly, there are no retired officers within the sample group who again would have more experience and more exposure to mental health issues. Thirdly, the sampling group is very small and consists of around 50 persons based within the Newport area. As such the results of the research will only give an indication for how officers and staff within the Newport area may feel. Other forces may use the TRIM sessions more or less effectively, and as such would not give an accurate representation of how officers feel about a referral system that is used nationally. Lastly due to the sensitivity around potential mental health problems in officers and staff, the survey must remain anonymous. Participants will have to reply to the survey in a way to protect their anonymity. This will have to be done through participants accessing the survey in an online link as appose to participants sending the results back to the researcher individually.

To conclude this chapter, research has been identified and defined as the consideration of a particular subject using scientific methods to address the subject question. With research being either quantitative, the collection of numbers; or qualitative, the collection of words. A survey was then identified as the best way to collect research for the questions being asked during this research paper, have police officers and staff experienced mental health issues following a critical or major incident? Have police officers and staff received any mental health support following a critical or major incident? How effective was the mental health support offered following a critical or major

incident? A survey was identified as the best way to gather information for this research paper due to the ease of analysing the data from surveys by putting the information gathered into graphs and forms. These forms of analysis will offer readers a visual aide when identifying the main questions asked within this research paper. The sample group for this dissertation was identified as a shift of police officers and staff working within the Newport area, who's number would be around 50 participants. This sampling group was chosen as it would offer targeted sampling and hold relevant opinions in the questions being asked by this dissertation. Targeted sampling is where researchers identify specific participants through their characteristics and experiences that can provide insight to the research question asked. Several limitations to the research have arisen when using the sample group and answering the main questions of the research paper. These generally being that Newport is a small force with a young work force. This means that when compared with the literature review, experienced officers tend to develop more mental health problems; Newport being a young shift may mean that more officers may not have experience major or critical incidents. However, with the limited research available to address if officers take mental health support offered to them and the limited research on how effective mental health support is to police officers and staff, this research will be able to address these questions within the Newport area and allow further research to be produced into why at a later point and to expand its research into other workforce areas.

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