

**AN EXPLORATION INTO THE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION STRATEGIES  
OF FEMALE OFFICERS AT THE CALGARY POLICE SERVICE: ARE FEMALE  
OFFICERS OVERLOOKED WITHIN THE PROMOTIONAL PROCESS?**

by

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*Submitted in partial fulfilment of  
the requirements for the degree of*

**BACHELOR OF ARTS**

in

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
(Honours)**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Since the beginning, policing has been a male-dominated para-military profession. Through the increasing participation of women in the workforce, policing has and continues to grow as a diverse organization. This research is focused on the position of women in the police hierarchy in relation to their positive and negative experiences. Using only secondary data, this study builds onto existing information concerning female officers within the Calgary Police Service. Additionally, this thesis demonstrates the theoretical context of the glass ceiling and functionalist theories in the examination of female participation in the police promotional process.

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## **Glossary and Acronyms**

**CPS.** The Calgary Police Service is a municipal police force in Calgary, Alberta. The force is comprised of officers, both male and female, of all ranks.

**Recruitment.** Recruitment, in the broadest sense, is the addition of new individuals to populations or to successive life-cycle stages; in this case, recruitment is the introduction of new officers into the police force (Caley, et al., 1996).

**Retention.** Retention is the process of implementing positives so that people remain in a job. Agencies can increase retention through input decision making and other evaluation and feedback opportunities (Wilson, et al., 2010).

**Promotional Process.** A process that involves the advancement in rank based on an individual's performance and success. The promotional process allows members of CPS to choose their career path (Calgary Police Service, 2013).

**Tokenism.** In the law enforcement profession, tokens are considered to be gender or ethnic groups that account for less than 15% of the population of the department (Harrington, 2014).

**Glass Ceiling.** A phenomenon in the career development of females - a barrier so subtle that is transparent, yet so strong that it prevents women from moving up in the management hierarchy (Shea, 2008).

**Functionalism.** The functionalist theory, also known as structural-functionalism, focuses on the description of the existing division of labour between the sexes; and the functions of this division for the maintenance of the family itself and other social systems, such as those based on occupation and personality (Hetlinger, 1979).

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

### Chapter Overview

The early history of policing in Canada can be traced back to 1651, where the first police officers were appointed as night watchmen in Quebec City (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 350). It was not until the early 1970s, that there began an increase in females entering the law enforcement profession (Harrington, 2014, p. 1). Police forces were given encouragement from women's liberation movements and organizations to hire more women. The rise of a crime-control model of policing furthered the ideal of a "paramilitary command structure, reactive response, and strict adherence to the definition of the law conflicted with the perceived roles that women could serve in policing" (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 351). However, with the rise of well-educated and career-oriented women, "coupled with legal requirements to ensure equitable opportunities for employment of women in government agencies, police organizations began to creep toward equitable representation of women in policing" (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 351). On a national scale, police agencies are striving to create a more diverse and impartial workforce. Specifically, the CPS has taken several steps to improve the recruitment, retention, and promotional process of female and minority officers. The CPS engages targeted recruitment policies to encourage the enrollment of women in the male-dominated profession of policing. In addition, retention strategies are employed in attempt to retain female officers as well as promote career growth. The promotional process from which the CPS follows, is a long and rigorous procedure and typically does not bear much female participation in comparison to that of men. However, as noted in the Canadian Police Resources of 2016, the presence of women in higher ranks continues to increase (Statistics Canada, 2017a) across police services.



This project is divided into the following sections. Chapter one includes detailed information on the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female officers in Canada, more specifically, within the Calgary Police force. The introduction of the topic includes information related to the lack of accurate representation of women within a male-dominated field. The research question, along with the rationale and significance of the study are included in this chapter in order to clarify the focus of this work and the importance to the law enforcement profession. The scope and structure are also included to articulate the approach and layout that this thesis will follow. Chapter two covers the methodology used in this research project, including a case study, a secondary data analysis, and a literature review. This chapter will also cover topics such as the ethics involved in this project, as well as the limitations of the methodology used. Chapter three consists of the literature review which examines the themes of recruitment, retention, and promotion. Recruitment will be examined through the role of patriarchy within modern society, through the barriers faced by female officers, and the advantages to hiring female officers. Retention will encompass the work-life balance faced by women, the gender discrimination involved in a male-dominated profession, and the importance of organizational support for female officers. Lastly, the promotional process will include a discussion of shift-work, the importance of female confidence, and tokenism within the workforce. Chapter four analyzes two theoretical approaches linked to the success of women in the workforce. The glass ceiling theory touches on heteronormative gender roles, women in traditionally male-dominated work, and how to break the glass ceiling that holds women back. The functionalist theory portion of the chapter will look at the traditional heteronormative family roles, Talcott Parsons' perspective of the family, as well as share some critiques of this theory in relation to this research project. The last chapter includes the discussion and conclusion, where

the research question will be addressed once again. This chapter will also cover the research implications, limitations, and future considerations.

### **Background**

Despite efforts to hire and promote women in policing, their representation relative to their numbers in the general population remain low and continue to fail to meet parity with men (Wilson & Whetstone, 2007, p. 130). Likewise, the representation of female officers among higher-rank positions relative to their representation within law enforcement agencies remains inadequate. Research has often examined the recruitment and retention of female officers, however it has not yet examined how these strategies are directly related to the promotional process.

“Canada’s first policewoman was hired in Vancouver and Edmonton in 1912, followed by similar hirings in Toronto in 1913 and in Montreal in 1915” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 350). During that time, women were typically not issued uniforms, as “gender stereotyping characterized the duties of these early female police officers, relegating them mainly to the roles of social workers and guardians of public morality” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 350). Today, there continues to be a strong patriarchal influence in the Calgary Police force, for which various barriers to the recruitment of women may be the result. Nonetheless, there are numerous advantages to the recruitment and retention of women in a male-dominated profession. “In 2016, the 14,545 female officers in Canada accounted for 21% of all officers” (Statistics Canada, 2017b). Once recruited, the retention of women in male-dominated work has proven to be challenging. The acknowledgement of a different work-life balance between men and women is crucial in examining the exclusive hardship experienced by women in the police force. Additionally, with the continuously increasing number of female officers in a male-dominated

profession, gender discrimination is prominent. According to Harrington (2014), “female police officers often adapt to the expectation by citizens and coworkers to maintain and demonstrate feminine traits by accepting a male-dominated culture, men’s protectiveness and restrictions on duties” (p. 27). This in turn causes a copious amount of stress for women in constant competition to prove their worth. With that being said, organizational support is necessary in the retention of female officers. Specifically, “mentoring is utilized to develop and retain employees and has been reported to aid in advancement, improved performance and satisfaction in the workplace” (Harrington, 2014, p. 125).

The promotional process is based upon the candidate pool, specifically their qualifications, experience, and personal strengths. Although the promotional process within the CPS is quite extensive and lengthy, “depending upon the recency of revision, police promotion policies are likely void of female perspective” (Shea, 2008, p. 7). Higher-ranking positions often require a change in shift-work, which conflicts with child-rearing responsibilities. Furthermore, the choice to apply for a promotion and further one’s career is a big step and requires a level of confidence and determination. Many women lack the confidence to pursue a promotion, and often prefer to get more experience and build up their seniority before attempting to make changes. Moreover, “perceptions of ‘tokenism’ among female police officers influenced the decision to participate in the promotion process” (Archbold & Hassell, 2009, p. 58). Through an extensive literature review of recruitment, retention, and promotion strategies there appears to be a gap in knowledge when it comes to the relation between all three themes. “Research related to female promotions within the police environment is limited” (Shea, 2008, p. 5), especially when analyzed through the impact of the strategies used for recruitment and retention of female officers. The use of secondary data obtained through a case study done on the Calgary Police,

provides this research with quantitative data regarding police officers. However, this research proposes a further qualitative analysis of the promotional process, through the lens of society's patriarchal strict gender roles that continue to disproportionately disadvantage women in waged and unwaged work.

### **Research Question**

For decades, the recruitment of women has been a concern and a priority for law enforcement (Morrow, 2015, p. 1). Law enforcement has worked, and continues to work towards a diverse and representational police force. The retention of female officers becomes crucial in order to achieve a diversified police force. "Diversity promotes multiple viewpoints, different styles of policing, cooperation and citizen support, and impartiality in policing" (Harrington, 2014, p. 16). Coupled with the retention of female officers among all ranks, law enforcement attempts to achieve an accurate representation of women within the promotional process. The question then lies in the promotional process itself. Research has often examined the recruitment, retention, and promotion of women, independently. However, women may be overlooked in the promotional process due to the strategies law enforcement applies within the recruitment and retention of these women. "Police agencies must find ways to adjust and incorporate flexibility in order to provide for a pool of the highest-qualified future commanders rather than one which is necessarily biased in terms of gender" (Wilson & Whetstone, 2007, p. 141).

This study will attempt to address whether female police officers within the CPS are being overlooked in comparison to their male counterparts. Within the promotional process, there are several factors that lead to the underrepresentation of women in general. The problem addressed in this study is that previous research regarding the promotion of female officers rarely

incorporates the importance of recruitment and retention initiatives, and the unique limitations that pertain to women.

*Through the examination of recruitment and retention strategies employed by the Calgary Police, are female officers being overlooked within the promotional process?*

## **Rationale and Significance**

### **Rationale**

The purpose of this study is to uncover the potential rationale for which women are underrepresented throughout the various ranks of the Calgary Police. Law enforcement administers procedures for encouraging the recruitment and retention of women in policing. This study aims to highlight the hardships women face in a male-dominated occupation, and the effects these difficulties have on the promotion process. The chosen research employs the use of a literature review, as well as a secondary data analysis and a case study of the Calgary Police. These methods were chosen in order to gather the existing research and incorporate data from a specific police force. A more detailed account of the use of these given research methods will be provided throughout the following chapters.

### **Significance**

“As diversity within the law enforcement community grows, the relationship between the citizens and law enforcement improve, which results in a better quality of life in the communities that are served” (Morrow, 2015, p. 20). Gender representation among all ranks of a police force must be demonstrated in order to depict the given population. Despite the proportion increase of female officers (Statistics Canada, 2017a), women are dramatically underrepresented; this evidence is heightened in positions such as superintendent, inspector, staff sergeant, sergeant, and detective. An inquiry into the gap in knowledge regarding the influence of recruitment and retention strategies on the promotion of female officers may provide insight into the barriers that inhibit women from performing in the same manner as their male counterparts. Gender roles “derive from long-standing social-structural arrangements and cultural ideas that lead us to

accept without question that so-called important jobs can only be done in one way to be considered professional and to remain competitive” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 356).

Ultimately, concepts and strategies should always be questioned in order to be improved. There is great potential that the information gathered in this research can be applied to the examination of society’s heteronormative gender roles through police recruitment, retention, and promotion strategies.

## **Scope and Structure**

### **Scope**

The intent of the literature review was to obtain as much information as possible about the criteria that impacts the recruitment, retention, and promotion of police officers, namely female officers. Through the statistical analysis of data from the Calgary Police, as well as police data across Canada from the past seven years, it is possible to examine the past and current trends. While it is evident that there has been an increase in female officers throughout the recent years, their numbers continue to fall very short as compared to their male counterparts (Statistics Canada, 2017b). In addition, the number of female officers in higher ranks is not representative in relation to their numbers in law enforcement, nor is it representative of the population for which they serve.

### **Structure**

The structure of this research flows directly from the information that was gathered from using the proposed research methods. Through the methodology used, which will be further explained in the next chapter, the information gave rise to the structure of this thesis. Additionally, a theoretical framework is applied to provide an analysis of police procedures. Following the introduction, the second chapter discusses the methodology in which this study will employ. A description of each research method will be provided, along with ethics and the potential limitations of the research findings.

Chapter three consists of the literature review, where the main themes will be explored in detail. The recruitment strategies for female officers will be dissected through the role of patriarchy. Correspondingly, numerous barriers to female recruitment will be mentioned,



coupled with the advantages of hiring women in law enforcement. Retention strategies will then be explored, as women tend to have a difficult time balancing a busy work and personal life schedule. Gender discrimination will be mentioned, as working in a male-dominated sphere does not constitute a simple task. With that being said, organizational support within law enforcement can create a healthy and positive work environment. Lastly, the promotional process within the CPS will be examined through the difficulty of shiftwork, the importance of female confidence, and the use of women as tokens for the institution.

Chapter four includes the theoretical approach, where the glass ceiling theory and the functionalist theory will be applied to the study. The glass ceiling theory will be enforced through heteronormative gender roles and the examination of women in the male-dominated profession of policing. As the number of female officers continue to increase, women work towards breaking the glass ceiling that hangs overhead. On the other hand, this chapter will also include the overview of the functionalist theory. This theory will be explored through the traditional heteronormative family roles, as well as Talcott Parsons' perspective of the family. As society continues to evolve and move away from the traditional, structural-functionalist ideals of gender roles, critiques of this theory arise.

Lastly, chapter five will include a discussion and conclusion. The research question will be addressed once again, along with the implications and limitations of this study. Considerations for future research will be provided in this chapter.

## **Chapter Summary**

The research identified several factors that restrict the recruitment and retention of female police officers. As indicated by the brief review of research, the recruitment and retention strategies have an impact on the career growth of female officers. There are several underlying factors that are taken into consideration when female officers are approaching a promotion; such factors may result in women being overlooked within the promotional process. The glass ceiling theory outlines the heteronormative gender roles and their influence on the lives of women. The functionalist theory applies the traditional, heteronormative family roles and their limitations for women in the workforce. The proposed method of reviewing literature and secondary data allows for the existing information to be examined in a new light, which in turn, allows for gaps in knowledge to emerge. The proposed research was beneficial to the professional field by highlighting the underrepresentation of female officers among all ranks, as well as outline the potential strategies to engage for better portrayal.

## CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

### Chapter Overview

The objective of this research project is to examine the recruitment, retention, and promotional processes of the CPS. This analysis will be done from a lens of society's patriarchal strict gender roles that continue to disproportionately disadvantage women in waged and unwaged work. With that being said, this research objective is explanatory or relational research. According to Given (2008), "the term explanatory research implies that the research in question is intended to explain, rather than simply to describe, the phenomena studied" (p. 324).

This research study is a qualitative literature review, where the method is to read and review the literature that currently exists on these topics. "A methodological review of past literature is a crucial endeavor for any academic research" (Levy & Ellis, 2006, p. 181). Throughout this study, a secondary analysis was conducted using existing data tables from Statistics Canada that itemize police membership across Canada, Alberta, and Calgary, over time. In addition, a secondary analysis of CPS data provided by Superintendent Vaughan was done, which includes a table of the number of officers, male and female, hired over the past seven years. With that being said, a case study was also implemented using the CPS.

There are several variables present in this research question that are necessary to conceptualize and operationalize; these include recruitment strategies, retention strategies, promotional strategies, the CPS and their policies. Recruitment strategies refer to the process of attracting and selecting appropriate, qualified people. According to Caley, et al. (1996), "recruitment, in the broadest sense, is the addition of new individuals to populations or to successive life-cycle stages within populations" (p. 477). Once recruited, retention strategies within the workplace are used to maintain the attractiveness and quality of the job. Retention is

the process of implementing positives so people remain in the job. According to Wilson, et al. (2010), “agencies can increase retention through greater employee engagement, including efforts to increase employee input in decision making and other evaluation and feedback opportunities” (p. 20). A promotion within a job is the advancement in rank based on an individual’s performance and success. The promotional process within the Calgary Police Service allows members to choose their own desired career path. “Members seeking advancement can opt to compete for promotion to either the rank of sergeant (supervisor) or detective (investigator)” (Calgary Police Service, 2013, para. 6).

The CPS is the municipal police force within Calgary, Alberta. This includes officers, male and female, of all ranks. The CPS has their own policies on recruitment strategies, retention, and promotions within the force. In order to recruit more women for the police force, CPS has tried to get more women currently working in the force to do public speaking in order to encourage female recruitment. Great attention is brought into the diversity of the job, females are typically drawn in by the flexible positions available. The numbers of female recruits have continued to increase within the past 10 years. Given this information, CPS’ retention strategies currently have to do with the diversity and flexibility of the job. Men and women are capable of changing positions within the force depending on their desires and lifestyle. The promotional process begins with an application process that allows for the best candidates to be chosen for the given position. The process starts with a written exam where the applicant must get about 70% to pass, then there is an assessment of the officer’s eligibility to act, a written application, an interview, and a work history review. The interview and work history review are used as a 360 tool; there is an interview with you, your superior, two of your chosen peers, and two peers of their choice in order to gain a full insight on your work history and work ethic. Each year this

process is reviewed; in 2015, unconscious bias training was added for the boards and have ensured diversity in boards for a number of years now (Superintendent Vaughan, personal communication, September 15, 2017). There have been no other major changes in the past few years.

In order to operationalize these variables, this study used academic and theoretical literature to uncover information regarding female officers about gender roles, norms, and patriarchy. It also analyzed justice-focused literature about police culture. In addition, the research study looked into the Calgary Police Service's strategies for hiring and promoting more female officers and examined the possible effects of masculinity and patriarchy on the careers of female officers, by reviewing the academic and theoretical literature.

### **Case Study**

This research was based primarily on the case study of the CPS and their recruitment, retention, and promotional processes concerning female officers. "A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life content, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Woodside, 2010, p. 1). In this case, the phenomenon concerns the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female police officers; the boundaries between these processes and the lack of female officers is not quite evident. The purpose of this study implementing a case study was to uncover and understand the possible rationale behind the omission of promoted female police officers.

### **Secondary Data Analysis**

This study encompassed the use of a secondary analysis of existing data tables from Statistics Canada that itemize police membership across Canada, Alberta, and Calgary, over

time. In addition, a secondary analysis of CPS data was conducted, that was provided by Superintendent Vaughan, of the CPS, which comprises of a table of the number of officers, male and female, hired over the past 7 years. “Qualitative secondary analysis entails the use of already produced data to develop new social scientific and/or methodological understandings” (Irwin, 2013, p. 295). In this way, this study utilized the existing data in order to further explore the proposed research question.

## **Literature Review**

For this study, information regarding the CPS’ recruitment, retention, and promotional strategies was gathered. Information concerning police culture and the influence of gender roles, norms, and patriarchy has also been reviewed through the use of a literature review. A literature review provides insight on the research topic through the examination of existing sources. Qualitative research methods, specifically literature review, in this case are beneficial in order to increase the understanding on the topic and discover possible gaps in the existing research.

## **Ethics**

For the purpose of this thesis, ethics approval was not needed as the methodology used is comprised of a literature review of material already analyzed by others.

## **Limitations**

While there are several strengths and benefits to a literature review methodology, there are also some limitations. For example, examining existing data may not provide all the answers to the questions this study has set out to answer and there may be some holes in the existing literature where more data needs to be analyzed. On the other hand, when examining literature,

there is often a problem of an excess in material. While on the search for literature, it may become time consuming and difficult to sort through the relevant sources and information. Another limitation is the secondary analysis, as opposed to a primary analysis done through interviews. Interviews require an ethics approval, but may uncover more relevant and useful material. The limitations pertaining to this study in particular will be further explored in the last chapter of this thesis, followed by future considerations.

### **Chapter Summary**

By conducting a qualitative literature review, it will be possible to examine and build onto existing data. In other words, this study will aid in understanding the existing data and be able to create a theoretical foundation. Furthermore, this research study will be able to substantiate the research problem by highlighting areas within the literature that require more research and analysis. In addition to the existing literature review, supplementary information will be provided through the secondary analysis of CPS data and through the case study of the CPS recruitment, retention, and promotional strategies.

## **CHAPTER III: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Chapter Overview**

This chapter encompasses an extensive literature review around recruitment, retention, and promotional processes regarding female police officers. The CPS, like most other police services, follows distinct strategies to hire, hold onto, and promote their officers. Unfortunately, there are a lack of studies exploring female officers in Canadian police organizations (Magnus, 2017, pp. 4-5). First and foremost, this chapter will examine the recruitment of female officers and evaluate the role of patriarchy within that process. Another important concept is the barriers that women face within the recruitment process, or in other words, what keeps women from joining the police force. There are several advantages to having women on the force.

Additionally, this chapter will analyze the retention of female officers; more specifically, the work-life balance of these officers, the gender discrimination that a male-dominated profession entails, and the importance of organizational support. “A clear understanding of the experiences females face in law enforcement would allow police agencies to develop ideas which would help to retain and recruit qualified individuals” (Dudley, 2015, p. 11). Lastly, this chapter will explain the promotional process within the CPS and how that affects female officers wishing to advance in their career. “Research related to female promotions within the police environment is limited and no quantitative research specific to participation by gender in the police promotion system could be found” (Shea, 2008, p. 5). This section will explore the impact of shift work, female confidence, and tokenism of women in the workforce.



## Recruitment

The recruitment of resourceful, qualified officers is key to a successful and efficient police force, especially in large cities such as Calgary, Alberta. With that being said, it is necessary to recruit a diverse group of applicants in order to mirror the diversified community in which Calgary provides a home. The recruitment of women and minorities has been a priority for law enforcement for decades; however, women today continue to be dramatically underrepresented in law enforcement (Morrow, 2015, p. 6). “Canada’s first policewoman was hired in Vancouver and Edmonton in 1912, followed by similar hirings in Toronto in 1913 and in Montreal in 1915” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 350). Several decades later, the CPS hired their first female officer in 1946, followed by Canada’s federal police service, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police hiring their first female in 1974 (Magnus, 2017, p. 1). The roles and duties of these early female police officers were generally characterized by the patriarchal society for which they served. Women were typically relegated to the “roles of social workers and guardians of public morality, which was reinforced by not issuing these early police women with either uniforms or other police paraphernalia” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 350). Policing today continues to be a male-dominated profession, where the “embedded masculine beliefs of the culture direct police organizations and actively influence the leadership behaviors and styles of employees” (Magnus, 2017, p. 1). The incorporation of female officers into all ranks of the police service continues to be a slow and ongoing process. Many women find an appeal in the diversity that policing provides; there are opportunities for change within career without leaving the realm of policing itself. Nonetheless, there is a fear that women in policing will never be awarded the same opportunities as men and will therefore be stuck in their awarded administrative and social work positions. Further contributing to the decline in female

recruitment was the rise of the “professional” or crime-control model of policing that arose throughout the 1920s and into the 1940s (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 351), and continues to influence policing today. “This model’s emphasis on a paramilitary command structure, reactive response, and strict adherence to the definition of the law conflicted with the perceived roles that women could serve in policing” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 351). Law enforcement has slowly began to work towards a more equitable representation of women in policing, through specifically tailored recruitment efforts. According to Gordon (2004), “those organizations who fail to adopt new recruitment strategies will fail to attract an applicant pool large enough or qualified enough to meet their organizational needs” (p. 20). Despite distinct recruitment efforts to attract more women into law enforcement, the male-dominated profession poses several barriers and restrictions. Nevertheless, the inclusion and acceptance of female police officers brings with it considerable advantages.

### **The Role of Patriarchy**

Hill (2009), explains patriarchy as “an organization, institution, or society in which power, social control, material wealth, and high social status accrue predominantly to males rather than females” (p. 629). Majstorović and Lassen (2011) add that patriarchy has been around for thousands of years and can only be upheld if women cooperate (p. 1).

Generally, the experience of female officers in Canada conforms to the experience of women in other traditionally male-dominated professions (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 360) such as corrections and the military. The underrepresentation of women in policing causes the profession to be primarily populated by men, which in turn, causes the organization to subscribe to and perpetuate masculine values, gendered norms, and principles. “Conceptually, hegemonic masculinity explains how and why men maintain dominant social roles over women” (Morrow,

2015, p. 11). As policing remains an occupation associated with traditional masculine values, it is often accounted as an “all boys club” hostile to women and feminine values (Cordner & Cordner, 2011, p. 210). These masculine values tend to embrace violence and strength, while minimizing feminine values such as support and communication. “Researchers have uncovered how the masculine culture in the police adhered to by leaders and administrators has prevented a large number of females from feeling accepted” (Magnus, 2017, p. 1).

According to Acker (1992), “gender is theorized as a basic principle of social structure and cultural interpretation” (p. 565). Acker also described the term “gendered institutions”, meaning that “gender is present in the processes, practices, images and ideologies, and distributions of power in the various sectors of social life” (p. 567). With this in mind, the only institution in which women have a central role is with the family. This theory focuses on the institutionalized inequality faced by women, and challenges the notion that organizations can be gender-neutral. According to Magnus (2017), gender is a process that involves “the examinations of family, personal relationships, workplaces, the media, and socialization, and how those areas influence the understanding and development of masculinity and femininity” (p. 21).

The placement of men and women within the organization, as well as their career success, is largely dependent upon the masculine and feminine traits they exhibit on the job. The distinct culture within policing is carried on through social interactions and social learning. The “learning phase” begins in recruitment, where behavior that supports sexism, racism, homophobia, alcohol indulgence, and dirty jokes must be accepted by women in order to fit into the police culture (Magnus, 2017, p. 26). The police culture is accepted and maintained by select few who have the power and influence to impose the same among others.

According to the traditional “gender model” explanation of female job behavior, “women who enter non-traditional, male-dominated occupations are governed by their prior socialization to identify primarily with their family role as opposed to their job role” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 355). Gender roles derive from social-structural understandings and cultural concepts, resulting in women fulfilling specific roles within professional occupations without questioning the underlying reasons. Consequently, women are placed in limited positions within male-dominated jobs due to the assumption that they will always have a greater commitment to their familial roles. Woodbury and Brown (2009), explain that the availability of jobs for women within a workplace is based on two functions. First, it is based on the importance of the family or domestic role compared to the work or career goal. The “long-standing cultural stereotypes about which role will inevitably be *more* important to women” has a definite impact on the availability of a job, coupled with “the cultural belief that the employment of too many women in so-called professionalism and competitiveness of the organization” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 356). “Women entering non-traditional occupations can therefore expect to experience treatment based not on *who* they are, but rather *what* they are believed to represent in terms of future job performance and commitment” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 356).

In reality, women typically do not demonstrate a lower level of commitment to their career in comparison to men. “For one thing, women have been proven to be just as competent, if not better at some roles, than their male counterparts” (Wilson & Blackburn, 2014, p. 88). Additionally, “much of the research reported similar motivations among men and women who became police officers” (Raganella & White, 2004, p. 502). Stereotypes often describe men’s motivations as those dedicated to power and authority, whereas women’s are linked to helping others and community care. While there are some men and women who conform to these

motivational assumptions, this may not be the case for others. “Males and females reported the same factors as being the most influential, though in slightly different order: opportunity to help people, job security, job benefits, opportunity for career advancement, early retirement, excitement of the work, and to fight crime” (Raganella & White, 2004, p. 505). Kringen (2014), “found that female recruits were less likely to be influenced by police officers who were friends and family, and that female recruits were more motivated by opportunities for advancement” (p. 24).

According to Prenzler and Sinclair (2013), “equity in policing supports the global mission to create genuine equality and independence for women, including through employment and better delivery of social services” (p. 117). Within policing, the gender equity agenda “has also been challenged to some extent by research indicating that a staged approach may be more successful in strongly patriarchal societies” (Prenzler & Sinclair, 2013, p. 117). A staged approach would involve female officers working largely with other women and children in an attempt to gradually integrate a cultural acceptance.

### **Barriers to the Recruitment of Female Officers**

Policing has always been, and continues to be a male-dominated profession; it is for this reason that “females have been faced with a multitude of barriers entering into law enforcement because of the traditional values and norms of their male-counterparts” (Dudley, 2015, p. 37). Although the current policing environment is more supportive and accepting of female officers, these officers continue to face difficulties fighting the masculine and archaic belief system, and experience issues with family and work life balance, the physical demands of the jobs, and gender discrimination in relation to their overall acceptance (Magnus, 2017, p. 23). Women are generally tasked with the primary role of the household caregiver, forcing them to play a dual-

role through family and work. Finding a family-work balance can be challenging, not to mention with the shift work that policing entails. Gordon (2014), explains that “shift work may be viewed as “non-family friendly” and many skilled people may disregard the law enforcement profession as a whole” (p. 14). Women with families who are looking for employment must take into account both their home life and their work life. “Police officers work varying shifts, and must frequently sacrifice nights and holidays” (Magnus, 2017, p. 4). This reality is not as easily acceptable for women who must also care for a family; while men may also face this same issue, it is not as commonly experienced and society doesn’t expect men to be the primary parent in childcare. On the other hand, female officers wishing to start a family also face many of the same barriers. “Several researchers have revealed that the multiple challenges faced by female police officers exacerbate when they become pregnant” (Magnus, 2017, p. 51). The maternity leave process in policing has proven to be difficult as police organizations have yet to improve pregnancy policies to better benefit female officers. Magnus (2017), mentioned “the necessity for progressive policies to be implemented and supported by not only the leaders of the police, but by all members within policing” (p. 51). Furthermore, “once police mothers return to work from maternity leave, they are expected to prove themselves” (Magnus, 2017, p. 52). Female officers are often given administrative tasks or positions of less demand in order to “get back into things” as the organization feels they may have lost their skill set. In fact, “many women keep very active up until their due date, but the manner in which a police department helps or hinders a female police officer determines how well an officer can do their job before and after giving birth” (Harper, 2016, p. 17). Physical fitness tests prove to be a barrier for women entering the policing organization; in addition to this original stress, women who take a maternity leave are encouraged to continue working on their fitness in order to stay fit and ready for duty. Maternity

leave is prescribed by law; the need for women to stay active throughout their pregnancy in order to keep up with their career is not prescribed by law, but rather, insinuated and encouraged by the organization. With that being said, it is up to the organization to provide the proper support and encouragement to help these women resume their position upon their return to work. “In several cases, female officers with families feel they are letting their partner, team, and organization down by taking maternity leave or seeking flexible work options and shifts to care for their family” (Magnus, 2017, p. 43). Therefore, the organization as well as the individual’s family and friends, must make certain that they feel it is acceptable to have both a career and a family to come home to at the end of the day. Female officers should be encouraged to flourish and grow both career-wise and family-wise. Magnus (2017), found that there is little research supporting police mothers in Canadian organizations, and the little existing research has found motherhood and policing to be incompatible (p. 52). Following more research and organizational changes, motherhood and policing could make advancements to eventually become more adaptable.

The recruitment process involves several steps, including physical agility and strength training and tests. “Physical agility and strength testing are used as a way to screen out weak candidates, and historically it has been women applicants who have been disproportionately screened out through the hiring process” (Wilson & Blackburn, 2014, pp. 86-87). Notably, it is often the upper body strength that women lack that causes them to fall behind in the physical portion of recruitment. It should be noted that “physical strength has not been shown to predict either general police effectiveness or the ability to handle dangerous situations successfully” (Morrow, 2015, p. 18). Female officers demonstrate different ways of dealing with confrontations, often using communication skills over physical abilities. Cordner and Cordner

(2011), state that critics question the scientific validity of police academy physical requirements. Realistically, if police organizations insisted on optimal fitness for all officers, they would require consistent physical fitness throughout their officer's careers however, few organizations actually do. Alternatively, police organizations could reinstitute the use of gender norms in conjunction with physical fitness standards (Cordner & Cordner, 2011, p. 221). Recruitment personnel must recognize that brute strength may not always be necessary in order to pass the physical test, women who lack the upper body strength can engage techniques that allow them to accomplish the same activities without using solely strength (Cordner & Cordner, 2011, p. 221).

As a male-dominated profession, policing continues to struggle with the complete acceptance of female officers. Policing is built on masculine traits and the traditional expectations that follow; "these traditional expectations still persist and promote the ideal of the tough-as-nails male street cop as the only way to deal with criminals and citizens alike" (Harper, 2016, p. 13). Female officers that do not fit into this stereotype must continuously prove themselves and their worth. In addition, they may be seen as trespassers in their own profession. Male officers that do not want females joining their "all boys club" will often find ways to "isolate them, keep secrets from them, deny them positions, and treat them as an outcast instead of treating them like they treat their other male counterparts" (Dudley, 2015, p. 37). In the face of gender discrimination and harassment, women are forced to either assimilate into the police culture, transfer areas, or resign. Although many female officers believe progress has been made in lessening negative reactions to women in law enforcement, they still perceive gender discrimination from fellow officers, including superiors, and the communities that they serve (Wilson & Blackburn, 2014, p. 86). It is for this reason that many women feel they do not have an equal chance in moving up the ranks and achieving their career aspirations in the police



agency. Without an ambition to succeed in policing, the recruitment and retention of female officers becomes challenging, despite the numerous advantages women bring to the police force.

### **Advantages to Hiring Female Officers**

There are various benefits to hiring female officers, namely representation. Calgary's community is made up of a diverse group of individuals, therefore in order for the municipal police force to effectively serve their community, they must be representative of that community for which they serve. Morrow (2015) explained that "a department that is representative of society's demographic makeup ultimately leads to the police being seen as an impartial and professional service" (p. 20). Diversity within law enforcement ultimately improves the service to the community as the relationships between the organization and its citizens grows.

Unfortunately, the benefits that women bring to the force are often overlooked or underestimated. Female officers tend to enforce a community-oriented style of policing, which "has been praised for improving relationships, lessening tension that may exist between the police and the community that they serve" (Wilson & Blackburn, 2014, p. 88). According to the National Center for Women in Policing (2002), an increase in the number of women in all ranks of law enforcement will "reduce police excessive force, strengthen community policing reforms, and improve police response to violence against women" (p. 9).

With the incorporation of more women into the policing profession, positive change is enacted through shedding light on new styles of policing. Wilson and Blackburn (2014), explain that "increasing the number of women in a department will serve to decrease sexual harassment and gender discrimination and bring about valuable changes in policy that impact all officers, male and female" (p. 89). These effective changes in policy can result in better treatment of female officers already working in policing, as well as those looking to join a police force but

that are held back by the numerous stereotypes and negative attitudes towards women in a masculine profession. That being said, the perceptions of women in policing can be positively affected, leading to more women choosing policing over other career paths. Moreover, “the presence of women police also provides an alternative contact point for victims of crime confronted by the well-documented insensitivity of many male police” (Prenzler & Sinclair, 2013, p. 117). Women are typically less aggressive than their male counterparts and do not employ use of force by default; instead, female officers resort to communication skills. Magnus (2017), explained that “female police officers can defuse conflict through their communication skills and in turn, generate fewer public complaints than male officers who immediately become aggressive and violent” (p. 22). By the same token, “employing more female officers will improve the law enforcement response to violence against women” (Morrow, 2015, p. 19). Through the better engagement of communication skills, female officers “have been found to be better able to respond to and diffuse domestic and family violence incidents as well as better able to assist victims, as the majority of domestic violence victims are also female” (Wilson & Blackburn, 2014, pp. 88-89). Female officers are better equipped to de-escalate potentially violent situations through the use of their interpersonal skills, rather than resorting to the need for physical confrontation. Through a more community-oriented style of policing, women can bring about positive change and therefore, improve police organizations. According to Morrow (2015), communication, problem-solving, and cooperation with community members are all hallmarks of community-style policing, and are all areas for which women officers receive better qualifications (p. 18).

## **Retention**

The collection of police officer statistics began in 1986, where the proportion of female officers rested at a low 4% (Statistics Canada, 2017b). Since then, the proportion of sworn officers has increased, as well as the proportion of female officers specifically. In 2016, there existed 14,545 female police officers in Canada, accounting for 21% of all sworn officers (Statistics Canada, 2017a). This increase in female officers has also implied the increased retention of female officers, as there more women across all ranks of the police force. In 2016, female officers in Canada made up 13% of all senior officers, 18% of all non-commissioned officers, and 23% of all constables (Statistics Canada, 2017a). Law enforcement, as well as other organizations, “recognize that turnover is a major concern because of the high cost of hiring and training new personnel as well as the cost of lost work ” (Howard, Donofrio & Boles, 2004, p. 384). In order to avoid high turnover rates, police agencies must take into account the experiences and treatment of their officers, namely their female officers. This section will explore the influence of work on women’s daily lives, their experiences at work, as well as how more organizational support could greatly benefit the retention of those female officers encountering issues with police work.

## Work-Life Balance

The traditional family of a working father and a stay-at-home mother is no longer the norm, as women now make up almost half of the workforce (Licea, 2014, p. 71). On that note, “society, as well as the economy, cannot survive without women in the workforce, but with both genders almost on par in labor force participation, the issue of balancing work and life must be addressed” (Licea, 2014, p. 72). One of the biggest issues for women in the workforce is children, women typically enter the workforce in their childbearing years and often must sacrifice their career in order to have a family. The shift work found in policing has proven to be a challenge for women raising a family; the dual role that women play causes conflict between both familial and employment roles. “The standard schedule of 12-hour shifts, with four days on, four days off, is not conducive to female officers managing both a career and a family” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 361). The struggle to balance shift work and a family is known as a work-family conflict, where the participation in one domain has a negative impact on the other. According to Howard, Donofrio, and Boles (2004), “work-family conflict is defined as inter-role conflict in which responsibilities from the work and family domains are not compatible” (p. 380). Policing involves a sense of constant awareness and attentiveness in order to perform well as an officer, while a family on the other hand, also requires constant care and consideration. This “inter-domain conflict seems to occur with front-line, blue-collar employees, business owners, professionals, and managers” (Howard et al., 2004, p. 383). In other words, this type of conflict is a reality for those with a diminished sense of control within their employment. Inter-domain conflict is present in policing as officers have limited control over their shift work, their fluctuating case assignments, and the ranging offenders they deal with on a day-to-day basis. “Previous research indicates that work-family conflict correlates to lower overall job satisfaction

and other negative dispositions, such as emotional exhaustion and greater propensity to leave a position” (Howard et al., 2004, p. 380).

In addition to work-family conflicts, law enforcement officers struggle to meet the demands from the agency and the public. Officers are faced with a different type of stress on the job known as “burst stress”, this type of stress “means there is not always a steady stressor, but at times, there is an immediate ‘burst’ from low to a high stress state” (Howard et al., 2004, p. 381). The danger and unpredictability in the everyday life of an officer can often lead to higher rates of officer burnout. In fact, research has documented extensively the higher rates of burnout, divorce, substance abuse, job dissatisfaction, suicide, cynicism, and lower morale among police officers (Harrington, 2014, p. 23). However, much of the research regarding police stress and burnout is based solely on the experiences of male officers and may not be applicable to female officers. “The concern of the impact of stress and female police officers should be given more attention now that female police officers have become a steadily growing demographic in many police agencies” (He, Zhao & Archbold, 2002, p. 688).

In order to deal with finding an appropriate work-life balance, female officers need to find useful coping strategies to deal with stress. Additionally, policing agencies “should play a leading role in creating greater flexibility in accommodating police officers’ professional, personal, and family needs” (He et al., 2002, p. 699). Licea (2014), further explains that “despite the clear change in the workforce and social demographics, limited action at the federal level to update workplace policies or create new policies to help working parents and their varied families has taken place” (p. 71). With a growing female population within the organization, police agencies will need to introduce shorter shifts, and potentially part-time work. While part-time work is virtually non-existent in policing, the Ontario Provincial Police and a few other

Canadian police organizations have made accommodations for constables requesting part-time work (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 361). Another potential solution to a better work-life balance is job-sharing; “job-sharing is a work arrangement in which two employees agree with the employer to share the work hours of one position, each receiving half of the pay” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 361). Job-sharing has the potential to allow female officers to continue their work in policing while advancing their careers, as well as spend a reasonable amount of time at home with their families. While the CPS can make several improvements to benefit female officers in their struggle to balance daily life and work, the CPS “is one of the few Canadian police services that have developed a policy for job-sharing by officers, though on a restricted basis” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 361).

### **Gender Discrimination in Male-Dominated Work**

Policing has always been a male-dominated field with a hidden curriculum of masculinity, making the organizational culture resistant to women. Harrington (2014), explained that “law enforcement institutions are tribal in nature and use various rituals such as shift briefings, the militaristic structure, uniforms, weapons, and to reinforce the masculine, tribal aspect” (p. 18). Rituals are used within policing to create the culture for which police officers are segregated from society. In other words, the unique characteristics of police work have created a distinct subculture, “one that permeates every aspect of policing including recruitment and selection, behavioral aspects of officers in the field, and overall acceptance of officers into the profession” (Lersch & Bazley, 2007, p. 626). “The indoctrination into the police culture begins with the initial training officers receive that dictates their behaviors, language, emblems, and procedures” (Harrington, 2014, p. 18). Police academy training supports ideal masculine traits such as being assertive, strong, and competent. Female officers are typically viewed as

submissive, fragile, and dependent, which often result in these female officers adapting to such expectations in order to fit into the policing culture. Moreover, the “distribution of power was discovered to rest with Caucasian males in law enforcement organizations” (Harrington, 2014, p. 3), as females only make up about 18 percent of police officers overall (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 361). A sense of isolation and vulnerability is highlighted for the minority of women within the policing profession, this sense of isolation is again reiterated through the lack of female role models within the organization. It has been noted “that those who hire need to diversify the ranks of law enforcement so that the male to female ratio of police officers is more reflective of today’s society”, in addition to providing positive role models for new female recruits (Dudley, 2015, p. 2). Unfortunately, policing continues to be a male-dominated field that does not promote the advancement of women, leaving female officers with an inadequate sense of belonging and commitment to the organization. “Although the law enforcement profession has diversified since the implementation of affirmative action policies, the changes have resulted in difficulties creating a diverse workplace culture” (Harrington, 2014, pp. 2-3).

“A component of establishing a diverse culture within a law enforcement agency is ensuring impartiality in the treatment of employees” (Harrington, 2014, p. 17). Nonetheless, in the male-dominated profession of policing, women continue to face issues related to gender. Gender harassment is the most prevalent form of harassment and includes sexist remarks, the use of derogatory terms, rude comments diminishing woman’s abilities, and indecent and vulgar behavior including the display of pornography (Magnus, 2017, p. 29). Furthermore, “there is an increased risk for women working in positions traditionally held by men to be a victim of sexual harassment” (Harrington, 2014, p. 30). Women typically engage in a passive response to harassment in the workplace, highlighting the need for organizational changes and increased

support. “Paramilitary and military organizations face many problems related to discrimination and harassment, making it a priority for leaders and government officials to find solutions to this continuous issue” (Magnus, 2017, p. 29).

### **Importance of Organizational Support**

“Ironically researchers have found that female police officers are more emotionally independent, flexible, and proactive than their male-counterparts” (Dudley, 2015, p. 2). With the numerous benefits that women bring into policing, there should be adequate organizational support in order to recruit, retain, and promote these female officers. “Police leadership can effectively demonstrate organizational support by eliminating the negative perceptions that supervisors are pressured to display” (Harrington, 2014, p. 22). These negative perceptions include things like organizational biases and attitudes, as well as the role politics play in promotions. “Fostering teamwork and effective working relationships can increase job satisfaction as long as the organization is sensitive to the negative aspects of the police subculture” (Harrington, 2014, p. 22). Teamwork and proper social support systems are crucial within policing, as the very nature of policing requires officers to rely on each other for safety in dangerous situations. “With respect to gender, peer support from fellow officers is regarded as especially important to female and minority officers who are ‘breaking and entering’ into an occupation that has traditionally been dominated by White male officers” (He et al., 2002, p. 690). With that being said, as female officers enter a male-dominated profession they must also be equipped with proper stress management training, counselling services, and a knowledge of effective coping skills.

“In order to not only recruit but also retain female officers, agencies must acknowledge the importance of having female mentors and role models at all levels of the agency” (Morrow,



2015, p. 89). Increasing the number of women throughout all levels of policing and providing mentorship for female officers, can aid in changing the negative perceptions around female police officers and their roles within the organization. Mentorship is often informal, but provides young officers with a sense of guidance, networking opportunities, the development of beneficial skills, and the potential for advancement. Harper (2016), noted that mentoring can help combine the best characteristics of both genders, as well as change how men treat women within the organization (p. 21). Nevertheless, “even though women may benefit from male mentors, it is essential that they have mentors who have successfully forded the barriers that women face since men may not be sensitive to those obstacles and barriers” (Licea, 2014, pp. 83-84). Mentorship by women for women provides a support network for female officers and ultimately, increases job satisfaction and performance. While this type of mentoring was “essentially nonexistent decades ago, today these relationships are notable, as are networking structures for women often in the form of professional organizations” (Licea, 2014, p. 83).

### **Promotional Process**

The composition of the Canadian Police has transformed since the 1970s (Shea, 2008, p. 1), and “although women account for a smaller proportion of senior and non-commissioned officers when compared with constables, their presence in the higher ranks continues to increase” (Statistics Canada, 2017b, p. 8). For example, “in 2016, 13% of senior officers were women, compared with 6% in 2006 and less than 1% in 1986” (Statistics Canada, 2017b, p. 8).

*The following table is adapted from Statistics Canada's Table 254-0005 - Police officers by rank and gender, Canada, provinces and territories, annual (Statistics Canada, 2017b, p. 8).*

Table 1

*Police Officers in Canada by Rank and Gender*

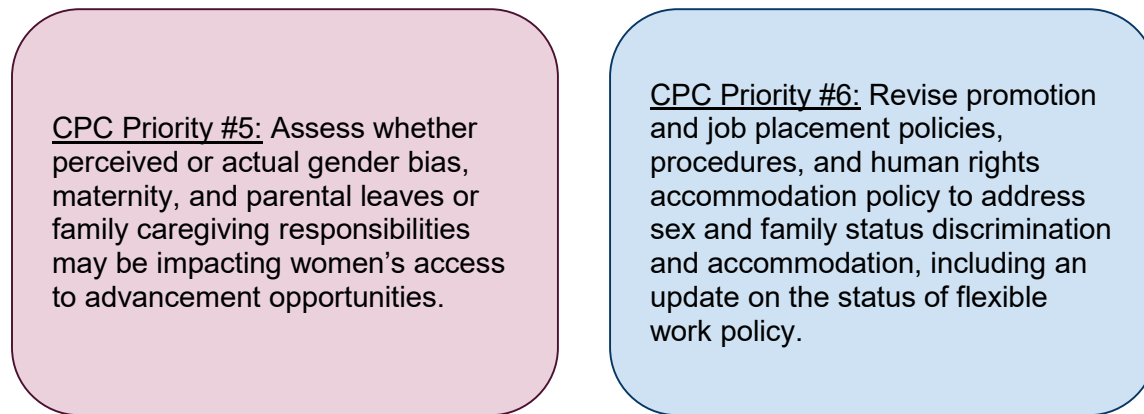
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Total Number of Officers</b>	<b>Males</b>	55,672 (80%)	55,252 (80%)	54,650 (79%)	54,440 (79%)	54,228 (79%)
	<b>Females</b>	13,832 (20%)	13,998 (20%)	14,156 (21%)	14,331 (21%)	14,545 (21%)
<b>Senior Officers</b>	<b>Males</b>	2,517 (90%)	2,563 (90%)	2,382 (89%)	2,347 (88%)	2,285 (87%)
	<b>Females</b>	278 (10%)	287 (10%)	291 (11%)	332 (12%)	348 (13%)
<b>Non-Commissioned Officers</b>	<b>Males</b>	15,020 (84%)	14,675 (83%)	14,463 (82%)	14,456 (82%)	14,301 (82%)
	<b>Females</b>	2,942 (16%)	3,019 (17%)	3,086 (18%)	3,184 (18%)	3187 (18%)
<b>Constables</b>	<b>Males</b>	38,136 (78%)	38,114 (78%)	37,805 (78%)	37,638 (78%)	37,720 (77%)
	<b>Females</b>	10,612 (22%)	10,692 (22%)	10,779 (22%)	10,815 (22%)	11,020 (23%)

This table demonstrates that there has been a slow increase of women in the police workforce throughout different ranks, all over Canada. While the increase has been incredibly slow over the course of five years, these numbers show a small but imperative change.

The ranking of officers in the force begins with the constables, then onto sergeants or detectives, inspectors, superintendents, deputy, and chief. Women tend to become detectives over sergeants; in 2016-2017, Calgary had two female deputies and 4 female superintendents

(Superintendent Vaughan, personal communication, September 15, 2017). Typically, an officer will give ten years to the organization before receiving a substantial promotion. Promotion time comes once a year and has proven to be a long process; this process begins with a written exam for which a 70% is needed to pass. From there, the officer is questioned for eligibility to act through an application and an interview. Lastly, a work history review is used as a 360 tool that engages an interview with the officer, their superior, two of the officer's chosen peers, and two peers of the superior officer's choice (Superintendent Vaughan, personal communication, September 15, 2017). The problem with the 360 tool used within the promotional process is that it is not used for eligibility, but rather more for a background check and work review. Each year, the CPS reviews the promotion process to see how it could be improved.

*The following figure and note are each adapted from the Accountability Report on the CPC 7 Point Plan from the CPS' Bureau of Corporate Support (Calgary Police Service, 2017, p. 10).*



*Figure 1.* The CPS' priority five and six as they pertain to the potential gender biases that have an impact on women's access to advancement, and what the CPS is doing to improve such biases.

The CPC 7 Point Plan has outlined that implicit bias training has been previously delivered; “the training is intended to raise institutional and individual awareness about implicit bias and how those biases impact organizational decisions around the recruitment, development, movement and promotion of our employees” (Calgary Police Service, 2017, p. 10).

A culture of acceptance is slowly created through the promotion of diversity within all ranks of policing, which in turn, “is viewed internally by police members and externally by the public as a signal that respect and understanding exist within the police” (Magnus, 2017, pp. 45-46). While most promoted positions are filled by men, women can be effective leaders in bringing about a perspective not formally included into the policing regime. Shea (2008), stated “when considering promotional processes and systems, like many existing police policies and procedures, due to the absence of women in decision-making positions they were drafted by men

from a male perspective” (p. 7). This absence causes many police promotion policies to be void of the female perspective, which has an impact on female-related issues surrounding maternity-leave and familial responsibilities. “The inability of administrators and leaders in police organizations to recognize the changes that need to occur for the inclusion of all groups demonstrates the entrenched masculine culture that continues to influence the hierarchical organizational system” (Magnus, 2017, p. 46). It is also important to note that “research related to female promotions within the police environment is limited and no quantitative research specific to participation by gender in the police promotion system could be found” (Shea, 2008, p. 5).

### **Shift Work**

Current research on the career development of women “ suggests that men and women have similar career aspirations and motivations but that women make alternative career choices based on their conformance to societal expectations and in alignment with their personal upbringing” (Wilson & Whetstone, 2007, p. 131). These societal influences and expectations place the familial responsibility on women, leaving men without such a strong need to factor in outside influences when considering a promotion. “While social expectations of males and females are becoming less 'traditional', women still comprise the vast majority of child caregivers and nurturers” (Wilson & Whetstone, 2007, p. 131). The parental duty of female officers is often has a large impact on their development opportunities as promotions are overlooked or given up in order to make the family and social role a priority. Women with children are regularly overlooked for promotions as they are thought to be “preoccupied or otherwise distracted by family life and may be perceived as somehow less devoted to their career than male officers” (Morrow, 2015, p. 87). Despite this perceived reality, female officers are just

as committed to policing as men but continue to fall behind due to career interruptions associated with children. Woodbury and Brown (2009), further illustrate this fact as traditionally “male-dominated workplaces point to their need for full-time work continuity, availability for overtime work, and overall 100 percent commitment to the work” (p. 256).

Shift work has proven to be a difficulty for female officers with children to care for outside of the work environment; it is for this reason that some women do not strive for a promotion as it would then change their already challenging work schedule. Many officers stated that “if they decided to participate in the promotion process, they would risk losing the seniority they had built up at the patrol level” (Archbold & Hassell, 2009, p. 64). Losing seniority means these female officers would potentially be giving up a work schedule that is more suitable for raising a family. A “short window of opportunity” has been identified that requires female officers to time their interest and opportunity for a promotion based on the development stages of their children (Archbold & Hassell, 2009, pp. 58-59). If this timed opportunity does not happen once the officer’s children enter their school years, working night shifts for example would eliminate the mother’s ability to spend quality time with their children and tuck them into bed. Provided that shift work is a problematic factor in the promotion of female officers, women will aim to keep as many day shifts as possible, whether that means relinquishing promotional opportunities or properly timing their advancement.

## **The Importance of Female Confidence**

The contemporary police culture has proven to uphold the many gender biases and stereotypes that follow women as they compete against men within a male-dominated profession. The capacities and abilities of female officers are constantly put into question as they work twice as hard to do the same work as men. “Female reality is that the police culture remains an environment in which belittling women is too often the norm” (Shea, 2008, p. 10). Magnus (2017) further described the impact of policing’s masculine culture on women’s experiences:

Researchers have continually demonstrated how the masculine culture in the police has created an environment in which female officers no longer feel they can successfully seek promotion, and in some instances, it has forced them to leave policing because of the damage it has done to them physically, emotionally, and psychologically. (p. 139)

It is due to the long-standing masculine culture within policing that female confidence remains crucial in moving up the ranks. However, despite the fact that women are being hired more often than before (Morrow, 2017, p. 87), they are often overlooked within the promotional process and therefore, very seldom get promoted. Poleski (2016), revealed that “women possess a greater power of observation, the ability to visualize, better linguistic skills, more effective communication, supportiveness, participation, and greater ability to coach and nurture employees than men” (p. 8). Provided that women hold numerous paramount qualities that make for excellent officers, they must assert the confidence that should follow such great characteristics. Nevertheless, “the fear of special or differential treatment of female officers is a barrier to promotional advancement when it comes to most of the female police officers in this police agency” (Archbold & Hassell, 2009, p. 66). The threat of oppression by their male counterparts is enough to sway female officers away from striving for a promotion. On the other hand, women



determined to move up the ranks often choose to defeminize themselves and adhere to the masculine attitudes and traits within policing. “Conversely, when women try to exhibit masculine leadership traits, they are criticized as insufficiently feminine” (Vetter, 2010, p. 10). It is this double standard that enhances the need for women to continuously prove themselves as competent and efficient police officers.

As female officers strive to achieve promotions, they lack the assurance that they have what it takes to be successful. “When female officers elected to participate in the promotional process, they actively sought to improve their chances of passing through longer periods of preparation and study than their male counterparts” (Wilson & Whetstone, 2007, p. 141). In doing so, women wait until they feel 100% prepared and qualified, whereas men apply when they generally feel about 60% prepared for the promotional process; it is for this reason that women have a higher percentage of success in achieving promotions once they have applied for the promotion (Superintendent Vaughan, personal communication, September 15, 2017). Additionally, “although both men and women believed they needed additional training in conjunction with moving up in rank, the female officers rated themselves as less competent than the males rated themselves and indicated fears surrounding being promoted” (Archbold & Schulz, 2008, p. 51).

Women who prove to be competent and have succeeded in the promotional process within a male-dominated occupation violate the normative prescriptions for women (Shea, 2008, p. 10). As these women prove their abilities and flourish as leaders within a hegemonic system, a queen bee effect becomes prevalent. Magnus (2017), explains that queen bee effect happens “when women in leadership positions display characteristics of competition and jealousy towards those of the same sex as a means of hindering their ability to progress” (p. 48). Policing as a

male-dominated profession, encourages women to distance themselves from each other in order to improve their own status within the organization. Nonetheless, “the inability for women to support one another validates the literature surrounding the queen bee effect and how necessary it is for employees to be promoted based on the skill sets they bring” (Magnus, 2017, p. 48). With that being said, “training systems need to be able to identify talented individuals at all levels and groom them for the top” (Robinson & Watson, 2003, p. 20).

### **Tokenism within the Workforce**

The few women who are successful in climbing the ranks of the corporation are given a heavy burden to carry, as they are viewed as representative of all women rather than as individuals (Swedberg, 2003, p. 277). In the law enforcement profession, these women are considered to be tokens; tokens are described to be “gender or ethnic groups that account for less than 15% of the population of the department” (Harrington, 2014, pp. 35-36). Within policing, tokenism is a prevalent issue as women in higher ranking positions demonstrate an artificial appearance of diversity throughout the male-dominated organization. “Moreover, beneficiaries of tokenism will often adapt to the norms and values of the advantaged group, even to the point, at times, of disadvantaging their own referent group” (Fitch, 2014, p. 287).

Tokenism brings about various consequences, some of the main effects of tokenism include an increased visibility, polarization and assimilation. “First, visibility creates performance pressure for tokens as their fewer numbers make them stand out more than the majority” (Harper, 2016, p. 27). A spotlight is already placed on women in policing, as the dominant group within the organization is male. Additionally, tokenism increases the weight of this spotlight placed on women as they climb the ranks as an officer. “As a result of their heightened visibility, individuals designated as tokens feel their performance is under the

constant scrutiny of the dominant group members” (Poleski, 2016, p. 33). Some women may view the elevated visibility of being an organizational token in a negative manner; as female officers battle to prove themselves in the workforce, the added pressure of being a token has the ability to make not only their actions more recognizable, but their mistakes as well. It is for this reason that many female tokens find themselves forced or steered into roles that seem to be more suited for women’s compassionate abilities and that “make them stand out further from the rest of the members of their organization” (Archbold & Schulz, 2008, p. 62). At the same time, other female officers may interpret the heightened visibility as a potential advantage to the growth of their career. Harper (2016), added that several female tokens found standing out was a positive factor for the public perception of female officers, both to the public and to young police recruits” (p. 46). Furthermore, “polarization magnifies the divide between the tokens and the dominant group by overemphasizing the differences and minimizing similarity between the groups, often taking the form of isolation and exclusion” (Harrington, 2014, p. 37). An invisible cultural barrier is created that separates the tokens from the dominant group, resulting in an increase in discrimination, harassment, isolation, and the possibility of being overlooked for promotions. Harper (2016), explained that as a perceived outsider, tokens make the dominant group feel uncomfortable (p. 27) and therefore, women often use a variety of strategies in order to reduce their contrast from the male expectations within policing (p. 61). As a result, “many officers, especially older ones, found themselves seeking friendship outside of policing and sought to separate their work lives from their private lives” (Harper, 2016, p. 61). Lastly, “assimilation occurs when the dominant group applies stereotypes to the tokens, going as far as giving them duties that are deemed appropriate for their gender or race” (Harrington, 2014, p. 37). Part of this process involves role encapsulation or entrapment, where the dominant members

of the organization designate roles that promote the stereotypical expectations to the token members. According to Harper (2016), the dominant group of “male officers tended to be very open about their expectations of the roles that they believed female officers wanted to perform” (p. 63). In this way, female tokens are not often judged as individuals with unique abilities but rather, their characteristics tend to be distorted to fit the generalization (Kanter, 1977, p. 971). When it comes to dealing with the consequences of tokenism, female officers “vary in the severity of their responses to being treated as a token within their environment” (Kringen, 2014, p. 51). In light of the psychological and physical stress placed on tokens, tokenism has proven to be a substantial barrier in the promotion of female police officers.

### **Chapter Summary**

Although the representation of women in policing is higher than ever before, statistics show law enforcement agencies are still falling short in their endeavor to attract a representative number of qualified females and minorities into the field” (Morrow, 2015, p. 3). The role that patriarchy plays in the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female officers has a distinct impact on the experiences of these women. The lack of equity and heavily imposed masculine culture causes issues for minority groups such as females in policing. The recruitment process in particular has a “disparate impact on women applicants, limiting the proportion of women who can successfully complete the process” (Cordner & Cordner, 2011, p. 209). Despite the struggle to recruit qualified female officers, women continue to bring multiple advantages to the police force; not only proper demographic representation, but also improvements concerning sexual harassment, sensitivity, and a more community-oriented policing style. After recruitment, the retention of female police officers continues to be a challenge for most police agencies. “There are unique reasons for women and minorities to relinquish a law enforcement career within the

first 2 years” (Harrington, 2014, p. 5) including factors related to family-life, gender, and a lack of support. Societal norms and values maintain a patriarchal outlook on household roles, where women are typically the child-rearing parent and the men are the breadwinners. However, “women’s experience shows that leaving the workplace for child-rearing purposes has a negative impact on career aspirations and promotion” (Woodbury & Brown, 2009, p. 361). Additionally, gender discrimination remains ingrained within male-dominated professions such as policing. “Law enforcement agencies interested in continuing to increase the diversity within their agency and develop leaders of all ethnicities and genders would benefit from the development of a formal mentoring program” (Harrington, 2014, p. 125). Lastly, there have been “increases in the number of women police supervisors and managers, yet these numbers remain proportionately low in comparison to their male counterparts” (Wilson & Whetstone, 2007, p. 129). One of the largest contributors for women not striving to climb the promotional ladder is linked to the shift work involved in policing. Shift work and a family life can be two very heavy factors to balance. Moreover, confidence and assertiveness are qualities necessary for women to advance themselves within a male-dominated occupation. “Women can be effective in leadership positions, often bringing a transformational style of leadership to organizations” (Magnus, 2017, p. 45). Although this may be true, the reality of policing is that women must work harder than their male counterparts to prove themselves in order to achieve the same positions. When women do accomplish higher ranking positions, tokenism is often a result. “Tokenism provides an artificial appearance of diversity, or window dressing, which permits police leaders to consolidate power” while continuing to exclude minority and disadvantaged groups such as women (Fitch, 2014, p. 287). While the policies of promotion within policing have been altered to accommodate a diverse workforce, they continue to be an example of tokenism. No matter the

implicit intentions of the police agency, as women are promoted to higher positions within the organization, it is inevitable that these women will become the tokens of the organization as it strives to achieve equity.

## CHAPTER IV: THEORETICAL APPROACHES

### Chapter Overview

This chapter will explore two distinct theories to further examine the roles that women play within society and policing, and how these roles ultimately influence their experiences within paid work. First, the glass ceiling is “the unseen, yet, breachable barriers that keep women and minorities from rising up the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements” (Cooper, 2013, p. 19). This theory will be used to dissect the heteronormative gender roles that exist in our society, as well as the part women play in traditionally male-dominated work. Cooper (2013) then further explains that “with the number of females in the workplace and the strides women have made, one would think there were more women in executive level positions of large corporations; however that is not the case” (p. 101). Therefore, the breaking of the glass ceiling is crucial to the success of women in policing; this chapter will explore the ways in which women can advance within the organization of policing and how society can work towards breaking such an intangible barrier known as the glass ceiling. Next, this chapter will look through a sociological lense in analyzing the functionalist theory and its impact on the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female officers. The functionalist theory explains social institutions like the family through the functions they perform, the relationship between the different parts of the structure, and its relationship to society as a whole (Jacobsen, Fursman, Bryant, Claridge, & Jensen, 2004, p. 25). This chapter will also take a look into Talcott Parsons’ perspective of the family, as the major proponent of the functionalist perspective is based on Talcott Parsons’ findings as they relate to sociology and the family. Lastly, this chapter will outline the critiques of the functionalist theory. This theory

will be critiqued individually, rather than also critiquing the glass ceiling theory, due to the limited explanations and lack of empirical validity of the functionalist theory.

## **Glass Ceiling Theory**

### **Overview of Theory**

The glass ceiling theory denotes a phenomenon in the career growth and development of women in the working sphere that has a limit (or ceiling) that prevents women from advancing past the ceiling, yet they can see what is above (promotion, raise increase, status) because it is see-through (glass). The glass ceiling “is a metaphor for the invisible and artificial barriers that block women and minorities from advancing up the corporate ladder” (Johns, 2013, p. 1). The term glass ceiling illustrates well the point that when there is no objective reason for women not rising to the very top as men do (Shea, 2008, p. 20); this is due to the variety of stereotypes and biases that prevent qualified women from advancing to superior positions. “Despite decades of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity policies, women continue to encounter cultural and structural barriers that render” their advancement and employment more difficult than their male counterparts (Licea, 2014, p. 38). The term “ceiling” implies this impediment that women face in preventing career growth, while the term “glass” highlights the transparency of the issue for those not affected. “The glass-ceiling effect has been noted within not only law enforcement but throughout the criminal justice system as well as the private sector” (Wilson & Whetstone, 2007, p. 129).



## Heteronormative Gender Roles

“When considering higher level positions, societal stereotypes including those related to masculine managerial traits, disadvantage women because women’s presence at such levels most violates the norm of male superiority” (Shea, 2008, p. 21). Women are typically expected to stay at home to care for the family and household needs, while men are the breadwinners expected to work in order to support the home. This reality has been further explored by Matthews and Beaman (2007), as they depicted separate spheres of power between men and women; the women’s sphere is known as the “private sphere” located around the home and family, whereas the male sphere is apart of the “public realm” (p. 178). The reality is that although men have taken on a larger role within the household, it is typically for a short period of time; the daily care routine falls to the responsibility of the women. “Family responsibility represents a unique challenge for those who want to advance in management” (Omotayo, et al., 2013, p. 51). Realistically, family obligations create major challenges for mothers not just looking to advance in management, but in a general work-life balance as well. “For female officers with young children, unencumbered availability without some consideration may not be an option” (Shea, 2008, p. 25). It is for this reason, along with the traditional male model of work, that “male workers who did not have family commitments were considered to be more valuable” (Cooper, 2013, p. 43). An underlying issue arises as women are thought to be less dedicated to their careers than men, whereas the division of labour should not necessarily be dependent upon traditional familial roles.

The glass ceiling creates a barrier of prejudice and discrimination that excludes women from higher levels of leadership positions. The problem of discrimination against women in police *de facto* remains to exist, due to a large resistance from the police personnel themselves

(Omotayo, et al., 2013, p. 50). As long as women remained in their traditional secretarial or administrative roles, they were generally accepted. “However, when women sought to break out of these confines, serious obstacles appeared” (Omotayo, et al., 2013, p. 50). Societal roles and accepted behaviours play a crucial role in depicting what positions are acceptable for women to hold. Nevertheless, gender stereotypes are applied “as a result of accepted cultural, societal or unconscious beliefs about women or women’s role in the workplace” (O’Brien, 2013, p. 28). Women also play a significant role in the economy, which places importance on their role in the workplace. “In the ‘she-economy’, women are frequently referred to as the household chief purchaser” (Johns, 2013, p. 2). As time goes on, the need for women to assume a paying position in the household division of labour increases, and the work-life balance becomes more difficult to employ.

### **Women in Traditionally Male-Dominated Work**

Traditionally, police organizations have been male-dominated, and “despite the remarkable increase in the existence of women in the workforce, women’s right of entry to diverse managerial positions remains restricted” (Omotayo, et al., 2013, p. 49). With this being said, there has been an increase in the number of women within the CPS, both in constable positions and higher, yet these numbers remain much lower than their male counterparts. “Many factors have been identified as contributing to the lack of proportionate representation of women among police officers” (Wilson & Whetstone, 2007, p.130); several factors include: a lack of opportunity for women, a lack of commitment from upper managerial positions for gender-equity, and discrimination within the organization. According to Omotayo, et al. (2013), women have been employed as a second fiddle to men throughout history (p. 50), which in turn influences women’s opportunities for job placement and advancement. “Diversity in executive

management was related to the overall demographic diversity of the workplace” with indications of homo-social reproduction (Cooper, 2013, p. 34). In other words, in a male-dominated environment men will typically hire and promote other men. This strategy does not allow for active recruitment and causes all promotions to come from within the organization. Without an active recruitment strategy, the pool of qualified candidates becomes extremely small and women wishing to be recruited will often find themselves denied. It is for these reasons that recruitment and outreach barriers are too often significant barriers for women in reaching higher ranking positions. “Society viewed women as having the skills or ability to be strong leaders, superior styles, and incredible effectiveness” yet women continue to find themselves in second place behind men (Cooper, 2013, p. 37). This is due to a concern with power and class within upper managerial positions, while lacking in a concern for gender equality.

Moreover, higher ranking officers must commit to the success of lower ranking female officers; it is crucial that female officers receive the proper support in order to achieve what they are capable of. “Women tend to seek career advice from family and friends rather than senior workplace individuals, resulting in a certain amount of invisibility” (Shea, 2008, p. 25). Without the support and encouragement of others within the organization, women may find themselves excluded from key networks resulting in a sense of isolation. According to Cooper (2013), “much of the past literature related to career development for women focused on a lack of mentoring” (p. 39). The presence of a mentor, specifically a female mentor, could aid a female officer in developing the necessary set of skills to succeed. “Women often lack a sponsor who promotes and sells their skills and abilities to others in the organization and goes to bat in helping them climb the organizational ladder” (Johns, 2013, p. 6).

The presence of stereotypes and gender-based discrimination in the workplace results in a lack of dedication and motivation from women hoping to achieve a high rank position. It is not uncommon for women to choose low level positions such as human resources or administrative assistant roles in order to avoid workplace discrimination. Many male officers “do not see women officers as doing ‘real’ police work; and they perpetuate myths about women’s lack of emotional fitness” (Omotayo, et al., 2013, p. 52). Women are therefore required to prove themselves when applying for the same positions as their male counterparts; this struggle alone is enough to force some women into administrative positions. “The absence of women in such positions signaled to potential harassers that women were not viewed as valuable members of the organization” (Cooper, 2013, p. 41). On the other hand, women that display too much confidence may be seen as too headstrong. In this way, “gender typecasts create a double bind in which women can be penalized for displaying either too little or too much assertiveness, competitiveness, and independence” (Johns, 2013, p. 6). Furthermore, “women who advance to first and middle management levels are frequently placed in lower profile positions with limited or no decision-making authority” (Shea, 2008, p. 23). This inhibits them from getting essential work experience, which then impacts their further development and available opportunities. Historically, women were offered positions that paid them less than their male counterparts who performed the same jobs. However, over the years many corporations have implemented policies that have been thought to eradicate this wage-gap problem. That is not to say that this issue is not still around today; many women continue to work twice as hard to prove themselves just as capable as the men, while receiving unequal compensation.

## **Breaking the Glass Ceiling**

The inclusion of women in higher police ranks would have a direct and positive impact on the availability, engagement, productivity, and diversity of the organization. “Women bring different life experiences and perspectives, providing organizations with different approaches and solutions that may help increase overall effectiveness” (O’Brien, 2013, p. 24). In addition, workplaces that support female employees moving beyond the glass ceiling tend to gain a competitive advantage in many respects including retaining those talented females (O’Brien, 2013, pp. 24-25). However, the breaking of the glass ceiling, while manageable, will require overcoming several challenges. “Federal and state governments, employers, academic institutions, and women themselves are essential players in breaking down barriers that are holding women back” (Johns, 2013, p. 6). The government is capable of enacting policy and legislation, as well as acting as a “catalyst for promoting gender equality perspectives and practices by heightening awareness of gender inequality” on women and their families along with the community, the business sector, and the nation as a whole (Johns, 2013, p. 6). In addition, employers and higher ranking officials must be proactive in their commitment to gender diversity and equity. This can be done through flexible work arrangements, work-life balance policies, and mentoring programs. “Leadership developments must help women create the critical skills needed, as well as identify their strengths and increase their confidence” (Johns, 2013, p. 8). In this way, women are given the opportunity to build their own capital. Lastly, academic institutions must embrace new leadership programs for the next generations that work on changing preconceived biases and assumptions surrounding women’s leadership abilities.

## **Functionalist Theory**

### **Overview of Theory**

The sociology of the family is typically interpreted by three theoretical explanations; these include the functionalist theory, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theories. For the purpose of this thesis, the functionalist theory will be examined in order to analyze the role of women within the family and how that role impacts a woman's workplace role. According to Fitzpatrick (2014), the "functionalist theory, also known as structural functionalism, commonly focuses on the roles and central tasks that family members should engage in" (p. 592). This theory describes a family as a structure that creates healthy and bright children that will become productive members of society. "Functionalism begins with the observation that behaviour in society is structured, and that relationships between individuals are organized in terms of rules and are therefore patterned and recurrent" (Jacobsen, et al., 2004, p. 25). Structural functionalist studies have long focused on the division of labour between the sexes and "the functions of this division for the maintenance of the family itself and other social systems, such as those based on occupation and personality" (Heitlinger, 1979, p. 9).

### **Traditional Heteronormative Family Roles**

"According to the theory, the appropriate family structure facilitated the fulfillment of instrumental and relational functions" (Fitzpatrick, 2014, p. 592). Within a traditional family, "men were characterised as fulfilling an instrumental role, with women's more expressive nature providing the complement" (Jacobsen, et al., 2004, p. 26). Men's instrumental function within the family consists of filling the husband and father role through earning a paycheck to support the family and disciplining the children. On the other hand, women's function as wife and mother is fulfilled through taking care of the family's emotional well-being and caring for the

children. “The language of roles conveys not only a sense of the fixed and dichotomous, but also an image of separate but equal” (Pierce, 1984, p. 107). In this way, spousal roles are complementary but do not overlap. There is a contrast between spousal roles as the men derive their self-worth and esteem from their employment outside the home, while the women find theirs in the domestic role within the family (Pierce, 1984, p. 98).

According to Fitzpatrick (2014), “a well-formed family was similar to a well formed machine - it worked smoothly and efficiently because it had the right components” (p. 592). The proper fulfillment of familial roles is thought to create a functioning unit that provides the basis for childcare, security, and support. The traditional family lifestyle also includes reproductive, sexual, educational, and socialization functions; although these functions may vary across cultures both in form and multiplicity (Pierce, 1984, p. 95). Therefore, gender roles “provide the building blocks of harmonious families and societies which functionalism posits; they are pieces of a static and conflict-free social picture” (Pierce, 1984, p. 107). In addition, “it is also claimed that this conventional, mutually exclusive, sex-role differentiation is the major factor in stabilising adult personalities” (Heitlinger, 1979, p. 10).

In the creation and preservation of a family, women are often limited in economic means; in other words, women tend to have less available time for paid-work due to the raising of children. Heitlinger (1979) explains “the functions that women may lose by entering a family are seen to be more than compensated for in the remaining areas of emotionality and primary socialisation” (p. 10). Moreover, the value of the family itself surpasses that of any educational, economic, or socialization role that employment may provide for women.

## **Talcott Parsons' Perspective of the Family**

Talcott Parsons (1902-1979) was one of the most influential and well-known sociologists of his time (Segre, 2012, p. 4) because of his functionalist perspective on the family, the relationships within the family, and the family's relationship to society. Parsons argued that the family fulfills several functions within society, however two of those functions are identified as key factors. The first function that the family performs is the socialization of children "into the appropriate values and norms of society" (Jacobsen, et al., 2004, p. 26). Furthermore, Parsons theorized "that the role of the family was to ensure that independence and a motivation to achieve was instilled in children's personalities" (Jacobsen, et al., 2004, p. 26). The appropriate socialization of children is crucial to their development and growth into well-adjusted adults, as the internalization of such "values is evident in the roles and actions of individuals carrying out their daily activities" (Minott, 2016, p. 19). According to Jacobsen, et al. (2004), "the second function of the family was the stabilisation of the adult personality through marriage" (p. 26). This function serves as a remedy for the typical stresses and strains one is expected to encounter in everyday life.

In light of Parsons' perspectives of the traditional family, he acknowledges the primacy of the father within a social structure such as the family. Parsons links the primacy of the father over the mother "to Western emphasis on achievement and instrumentality, but does not emphasize or question male dominance" (Pierce, 1984, p. 107). The emotional role that the mother takes within a family is imperative to the family's survival; "Parsons argued that the expressive role was assigned to women as a result of the primarily expressive bond between mother and children" (Jacobsen, et al., 2004, p. 26). In this sense, maternity is the female social destiny. "This assumption has led Parsons to regard alternative social roles of the woman as



conflicting with the basic biological ‘root’ function of reproduction” (Heitlinger, 1979, p. 11). The alternative social roles that Parsons refers to are the roles fulfilled within the labour force, which demand a large portion of time. This demand conflicts with the basic female function of reproduction as women are expected to spend their time in the home caring for children and the household duties. A dual-role is then necessary for mothers to fulfill, a full-time role within the household as well as a role within the workforce.

## **Critiques**

“Since the 1960s, functionalist theory has been strongly criticized for its inability to accept variations of the traditional family” (Fitzpatrick, 2014, p. 592). The traditional family comprised of a working father, a stay-at-home mother, and several children is not as typical in today’s society. Rather, there are several alternative family forms found within society. The functionalist theory views these divergent families as dysfunctional, or fulfilling some latent function in a broader society (Jacobsen, et al., 2004, p. 26).

“Furthermore, functionalist theories tend to justify the sexual division of labour, and ignore gender inequalities inherent in Parsons’ ‘complementary roles’ structure” (Jacobsen, et al., 2004, p. 26). The complementary roles once outlined in a traditional family, no longer support a typical family in today’s ever growing society. The sexual division of labour is in constant flux, where gender inequalities are slowly changing as more women enter the workforce and perform the same jobs as men do. The traditional family is expected to satisfy and support each member’s emotional needs. However, “one could argue that rather than satisfying each other’s emotional needs, this structural setting in many instances creates frustration and alienating experiences for both spouses, but especially for the wife” (Heitlinger, 1979, p. 11).

Lastly, another factor that “has been lacking is a sociological account of the relative importance these areas play in the totality of women’s experience” (Heitlinger, 1979, p. 12). In fact, important aspects of women’s lives are frequently neglected; such aspects include the balance between work and home, and the impact in which this balance has on the role of women. The dual-role the women play in everyday life is far too often completely neglected from modern studies. “The unsatisfactory treatment of women in sociology has been at least partly related to an underlying premise of functionalist sociology as a whole, namely its emphasis on the status quo, on persistence, integration and pattern maintenance” (Heitlinger, 1979, p. 13).

Personally, I would have to agree with the critiques of this theory. The glass ceiling theory clearly underlines the struggles women face when dealing with society’s heteronormative gender roles, whereas the functionalist theory tends to overlook these gender norms. The functionalist theory explains the family through a sociological lense, however, historically the family has carried with it, its own roles and norms. The theory misses the dual-role that women are forced to play in modern society, as they are still considered the primary caregivers in the family but they are now expected to also enter the workforce.

### **Chapter Summary**

The glass ceiling is a barrier of prejudice and discrimination that excludes women from entering the workforce and entering higher level of leadership positions within that organization (Omotayo, et al., 2013, p. 50). The glass ceiling creates an obstacle for women looking to enter the workforce as well as those in the workforce looking to advance their carrier, namely due to the heteronormative gender roles that exist within our society. Women found in traditionally male-dominated work often experience career-related restrictions due to stereotypes, limited opportunities, and a lack of support. “While the phrase glass ceiling is metaphorical many

women do not realize the intensity of its effect unless and until it is experienced” (Omotayo, et al., 2013, p. 50). The notion of the glass ceiling is found to be hard to describe to those who have not experienced its full effects. With that being said, “though diversity initiatives have increased, gender neutrality remained as an area where organizations and management improvement was needed to provide better opportunities for advancement” (Cooper, 2013, p. 35).

The functionalist theory describes the instrumental and expressive roles that men and women play within the family in order to ensure the survival and success of the family. Heitlinger (1979), further explained that “the female position within the family and in society at large is seen in terms of maintaining group solidarity by virtue of preserving emotional, expressive, ascriptive and particularistic values” (p. 10). Talcott Parsons further demonstrated the important role of the family through the socialization of children and the stabilization of personality. However, this theory has been heavily critiqued amongst scholars as it does fails to examine variations of families as well as the experience of women within such families. In addition, the theory justifies the division of labour between the male and female roles. “The conflict between these two roles has been taken for granted, and the analysis of the nature and significance of housework in modern industrial societies neglected” (Heitlinger, 1979, p. 13). The examination of both the glass ceiling theory and the functionalist theory further demonstrates the long standing discrimination of women within the workforce. The experiences and struggles of women in policing are highlighted and analyzed through the implication of both theories. According to Cooper (2013), “social change will only occur once people understand that the best candidate for any position should be evaluated based on their ability not their gender or race” (p. 101).

## **CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION**

### **Chapter Overview**

“The occupation of policing has been described as one of the most resistant to the acceptance of women” (Lersch & Bazley, 2007, p. 626). This has proven to be true through the examination of police recruitment, retention, and promotional strategies. Due to the reluctance in accepting women into policing, female officers are often overlooked within the promotional process. However, through conducting a case study of the CPS, a secondary analysis of CPS data, and a literature review of the existing information, this research has proven that there are many causes to the lack of promotions among female police officers. This chapter will revisit some of the key findings discovered through the literature review, as well as provide a synopsis of the theoretical framework. From there, the implications, limitations and future considerations pertaining to this study will be explored.

### **Addressing the Research Question**

This research study examined the recruitment and retention strategies employed by most police agencies, specifically the Calgary Police, in an attempt to determine if female officers are being overlooked within the promotional process. This study has discovered that female officers have and continue to be overlooked within all areas of police recruitment, retention, and promotion; however, it is not simply just the issue of being overlooked, but also women’s choices based on society’s patriarchal values and norms within paid and unpaid work. “Most agencies use specific strategies and policies designed to help them meet the challenges of recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified sworn personnel” (Morrow, 2017, p. 2). Nonetheless,

the masculine culture of policing has created barriers for women looking to join the force. There exist issues concerning the balance of work and family life, pregnancy, physical abilities, harassment, acceptance, support, and the list goes on. “Simply put, recruitment efforts that are specifically tailored, based on research, to attract female and minority officers seem more likely to be successful” (Raganella & White, 2004, p. 504). Targeted recruitment strategies are crucial to the diversity and efficiency of policing, as women bring numerous advantages to the organization. “Researchers have found that female police officers are more emotionally independent, flexible, and proactive than their male-counterparts” (Dudley, 2015, p. 2), all of which are imperative characteristics for competent and productive police officers.

Harrington (2014), further explained the importance of identifying factors that have both a positive and negative impact on female officers, and what factors have supported them within their careers as they are pertinent in preventing resignation and turnover (p. 5). It is crucial for police agencies to understand and take into account the work-life balance that female officers are faced with; the struggle of balancing a family and a career is a heavy task for most women. The glass ceiling theory further explains the influence of heteronormative gender roles in the balancing of paid and unpaid work. Furthermore, the masculine, para-military culture that exists within policing promotes harassment and discrimination towards minority groups like women officers. For this reason, organization support within police agencies plays a significant role in the retention of female officers. “As women make up a very small percentage of the police nationwide, it logically follows that there is also a lack of role models for women to follow into policing” (Harper, 2016, p. 21).

Archbold and Schulz (2008), stated that most promotion exams for supervisory and non-management positions like sergeant occur at irregular intervals, generally based on a

combination of a department's needs and the city's fiscal health (p. 51). With this in mind, once promotion exam time comes around, it is highly important to encourage female officers to apply. Organizational leaders must play an active role in boosting the confidence of female officers and allowing for the opportunity for promotion, in order to strengthen the numbers of women in higher ranks. The reality of shift work must be taken into account when dealing with female officers with a family, and tokenism must be recognized and reduced. The functionalist theory aids in highlighting the role that social institutions, like the family, play in women's choices in applying for promotional positions.

### **Implications**

Unfortunately, there is not much current research on the topic of female police officers concerning the challenges they face within recruitment, within the organization, and within the promotional strategies of law enforcement. Harrington (2014), illustrated that significant research has not focused on the experiences of these demographics and how these officers are able to negotiate the challenges of a law enforcement career and remain in the profession (p. 5). Nonetheless, a common topic among research concerning women in the workforce is that women and men have separate spheres of power; the women's sphere is situated at home with the family and known as the "private sphere", whereas the men's sphere is known as the "public realm" (Matthews & Beaman, 2007, p. 178). This thesis has also outlined the heteronormative gender roles and the influence of a patriarchal society on women's career ambitions. Additionally, this thesis has presented several ways in which many police agencies have and could improve their female demographics in order to be representative of the population throughout all ranks of law enforcement. For example, "police administrators could make an effort to provide affordable, on-site daycare options for all sworn police officers" (Archbold &

Hassell, 2009, p. 70), in an attempt to alleviate some of the familial pressures that women hold. This is just one of the ways in which law enforcement leaders can improve the recruitment, retention, and potentially the promotion of female officers. Through implementing different strategies to help female police officers commit to both a work and family environment, “administrators and police leaders may begin to understand how the organizational culture currently inhibits the recruitment, promotion, and retention of all female police officers in Canada” (Magnus, 2017, p. 6).

### **Limitations & Future Considerations**

Existing data surrounding police recruitment, retention, and promotion has proven to be very limited. Through conducting a qualitative literature review, this study has found many gaps in the existing information, which has proven to be a limitation of the chosen methodology. However, these gaps have only heightened the need for further research concerning female police officers and their challenges in applying and receiving promotions. In addressing this anticipated limitation, this study implemented a literature review, a secondary analysis, and a case study in order to gather as much information surrounding the topic as possible.

Further “research is needed to aid in developing recruitment and retention methods for minorities and women, as well as preventing turnover and developing personnel staffing plans” (Harrington, 2014, p. 48). While there is a lack of research around the recruitment and retention of female officers, there is a larger gap in the research surrounding the promotion of these same officers. “Research into municipal policing practices has rarely focused on issues surrounding upward mobility and the decision-making process police officers follow in deciding whether to engage in the promotional process” (Archbold & Schulz, 2008, p. 51). Moreover, there exists a scarcity of information regarding the influence of heteronormative gender roles in both waged

and unwaged work. “Despite the paucity of research into the promotional process, a few researchers have questioned how gender roles—either in policing or in the larger culture—may affect women’s decisions to participate in the process” (Archbold & Schulz, 2008, p. 51). Future research should investigate policing promotional strategies concerning female officers, as well as the role a patriarchal society plays in women’s choices to enter, stay in, and further their career within law enforcement.

### **Chapter Summary**

Through examining the recruitment, retention, and promotional strategies of policing, this thesis has provided an in-depth look at the underrepresentation of women throughout all ranks of law enforcement. A proper representation of women in policing would not only better mirror the population, but also improve the quality of the existing relationship between the police and the community they serve. The introduction of this thesis provided the background of information pertaining to the research question, as well as the rationale, significance, scope, and structure of the question. The second chapter examined the methodology used throughout the analysis of the research question. This study implemented a literature review, a secondary analysis of CPS data, and a case study of the CPS. The reasons for using these methods and their limitations have been listed and discussed. Chapter three dissected the main themes in detail, providing pertinent information surrounding the recruitment, retention, and promotion of female officers. The difficulties experienced by female officers throughout these processes have been examined, in addition to mentioning the advantages to having female officers within law enforcement. The fourth chapter investigated two theories that aid in explaining the experiences and challenges of female police officers. The glass ceiling theory explained the invisible barrier that women face in achieving promotions and advancements within their careers. The functionalist theory elaborated



on the role that family plays as a social institution within society and the separate lives of women. Lastly, this chapter addressed the research question once again. This chapter also outlined the implications, limitations and suggestions for future research that surfaced in the execution of this research study. It is hoped that this research paper will shed a light on the importance of recruiting, retaining, and promoting female police officers while continuing to be aware of the everlasting role of patriarchy within society.

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