SELF-REPORTED STRESS AT WORK:

A STUDY OF DEPUTY SHERIFFS

IN NORTHEASTERN OHIO

by

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<u>Self–Reported Stress at Work:</u>

<u>A Study of Deputy Sheriffs in Northeastern Ohio</u>

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<u>ABSTRACT</u>

Deputy Sheriff's work is especially stressful. This stress takes a toll on the deputies and those people who surround them. There are a number of different sources linked to this stress ranging from self-induced and organizational, to other causes out of the control of the officer or departments. Over time, this stress can cause the deputies to act out unreasonably, potentially causing destructive outcomes. The inability to cope effectively with stressful events can result in undesirable results including, but not limited to, chronic stress, burnout, and quitting the profession. The purpose of this research is to study how deputies view stress.

This thesis used a survey design. Overall, deputies reported a number of sources of stress at a medium to high level. Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / and political instability" is the one rated highest in terms of a source of stress. Factors such as years of experience, education, missed work days, satisfaction level and stress level appear to affect how deputy's views stress. Information learned from this thesis can be used by deputies and their departments to better manage the causes and effects of stress.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The position of deputy sheriff has a long tradition, rooted in the time of the Norman conquest of England (in 1606), and it played an important part in the early law enforcement activities of colonial America. Because of the diversity of sheriff offices throughout the country today, it is difficult to describe a "typical" sheriff department; those offices run the gamut from the traditional, highly political, limited-service office to the modern, fairly nonpolitical, full-service police organization (Peake 2003). A deputy sheriff is a sworn law enforcement officer working for a sheriff sometimes referred to as a "sheriff's deputy", "sheriff's officer" or something similar and is authorized to perform the sheriff's duties. (See Appendix F for an example of a complete job description for a deputy sheriff). Ohio deputy sheriffs and police officers are referred to as "Peace Officers" and are statutorily the same as it relates to their authority to enforce the laws of the state. The only dissimilarity between the two is that deputies have additional statutory duty to operate jails.

Policing has long been cited as one of the most stressful occupations (Anshel, 2000; Toch 2002; Violanti, 1992) and is one of the few professions where individuals must deal with a variety of stressors that exceed the usual expectations of society (Anderson, Litzenberger, & Plecas, 2002; Carlier, Lamberts, Gersons, 1997; McClaren, Gollan & Horwell, 1998). The nature of police work is changing at whirlwind speed. Perhaps now more than ever before, job stress poses a threat to the health of deputies and, in turn, to the health of organizations.

The word stress is derived from the Latin word *strictus*, which means, "to tighten" (Jex, 1998). Stress is hard to define because it means different things to different people; however, it's clear that most stress is a *negative* feeling rather than a *positive* feeling. Stress is a natural part of our life, but being a law enforcement officer may put you at a higher risk for a long list of stress-related illnesses, fatigue, and family problems that ultimately could affect the deputy's stability and health.

In this study, I examined three specific areas of occupational stress for full-time deputy sheriffs working in an Ohio Sheriff's Office. First, the focus will be on how deputy sheriffs may be the source of some of their own stress. The second area is on how the deputy's office may also be a major contributor to this problem. Lastly, this thesis will cover how other outside influences out of the deputy's and the departments control may also relate to this problem. For example, as a twenty-two year veteran law enforcement officer I believe much of this stress can be attributed to what have become the daily routines of law enforcement officers. For instance, the work hours in many professions (for example, airline pilots and truck drivers) are standardized and regulated. No such structure exists for law enforcement officers.

There are scattered reports of officers working astonishing amounts of overtime or extra-duty details. The Boston Globe's detailed review of timekeeping records for one (medium-sized) police agency found 16 officers who each averaged more than 80 total work hours per week (including regular and overtime hours) during a 12-month period. Two officers averaged more than 100 hours per week and another officer once worked 130 hours in a single week—averaging less than 6 hours off each day. As unbelievable as this may sound, in my experience this type of excessive work-load is accepted as more of the norm in the law enforcement profession as compared to most of the rest of society. This type of disproportionate, to what's considered the

norm for society, self-driven workload can cause the deputies decision making processes to become foggy which in due course can lead to negative behavior and or physical deterioration. In the movie *The Shining*, "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy" was a good portrayal of just what effect mounting stress can inflict on a human being. Deputies regularly deal with the worst of what society has to offer and they make special sacrifices to maintain the peace. In the process, doing their duty may slowly eat away at their own health and satisfaction in life.

Almost all jobs/occupations are associated with stress. Certain occupations such as policing are unsurprisingly more stressful than others. Taken as a whole, research on policing and stress suggests that police work is in fact stressful. As Anshel (2000), citing others, reminds us, it is one of the most stressful occupations in the world. We also know that stress, particularly when it becomes chronic, can lead to a multiplicity of problems for the officers as well as the organization they work for.

Work is a very important part of our lives. In fact, many people would agree it tends to define who we are and how we are perceived by others as well. Recently, especially after the 9-11 tragedy, people have begun to look at law enforcement officers which include deputy sheriffs as strong individuals. They are perceived as tough, rough, and always ready to protect and serve. Yet, in keeping their pillar-of-strength perceptions, it's my belief that deputy sheriffs tend to keep to themselves when it comes to their own personal trials and tribulations. In my opinion, in the "police culture," if deputies are seen as being too sympathetic, they may be viewed as weak and untrustworthy by their peers. These deputies may find themselves ostracized from the group. When this occurs, deputies lose a practical and very effective outlet for their stress of talking with others in their profession.

The harmful effect stress can have on deputies mental and physical health, their work productivity, as well as the costly problems it can cause for the organization is why it is essential to understand what causes this stress for deputies and how it can be better managed. The following quote by our nation's first President remains as significant today as when he made it more than two hundred years ago.

"The preservation of the Soldier's health should be the commander's first and greatest care."
--- George Washington

Retrieved August 31, 2010 from http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/g/george_washington_3.html

Purpose of Study

Job stress is a significant problem for deputy sheriffs. Serious physical and mental health problems are likely to occur if deputies and their departments do not learn to cope in positive ways. I believe stress not only impacts the health of the individual deputy, but also affects the health of the organization and presents a number of management concerns. Examples include high turnover rates, accidents, increased workers compensation claims, and employee grievances.

In a study conducted by Crank and Caldero (1991), the authors state that most empirical research on the topic of police officer stress has been conducted among large metropolitan police agencies such as the Cincinnati Police Department, Los Angeles Police Department, and the Portland Police Department. Therefore, most of what is known about police occupational stress is based upon data gained from large metropolitan police departments. Crank and Caldero (1991) believe that because small (1-49 officers) and medium-sized (50-399) departments encounter violent and more serious crime less frequently and that many of these smaller communities have

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a higher regard for their police than large urban cities, the relevance of the existing literature to small and medium-sized police departments is questionable.

While studying large departments is important, the majority of law enforcement agencies throughout our country are notably smaller and the issues that may contribute to their stress may be appreciably different.

Therefore, in order to expand on prior research, the purpose of this study is to find out how deputy sheriffs employed in a medium-size department view stress. This study examines the self-reported sources of stress among deputy sheriffs in this department in an effort to provide deputies and Sheriff Offices with useful information that can be used to manage the impact this stress can have on the deputies and their organization.

Need for Study

This research is important for three reasons. First, there is the concern for the well-being of the people who are involved in police work. It is important that deputies enjoy their work and feel productive. Second is the fact that deputies that have stress related problems may have a negative effect on the quality of service provided to the public and will lessen the overall performance of the Sheriff's Office. Lastly, it will briefly look at what deputies do to help manage their stress.

This research is significant because it attempts to identify occupational factors that serve as a source of stress for deputy sheriffs as well as explores how deputies will handle stress. While stress in law enforcement has had an ample amount of research conducted about its causes and consequences, minimal research has been conducted on this problem as it relates to deputy

sheriffs and even less when narrowing the focus group to deputy sheriffs employed in Ohio whose job duties, responsibilities and work environment may differ from their counterparts across the United States. A good example of this is while Ohio Sheriff Departments are generally full service law enforcement agencies; Sheriff Departments in Pennsylvania are usually limited in their statutory duties to the operation of jails and service of the courts.

Police occupational stress is a complex phenomenon. Continued research will help to understand the sources of stress for this profession as well as what can be done to lessen its effects on the deputies and their departments. It is the intent of this study to increase the deputy sheriffs and sheriff's administrators' awareness of the sources of stress that may affect them.

It is my hope that this research would be used in future studies by students, law enforcement agencies or anyone else to improve their understanding of what causes stress for the deputies, and also to help develop effective stress management programs to reduce this potentially serious problem.

In conclusion, as a twenty year veteran of a Sheriff's Office, I have seen firsthand some of the destructive affects stress can have on law enforcement officers and those around them. The adage "stress will kill you" is worth mentioning. It is my belief that stress management should be one of the fundamental principles for all law enforcement agencies. For the deputies' sake, as well as the communities they serve, Sheriff's Offices should make a genuine attempt to improve their understanding and management of stress and in that course of action support their deputies.

Defining some Terms

To understand this study, it is necessary to understand certain key terms. The terms that are intrinsic to this study are listed below:

1. Stress: The definitions for this term vary widely. They range from "any demand that taxes or exceeds individuals' abilities and resources (Pendleton *et al*1989)" to "the feeling of being faced with demands that could not be met (Stotland *et al* 1989)." However, most definitions are a result of Mr. Hans Selye's interpretation of stress as "the body's non-specific response to any demand placed on it (Territo and Vetter 1981)." Stress can be positive (eustress) or negative (distress).

2. Stressors: the threat, event or changes are commonly called stressors. Stressors can be internal (thoughts, beliefs, attitudes) or external (loss, tragedy, change).

3. Eustress: or positive stress occurs when your level of stress is high enough to motivate you to move into action to get things accomplished.

4. Distress: or negative stress occurs when your level of stress is either too high or too low and your body and / or mind begin to respond negatively to the stressors.

5. Stress Management: Methods of controlling factors that require a response or change within a person by identifying the stressors, eliminating negative stressors, and developing effective coping mechanisms to counteract the response constructively. Examples include progressive muscular relaxation, guided imagery, biofeedback, breathing techniques, and active problem solving. (Mosby's Medical Dictionary, 8th edition. © 2009, Elsevier).

6. <u>Organizational Structure</u>: As used here, this refers to the organizational and administrative functions of the Sheriff's department. It includes the physical structure as well as the administrative hierarchy within the department.

7. <u>Police Culture</u>: As used here, this refers to the perception of officers as being rough and tough individuals who are always ready to serve yet when it comes to their own problems tend to keep to themselves.

<u>Research Hypotheses</u>

This study will attempt to determine the levels of stress that deputy sheriffs frequently experience. The subjects were all asked to rate their sources of stress on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where "1" indicated a lesser source of stress and "5" indicated a greater source of stress. There are 4 hypotheses for this study:

1. Several factors serve as high sources of stress for Deputy Sheriffs.

2. Certain factors are related to high levels of stress; such as job role or assignment.

3. Certain characteristics of Deputy Sheriff's will show differences in stress levels.

4. Deputy Sheriffs manage stress in a variety of ways.

A positive association was hypothesized between deputies perceived stress level and the organization and administration of the Sheriff's department. It was expected that deputies would cite problems from this area as their greatest source of stress.

Theoretical Considerations

Past research on stress, as well as the law enforcement officers themselves have supported the belief that danger and the fear of death or serious injury was the major cause of stress among officers (Sewell 1981; Walker 1983; and Pendergrass and Ostrove 1982). The premise in this study is that Sheriff's department and administration is the greatest source of stress for deputy sheriffs.

Also inherent in this study is the exclusion of deputy sheriffs' supervisor's and administrator's perceived sources of stress. While they do suffer from the effects of stress, it does not usually originate from the same sources that cause stress for officers (Territo and Vetter 1981). Therefore, it is important to distinguish between the two groups so that the research will only focus on the self-reported sources of perceived stress among deputy sheriffs not their supervisors.

Overview of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters, Chapter One, the introduction, describes the purpose and need for the study. Chapter Two is a review of the literature pertaining to the sources and reactions to deputy sheriff stress. Also included in this chapter is a brief discussion of the possible solutions to reduce stress. Chapter Three is a discussion of the methodology of the research. It contains information relating to the sample of the study and the data analysis plan. Chapter Four contains a presentation of the findings relative to each research hypothesis. Finally, chapter Five is a summary of the thesis, an elaboration of the results relative to prior work, and a description of recommendations for future research on the topic of deputy stress.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Substantial amounts of literature exist on the topic of police stress. However, it is difficult

to locate a single source that contains a complete overview of the subject. This is one of the

reasons a thorough examination of literature on the subject of police stress is necessary. All of

the information will be organized into the following four categories: (a) general overview of

stress, (b) sources of deputy stress, (c) reactions to stress, and (d) possible solutions to reduce

stress.

General Overview of Stress

The Merriam-Webster Medical dictionary defines stress as: "a state of bodily or mental

tension resulting from factors that tend to alter existent equilibrium." Simply put, stress is an

emotional, physical or behavioral reaction to a stressor that forces the central nervous system to

adapt.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is the Federal agency

responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-

related illness and injury. NIOSH defines "Job Stress" as the harmful physical and emotional

responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or

needs of the worker.

The study of stress, the identification of contributing factors and symptoms, and the

development of prevention and treatment programs began in earnest in the mid to late twentieth

century (Lindemann, 1944; Mantell, 1994; Maslach and Jackson, 1979; Maslach, 1982; Mitchell, 1983; Mitchell and Everly, 1993; Reese, 1987; Russell and Beigel, 1990; Waters *et al*., 1982).

A pioneer on the subject of stress was Dr. Hans Selye. For several decades, Selye studied the issue, especially its psychological effects. He defines stress as "anything that places an adjustive demand on the organism" (Selye, 1974). Within the definition was a separation between positive stress (eustress) and negative stress (distress). Dr. Selye made this distinction because many stressful events do not cause problems for individuals; rather they provide them with excitement (Territo and Vetter 1981). The athlete, skydiver, extreme sport enthusiast and many others all experience stress that provide them exhilaration and challenge. This is stress without distress (eustress). Eustress occurs when your level of stress is high enough to motivate you to move into action to get things accomplished. For the purpose of this review only negative stress (distress) and the impact it has on the individual and organization is examined.

Research indicates that personality characteristics and past experiences all have an effect on an individual's ability to cope with stress. Because of this connotation, it is thought that the potential of something to cause stress must be examined in conjunction with individual attributes (Webb and Smith 1980). The individual attributes that influence a person's ability to successfully handle stress include but are not limited to: (A) *momentary states of arousal*: hunger and sexual arousal; (B) *idiosyncratic skills and weakness*: e.g. intelligence, strength, and agility (Webb and Smith 1980), (C) *preparedness*: previous life experiences or training in coping techniques (Blanshard 1974; and Hammerton and Tickner 1968), and (D) *support*: the availability of love and help found in familial or close relationships (Dean and Lin 1977).

Personality characteristics also influence a person's ability to deal with stress. The types of people that will more likely experience the negative effects of stress are: introverts, people who experience high levels of depression, persons with low self-esteem (Webb and Smith 1980), and people that exhibit unusual levels of competiveness, aggressiveness, and restlessness (French and Caplan 1970).

Typically, Type A personalities are "intensely driven, anxious, and demanding" (Occupational Hazard, 1983). Individuals with Type A personalities often place too many demands on themselves. If they are not able to meet those demands they may experience increased stress. Individuals with Type B personalities are typically more patient, relaxed and positive thinkers; they are generally regarded as able to handle stress better. Type Bs get along better with people and do not worry unnecessarily about seemingly insignificant problems (Occupational Hazards, 1983).

There are also several group attributes that may serve as potential sources of stress. These characteristics include: *age* – older people are more susceptible to stress (Webb and Smith 1980); *social status* – lower status is associated with greater stress (Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend 1974); and *sex* – females are believed to suffer more stress than males (Webb and Smith 1980). Family problems, financial difficulties, and life crises also have an impact on job stress (Cooper and Marshall 1976).

However, the most important variable that determines an individual's ability to deal with stress is the person's perception of the situation (House 1974). An event that is stressful to one person may have a different effect for another. Stress is "in the eye of the beholder" (Territo and

Vetter 1981). It is the person's subjective perception of events that determines if something is stressful. Job satisfaction and attitudes toward work may be more predictive of stress than factors such as working conditions or type of job (Webb and Smith 1980). The following illustration depicts susceptibility factors that influence risk:

Figure 1. Susceptibility to Stress Factors
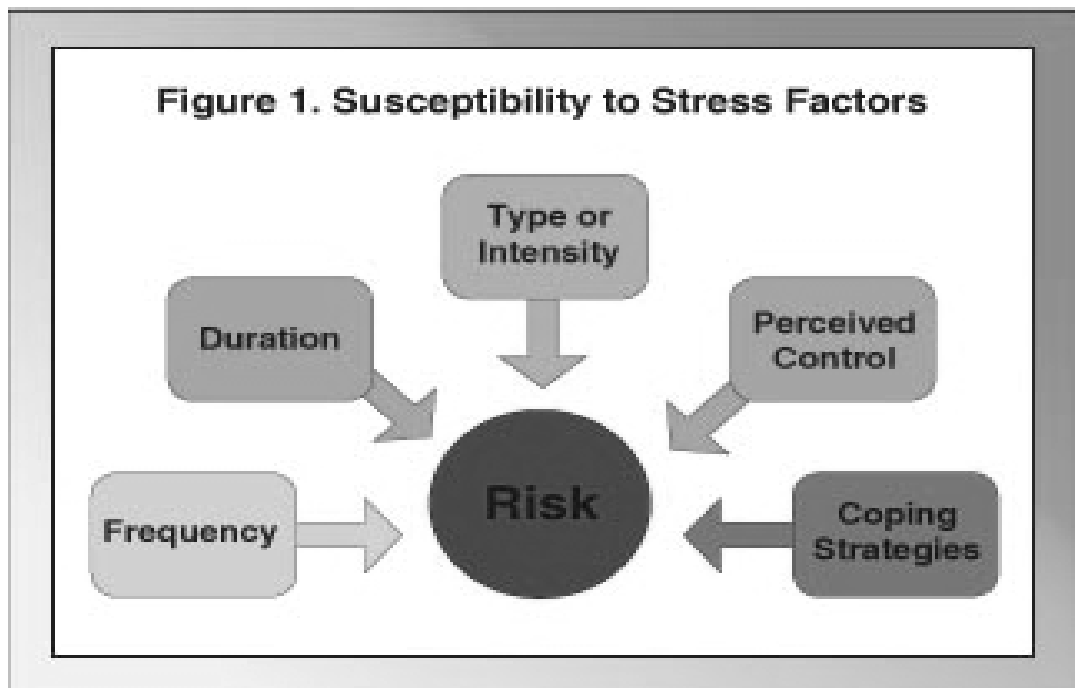
Researchers have developed several "models" to study occupational stress; four models are reviewed in this thesis. French and Kahn (1962), at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan, developed a model that examines an individual's objective environment and psychological environment. This model examines all the factors in an individual's environment that may cause stress, as well as the individual's response to that stress. The body's physical reaction to stress may include such things as an increase in blood pressure, heart rate, and in some cases skin hives. A person may also exhibit such behavioral responses as angry outbursts, depression, and sleep problems. In addition to behavioral and physical responses to

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stress, the Institute for Social Research Model also examines individual characteristics such as personality traits, genetic makeup, and interpersonal relationships with others (Jex, 1998).

McGrath (1976) developed the second stress model. It explains organizational stress in four stages. The first stage is similar to the Institute for Social Research's model; the situations individuals are exposed to are examined. The second stage looks at the individual's perceptions of these situations. Thirdly, the individual must choose a response to the situation. For example, if an employee perceives their work environment to be unsafe they may react by not working as diligently. This poor job performance ultimately effects the overall operation of the organization (Jex, 1998).

A third model of occupational stress was developed by Karasek (1979) and is called the demand-control model. This model explains occupational stress as the result of employees having too many demands placed on them, and having little control over their work environment. "A good example of this might be an employee on a factory assembly line. An individual such as this may have very demanding production quotas to meet, but at the same time have very little control over such things as the work pace of others and the reliability of machinery" (Jex, 1998).

The final model of occupational stress to be discussed is called the Person-Environment fit model. This model was derived by a social psychologist named Kurt Lewin. "Lewin's notion was simply that behavior is a function of the interaction between the person and the situation" (Jex, 1998). As an example, law enforcement officers may view their family as their most important value. The agency may require officers to work overtime and rotating shifts which lead to time away from family. The officer does not value work as importantly as family and a significant amount of stress may result.

The following three studies measured the scope of stress in the American workplace. First, in a study by Northwestern National Life, one-fourth of employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their life. Second, in another study by Princeton Survey Research Associates, three-fourths of employees believe the worker has more on-the-job stress today than a generation ago. Finally, in a study conducted by St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Company, findings indicated that problems at work are more strongly associated with health complaints than are any other life stressor – more so than even financial problems or family problems.

In addition, the next three studies measured what American workers had to say about stress on the job. In a survey by Northwestern National Life, 40 % of workers reported their job is "very or extremely stressful." In another survey by the Families and Work Institute, 26% of workers who report they are "often or very often burned out or stressed by their work." Lastly, in a survey by Yale University, 29% of workers who report they feel "quite a bit or extremely stressed at work."

Occupational stress is a complex issue. Fortunately, research on job stress has greatly expanded in recent years. But in spite of this attention, confusion remains about the causes, effects, and prevention of job stress.

Sources of Deputy Stress

For most people work is a significant part of their life, unfortunately, this inference may occur more often in police work than other jobs. Many have heard the notion that "police work isn't a job, it's a lifestyle." Police work doesn't exactly lend itself to an abundance of spare time. Between callouts, overtime details, court days, shift holdovers, extra-duty jobs and the myriad of

other duty-related things that deputies end up having to do before and after work, it's no wonder so many fall victim to stress. Because so much emphasis is placed on one's job, it is important to realize that the individual's quality of life, including physical and psychological health, can be dramatically affected by the nature of one's employment (Hopkins 1983). The longer officers are on the force, the more their resistance is worn away.

Most people believe that it is the traumatic incident, such as when the officer is in a shoot-out that would cause the most stress. The reality is that incidents such as this happen so few times and in fact may never occur during the career of most officers. Instead, research indicates that it's not the single incident that causes distress. Rather, it appears that it is the long term effects caused by what can be said are an officer's normal duties that cause the problem.

There are many sources of stress that employees may experience in today's workplace. These sources of stress, or stressors, are "demands made by the internal or external environment that upsets a person's balance and for which restoration is needed." (Matteson and Ivancevich, 1987). Many of these stressors are discussed in the book Controlling Work Stress (1987) by Matteson and Ivancevich. The following are some of those sources:

Work Environment

Deputy Sheriff's often work in physical environments that can cause stress levels to accumulate. On a regular basis, deputies assigned to patrol functions find themselves alone in rural areas of the county where their closest back-up may be a considerable distance away. This can cause feelings of anxiety when having to respond to potentially dangerous calls. In addition, deputies assigned to corrections regularly work in overcrowded jails where they are exposed to

fights and assaults on a daily basis. "When these violent events occur, they increase feelings of lack of control and helplessness among employees; the lack of control over danger in one's environment is a significant environmental stressor" (Matteson and Ivancevich, 1987).

Shift Work

Sheriff's Offices do not close and deputies must work a variety of shifts. Research has shown that shift work is a significant stressor for officers; rotating or regularly changing shifts is a major problem. Working the "graveyard" shift is difficult mentally and physically for many individuals. The body's internal clock becomes disoriented when there is a change in the normal sleeping pattern. In addition, individuals working this shift may not eat at regular intervals and / or normal meal times. These changes often result in physiological problems (Matteson and Ivancevich, 1987).

Role Ambiguity and Conflicts

Another stressor that deputies may experience is Role Ambiguity. "Role Ambiguity is a lack of clarity about one's job objectives, as well as, the scope of responsibilities of one's job" (Matteson and Ivancevich, 1987). An example of this would be someone just starting a new job. New deputies are usually unsure of their job duties as well as what the proper procedures are for performing their job correctly. As they "learn the ropes" they become more familiar with their job duties, and in turn become more comfortable at work. Temporary Role Ambiguity generally does not result in an increase in stress. Workers are usually able to cope with it well. Kahn and colleagues conducted a study in 1964 illustrating that workers who experience role ambiguity

over a long period of time are less satisfied with their jobs and are less self-confident than workers who do not experience Role Ambiguity (Matteson and Ivancevich, 1987).

Chronic Ambiguity can occur if a person frequently finds them self in a work environment where they are unclear about their job. Deputy Sheriffs may experience Chronic Ambiguity because they regularly deal with a variety of work assignments depending on the needs of the agency. A good example is from deputies that may find themselves assigned to the patrol division where they are sometimes required to enforce the laws by making arrests. Then, the deputies are transferred to the corrections division where they are required to maintain the safety and security of the jail or to the County Court House where their duties and responsibilities are changed yet again. As deputies work in these different assignments they must adapt to new roles. This ambiguity is sometimes too much for officers to handle. "The result is low job satisfaction, depression, moodiness, and lowered self-esteem" (Matteson and Ivancevich 1982).

Role Conflict is often encountered by Deputy Sheriffs. There are two types of Role Conflict that they may experience. Intra-Role Conflict occurs when individuals receive different information on how to do their jobs (Jex, 1982). Deputy Sheriffs may experience Intra-Role Conflict when one supervisor tells them what is important to do during their shift and another tells them something different. For example, one supervisor may feel that deputies should be conducting more traffic enforcement, while another may emphasize community relations activities. This can cause stress for deputy sheriffs because they are forced to adopt differing roles according to the supervisor present.

The second type of role conflict is inter-role conflict. This occurs when "there is conflict between the requirements of the role as you see them and your own needs, goals, and values (Jex, 1998)." Deputy Sheriffs may experience inter-role conflict if they feel that law enforcement should be the main role of the Sheriff's office, when, in reality it may be to run the jail. This role conflict may lead to stress.

Work Overload and Underload

Work Overload and Work Underload are two more stressors Deputy Sheriffs may experience. Work underload occurs when a worker does not have enough work to do. This boredom can cause stress for many individuals. Quantitative work underload occurs from physical inactivity and idleness which may arise from having to little to do on the job. Qualitative work underload occurs when a job is not mentally stimulating. A worker experiencing this may become depressed because they do not feel that they are meeting their full potential (Matteson and Ivancevich, 1982).

Work Overload is probably the most common stressor that a worker may experience. "Stressed out generally refers to someone who has too much to do and too many demands" (Federal Bureau of Prisons Training Manual, 1996, 6). For example, deputies assigned to corrections often deal with large numbers of inmates, each having different problems or needs. On a daily basis deputies may have an inmate who has medical concerns, another who may be violating the rules of the jail, as well as dealing with added duties from their supervisors. The result of this overload may be "apathy, indecisiveness, poor judgment, and increased errors (Federal Bureau of Prisons Training Manual, 1996).

Interpersonal Conflicts

Interaction with others is often a significant source of stress for deputies. Interpersonal conflict occurs when an individual has a disagreement with another person at work. These interpersonal conflicts may result in verbal confrontations, but can in extreme circumstances escalate into physical violence (Jex, 1998).

Interpersonal conflict for deputies can occur with the public, inmates, coworkers, or supervisors. Interpersonal conflict with the public can occur because deputies don't just show up on the door step for no reason, they are usually responding to a problem already occurring. Interpersonal conflict with inmates occurs because many inmates do not follow the rules and lack respect for authority. Interpersonal conflict can also occur between deputies and other coworkers. Deputies often work with the same coworkers on a daily basis. This constant contact increases the opportunity for conflicts to occur. In general though, the conflict between deputies is usually not a significant stressor compared to conflicts that occur between deputies and their supervisors. This is due to the fact that coworkers are not in the position to influence your work; performance, rewards, and career progress like superiors are (Matteson and Ivancevich, 1982).

Supervisors May Cause Stress

Matteson and Ivancevich (1982) list five ways that supervisors may cause stress for subordinates. Workers often experience stress when they feel that their supervisor plays favorites, does not communicate effectively, is not trustworthy, does not listen to their problems, and is unclear about how they are performing on the job.

<u>Lack of Control</u>

Deputies may experience a sense of powerlessness when they feel that they do not have the authority to handle situations that arise. For example, if a deputy working in corrections is having a problem with an inmate they can write a disciplinary report for the inmate's actions. A supervisor may throw out the report, or the inmate may not be disciplined in a way that the deputy feels is appropriate. This powerlessness often results in resentment towards supervisors, as well as an increase in stress (Lombardo, 1981).

Deputies may feel that they have little input on decisions that affect their jobs. "When their advice is sought, officers often interpret solicitation as 'asking for asking sake' not as a 'real' attempt to solicit an officer's suggestion (Lombardo, 1981). "This feeling of co-opting or cooptation may have a pessimistic affect with deputies attempting to submarine departmental initiatives. Often times, members of a Sheriff's department have not worked as deputy sheriffs. This adds to the frustration because deputies may feel that individuals who have no experience working in their positions are not capable of implementing positive changes when necessary.

The following six areas may be additional causes of stress for deputies (Lombardo 1981).

1. <u>Human Indecency and Pain</u>

   Putting aside personal feelings and dealing with criminals and their victims can be challenging. Many police officers see examples of human indecency and pain on a day-to-day basis. Seeing people, particularly the elderly and children, who are the victims of murder, beatings, robberies, rapes and sex crimes can take a toll on the mental health of

officers. Criminal profiling and getting inside the minds of criminals who perpetrate these types of crimes can also cause mental stress.

2. Internal and Personal Stressors

   Police officers often work different shifts, sometimes on monthly rotations. Continual body rhythm alterations, such as changing from a day shift to a graveyard shift or being on call 24/7, requires biological adjustment. These continual changes in work hours not only cause body stress, but they can cause personal stress as well, as officers make adjustments in how they interact with their spouses, children, parents, extended family members and friends. Just as a pattern is established in personal relationships, changes in work shifts can upset these routines and relationships.

3. Criminal Justice System Stressors

   Working with the different agencies within the criminal justice system can cause stress. Having to appear in court may interfere with an officer's sleep, personal time and current work assignments. Battles between agencies and the court's decision to release offenders can also cause stress. The perceived ineffectiveness of agencies that victims are often referred to by police officers can also cause stress. It can make officers feel they are unable to truly help crime victims, and they may never feel they have closure on a case.

4. Safety Issue Stressors

   Law enforcement work can be a dangerous job. An officer's day may fluctuate from slow boredom to a sudden mobilization of energy; this creates both physical and mental stress. Deputies assigned to field operations will be sent countless times during their career into

unknown and potentially dangerous situations. Some examples are: assaults in progress (domestic violence), burglaries, alarms, accident, suicides and countless others. While deputies assigned to corrections routinely interact with inmates who are incarcerated for minor offenses such as theft or driving under the influence to more serious offenses such as murder, rape and robbery. In addition, these deputies are responsible to guard the mentally ill inmates whose behavior can be very un-predictive and possibly dangerous. Unfortunately, recent studies have shown a dramatic increase of mentally ill people being incarcerated in jails and prisons. During these times an officer's physical and mental state heightens as they prepare for the unknown. Maintaining the ability to control their emotions and protect the lives of others even when their safety is threatened is a big challenge

5. Administrative Stressors

In addition to working out in the public, a lot goes on inside a police department. Dealing with administrative issues, paperwork and internal investigations can all cause stress. Officers may feel they are the ones being watched and that even their off-time is being monitored. Lack of recognition and training can also contribute to police stress. Female officers may feel even more stress as they may feel challenged to constantly be proving themselves to male officers.

6. Outside Influence Stressors

It's my opinion that deputy sheriffs in Ohio are exposed to a unique work environment. It wasn't until 1980 as a result of the Ohio Supreme Court ruling in Yarosh v. Becane, did

Deputy Sheriffs employed in the State of Ohio have a legitimate opportunity at a career. Prior to this ruling, deputy sheriffs worked at the "will" of the Sheriff. This meant, if you supported the loser, weren't connected, or didn't work to get the boss elected, you were probably out of a job. This **"**spoils system" is a practice where a newly elected office holder, in this case a Sheriff, after winning an election, gives government jobs as a reward for working to help get him or her elected. This way of filling positions is not new; in fact, it has been around since the United States was founded. Unfortunately, it is my opinion that this type of political patronage still remains in effect to some degree today.

<u>Reactions to Stress</u>

Over the span of my career, I've seen most if not all rookie deputies begin their careers with great enthusiasm and lofty ideals. Unfortunately, over the span of their career, far too many of these deputies lose their excitement and idealistic outlook and instead pessimism and poor attitudes set in. Veteran deputies can be heard making statements such as "If I had to do it all over again, I don't think I'd become a deputy. I'd go into some other line of work," or "Ten more years and I'm the hell out of here." Another quandary is the fact that many deputy sheriffs begin their careers in excellent physical health only to retire early usually on some type of disability or die from job related stress disorders. These reactions to stress demonstrate the cost of continuous pressure and the need for ongoing emotional readjustment.

Many employers incorrectly assume that stressful working conditions are a necessary evil – that companies must turn up the pressure on workers and set aside health concerns to remain productive today. Table 1 shows 4 ways stress can show up.

Table 1: Four Ways Stress Can Show Up.

1. Physical indicators:	**2. Behavioral indicators:**
Migraine headaches	Change in eating habits
Clenching jaw, grinding teeth, facial twitching	Risk-taking
Chest pain or tightness	Anger – lashing out
Nausea, vomiting, heartburn, cramps, diarrhea	Hyperstartle, restlessness
Unusual number of colds and flu	Alcohol / drug use
Backaches, muscle tension	Fatigue – sleep disturbance
	Withdrawal
	1000 yard stare
	Family discord
3. Mental (cognitive) indicators:	**4. Emotional indicators:**
Decrease in concentration	Anxiety
Increased forgetfulness	Agitation
Confusion	Overwhelmed – feeling out of control
Poor problem – solving abilities	Tearfulness
Loss of decisiveness	Fear, panic, worry, pessimism
Guilt	Irritable, impatient, frustration
Preoccupation (obsessions) with event	Sad, depressed, loss of motivation
Inability to understand consequences of behavior	Feeling empty, spent, apathy, indifference

Taken from "Stress Management in Law Enforcement" Handbook, FBI National Academy CJ-475A Instructor S.S.A. Paula Barrow pp. 6. October 2007.

Occupational stress has a causal relationship with disease, and increased stress is

associated with poorer physical and mental health. The 1998 Journal of Occupational and

Environmental Medicine reported that health care expenditure is nearly 50% greater for workers who report high levels of stress than for those who don't report high stress levels. According to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (1996), workers who must take time off work because of stress, anxiety or a related disorder will be off the job for about 20 days.

Stress disrupts the regulatory functions of the body (the nervous and the endocrine systems). All organs can eventually be affected (Selye 1978). It is thought to cause immunosuppression; a lowered immunity to viruses and cancer causing substances. The normal amounts of adrenalin secreted during stress might reduce the immune capacity of the body and increase susceptibility to malignancy (Fox 1978). This might be the reason a current study has postulated that high stress levels in the police occupation may play a large part in the elevated rate of cancer among police officers (Violanti *et al* 1986).

The findings of several studies illustrate that police officers experience a high rate of stress related illnesses (Singleton and Tehan 1978; Stotland 1991; and Kreitner *et al* 1985). They report that police officers experience higher rates of heart attacks and diabetes than the general public (Guralnick 1963), as well as have an increased mortality risks for colon cancer, liver cancer, and heart disease (Milham 1979; Violanti et al 1986; and Kreitner *et al* 1985). The shift work that many officers rotate through creates stress that can lead to erratic diet patterns, lack of exercise, and irregular sleeping cycles (Bocklett 1988; Klinzing 1980; and Jaroszowa 1977).

The psychological and emotional health of deputy sheriffs is also vulnerable to high levels of stress. Divorces, marital problems, family trouble, alcoholism, drug abuse, and suicide can be linked to high levels of stress (Terry 1981; Wagner and Brzeczak 1983; Violanti *et al* 1985; Dietrich and Smith 1986; Heiman 1975; Hageman 1978; Southworth 1990; and Maslach

and Jackson 1979). In my opinion, it is unfortunate that alcohol is not only used but very much accepted as a way of coping with the tensions and stresses of the day. While these studies do not claim that stress directly causes these maladies, they do offer sufficient evidence that stress can aggravate these pre-existing conditions.

Major epidemiological studies have shown that the risk of police suicide is over three times that of the general population and risk has appeared to increase over the past decade (Gillan 2009). In addition, there is suspicion that some police suicides are intentionally misclassified as accidents or undetermined deaths to protect suicide victims and survivors (Gillan 2009). Research shows that law enforcement officers kill themselves more often than they are killed by others. However, generally there is little and often no occupational suicide training provided for police officers (Violanti 2010). By its very nature, suicide is an act of desperation, carried out when less drastic avenues of relief seem unavailable or inadequate. Police suicides can devastate the morale of entire agencies and leave other officers with intense feelings of guilt, remorse, and disillusionment.

The work performance of deputy sheriffs that experience reactions to long-term stress can be affected. Poor morale, excessive fatigue, and absenteeism are all possible outcomes of stress (Dunham and Alpert 1989). Deputy's alertness, physical stamina, and their ability to perform their duties are also affected (More 1992). Since personnel costs usually account for between 60% and 90% of most police agency budgets (Swank and Conser 1983), it is imperative that police organizations achieve the maximum performance from their officers. Rising costs for medical coverage, fringe benefits, and disability compensation are all excellent reasons why

police organizations should attempt to reduce the effects of stress on their officers (Stratton 1978).

The Sheriff's department itself can be adversely affected by deputy sheriffs that experience high levels of stress. The quantity and quality of police services provided by these deputies usually will reflect the problems that the deputy is encountering. Cynicism and deviance are two ways in which officers cope with the stress they are experiencing (Graf 1986). This can result in an increase in citizen complaints against deputies which may lower the public trust of the sheriff's department and damage the reputation of the organization within the law enforcement community. As is true with addressing any problem, the first and most important step is to recognize that the problem exists. With regard to stress, this fact can no longer be ignored.

Solutions to Stress

Many progressive law enforcement agencies proactively have begun addressing the realities of job-related stressors, such as post-traumatic stress symptoms, and other potentially debilitating conditions often caused or exacerbated by the rigors of law enforcement duties. Agencies are providing stress management training and employee assistance programs (EAP) to improve the ability of workers to cope with difficult work situations. Stress management programs teach workers about the nature and sources of stress, the effects of stress on health, and personal skills to reduce stress – for example, time management or relaxation exercises. EAP's provide individual counseling for employees with both work and personal problems.

There are several techniques or strategies to help manage stress such as; proper diet and nutrition to maximize the body's capability to handle stress, cardiovascular fitness to reduce the impact of stress and to foster the body's proper response to stress, outlets outside the job such as hobbies or travel to allow an emotional and psychological escape from job issues, sufficient rest and relaxation to allow the body's restoration from stress, and relaxation exercises like yoga, or tai chi, which can restore emotional balance.

Follow the simple thought for the day that we spend a very significant portion of our waking hours at work, so why not spend a significant portion our waking hours doing something we love to do.

Summary

In conclusion, police work is among the most satisfying, yet most stressful, of all professions. Protecting and serving the community is, no doubt, a noble calling. The literature in this chapter represents a collective view of the topic of police stress. The scale and complexity of the subject matter necessitates future research on the topic. While past researchers have disagreed on the reliability of some of the studies, they have agreed on the need for more investigation on the topic, especially in the area of sources of stress. Further research will result in data that will hopefully enable participants in the police organization to better identify stressors and reduce their effects on each deputy and the organization as a whole.

The next chapter consists of a discussion of the methods used to test the hypotheses. Specifically, a review of the questionnaire, sample, and the data analysis plan are included in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This thesis examined job stress of deputy sheriffs. The design used in the collection of the data, the survey instrument, a description of the respondents, and the statistical analysis plan are discussed in this chapter.

Design

This thesis used a survey design. Specifically, a self-administered mailed questionnaire method was employed. The thesis began by speaking with the Sheriff of a department that this author had access to in which the proposed data for the thesis would originate. The importance of the thesis and its purpose were explained. Permission was granted to administer the survey.

A self-addressed stamped envelope containing the questionnaire and some additional information on stress relief techniques were disseminated to all full-time deputies ($N = 208$), in the particular department by using the inter-office departmental mail system.

The procedure for collecting the data was chosen for at least two reasons. First, it promoted anonymity of the deputy sheriffs and the sheriff's department. Second, it was efficient: administering the questionnaire to a large group of subjects in a relatively short period of time for a low cost was easy given the access for this author.

Instrument

This survey was designed so that it could be determined whether or not the reporting deputies perceived certain stressors to be greater or lesser sources of stress. The questionnaire

was made up of 4 sections (see Appendix A for a copy of the instrument). In section one, self-reported sources of stress were asked in order to place the responses into one of seven general categories of stressors that prior research suggested may be important. These categories are:

1. The Organization and Administration

2. Supervisors

3. Work Environment

4. Current Role

5. Outside Influences (such as funding / financial)

6. Public or Community Issues

7. Personal and Other Issues

The respondents were all asked to rate their sources of stress on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where "1" indicated a low source of stress and "5" indicated a high source of stress. Section one also asked respondents to indicate which category of stressors caused them the most stress.

Section two asked respondents to describe what aspects of each of the categories of stressors listed in section one caused them stress. Using the written responses provided in section two, if respondents indicated conflict with at least 50% of the categories of stress in section one, a positive association with stress was indicated.

Section three asked seventeen additional questions such as age, sex, marital status, and current role which enabled the sample to be profiled and certain other hypotheses to be pursued.

The final section asked respondents; "What if anything do you do to handle stress?" The responses to this section were placed into one of five general categories. These categories are:

1. Drink (alcohol)

2. Exercise

3. Combination

4. Peer / Talk (social)

5. Other

<u>Sample</u>

Overall, 208 questionnaires were distributed and 39 were completed and returned. This resulted in a response rate of 19% for the entire survey. There was an expected return rate of 10 to 15%. The sample consisted of full-time deputy sheriffs who were employed by a medium size (50 – 399), full service sheriff's department located in the northeastern part of Ohio. These subjects' duties include: law enforcement, corrections, security and administrative functions throughout the county. Deputies surveyed held the lowest sworn rank (see Appendix F) in the sheriff's department and did not serve in any supervisory capacity. Respondents were selected because of the convenience of the sample for this researcher. Various demographic characteristics of the samples are provided in Table 2.

Of the 39 deputies that participated in the study, 32 (82.1%) were male and 7 (17.9%) were female. Thirteen (33.3%) were never married, 19 (48.7%) were married, 5 (12.8%) were divorced, 2 (5.1%), and 2 (5.1%) were separated. None of the deputies was widowed. Two or

Table 2 - Demographic Characteristics of Samples, N = 39

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Male	32	82.1
Female	7	17.9
Never Married	13	33.3
Married	19	48.7
Divorced	5	12.8
Separated	2	5.1
Widowed	0	0
Age		
21-30	2	5.1
31-40	11	28.2
41-50	17	43.6
51-60	7	17.9
61+	1	2.6
Education		
High School	4	10.3
Trade/Technical School	26	66.7
Some College	3	7.7
College Degree	5	12.8
Graduate Degree	1	2.6
Number of Children		
0	13	33.3
1	13	33.3
2	9	23.1
3	3	7.7

(5.1%) were 21 – 25 years of age, 11 (28.2%) were 26 – 35 years of age, 17 (43.6%) were 36 – 44 years of age, 7 (17.9%) were 45 – 55 years of age, and 1 (2.6%) was 56 years of age or older. Four or 10.3% had a high school diploma, 26 (66.7%) had some college, 3 (7.7%) had two years of college, 5 (12.8%) had four years of college, 1 (2.6%) had a Masters degree or higher. Thirteen or 33.3% had no children, 13 (33.3%) had 1 child, 9 (23.1%) had two children, and 3 (7.7%) had three children.

Hypotheses

There are several group attributes that may serve as potential sources of stress. These characteristics include: *age* – older people are more susceptible to stress (Webb and Smith 1980); *social status* – lower status is associated with greater stress (Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend 1974); and *sex* – females are believed to suffer more stress than males (Webb and Smith 1980). Family problems, financial difficulties, and life crises also have an impact on job stress (Cooper and Marshall 1976). However, the most important variable that determines an individual's ability to deal with stress is the person's perception of the situation (House 1974). An event that is stressful to one person may have a different effect for another. Stress is "in the eye of the beholder" (Territo and Vetter 1981). It is the person's subjective perception of events that determines if something is stressful.

Almost all jobs/occupations are associated with stress. Certain occupations such as policing are unsurprisingly more stressful than others. Taken as a whole, research on policing and stress suggests that police work is in fact stressful. This thesis analyzed the following four hypotheses relative to job stress among deputies:

1. Several factors serve as high sources of stress for Deputy Sheriffs.

2. Certain factors are related to high levels of stress; such as job role / assignment for Deputy Sheriffs

3. Certain characteristics of Deputy Sheriffs, such as, Satisfaction with Sheriff's Office, Level of Work Satisfaction, Years of Work Experience, and Number of Missed Work Days will show differences in stress levels.

4. Deputy Sheriffs manage stress in a variety of ways.

Data Analysis Plan

There were two stages in the data analysis for this thesis. In stage one, descriptive statistics including frequency distributions, measures of central tendency, and measures of dispersion were used to summarize the information garnered from the 39 completed surveys. In the second stage, the hypotheses were tested using independent two-sample t-tests, cross-tabulations with Pearson's chi-square, and Pearson's correlations. Both Microsoft Excel 2007 and SPSS (the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 17.0) were used to perform the analysis. The alpha level to determine significance throughout the analysis is .10.

Summary

This chapter examined the self-reported sources of occupational stress for Deputies. The method for collecting the data was presented along with the instrument that was used to conduct the study. A description of the sample along with their various characteristics was displayed. The findings of the study are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Law enforcement has been recognized as one of the most stressful occupations worldwide (Dantzer, 1987; Loo, 1984). In addition to experiencing job-related stressors such as dealing with unlawful, often dangerous, actions of citizens, there is abusive treatment in the workplace (Hart, Wearing, & Headley, 1995) and a general lack of social support (Violanti, 1993). Not surprisingly, police officers have more stress-related physical complaints and psychological problems than workers in most other professions (Lobel & Dunkel-Schetter, 1990), resulting in a high incidence of sickness, absenteeism, burnout, and premature retirement (Band & Manuele, 1987; Brown & Campbell, 1990, 1994; Burke 1993). The failure to cope effectively with stress results in increased rates of heart disease, stomach disorders, divorce, alcohol and drug abuse, and suicide, as compared to norms for the general population (Lord, Gray, & Pond, 1991; Rogers 1976). Therefore, it is important to be aware of the factors in a person's job that may negatively affect their physical, psychological and emotional health.

The purpose of this thesis is to study how deputies view stress. This study used a self-reporting stress survey to collect the data from a sample of full-time deputy sheriffs. The deputies were asked to rate sources of stress on a Likert scale of 1 to 5, where "1" indicated a lesser source of stress and "5" indicated a greater source of stress and how they managed it. In order to collect this information, a survey instrument was provided to 208 deputies of a medium-sized department located in northeast Ohio. Overall 39 were returned; this resulted in a response rate of nearly 19% for the entire survey. There was an expected return rate of 10 to 15%.

In order to further describe the respondent sample, question 4 of the survey asked, "What is your current role at the Sheriff's Office." The following 3 categories (a, b, and c) were options to choose from: a) Field officer – a deputy who regularly performs duties outside of the jail environment patrolling designated areas, responding to calls for service, and conducting investigations; b) Corrections deputy – a deputy who regularly performs duties inside the jail related to security of the jail, the processing of new prisoners, and prisoner transport; and c) Administrative deputy – a deputy who regularly performs duties such as working in an office performing administrative or clerical type functions.

Of the 39 deputies that participated in the study, 24 (61.5%) worked in the corrections division, 14 (35.9%) worked in the operations division, and one (2.6%) worked in the administrative division. Table 3 illustrates the frequency of work role / assignment of deputy sheriffs that responded to the survey at the Sheriff's Office that was examined in this study.

Table 3: Work Role—Job Assignment of Deputies, N = 39.

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Corrections Deputy (Jail)	24	61.5
Operations Deputy (Patrol)	14	35.9
Administrative Deputy	1	2.6

Because of the low response rate of deputies assigned to the administrative division this group of respondents will not be used for the testing of any hypothesis in this thesis.

In addition, question 6 of the survey asked, "how many hours per week do you work for pay?" Each of the following 3 categories (a, b, and c) were listed: a) Police Work – defined as

working for pay as a police officer for a law enforcement agency; b) Extra Duty – working for

pay as a police officer for another entity other than a law enforcement agency i.e. working for

private contract sometimes referred to as secondary or casual employment; and c) Non-Police

Work – working for pay for any other job other than a police officer. Thirty-three (84.6%)

reported doing police work 0 to 40 hours per week for pay, and 6 (15.4%) reported doing police

work 41 to 72 hours per week for pay. Thirty-one (79.5%) reported working extra-duty 0 to 12

hours per week for pay, and 8 (20.5%) reported working extra-duty 13 to 24 hours per week for

pay. Thirty-six (92.2%) reported working 0 to 20 hours non-police work per week for pay, and 3

(7.8%) reported working 21 to 45 non-police work hours per week for pay. Various work

characteristics of the samples are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Work Characteristics of Deputies, N = 39.

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Police Work		
0 to 40 hours	33	84.6
41 to 72 hours	6	15.4
Extra Duty Work		
0 to 12 hours	31	79.5
13 to 24 hours	8	20.5
Non-Police Work		
0 to 20 hours	36	92.2
21 to 45 hours	3	7.8

This thesis analyzed the following four hypotheses to find out how deputies view stress:

1. Several factors serve as high sources of stress for Deputy Sheriffs.

2. Certain factors are related to high levels of stress; such as job role or assignment.

3. Certain characteristics of Deputy Sheriff's will show differences in stress levels.

4. Deputy Sheriffs manage stress in a variety of ways.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 – Deputies view a number of sources of stress as high; in fact most stress levels will be high. A high level of stress is defined as a mean of 3.5 or greater, a medium level of stress is defined as a mean of 1.8 to 3.4, and a low level of stress is defined as 1.7 or less.

In order to test the first hypothesis, question 1 from the survey, which included 8 items to report on, asked the following: there may be several sources of stress for a deputy sheriff, for items "a" through "h", choose the best response for each item that reflects how stressful the item is for you.

Use the following scale where: *"1" means Low Stress and "5" means "High Stress".*

a. The Sheriff's Office in general   1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

b. The Sheriff's Office supervisors   1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

c. The work itself of being a deputy Sheriff   1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

d. Working in the corrections division (jail)   1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

e. Working in the operations division (patrol) 1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

f. Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / political instability

<div align="center">1.   2.   3.   4.   5.</div>

g. The public or community itself to which a deputy sheriff serves

<div align="center">1.   2.   3.   4.   5.</div>

h. Personal and or other issues   1.   2.   3.   4.   5.

The results are listed in hierarchical order in table 5 from highest level of stress to lowest level of stress. Valid "N" is actual number of responses for each question.

Table 5: Deputies View Stress from Highest to Lowest, N = 39.

Highest to Lowest Stress Level	Item	Mean	Valid N
	f. Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / political instability	4.31	39
	d. Working in the corrections division (jail)	3.87	38
	b. Sheriff's Office supervisors	3.26	38
	a. Sheriff's Office in general	3.08	39
	c. Work itself of being a Deputy	3.03	39
	g. The public or community itself to which a deputy sheriff serves	2.94	36
	h. Personal and or other issues	2.72	36
	e. Working in the operations division (patrol)	2.53	32

The test results for hypothesis 1 indicate, "Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / and political instability" is the one rated highest in terms of a source of stress. Also

interesting was the indication that "working in the operations division (patrol / field)" was reported by the deputies as the least stress of the 8 items analyzed.

A high level of stress was discovered with the following sources: Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / political instability, and assignment to the corrections division (jail). A medium level of stress was discovered with Sheriff's Office supervisors, as well as for all other items tested, see table 5. There were no sources discovered associated with low stress.

Hypothesis 2 – Deputies Roles / Assignment will be related to stress levels; in fact Deputies assigned to the corrections division (jail) will have a higher level of stress than Deputies assigned to the operations division (patrol / field).

The responses / data from questions 1 (d) and (e), and (h) in the survey were analyzed to test the second hypothesis. Question 1(d) asked deputies to indicate their level of stress caused by working in the corrections division (jail).

Question 1(e) asked deputies to indicate their level of stress caused by working in the operations division (patrol / field). The test results for hypothesis 2 are summarized in table 6.

Table 6: Work Role—Job Assignment Comparisons of Stress Level 1 - 10, N = 39.

Assignment	Valid N	Mean	SD	P-value
Corrections Deputy (Jail)	23	6.5	1.9	P < .01
Operations Deputy (Patrol/Field)	14	3.6	1.8	

A t-test analysis was performed to compare stress levels of Deputy Sheriffs working in the corrections division versus Deputy Sheriffs working in the operations division. Results indicate a difference in stress levels, (on a scale from 1, least stress, to 10, most stress) with a mean of 6.5 for deputies working in the corrections division as compared with a mean of 3.6 for deputies working in the operations division. This difference is statistically significant. Consequently, the test results for hypothesis 2 indicate deputies working in the corrections division have a higher level of stress than deputies working in the operations division. The P-value is (P<.01) which means 1% of the time this difference is due to a fluke or due to chance.

Hypothesis 3 – Certain (four) characteristics will impact Deputy Sheriff Stress levels.

The responses / data from these four items in the survey were analyzed to test the third hypothesis: a) Satisfaction with Sheriff's Office, b) Level of Work Satisfaction, c) Years of Work experience, and d) Number of Missed Work Days.

A Pearson's "r" Correlation coefficient matrix was produced with the following 5 items indicating a stress level (on a scale of 1 to 10): Work Satisfaction Level with Sheriff's Office, Years of Work Experience, Number of Missed Work Days, and Level of Education. The following scale: 0 = nothing, Low = .01 - .29, Medium = .30 - .59, and High = .60 - .99 was used to indicate the strength of correlation between deputy stress level and characteristic. The test results for hypothesis 3 indicate three out of four characteristics impacted stress levels in the manner expected, but only one of the four demonstrated a statistically significant correlation. The test results for hypothesis 3 are summarized in table 7.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix of Items Related to Stress, N = 39. (Top row is Pearson's r correlation coefficient, middle row is p-value, and lowest row is number of cases used in the analysis).

Item	Stress Level	Satisfaction	Experience	Missed Work
Work Satisfaction Level	-.523 .001			
Years of Work Experience	-.239 .155 37	.145 .386 38		
Number of Missed Worked Days	.274 .106 36	-.349* .034 37	-.151 .379 36	
Level of Education	.138 .410 38	-.180 .274 39	.021 .902 38	.030 .861 37

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

1. Satisfaction with Sheriff's Office – Deputy Sheriffs with a higher satisfaction level with the agency had less stress.

2. Years of Work Experience – Deputy Sheriffs with more experience had less stress.

3. Number of Missed Work Days – Deputy Sheriffs with a greater number of missed work days had high stress.

4. Level of Education – Deputy Sheriffs with a greater level of education reported a higher level of stress than those with less education. This result was unexpected

Hypothesis 4 – Deputies will manage stress in several ways.

In order to test hypothesis 4, question 20 from the survey was used, "What if anything do you do to manage stress?" The deputies were given space to write down responses as to how they manage their stress. The responses varied widely requiring a combining of the factors into 5 categories; a) Drink, b) Exercise, c) Talk with Peers / Social, d) Combination of categories a, b, and c, and, e) Other. The data testing the fourth hypothesis are summarized in table 8.

Table 8: Ways Deputy Sheriffs Manage Stress, N = 39.

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Exercise	4	11.1
Drink	3	7.7
Talk with Peers / Social	0	0
Combination	19	48.7
Other	10	25.6

The test results for hypothesis 4 indicate deputies manage their stress in a number of ways. Three (7.7%) of deputies reported drinking to manage their stress. Four (11.1%) reported exercising to manage their stress. Zero reported talking with peers / social to manage their stress. Nineteen (48.7%) reported using a combination of drinking, exercising and other to manage their stress. Ten reported "other" ways to manage their stress. Only 3 (7.7%) reported no way to manage their stress

<u>Verbatim Statements Made by Deputy Sheriffs</u>

Appendix H lists the verbatim comments of deputy sheriffs in response to question 2 which asked the deputies to describe "What aspect of items a – h cause you the most stress." These statements were incorporated in this thesis in this manner because the researcher believes the statements are noteworthy and should be provided verbatim to learn just how Deputy Sheriffs are saying they are trying to manage their stress. However, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to analyze the qualitative nature of these statements.

a. The Sheriff's Office in general

b. The Sheriff's Office supervisors

c. The work itself of being a deputy sheriff

d. Working in the corrections division (jail)

e. Working in the operations division (patrol)

f. Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial

g. The public or community itself to which a deputy sheriff serves

h. Personal and or other issues

<u>Summary</u>

Overall, deputies reported a number of sources of stress at the medium to high level, such as job security, job role or assignment, the supervisors, the organization, the public they serve, and the work itself. Factors such as years of experience, education, missed work days, satisfaction level and stress level also appear to affect how deputy's views stress. In addition, deputies reported several ways they manage their stress.

The next chapter provides an overall summary of the thesis, a discussion of the limitations of the research, and implications for the sheriff's office administrator and deputy sheriff. The chapter ends with a discussion of general implications of these suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, DISCUSSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Law enforcement has long been recognized as a high stress and a high strain profession (Brown & Cambell 1994; Horn 1991; Kroes 1976; Kroes & Hurrell 1975; Raiser 1974; Reilly & DiAngelo 1990; Violanti & Marshall 1983), yet is among the most satisfying of all jobs. The deputy sheriffs studied were from a medium-sized (50 – 399) agency located in the northeast part of Ohio. The deputies held no supervisory rank. Their mode age was 36-44 years of age and their mode number of police experience was 16 or more years. The purpose of this thesis was to learn how deputies view stress. This thesis has concurred with most of the current research on stress and its effects on law enforcement officers. It has also strengthened the proposal that most stress comes from the organization and administration.

Perceived work stress has been defined as the degree to which workers "feel-strain" associated with their jobs (Karacek & Theorell 1990). Work that is both physically and emotionally demanding, as well as lacking flexibility and control, has been characterized as particularly stressful (Grosch & Sauter 2005; Hurrell & Aristeguieta 2005; Murphy & Sauter 2004; Quick, Quick, Nelson & Hurrell 1997). Although certain levels of work stress are inevitable in almost any occupation, unremitting high levels of work stress are a concern because, as numerous empirical studies have shown, a number of negative outcomes at both the individual and organizational levels can result (Cropanzano, Rupp, & Byrne 2003; Podsakoff, LePine, & Lepine 2007).

Stress is caused by a variety of sources such as excessive work rules and regulations, the constant changing of shifts, the court system's leniency towards criminals, and the omnipresent potential of being injured or killed. No matter what produces the stress, the results are typically the same. A deputy's physical health may be affected by stress which can lead to heart attacks, headaches, gastrointestinal disorders and other ailments. The psychological state of the deputy may also be affected which in turn could result in alcoholism, family problems, and possibly suicide.

Highly stressed deputies can pose a threat to their own safety and to that of the community. The sheriff's office may also be negatively affected by employee's who are stressed out. Deputies that suffer from too much stress may be involved in more use of force situations and have trouble controlling their aggression when interacting with the public. Increased sick time, deviant behavior and resignations are also products of stress. These problems have a damaging effect on the quantity and quality of services provided to the public and the department. This in turn lowers the public image of the sheriff's office which compounds the problem for the organization. Despite the growing awareness of stress related problems among law enforcement officers and ongoing efforts to address this issue, psychological and physical problems in policing continue to grow at an alarming rate (Collins & Gibbs 2003).

Therefore, in order to be a healthy law enforcement agency it is essential that administrators and deputies both be trained and learn what these greatest sources of stress in order to do a good job managing them. Identification of these sources will enable deputies and management to work toward lessening their affect. In turn, this could help to produce a sheriff's

office that is more responsive and effective to the needs of their employees and the community in which they serve.

Employers in general are increasingly aware of the quality of work-life needs of their workforce to stay competitive and productive and to retain workers in an increasingly restricted and aging labor market. Consequently, programs on conflict resolution and work place wellness are more prevalent, especially in some of the high-risk industries and workforces (Stokols, 1991). Similarly, it may be advisable for sheriffs office's to continue to find opportunities to improve the work environment of deputies and to find new and effective mechanisms for addressing stressors in policing. Progressive departments favor this approach and actively implement innovative strategies to help minimize the risk of work stress among deputy sheriffs.

As with all studies, this thesis has potential limitations related to the design that may preclude the determination of causality. This thesis, however, provides a basis for more definitive studies in the future. Deputies from only one Sheriff's Office were sampled; these results may not be generalizable to all Sheriff's Offices, especially those outside Ohio. The survey instrument is limited because it was developed specifically for this study so its psychometric properties are unknown. The survey may have benefited from added focus. Its validity has not been established thoroughly. Future use of this instrument may reveal whether or not it measures what it was designed to analyze nonetheless, its results affirm prior research.

Also, the length of the survey may have contributed to the low response rate. The twenty questions which were asked may have discouraged deputies from responding. In addition, some of the questions which were of a sensitive nature may also have deterred deputies from responding. Probably the most prominent weakness of the study was the relatively small size of

the sample. Only 39 out of 208 deputies responded to the survey. This raises questions about the ability to infer characteristics from the sample to the general population of deputy sheriffs. A sample of more deputy sheriffs would enable the researcher to make more conclusive statements concerning the relationship between the data and the hypothesis.

Finally, the last weakness related to the sample was the absence of a significant number of female deputy respondents. Since only 3 women participated in the survey, very little can be said about what women deputy sheriffs think are their greatest sources of stress.

Discussion

Data gathered from the questionnaires supported the research hypothesis. Overall, deputies reported a number of sources of stress at the medium to high level, such as job security, job role or assignment, the supervisors, the organization, the public they serve, and the work itself. Factors such as years of experience, education, missed work days, satisfaction level and stress level also appear to affect how deputy's views stress.

It is interesting that of the items tested deputies indicated, "Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / and political instability" is their highest source of stress. This response may be linked to job security caused in part by erratic budgets sometimes interconnected with political agendas.

The only other item tested that indicated a "High" stress level was (job role) assignment to the corrections division. This may be due to the fact that these deputies have more direct supervision, less control over their duties, and more responsibilities. In addition, these deputies must remain vigilant at all times, due in part that their duties require constant interaction with

inmates who could be incarcerated for crimes ranging from low level misdemeanors to high degree felonies, an example are murder, rape, and robbery.

Also interesting was the indication that "Working in the operations division (patrol / field)" caused the deputies the least stress of the 8 items analyzed. This may be associated to the fact that this group of deputies has less "direct" supervision as well as the ability to have more control over one's duties and responsibilities.

Finally, the finding that deputies who have more education have a higher stress level than do deputies with less education was completely unexpected. However, this may be due to the fact that these deputies may be type-A personalities who tend to be very controlling, competitive, and aggressive. On the other hand, deputies with less education may be less concerned with trying to move ahead or maybe it is as simple as "ignorance is bliss".

Implications

Sheriff's Office Administrator

The identification by deputy sheriffs of the "Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / and political instability" as being the greatest source of stress has important implications for the police administrator. First, it demonstrates the need for change in the sheriff's office. This change should be fashioned by both management and deputies. This change may include the physical structure of the department or the equipment used by the deputies. It may also include the manner in which supervisors oversee their subordinates.

Police administrators must realize that by lessening the impact of these sources of stress created by the organization, the overall health of the sheriff's department is likely to improve.

Absenteeism and employee turnover may decrease which would lead to substantial monetary savings in the areas of health care, overtime, and the financial costs of hiring new deputies. Also, employees that experience little stress from the organization and administration are able to spend more of their time being productive by concentrating on their work assignments.

<u>Deputy Sheriff</u>

Because there is high stress that deputy's experience comes from "Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / political instability", it is important that they identify the sources and take steps to deal with it. If they do not, a cumulative affect may occur, which may cause problems in their personal and professional lives. Deputy Sheriffs should be made aware of the symptoms of stress related problems (i.e. alcoholism) so they better understand the causes of such behavior. This may also allow them to better assist their fellow employees experiencing similar problems. A better awareness of the causes and the problems associated with stress will allow deputies to develop positive coping skills which will mitigate the potential harm.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future research should examine the sources of stress from within the organization and administration more closely. An attempt should be made to identify those stressors that cause the most problems and the best way to deal with them. Input should also be sought from the families of deputies to determine if they have ideas that may be used to lessen the effects of stress on them as well.

The area of administrative and supervisory stress also needs to be further studied. There are certain stressors that are unique to these positions and data should be collected to determine the impact they have on these employees. Because deputies experience a large amount of stress that is created by their supervisors, it may be important to discover the sources of stress of the leaders of the department. If the amount of stress that affects the supervisors can be lessened, then it logically follows that deputy sheriffs will experience less stress as well.

Hopefully, this study will make administrators, supervisors and deputy sheriffs more aware of the sources of stress in their lives and the importance of dealing with the stress. Continued research in this area will result in positive gains for law enforcement agencies and the criminal justice system.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument: Sheriff Stress Study, Summer 2010

Q1 There may be several sources of stress for a deputy sheriff. For items "a" through "h", choose the best response for each item that reflects how stressful the item is for you. Use the following scale where:

"1" means "Low Stress" and "5" means "High Stress"

a. The Sheriff's Office in general   1   2   3   4   5

b. The Sheriff's Office supervisors   1   2   3   4   5

c. The work itself of being a deputy sheriff   1   2   3   4   5

d. Working in the corrections division (jail)   1   2   3   4   5

e. Working in the operations division (patrol) 1   2   3   4   5

f. Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial / political

                                      1   2   3   4   5

g. The public or community itself to which a deputy sheriff serves

                                      1   2   3   4   5

h. Personal and or other issues   1   2   3   4   5

i. Of items *a - h*, specify the one that is the most stressful _____ (letter)

Q2 Please describe what aspects of items *a - h* cause you the most stress:

a._____
_____

b._____
_____

c._____
_____

d._____
_____

e._____

_____

f._____

_____

g._____

_____

h._____

_____

Q3 Overall, on a scale of 1 to 10, how stressed are you?

1 means "Lowest Stress" and 10 means "Highest Stress": _____ (1-10)

Q4 What is your current role at the Sheriff's Office?

a) Field officer   b) Corrections officer   c) Administrative officer

Q5 How much satisfaction do you have working at the Sheriff's Office?

"1" means "low satisfaction" and "5" means "high satisfaction"   1   2   3   4   5

Q6 How many hours per week do you work for pay?

Police work _____   Extra Duty _____   Non-Police Work _____

Q7 The Sheriff's Office provides adequate training in managing stress.

1. Strongly agree   2. Agree   3. Uncertain   4. Disagree   5. Strongly disagree

Q8 The Sheriff's Office provides adequate employee assistance.

1. Strongly agree   2. Agree   3. Uncertain   4. Disagree   5. Strongly disagree

Q9 I feel that I am hurting my career growth by staying with the Sheriff's Office.

1. Strongly agree   2. Agree   3. Uncertain   4. Disagree   5. Strongly disagree

Q10 I feel that I am at a standstill in my career here in the Sheriff's Office.

1. Strongly agree   2. Agree   3. Uncertain   4. Disagree   5. Strongly disagree

Q11 What is your level of satisfaction with your current union representation at the Sheriff's Office?

"1" means "low satisfaction" and "5" means "high satisfaction"   1   2   3   4   5

Q12 How many years have you worked at the Sheriff's Office?

1 = 0-3   2 = 4-7   3 = 8-10   4 = 11- 15   5 = 16 or more

Q13 How many work days have you missed in the last six months?

1 = 0 days   2 = 1-3 days   3 = 4-6 days   4 = 7-9 days   5 = 10 days or more

Q14 What is your gender?   1. Male   2. Female

Q15 What is your age?

1 = 21-25   2 = 26-35   3 = 36-44   4 = 45-55   5 = 56 and over

Q16 What is your marital status?

1. Never married   2. Married   3. Divorced   4. Separated   5. Widowed

Q17 How many children do you have? _____

Q18 What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

     1. High school diploma

     2. Some college

     3. Technical college degree

     4. Two-year college degree

     5. Four-year college degree

     6. Masters degree or higher

Q19 If you have a college degree what was your major? _____

Q20 What if anything do you do to handle stress? (Please explain)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix B

Sheriff Stress Survey Codebook

VARIABLE	CODING SCHEME
ID Number	1 to 39
The Sheriff's Office in general	1 to 5
The Sheriff's Office supervisors	1 to 5
The work itself of being a deputy sheriff	1 to 5
Working in the corrections division (jail)	1 to 5
Working in the operations division (patrol)	1 to 5
Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial	1 to 5
The public or community itself to which a deputy sheriff serves	1 to 5
Personal and or other issues	1 to 5
How much satisfaction do you have working at the Sheriff's Office?	1 to 5
Of items a-h, specify the one that is the most stressful	a - h
How stressed are you?	1 to 10
What is your current role at the Sheriff's office?	a=Field Officer
	b=Corrections Officer
	c=Administrative officer
How many hours per week do you work for pay?	0=blank
Police work	1=0 to 40 hours
	2=41 to 72 hours
Extra Duty	1=0 to 12 hours
	2= 13 to 24 hours
Non-Police work	1= 0 to 20 hours
	2= 21 to 45 hours
The Sheriff's Office provides adequate training in managing stress	1=Strongly agree
The Sheriff's Office provides adequate employee assistance	2=agree
I feel that I am hurting my career growth by staying with the S.O.	3=Uncertain
I feel that I am at a standstill in my career here in the Sheriff's Office	4=Disagree
	5=Strongly Disagree
How many years have you worked at the Sheriff's Office?	1=0-3
	2=4-7
	3=8-10
	4=11-15
	5=16 or more
How many work days have you missed in the last six months?	1=0 days
	2=1-3 days
	3=4-6 days
	4=7-9 days
	5=10 days or more
What is your gender?	1=Male
	2=Female

What is your age?	1=21-25
	2=26-35
	3=36-44
	4=45-55
	5=56 and over
What is you marital status?	1=Never married
	2=Married
	3=Divorced
	4=Separated
	5=56 an over
How many children do you have?	Actual number
What is the highest level of education that you have completed?	1=High school diploma
	2=Some college
	3=Technical college degr
	4=Two-year college degr
	5=Four-year college degr
	6=Masters degree or high
If you have a college degree what was your major?	1=Criminal Justice
	2=Political Science
	3=Physical Education
	4=Other
	9=Blank
What if anything do you do to handle stress?	1 = Drink
	2=Exercise
	3= Peer/Talk/Social
	4=Combination
	5=Other

Appendix C

Human Subjects Request Approval: Mahoning County Sheriff's Department

To: Human Board of Review (I.R.B.)

Fr: John M. Beshara

Re: Thesis Project

Da: June 14, 2010

I propose to utilize the Mahoning County Sheriff's Office inter-departmental mail system to distribute a twenty-five question survey instrument to collect data on stress for full-time Deputy Sheriffs. The survey will be provided to all full-time Mahoning County Sheriffs deputies. In order to assure confidentiality, the deputies will also be provided with a postage paid addressed envelope in order to return the completed instrument. The envelopes will be self-addressed to Youngstown State University, Criminal Justice department, One University Plaza Youngstown Ohio 44555.

In addition to the survey, information on stress management techniques will also be distributed to deputies with the surveys for educational purposes.

_____

John M. Beshara

Appendix D

Youngstown State University Human Subjects Review Committee Approval

Youngstown
STATE UNIVERSITY

July 7, 2010

Dr. C. Allen Pierce, Principal Investigator
Mr. John M. Beshara, Co-investigator
Dr. Gordon Frissora, Co-investigator
Dr. John Hazy, Co-investigator
Department of Criminal Justice
UNIVERSITY

RE: HSRC Protocol Number: 195-2010
        Title: Self-reported Police Stress: A Study of Deputy Sheriffs

Dear Drs. Pierce, Frissora, and Hazy and Mr. Beshara:

The Human Subjects Research Committee has reviewed the abovementioned protocol and determined that it is exempt from full committee review based on a DHHS Category 3 exemption.

Any changes in your research activity should be promptly reported to the Human Subjects Research Committee and may not be initiated without HSRC approval except where necessary to eliminate hazard to human subjects. Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects should also be promptly reported to the Human Subjects Research Committee.

The HSRC would like to extend its best wishes to you in the conduct of this study.

Sincerely,

Peter J. Kasvinsky
Dean, School of Graduate Studies
Research Compliance Officer

PJK/cc

c: Atty. Patricia Wagner, Chair
      Department of Criminal Justice

www.ysu.edu YSU

Appendix E

Authorization from the Sheriff of Mahoning County

To: All Concerned

Fr: Sheriff Randall A. Wellington

Re: Thesis Project of John M. Beshara

Da: June 14, 2010

I authorize John Beshara to administer an anonymous survey to full-time Deputy Sheriffs at the Mahoning County Sheriff's department. I am aware that the survey is being conducted as part of a research project (thesis) on the topic of stress among Deputy Sheriffs and that there is no risk to employees who choose to participate in the study.

Sincerely,

_____

Sheriff Randall A. Wellington

Appendix F

Mahoning County Sheriff's Office Deputy Job Description

(Source: Mahoning County Sheriff's Office General Orders Manual 2002)

Sheriff's deputies are trained law enforcement officers or police that work strictly at the county level for the sheriff's department. As sworn officers of the law, sheriff's deputies are also charged with making arrests and leading persons through the booking process at the jail. The following is the job description for a deputy sheriff as written in the Mahoning County General Orders manual, Directive #21.2, which was issued by Sheriff Randall A. Wellington on January 01, 2002.

Deputy:

The classification for Deputy, at any pay rate will be the same, with the only difference being time of employment.

Under supervision, this individual performs general police duties with the emphasis on enforcing the laws and ordinances, serving the courts by serving summonses and other legal executions, and the supervision of the Division. This work involves responsibility for the protection of life and property; for the prevention, detention, and investigation of crimes; for the maintenance of law and order.

This individual must be able to evaluate a situation and determine the proper course of action and will normally work without supervision.

Makes written reports and narratives concerning crimes against persons or property, arrests, health or safety hazards, unusual or suspicious incidents, or channels information to other personnel inside and outside the Sheriff's department.

Will receive specific assignments under the direction of Sergeants, or other supervision depending on assignment. Will assist less experienced deputies by serving as a field trainer, providing direction, feedback, and performance reports when required to do so.

Performs related duties as required.

Will report for duty in uniform per policy and have all necessary equipment required to perform duties.

Will familiarize themselves with policies and procedures and will familiarize themselves with the post orders for their particular post or field assignment.

Under supervision, performs duties exclusively focused on the care and security for prisoners within the confines of the housing unit. This work involves constant interaction with male and female prisoners in both a group and personal basis. Will perform necessary tasks to directly supervise prisoner activity within the housing units involving hygiene, housekeeping, meals, recreation, medical needs, adherence to jail rules, and maintaining order within the housing units by providing direct supervision of the prisoners.

Will maintain roll call, prisoner counts, and a log of housing unit activities. Will supervise the issuance of prisoner property.

Will perform tasks within the Justice Center or Minimum Security Jail (MSJ) as directed by their immediate supervisors and report to the Corporals or Sergeants on the shifts.

Appendix G

Informational Packets distributed to Deputies with the Survey Instrument

(Source: Ohio Employee Assistance Program)

THERAPUETIC ACTIVITIES FOR STRESS REDUCTION

GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITY- ANGER, ANXIETY, FRUSTRATION

Racquetball, handball, basketball, tennis

Yard work such as raking, hoeing, chopping / sawing wood

House work such as vacuuming, sweeping, scrubbing floors

Running, sparring, fast-paced walking, swimming

CALMING ACTIVITY – OVERLOADED, CONFUSED, PRESSURED

Yard work such as weeding, gardening

Handwork such as woodworking, sanding, needlework

Listening to soothing music

Reading

Meditation

Slow-paced walking, sauntering, especially in a park

Watching nature or relaxing videos

WHEN EXHAUSTED – OVERLOADED, CONFUSED, PRESSURED

Yoga, stretching exercises, slow movements

Relaxing, soothing, long bath

Movie

Use of scents (candles) and herbs (tea – try chamomile)

Reading light material

Water aerobics

DONT'S

Channel surf

Increase alcoholic beverages / do increase water consumption

Increase use of medications or drugs

Increase or decrease normal food intake; eat nutritional food

Increase or decreases your normal sexual activity

Isolate from family and friends

DO'S

See the humor in things, smile, and laugh

Allow yourself solitude

Learn to say "no" when you are over-loaded

Appendix H

Statements Taken Verbatim Question #2, Sheriff Stress Survey, Summer 2010

The following responses were taken verbatim from the "Sheriff Stress Study, Summer 2010" question 2.

Q2 Please describe what aspect of items a-h cause you the most stress:

a. The Sheriff's Office in general

b. The Sheriff's Office supervisors

c. The work itself of being a deputy sheriff

d. Working in the corrections division (jail)

e. Working in the operations division (patrol)

f. Beyond the Sheriff's Office control; such as funding / financial

g. The public or community itself to which a deputy sheriff serves

h. Personal and or other issues

ID1 (verbatim responses)

    a. Day to day operations.

    b. Low moral due to administration.

    c. Daily operations and low morale.

    d. Dealing with society's worst daily.

    e. 9.

    f. Budgets that are mismanaged by commissioners.

g. 9.

h. Stress on family due to overtime.

ID2 (verbatim responses)

a. Short staff.

b. Wanting more than one thing done at the same time.

c. Protecting and serving the public.

d. The number of inmates per deputy and the twelve hour shift.

e. The unknown of every situation.

f. Loosing so much with the lost day of pay each pay period.

g. The unknown.

h. The short amount of time to spend with my family because of the long hours.

ID3 (verbatim responses)

a. The constant flux of funding and "changing the guard."

b. Most supervisors cannot motivate deputies due to lack of education and experience. Most have never supervised in the private sector.

c. Law enforcement in general is of course stressful. However, reverting back to a lack of education of the majority of deputies is substantial.

d. The corrections division holds its own stressors. Coupled with this is the demoralization from top end supervisors: Lack of support to deputies.

e. Depending on who is in charge of the division, this can be a comfortable position or not.

f. Continuous budgetary concerns are very stressful. Every two years the red ink monster appears; people lose jobs.

g. Currently the community somewhat supports the S.O... However, when a deputy is the center of attention, due to behavior, we have to stick our heads in the sand.

h. Marital relationships become strained because of law enforcement (work hours, amount of work, etc...) many fail.

ID4 (verbatim responses)

a. Lack of leadership. No training.

b. Don't care about safety for deputies. Don't have proper equipment to do the job.

c. Not enough staff

d. Not enough staff

e. Not enough staff. No training.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID5 (verbatim responses)

a. Political responses

b. One supervisor makes almost every deputy stressed out, every other supervisor is easy to get along with.

c. 9.

d. Dealing with thugs and the mentally ill.

e. The risk of injury.

f. Financial security for myself and family. Decreases in pay.

g. Unappreciated in the inner city.

h. Divorce.

ID6 (verbatim responses)

a. Working for a department that goes against and disregards the union contract for its deputy sheriffs.

b. Some supervisors demand just a little too much out of deputies. Too much inconsistency with many issues.

c. 9.

d. Working in the corrections division is stressful due to the type of work. – (working with inmates for twelve hours in a pod).

e. 9.

f. The sheriff's office allotted budget issued by county commissioners cause layoffs and pay freezes.

g. 9.

h. Not being able to obtain personal or vacation time off.

ID7 (verbatim responses)

a. Administration changing policy or violating our contract whenever they want and getting away with it.

b. No supervisor is on the same sheet of music. I.e. one will tell you hands off the inmates, another will tell you do your job.

c. Working with maximum security inmates. Not knowing what will happen day to day. Not having enough staff to deal with problems. (Safety issues).

d. Safety issues; cameras not working; being understaffed.

e. 9.

f. Having to be on food stamps. Not being able to pay bills; due to being cut back from $24,000 to about $19,000 a year. Commissioner's spending money out of control last year then coming to us for concessions and layoffs.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID8 (verbatim responses)

a. Micromanagement – lack of good leadership. Leadership is completely out of touch with reality / doesn't care.

b. No one on same page / more micromanagement. Leaders who run jail have never been corrections deputies.

c. Imperative that all work done correctly due to sensitive nature of work.

d. Overcrowding / understaffing/ poor equipment/ type of inmates/ one deputy doing the work of 2 – 4 deputies/ poor upper level management.

e. 9.

f. Cannot do long term planning due to constant fear of layoffs.

g. General public unaware of job law enforcement does. Large criminal contingent in area.

h. Major move in last twelve months plus two deaths in family.

ID9 (verbatim responses)

a. Working under the Sheriff is not stressful; you just need a good work ethic and do what is expected of you.

b. Most of the supervisors are great to work with and will listen to what difficulties you're having. A few don't care.

c. Working as a deputy is a very interesting job.

d. Working the jail will stress you, due to the fact that the inmates know all they have to do is complain and you're instantly at fault.

e. 9.

f. Working under the financial condition we are under is very stressful. Makes you not want to do your job to the best of your ability.

g. The community is pretty accepting of the sheriff's office.

h. 9.

ID10 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. Orders contradicting other orders.

c. 9.

d. Corrections environment.

e. 9.

f. Concerns over county budget; shortfalls being taken out on the MCSO.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID11 (verbatim responses)

a. The political aspect of working in county government.

b. Some supervisors gripe over little things when there are more important concerns.

c. 9.

d. Dealing with inmates on a day to day basis.

e. 9.

f. Not getting raise due to lack of budget and worry of getting laid off.

g. In this immediate area – many are criminals who are ruthless and many, many repeat offenders.

h. Personal life is mainly stress free.

ID12 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. Being around murderers, social misfits, and twelve hour days.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID13 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. Never knowing the department's future.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID14 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. Knowing how dangerous and stressful my job is for very little pay and that the public views us as overpaid and lazy.

h. 9.

ID15 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. Being underpaid is a major concern for me.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID16 (verbatim responses)

a. Not knowing if layoffs or pay cuts are coming.

b. 9.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID17 (verbatim responses)

    a. Bills.

    b. Lack of funds.

    c. Spouse.

    d. 9.

    e. 9.

    f. 9.

    g. 9.

    h. 9.

ID18 (verbatim responses)

    a. Political stress – Upper management.

    b. How they take care of themselves to screw over anyone they can.

    c. Dealing with liars.

    d. The twelve years of mismanagement.

    e. Rushing to calls.

    f. Constant lack of funding.

    g. The city of Youngstown.

    h. Lowest paid of the three departments we are compared to for arbitration.

ID19 (verbatim responses)

a. The uncertainty of what is going to happen next. The whole department is under uncertainty.

b. New sergeants understand. Older sergeants don't have a clue what deputies go thru – (They

    never did it).

c. Should be easy depending on where you work and how much seniority you have.

d. Is the worse. To staff makes rules that are stupid and don't work and make you enforce stupid

    rules.

e. Is better but you never know where you're going to work.

f. Sick of other people controlling my life and how I live and my family's life.

g. This area is horrible, people are rude and ignorant.

h. Always wondering if I am going to have a job, but money is the biggest problem.

ID20 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. Most supervisors are not educated or have the knowledge of proper administrative/supervisory

    theories.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. Never having proper funding to do the job properly.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID21 (verbatim responses)

a. Employees here are underappreciated. The administration does whatever it wants regardless of our contract or what it does to people's lives.

b. No consistency in what is expected by different supervisors. Often we are reprimanded for using force according to policy.

c. This job in itself is inherently stressful.

d. I could write a term paper on how stupid some of these people are despite this; I have learned to tune them out.

e. I had a short time outside of the jail before the layoffs; I still had stress to deal with but not as much as the jail.

f. We continue to take pay cuts while money continues to be dumped into the Oak Hill Renaissance Center.

g. When out in public in uniform most of the public seems very appreciative of what we do. There are others who are not but that is part of the job.

h. IF I had another job outside of law enforcement my life would be almost stress free.

ID22 (verbatim responses)

a. Politics / Funding

b. Most supervisors are good.

c. Dealing with mental and non-conforming inmates can be stressful.

d. Same as C.

e. Patrol seems to run smoother and patrol deputies get to deal mostly with "normal law abiding citizens."

f. Commissioners continually short the sheriff's budget and in tough times the sheriff's budget is always first to be cut.

g. The public mostly supports are work and are a positive influence.

h. Depending on personal issues that the deputy has at a particular time it can be no stress or extremely stressful.

ID23 (verbatim responses)

a. Low pay; layoffs; short staff; Administration is too old and doesn't have a clue.

b. Lazy; no training; they are afraid of top administrators.

c. No training; low pay; no respect.

d. Short staff; no training; top administrators treat people like a piece of dirt.

e. No training.

f. Layoffs, low pay; no raises; we take cut backs all the time.

g. No respect.

h. Low pay job. Administration is too old.

ID24 (verbatim responses)

a. No stress.

b. Not letting deputies do the job properly.

c. No stress.

d. No stress.

e. No stress.

f. Not knowing if you'll be laid off or working and the political games played on the department.

g. No stress.

h. No stress.

ID25 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. Top administrator.

c. Very little stress.

d. Very little stress.

e. Very little stress.

f. Misappropriated funds going to the Renaissance Center to fund construction.

g. Dealing with all of the wanna be gangster in Youngstown

h. Personal issues with fiancé and money issues.

ID26 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. Always tell you what you are doing wrong but never give you credit when due for work.

c. 9.

95

d. Dealing with inmates, comments, hours, rules.

e. To unsafe.

f. Not paid enough. Worrying about layoffs, taxes, cutbacks etc…

g. People expect you to act a certain way, don't like you and judge you.

h. 9.

ID27 (verbatim responses)

a. It varies depending on everything that is going on in the department. Low wages.

b. Most of the supervisors would be a "1," but the couple that are a "5" makes them a "3."

c. Job is very easy.

d. Dealing with certain inmates. High volume of call-offs in division.

e. 9.

f. Lay off's; short staffed due to the lay off's and safety due to being short staffed.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID28 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. 9.

d. Not knowing when anything could go bad.

e. 9.

f.   Financial problems such as no raises and cut in take home pay.

g.   9.

h.   Not having enough money to pay bills.

ID29 (verbatim responses)

a.   9.

b.   9.

c.   9.

d.   9.

e.   9.

f.   9.

g.   9.

h.   9.

ID30 (verbatim responses)

a.   Politics and always being lied too.

b.   The supervisors on power trips that forget they used to be a deputy.

c.   Dealing with idiots.

d.   Dealing with the pieces of shit that do nothing but drain the government's money.

e.   Civilians that don't have common sense.

f.   The commissioners never funding us.

g.   They treat us like shit.

h. Everyone has problems in their life.

ID31 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. The inmates. Their attitude towards life. Their disrespect and lack of care for everything, 90% of them.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID32 (verbatim responses)

a. Administrative personnel spend very little time in the jail (our biggest division). They don't know what we do although this is getting better over time. Poor money management.

b. Inconsistent rules.

c. Dealing with criminals who have no respect for others or authority.

d. Inmates with mental problems we are not equipped to hold too many t once. Most deputies have little or no training in dealing with these problem inmates. Call offs make getting time off difficult.

e. 9.

f.   Sales tax is not permanent so every couple years we have severe financial problems.

g.   They don't understand our job and expect us to be nice to everyone we deal with even though most people are not nice to us.

h.   9.

ID33 (verbatim responses)

a.   Not organized enough.

b.   Some sergeants work deputies to hard and others don't make deputies do anything.

c.   Work is not hard but stressful.

d.   Dealing with inmates with mental and discipline problems is very stressful.

e.   Less stress due to fewer incidents.

f.   Always worried about getting laid off and not getting a raise in years makes a person very angry. Some deputies make little money.

g.   Everyone thinks deputies are not doing their job.

h.   When you have stress at work and make little money it's hard not to take it home.

ID34 (verbatim responses)

a.   Staff making rules and policies never worked in direct supervision of inmates just on the streets.

b.   Supervisors are not consistent. Some supervisors are scared to make a decision.

c.   You start off in corrections and spend most of your career in it; no rotation to learn other jobs.

d.   Very stressful in corrections. You deal with the worst of the WORST. No training to deal with the mental unstable / special needs inmates.

e. Been here ten years and never been able to bid out of the jail.

f. Mismanagement of funds, sheriff's department always suffers from budgetary problems.

g. 9.

h. Female deputies are discriminated on although they can do every job.

ID35 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID36 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. No consistency. Depending on shift supervisor you need to conform to each supervisor's

management style.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID37 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID38 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. Multiple orders conflicting between different supervisors.

c. 9.

d. Lack of consistency among deputies in pods and backing by supervisors.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.

ID39 (verbatim responses)

a. 9.

b. 9.

c. 9.

d. 9.

e. 9.

f. 9.

g. 9.

h. 9.