ANALYSIS OF POLICE OFFICER PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES REGARDING VEHICLE PURSUITS

by

CHRISTOPHER G. COOK

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Arlington in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

December 2008

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this project to a dear friend, Officer Nathan Laurie, who lost his life during a vehicle pursuit on July 29, 2004. Nathan died doing what he loved; being a police officer and trying to make a difference in the community where he selflessly served. His sacrifice touched so many in the law enforcement community and opened many eyes to the real dangers and risks associated with vehicle pursuits.

(The following excerpt was compiled from The Officer Down Memorial Page, Inc.)

Officer Laurie was killed at approximately 0230 hours in an automobile accident during a vehicle pursuit. The pursuit began when Officer Laurie attempted to stop a pickup truck for a traffic violation. The driver of the truck attempted to flee in the truck. Officer Laurie notified dispatchers of the pursuit. A short time later his patrol car collided with another responding patrol car at the intersection of Yale Street and Tulane Avenue. The impact caused Officer Laurie's radio to have an open microphone. Dispatchers were unable to reach either officer so a sergeant responded to their last known location where he found the wrecked patrol cars. Officer Laurie was transported to Harris Methodist Fort Worth Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. The other officer was also transported to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries. The suspect was apprehended approximately two weeks later after investigators received a tip on his whereabouts. He pled guilty to a second-degree felony charge of evading arrest using a vehicle that caused a death and received a six year sentence. Officer Laurie had served with the River Oaks Police Department for two years and had previously served for one year with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department. He is survived by his wife, two sons, and daughter.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Alejandro del Carmen who has been committed from day one to my success and career development. Dr. del Carmen has taken the time out of his demanding schedule to coach, mentor and encourage the growth of my personal and professional development as a law enforcement practitioner. I owe a great deal of appreciation to Dr. John Stickels and Dr. Rhonda Dobbs who allowed me to see the other realms of the criminal justice system and to challenge what I see each and every day. I was quickened to become a critical thinker and not to accept law enforcement issues as the status quo.

I want to acknowledge a supervisor who had a great deal of impact on molding me into the police officer that I have become. Sergeant David Boden coached and guided me and developed my officer safety skills that are vital to a successful career in law enforcement.

I also owe a great deal of gratitude to my loving wife, Cameron, and my son Benjamin, who continued to encourage and believe in me as I pursued this vision. My son Ben is the center of my world. I am also grateful to my parents, Gordon and Lanette Cook and brother, Chance who continued to lend their full support, provide helpful words of wisdom and for believing in me that could do anything that I put my mind to.

November 20, 2008

ABSTRACT

ANALYSIS OF POLICE OFFICER PERCEPTIONS AND

ATTITUDES REGARDING VEHICLE PURSUITS

Christopher Cook, M.A.

The University of Texas at Arlington, 2008

Supervising Professor: Alejandro del Carmen, Ph.D.

The purpose of this study was to analyze differences in the way that officers respond to pursuit scenarios. This project used a survey questionnaire to gather responses from participants who read a chase scenario and considered the type of offense and risk factors to the public as they answered. Similarities and differences were analyzed in relation to demographical data regarding gender and years of experience as a police officer. Officers and supervisors were asked to respond to each scenario how they actually felt, without regard to current institutional constraints such as policies and procedures. This study was conducted in a mid-sized metropolitan law enforcement agency in Texas. Future policy implications and training recommendations are presented.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

On March 29, 2001, while patrolling the highway near Atlanta, Georgia, Deputy Reynolds observed a car driven by Victor Harris traveling at 73 mph in a 55 mph speed zone. Deputy Reynolds activated his overhead lights and followed the vehicle (activating the overhead lights also activated the in-car video system). Harris accelerated and headed toward Peachtree City. Deputy Reynolds caught up with Harris and turned on his siren. Harris continued to drive more than the speed limit, failing to stop his vehicle, crossing the double-yellow line, passing cars on the wrong side, driving through intersections against red lights, and breaking several traffic laws. Deputy Reynolds radioed dispatch that he was pursuing a fleeing motorist. Deputy Timothy Scott responded to Reynolds' radio transmission and joined the pursuit. Once in Peachtree City, Harris pulled into a drugstore parking lot where two Peachtree officers in patrol cars were waiting. Reynolds entered the lot and the officers attempted to box Harris in while Scott took a position to block his exit. This strategy did not inhibit Harris from stopping as he collided with Scott's patrol car. He escaped from the parking lot, reentered the highway, and sped away. Believing that Harris posed a risk of danger to the public, Deputy Scott resumed the pursuit and assumed the position as the lead vehicle. Harris continued to drive recklessly, driving at a speed of more than 90 mph. After traveling for about 9 miles over 6 min, Deputy Scott requested permission from his supervisor to perform the Precision Intervention Technique (PIT) maneuver. The PIT maneuver is a recognized driving technique designed to safely and quickly stop a fleeing motorist by using the patrol car to strike a specific point on the fleeing vehicle, which moves the vehicle into a spin bringing it to stop without crashing (Nerbonne, 1998). Scott's supervisor approved the technique pursuant to departmental policy. Scott decided to apply the technique in an area which appeared to be void of other motorists but decided not to execute it because of the excessive rate of speed of Harris' vehicle. Rather, Deputy Scott made contact with the back bumper of Harris' vehicle causing it to leave the roadway and crash. Harris was not wearing his seatbelt and sustained injury which rendered him a quadriplegic.

Ross, 2008, p.435-436

The events detailed in this pursuit involving Victor Harris resulted in a case heard by the Supreme Court of the United States. Law enforcement closely monitored this case as the ruling would have potentially broad ramifications. The Court's holding answered that a police officer can take actions that place a fleeing motorist at risk of serious injury or death to stop that motorist from endangering other innocent bystanders who may be on the roadway. This landmark case has established a reasonableness doctrine that officer's actions will be evaluated and assessed in accordance with balancing the government's interest in protecting

the public from the risk of harm that a suspect poses by fleeing in a reckless disregard for public safety (Ross, 2008). This is the latest development in the world of pursuits as the literature review will examine the many facets involved when deciding to chase a vehicle.

Police pursuits have become an important issue and hot topic in the media and across law enforcement circles. Statistics available show that pursuits become dangerous quite quickly and the end results can include injuries, property damage and in some instances, even death (Hill, 2002, Britz & Payne, 1994). The officer on patrol is the primary decision maker in pursuit matters, utilizing a great deal of discretion on this topic (Homant & Kennedy, 1994). Guided by their training and their departmental policies, officers must determine whether to initiate the pursuit of a fleeing vehicle, continue the pursuit, or terminate a pursuit as it unfolds (Homant & Kennedy, 1994b). By the same token, supervisors are often times tasked with evaluating pursuits as they unfold and making decisions whether to allow their officers to continue the chase or terminate the pursuit.

Concerning previous research on pursuits, one area of concentration on officers' attitudes towards pursuits is limited and therefore this author conducted a study to supplement and enhance the body of existing knowledge related to attitudes and opinions of officers who engage in or approve vehicular pursuits (see Homant & Kennedy, 1994b; Alpert & Dunham, 1994). Specifically, there is little to no research that has been conducted on law enforcement agencies that require a baccalaureate degree before being hired. Some previous research has included educational levels in the demographical sections of their data collection, but no single agency that requires all of their officers to hold an undergraduate degree of this level has been examined. The goal of this project is to provide a catalog of data and supplement existing literature that is helpful to law enforcement agencies, police administrators, and other police personnel as they examine pursuit risks. This study will examine law enforcement officer's perceptions and attitudes towards engaging in vehicle pursuits without regard to current practices or policies. Data was collected within a municipal police department in the Dallas-Fort

Worth Metroplex area that serves a population of 375,000 residents. This study will use a common definition of police pursuit that is found in many pursuit studies:

> An active attempt by a law enforcement officer on duty in a patrol car to apprehend one or more occupants of a moving motor vehicle, providing the driver of such vehicle is aware of the attempt and is resisting apprehension by maintaining or increasing his speed or by ignoring the officer's attempt to stop him (Nugent et al., 1990:1).

In chapter two, the author will provide an extensive review of the literature that relates to vehicle pursuits. This review will include current and past case law, prior relevant research projects and liabilities that are prone to exist when pursuits end in negative terms. In addition, the literature review will expound on the new technologies that have developed and recent training standards implemented governing pursuits. This review will provide the reader with a solid foundation of knowledge concerning the world of police pursuits and the many dangers and risks that exist.

In chapter three, the methodology of the current study will be outlined which will include the development of the survey questionnaire along with the institutional requirements governing the use of this survey instrument. The sample size, participant selection method and an overview of the demographical group which participated will be scrutinized. In addition, the procedures for administration of the survey will be described along with the operational concepts of the scenarios and risk factors presented to the participant group.

Chapter four will present the analysis and findings of the current project. The data compilation method will be presented by demonstrating results by the coding of data using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Specifically, findings which demonstrate any statistically significant differences with regards to police certification level, educational level and years of experience will be delineated.

Chapter five will include a discussion about the probable impacts that the nature of pursuits create. Future policy implications and liability reduction techniques will be addressed along with any future areas of study that need to be addressed.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

With the advent of the automobile, both criminals and officers have improved access to either commit their crimes and likewise catch those who are suspected of violating the law. Police chases by nature are fluid events where possible outcomes and the dynamics of the chase can change in seconds (Daniels & Spratley 2003). What follows is an extensive review of leading academic research related to the police pursuit body of knowledge. The first part of the review is very broad in scope and will focus on prior studies related to liability exposure in reference to the world of pursuits. The latter part of the review will narrowly focus on prior research related to officers' opinions and attitudes that equate into decisions being made day in and day out on whether or not to engage in a vehicle chase.

2.1 Dangers

In years past, the media has focused a great deal of attention on policing actions, not to withstand the act of police officers pursuing suspected violators of the law in automobiles. It is through this use of the media that many of these events are sensationalized and command much public outcry when something goes wrong, such as a collision that ends in a fatality.

Sharp (2003) shared one example of a real-life pursuit that occurred in Connecticut on February 26, 2002 to show the devastating results in terms of injuries, damage to property, and public scrutiny. The pursuit involved officers from three adjacent jurisdictions and involved pursuing a suspected drunken driver who fled from an attempted assault on an officer from one of the jurisdictions. The pursuit continued though Newington, Wethersfield and Rocky Hill and resulted in three traffic accidents, injuries to two police officers, damage to two law enforcement vehicles, the destruction of the fleeing suspect's car, and property damage to the lawn of a private citizen's residence where the pursuit terminated. The author revealed that this pursuit

drew criticism from outside sources that believed it could have been stopped at an earlier stage (Sharp 2003).

While there is conflicting data on the actual number of pursuits initiated and the number of injuries and deaths, it can be agreeable that there are anywhere from 300 to 500 deaths per year which is roughly 2 percent of all reportable pursuits (Homant & Kennedy, 1994b). Falcone (1994) called this unknown data on the exact numbers the "dark figure of pursuits," (p. 145). Recent statistics show that once a pursuit has started, there is an approximate probability of 40 percent that some type of accident will occur and a roughly 20 percent chance that an injury will be sustained (Eisenberg, 1999).

2.2 Media Exposure

Not only have news outlets carried numerous stories on pursuit driving, several dramatic television shows have emerged and aired that place public cameras inside the law enforcement arena to capture officer activity as it unfolds. As expected, some of this activity includes video of police pursuits as they happen. An example of a few of these series includes "C.O.P.S.", "The World's Wildest Police Chases," and "Real Stories of the Highway Patrol." Court Television has also released several new media series including "Most Shocking, Speeders, Beach Patrol, Hot Pursuit, Swat U.S.A., Under Fire, and Video Justice." Homant and Kennedy (1994a) conducted a survey on citizen preferences and perceptions concerning police pursuit policies and found that court decisions and media publicity could play a role in developing the overall citizen perception processes with regards to pursuits. It could be said that all of these forms of media have dramatized police pursuits and added to the public and officer perceptions of pursuing vehicles and suspects.

Reality television has been identified as a "new genre" of programming and a modification of the "crime show" in particular (Cavender & Bond-Maupin, 1993; Surette, 1992). They argue that reality based crime television shows superimpose a news or public service format with entertainment formats to produce a new television genre (Cavender & Bond-Maupin, 1993). Surette (1992) argued that the emergence of reality television may partially be

explained by law enforcement agencies' need to control and promote their public image through use of media outlets in the wake of sensational, negative policing actions such as the Rodney King incident that occurred in Los Angeles, California. In addition, Surette (1992) suggests that these shows not only promote public image for departments, but they also enhance ratings and can be highly profitable for the networks. It could be said that police chases are highly dramatic and sensational and this is why major news networks interrupt local programming to carry these type of law enforcement events "live."

These new television "realities" that have emerged in recent years have added to not only public opinion regarding pursuits, but also to officer opinions and attitudes. A study by Hallett and Powell (1995) showed that police officers were skeptical about the "realistic portrayal of their job," (p.114). Officers characterized "C.O.P.S.", a Fox television series which allowed media to ride in the actual police cruiser which started at the Broward County Sheriff's Office in Florida, as an "entertainment show," but many officers still felt that is was the best portrayal of police work that existed at the time (Hallett & Powell, 1995). As illustrated in the study, one officer said, "The producers know what the audience wants to see…People don't want to see the everyday officer at work. They want to see the entertainment," (Hallett & Powell, 1995, p.114). One could then believe that is the reason why so many vehicular chases are publicized and carried on these so-called reality television shows, in order to produce ratings and entertainment value. These pursuits which are aired rarely end in death to officers, suspects or citizens and can lead to a false belief system into the real life dangers and costs associated with chases that occur (Kenney & Alpert, 1997; Brown & Benedict, 2002).

Sharp (2003) argued that there are two types of police chases: the Hollywood pursuit, in which every police car in a three-state area is involved; and the real pursuits, which rarely involve more than three vehicles. Whether the officers or the public form their perceptions based on television or training, it can be clearly seen that there is a wealth of information on pursuits that can either be classified as accurate depictions or inaccurate portraitures of the reality of engaging in the act of pursuing suspects in vehicles.

2.3 Defining Pursuits

To fully analyze a study of this magnitude, police pursuits need to be defined. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) define a pursuit as "an event that is initiated when a law enforcement officer, operating an authorized emergency vehicle, gives notice to stop (either through the use of visual or audible emergency signals or a combination of emergency devices) to a motorist who the officer is attempting to apprehend, and the motorist fails to comply with the signal by either maintaining his or her speed, increasing speed, or taking other evasive action to elude the officer's continued attempts to stop the motorist," (2007).

One classic definition of pursuit used by a major recent study is:

> An active attempt by a law enforcement officer on duty in a patrol car to apprehend one or more occupants of a moving motor vehicle, providing the driver of such vehicle is aware of the attempt and is resisting apprehension by maintaining or increasing his speed or by ignoring the officer's attempt to stop him (Nugent, et al., 1990, p.1).

2.4 Liability Factors

Pursuit policies have become more restrictive in the past decade due to the ever increasing liability issues and litigation that surrounds them. Officers and departments have been sued civilly when something goes wrong during the pursuit and in some instances, criminal charges can be filed against the officer themselves when it has been deemed there has been a blatant and clear disregard to the public safety while engaging in a vehicle pursuit by the officer. Often times, pursuits are initiated for insufficient reasons which can lead to tremendous liability exposure for the municipality, county, or state who employs the officer (Payne & Corley, 1994; Kenney & Alpert, 1997; Smith, 1999; Hicks, 2006; Becknell, et al., 1999). Pursuits which end in death or serious injury to persons and property are given formidable media and public scrutiny. The value of chasing offenders who flee from law enforcement officers in vehicles continues to be the subject of intense debate and controversy among varying departments across the country (Crew & Hart, 1999).

Previous research illuminates the fact that civil litigation is likely to occur at two levels against the police who engage in any type of use of force. The International Association of Chiefs of Police in its study, “Police Use of Force in America 2001,” defined use of force as “The amount of effort required by police to compel compliance by an unwilling suspect.” Obviously this definition would include police using vehicle pursuits as a tool to gain compliance and take into custody an offender who is fleeing.

The first level regarding the potential for civil litigation is likely to occur at the individual officer level based upon the decisions he or she made regarding the issue of pursuing suspects. Deciding to engage in and continue a vehicle pursuit may expose the officer to a heightened risk of a civil lawsuit (Ross, 2000). In addition, many lawsuits are also brought against the individual officer when it is evident that the officer abused their authority or acted and performed their duties in a negligent and harmful manner (Ross, 2000; Payne & Corley, 1994).

The second level of potential litigation deals with supervision and agency written policies and standards. If it is considered that an officer’s actions could have been prevented by a supervisor “calling” off the pursuit or giving the officer training and written guidelines concerning pursuits, then the immediate supervisors in that officer’s chain of command can be and are frequently named in conjunction with the officer in a civil litigation suit. This in-turn allows a plaintiff to go after the city or county directly by naming the officer, the supervisors, and the chief or department head in order to retrieve substantial monetary settlements which goes back to the probing question of whether to pursue or not to pursue. This apprehension is commonly referred to as the “deep pockets” that cities have. Most litigation does not ultimately seek wealth from officers, but rather the municipality or employing agency that holds thousands if not millions of dollars in reserves to prepare for possible civil actions that are filed against its employees, hence known as “deep pockets,” (Ross: 2000).

Title 42 of the United States Code Section 1983 allows a city along with supervisors to be held accountable for the acts of those employed under them. Ross’ (2000) study on police liability issues indicated how the process to bring a suit against a city usually occurs. Ross

(2000) argued that the plaintiff in a Section 1983 lawsuit will structure the complaint against the police administrator alleging a failure to direct officers through policies and procedures, thereby alleging that there has been a failure to supervise and discipline subordinates which commonly lead to a claim of failure to train. In the court case of *Oklahoma City v. Tuttle* (1985), the court found that supervisors can be liable under Section 1983 when they enforce or suggest a policy that leads to a constitutional violation (Ross, 2000).

The realization of the potential costs concerning failure to train and liability issues related to pursuits has led to extensive review of policies and training standards over the past few years (Archbold, 2003). The training normally starts in the police academy where the recruit receives instruction on vehicle handling and pursuit driving. The amount and length of training varies greatly between agencies and academies. The recruit also receives instruction regarding the agency's written directives and policies related to engaging in pursuits and the written documentation that is usually required upon completion of a pursuit. The training then usually extends briefly into field training, where the field training officer reviews the written policy with the recruit to fully document that the officer is competent in the written policy of the department. Alpert and Dunham (1990) claimed that pursuit potential liability can be minimized if the agency has a strong policy, officers are specifically trained effectively, there is supervision during the pursuit occurrence and officer accountability systems are in place with safeguards attached.

2.5 Pursuit Training

According to Lesh (2003), one of the biggest challenges facing law enforcement in the coming years is the need to reduce civil liability from collisions related to high-speed pursuits. He identifies several ways an agency can prepare for possible litigation that may arise from pursuing criminal motorists. In his article, he states that one thing is clear: "Every law enforcement agency needs a written pursuit policy. While most organizations do have one, there are still a number of smaller departments that have no written procedures in place," (Lesh, 2003, p.29). Having no written policy in place can leave these agencies and cities vulnerable to civil litigation in terms of pursuit related damages and injuries.

A second way to reduce liability exposure is by having pursuit related training. Lesh (2003) advocates at least annual training, whether a five to ten minute roll call training that reviews pursuit policies and factors concerning initiating or discontinuing pursuits to providing training in emergency vehicle operations. Some of the benefits cited to the roll call training are that it costs the agency nothing to provide, it provides refresher training in policies and tactics, and if sued, officers can testify that they receive annual training on pursuits.

A third area that agencies can utilize is to lobby for stiffer criminal penalties for fleeing motorists. Recently in Texas, fleeing in a motor vehicle was a misdemeanor offense. The Texas Legislature increased the penalty to a state jail felony with even higher enhancements if someone is injured or killed in the pursuit. “Of course, increasing criminal penalties will not act as a deterrent to all drivers. However, some individuals will avoid fleeing when they know that the penalties for attempting to elude officers are severe,” (Lesh, 2003,p.29).

Another area of preparation cited is for agencies to review new products and techniques designed to prevent or terminate pursuits. Lesh (2003) argues that in many civil cases alleging police negligence, plaintiffs’ expert witnesses often criticize officers for failing to employ a procedure that could have prevented or ended the pursuit in their opinion, much more quickly before the plaintiff suffered injuries or death. While it is understood that no agency can have or obtain all of the bells and whistles of every new innovative pursuit prevention or termination product or technique that exists, supervisors and command staff should be familiar with the available resources in the law enforcement market.

In the conclusion of Lesh’s (2003) article, he asserts that all law enforcement agencies should require written documentation from all pursuits, even those which end in tragedy. The data collected can be analyzed to develop trends which may assist top administrators in making key decisions to reduce the number of pursuits or help make pursuits themselves, safer. Departments should also address any pursuit which ends in a collision with a citizen appropriately and treat it as a serious criminal investigation. How the department responds to this issue can be of critical importance during a civil suit alleging negligence (Lesh, 2003).

Officers receive extensive training on the use of firearms and are regularly required to qualify annually or semi-annually with the use of that firearm. On the contrary, after the initial training in the academy and in field training, there is usually no additional pursuit driving training given, and certainly no annual proficiency driving test given. Why is this the case then, given the overwhelming evidence of the potential for liability?

There are distinct differences between using a firearm and using a 4,157 pound Ford Crown Victoria (NHTSA, 2007). “In driving an emergency vehicle, the officer has control the entire time of the pursuit unless speed and road conditions become extreme. With a firearm, once the trigger has been pulled the officer no longer has control of the bullet” (Becknell, Mays, & Giever, 1999,p.94). This illustration highlights the idea that officers receive more physical training related to the application of firearms than they do regarding pursuit driving and decision making. The control that the author is asserting is the ability for the officer to stop the pursuit at any given time however once the trigger is squeezed, there is no stopping the discharged round. As clearly seen, both firearms and pursuits can end in the same amount of death and destruction, but it is important to distinguish between the two when making the statement that both can be seen as a deadly force encounter. It could be said that many officers do not even relate a deadly force encounter with a firearm to the same plateau of pursuing a violator, but a law enforcement pursuit is one of the most dangerous performance skills that a police officer can initiate (Yates, 2004).

The findings of one study showed that about one-third of all pursuits end in an accident outcome, which falls close into line with other previously reported research literature (Senese & Lucadamo, 1996). Other data showed 40 percent of all pursuits end in collision, with 20 percent resulting in injury and approximately 1 percent ending in death or serious injury (Yates, 2004). Another study by Crew, Fridell and Pursell (1995) provided a cost-benefit assessment of pursuits and reported that nearly 44 percent of all chases encompassed in their study involved some sort of property damage.

Additional research related to pursuit training comes from Daniels (2002) who demonstrates the analogy that minimum initial and in-service training standards exits when it comes to firearms, yet similar standards are rare for training in pursuit and emergency driving as stated previously. Daniels (2002) presents the scenario that still holds true today; If an officer shoots someone, investigators will scrutinize his firearms training records and his department's policies. Likewise, when a pursuit ends badly, investigators review all available videotapes of the chase, and often ask for proof that the officer was sufficiently trained to engage in a pursuit. Daniels (2002) argues that the best defense against high-speed accidents, injuries, deaths and lawsuits is proper training of officers, yet most officers receive woeful training in pursuit driving. The more formal training that the officer has, the better the officer can handle a pursuit. He advocates that pursuit driving classes should consist of two components. The first component should be a classroom setting with review of policies and laws, watching videos and scenarios on liability issues and conclude with a written test to demonstrate the knowledge that was learned during this classroom section of instruction. The second component should consist of a hands-on driving component on a driving course (Daniels, 2002).

Continuing with training issues related to the body of pursuit literature is a study by Daniels and Spratley (2003). The authors assert that officers not only need to be trained in how and when to initiate a pursuit, but training on when and how to end a pursuit is also necessary. The single most important consideration during the pursuit is for the officer to think ahead and plan strategies on how to safely end the pursuit. Officers must concern themselves with regards to the overall public safety if the pursuit is continued and other limitations such as vehicle, psychological, and physical limitations. (Daniels & Spratley, 2003).

2.6 Classifying Pursuits as Force

Other research indicates that police pursuits are relatively rare occurrences with regards to other police actions and that they do not normally follow the tradition of dramatically charged events as portrayed by Hollywood and television (Payne, 1997). In contrast, a study by Alpert and Dunham (1989) suggests that police pursuits "create high anxiety and the potential

for destruction and injury," (p.523). By making this assertion, it would seem as though pursuits can be as harmful as the officer using his or her firearm is, thereby we should possibly consider pursuits as a potential form of deadly force on the use of force continuum.

Additional previous literature indicates that pursuits initiated by police are considered by the majority of departments as use of force, just as firearms or empty hand control techniques are considered as use of force. One source states that there have been estimates that between 50,000 and 500,000 police pursuits occur each year in the United States (Fennessy et al., 1970). The reason for the inconsistency in the data is due to reporting requirements and record keeping methods which will be analyzed later.

Michael Smith (1998) examined the legal and policy implications of the Supreme Court Decision of *County of Sacramento V. Lewis*. The issue at stake was whether police officers can be held liable under the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution when citizens sustain injuries related to vehicle pursuits. The Supreme Court applied the constitutional standard of "shocks the conscience" and ruled that a due process violation can only be attained when there is a blatant disregard by police that shocks the common conscience of the public. In order to rise to that level, the Court indicated that the officers involved would have to intentionally cause harm to citizens for some other purpose which is not related to a legitimate law enforcement objective or goal. Bear in mind that this case did not decide the question of supervisor or local government liability as stated earlier related to Section 1983 for failure to train.

2.7 Pursuit Reporting and Policies

It appears that society does not have an accurate picture of the overall odds and risks that pursuits bring to the table. First, there is no mandatory reporting system. While there is no standardized reporting such as the Uniform Crime Reports, pursuit records and management systems are normally governed by each individual department or agency. Information kept by local governments varies widely in the type and amount of information collected and kept on file. For example, some small agencies keep no records on file concerning pursuits at all while others collected vast amount of information which remains on record for years.

According to the Fatality Analysis Reporting System maintained by NHTSA (2002), from 1994 through 1998, one law enforcement officer was killed every 11 weeks while actively engaged in a vehicle pursuit. Another alarming statistic during the same time frame was that innocent third parties constituted 42 percent of those who were killed or injured in a vehicle pursuit (NHTSA, 2002). Research also shows that pursuits can escalate in danger very quickly with 50 percent of all collisions occurring in the first 120 seconds of the initiation of the pursuit.

Additionally, policies vary from non-existent to highly restrictive amongst agencies. Even with agencies with a highly restrictive policy regarding pursuits, compliance by officers and even supervisors can vary depending on previous precedents set by other officers and the evaluation of other pursuits which have occurred. There is a great deal of literature related to future policy implications which tend to support more restrictive policies which, in turn, lead to fewer pursuits which translates into less accident frequency.

One study examined the association between sensation seeking and officers' willingness to engage in a high-speed pursuit (Homant, et al., 1993). Sensation seeking scales were utilized which were correlated with measures of pursuit tendency by the officers. What was discovered is that officers who sought more sensations were more likely to become engaged in a vehicular pursuit versus those officers who sought less sensations as per the measured score tables. The study looked at sensation by officers as a possible motivation to initiate a pursuit. "It is possible under this theory that some pursuits may be more likely to end in accidents because the pursuit is not disengaged due to the stimulation it provides to the officer," (Senese & Lucadamo, 1996, p.58). In other words, the officer's decision making ability may become clouded and objective judgment may become diminished when it comes to continuing or terminating a pursuit.

One has to be careful to support policies that completely remove pursuits as an effective law enforcement tool. Previously applied research indicates that if police are placed under too many restraints in regards to pursuits, the public can be placed at risk (Hill, 2002). What could be the potential outcome if criminals knew that police could not pursue them? There

could be an essentially open-season to commit crimes and run from the police because suspects would know that there would be no one to stop and confront them. This demonstrates a need for certain types of police pursuits, however there should be sufficient controls put into place by governing agencies to help officers evaluate the decision of whether to pursue or not pursue (Yates, 2004). In addition, these controls and policies should aid officers in evaluating the underlying question related to comparing the benefits and consequences of pursuing the suspect. Officers must bear in mind the possible liabilities involved when ultimately deciding to pursue and then the decision to continue to pursue or terminate the chase (Klotter, 2002).

2.8 Pursuit Attitudes and Decision Making

Now that the various liability issues have been explored, it is time to look at the many factors which affect the decision making process of the individual officer. As stated earlier in the example of firearms and pursuit training, officers are trained “how” to pursue but in some cases, not “when” to pursue, other than the written directive of the department that may or may not exist. This can lead to faulty decision making when trying to balance the risk factors at hand in deciding to first initiate the chase or to let the suspect go (Alpert & Friddell, 1999).

Officers have several tools in order to complete the daily tasks that are asked. Some of these tools are experience level, written directives and training. Policies help guide officers in their decision making processes however there is still a great deal of discretion involved and in some circumstances, policies can be violated if the reason for violation is articulated to suffice the chain of command in the organization. Cordner and Sheehan (1999) contend that policies are primarily guides to thinking, rather than to action, which is whow discretion is bestowed upon officers and supervisors as they complete their duties.

Discretion can be described as the use of professional judgment to choose one action over another (Barlow, 2000). In other words, the choice to chase someone or not chase one is an example of discretion. Officers use discretion countless times every day while responding to calls for service, issuing citations, using force, or deciding whether to puruse a violator. “The

police generally have considerable discretion in dealing with order-maintenance problems, whether police or citizen initiated," (Cordner & Sheehan, 1999, p.52).

There are many factors to consider when deciding to pursue or not pursue. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (2002), officers face a basic dilemma associated with pursuits: Do the benefits of potential apprehension outweigh the risks of endangering the public and the police? There is no easy, black and white answer to this contemplating question. Unfortunately for officers, they are given seconds to evaluate this question and formulate a plan and come to a decision based on a multitude of factors. If the decision is made to initiate the pursuit, the officer then has to continually re-evaluate the ever-dynamic high risk situation as the pursuit progresses. This leads to multiple decision making processes that occur during the duration of the pursuit, while at the same time, the officer is probably experiencing some type of adrenaline rush due to the very nature of pursuit driving. Sometimes an officer who initiates a pursuit will then decide to terminate it if these risk factors change in a way that leads the officer to believe the risks outweigh the potential capture of the eluding suspect. This illustration highlights the notion that many factors come into play when deciding to first initiate the pursuit, and then factors to decide whether to continue to pursue or terminate the pursuit.

The officer, not the suspect, makes the decision on how the police chase will be conducted (Daniels & Spratley, 2003). This decision will be based on a multitude of factors which include road, traffic and weather conditions present during the time the pursuit unfolds. Once the pursuit has been initiated, the officer has to continually reevaluate the ever-changing environment and factors that persist while at the same time maintaining control of the vehicle operation of the emergency vehicle and updating locations with dispatch and other officers. Some of the questions that should surface during this mental evaluation of the pursuit process should include, "Is the suspect's flight likely to take him through a school zone while children are present? Is he heading for a neighborhood with heavy pedestrian traffic or barreling straight for the busiest intersection in town?" (Daniels & Spratley, 2003, p.86).

Officers must remember that while they are required and will be held to the standard of driving with due regard to the public safety, suspects often times are not likely to concern themselves with public safety and have one goal in mind and that is to get away at all costs (Daniels & Spratley, 2003). Once the officer has determined that the danger to the public has risen significantly, the decision can be made to terminate the pursuit in its entirety or attempt to stop the suspect by using a pursuit intervention technique if approved by departmental policy. If the danger levels to the public rise significantly in a pursuit and the officer makes the decision to continue the pursuit, that officer must understand that they are accepting a higher degree of responsibility if something goes wrong, such as an accident that results in property damage, injury or even death.

Once the officer determines that the added risks to the public and the officer outweigh the benefits of apprehension of the suspect, the pursuit should be terminated immediately. All emergency equipment should be disengaged and dispatch and other officers should be immediately notified over the radio that the pursuit has been discontinued. Officers should not attempt to follow at high speeds with no emergency equipment engaged as the fleeing offender may realize that they are still being followed by the police and continue their dangerous driving behavior to elude capture. In addition, following the pursued vehicle even without lights and siren activated can and will be brought to light during civil actions if the offender has an accident and causes injury to an innocent third person. Surprisingly, research shows that on average, 50 percent of suspects continue to drive dangerously after ground units terminate their pursuits (Martin, 2001).

Additional factors which go into the decision making process include, but are not limited to, the officer's training, the officer's driving abilities, the pursuit policy at the employing agency, and the suspect's initial reason for contact and determination to avoid apprehension. Homant and Kennedy (1994b) maintained that there is no one best type of pursuit policy, but rather each state must weigh the advantages and risks of pursuit. Risk factors also include traffic conditions, speed of vehicles, weather, time of day and the basic environment where the pursuit takes

place. For example, if the suspect vehicle was evading officers by driving 70 mph down a residential street at around 3 P.M. in the afternoon versus driving 70 mph down a highway at 2 A.M., the difference in potential risk factors is self-evident. Once the officer examines these risk factors and formulates a decision, that subsequent decision and the dynamics of the pursuit will usually be evaluated at a later time by supervision that have an ample amount of time to critique the pursuit and the initial decision. What took the officer a few seconds to decide to pursue, now ends in a bureaucratic process that analyzes the incident to determine correctness in that decision or possible discipline for incorrectness.

There is a substantial amount of research related to the body of police pursuit literature. A new and recent pursuit decision making model has emerged and is called, “3QFC,” and stands for three question, forced choice” (Martin, 2001). Martin (2001) shows that almost every pursuit policy in the United States and Canada contains a similar statement that requires officers to continuously evaluate the risks that the pursuit poses to the public against the need to immediately apprehend the fleeing driver. As seen previously with the lack of training involved in formulating and evaluating a fluid pursuit response, continually evaluating a pursuit while managing all of the other driving and mental processes that the officer engages in can be challenging.

The 3QFC pursuit decision making model was developed to aid officers by replacing the traditional model of evaluation by offering a simple approach that can be rapidly answered during the stressful event of engaging in a pursuit. Most defensive tactics instructors will affirm that officer’s fine motor skills diminish under stress and the act of being involved in a vehicular pursuit can cause an adrenaline rush and increase officer stress levels. The author argues that when applied to the pursuit decision making process, the traditional response of continuous evaluation during the pursuit can be seen as traditional micro factors controlled by fine motor skills. The 3QFC model attacks the problem by using gross motor skills in the form of three questions which require the officer to make a simple yes or no calculation (Martin, 2001).

The first question is: Was the suspect an immediate or future threat to the public before the police pursuit? If the answer is yes, then a pursuit should not create a greater danger to the public in most cases and the pursuit may be continued.

If the answer is no, then the second question should be asked of officers: Is the non-compliant driving by the violator hazardous? If the violator's conduct prior to the pursuit initiation is not seen as an immediate or future threat, but the non-compliant driving is, then the danger of the pursuit to the public can be more clearly seen as outweighing the need to immediately make the apprehension. If the non-compliant driving is of a relatively benign nature and does not create an immediate threat to the public, a pursuit may be undertaken according to Martin (2001). It should be noted however that the officers involved and the controlling supervisor should be ready to terminate the pursuit if the non-compliant driving increases in hazardous severity.

The third question: If pursuing, what is the plan to end the pursuit as soon as possible? As stated previously by other authors, the need for officers to be thinking ahead about how to end the pursuit as quickly as possible is of extreme importance. The old adage of chasing offenders until their wheels fall off is no longer acceptable in today's society. This new aspect of pursuit decision making demonstrates an alternative to the traditional decision making processes that officers are required to participate in when engaged in pursuing offenders (Martin, 2001).

One portion of the literature warranted for further examination is analyzing previous findings related to the dangers, risk factors, and possible outcomes of officers who elect to engage in or continue a vehicular pursuit. First, some additional terminology needs to be defined. An article by Connor (2003) suggests the notion of looking at fleeing violators through a pursuit paradigm. Connor (2003) defines two terms which are commonly used in law enforcement circles interchangeably. The first term is discontinuation, which as it relates to the pursuit decision making process is the decision that the pursuing officer makes to simply stop the apprehension effort of the suspect due to conditions that arise. This discontinuation decision

can be made by the patrol officer engaged in the pursuit or by the controlling supervisor of the pursuit effort. Connor (2003) argues that the key element to remember in the discontinuation principle is that something or someone has prompted an immediate conclusion to the action, for whatever necessary reason.

Termination on the other hand is described as a result of something which is contrary to discontinuation. Discontinuation keeps officers from the activity while termination directs officers to continue the enforcement effort toward a structured conclusion. The termination aspect of the pursuit could be catching the suspect, turning the pursuit effort over to another jurisdiction, or the offender escaping the pursuit effort. These terms are important to ponder as research continues to provide a glimpse into the actual constraints that are involved in pursuing vehicles (Connor, 2003).

2.9 Previous Pursuit Studies

This section of the literature review will narrowly focus on previous research on officers' attitudes and opinions toward pursuits which is directly related to the inquiry of this project. Dr. Geoffrey Alpert could be considered by many as a leading expert in the world of police pursuits and is currently a professor in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of South Carolina. He has published numerous articles for leading, scholarly journals and has also published books on the topic.

During the time frame of the 1960s, the topic of pursuits became a critical issue for both the police and the public. The focus of the debate was divided between two issues: the benefit of pursuing violators or the need to enforce laws and apprehend violators, and the risk of engaging in pursuits or the importance of public safety (Fennessy & Joscelyn, 1972). Even though these critical issues emerged many decades ago, these two central themes still prevail in today's society, yet there is little research compiled on the views that officers and supervisors hold on pursuits (Falcone, 1994).

In this section, there are five research studies which will be assessed since they accumulated data on officers' attitudes toward police pursuit driving. Falcone, (1994) conducted

a study on pursuits which included a sample of officers and agencies in the state of Illinois. The data compiled from the research project included responses from almost all of the responding officers that engaging in police pursuits was somewhat or absolutely essential for controlling crime and maintaining order (Falcone, et al., 1992). Additionally, findings showed that there was a wide degree of variation among the respondents for the particular offense categories which would justify engaging in a pursuit.

The offense categories included a wide range from traffic offenses to driving under the influence, misdemeanor or felony offense types, drug offenses and force used while in the commission of a felony (Falcone, et al., 1992). Falcone and his colleagues (1992) acknowledge that there is some degree of variation in the attitudes between police officers in some areas of decision making on pursuits. The most notable and interesting key differences between law enforcement officers is that some officers see the risks of engaging in a pursuit as high and avoid becoming involved in a pursuit on that basis. Other officers consider the notion that the benefits outweigh the risks of engaging in a pursuit and will become involved in pursuing violators (Falcone, et al., 1992).

Several consistent themes emerged throughout the study. The seriousness of the offense type was positively and strongly correlated to the need to pursue. Most officers reported in declining order that the reasons to terminate a pursuit included traffic conditions, certain speed zones, dangerousness of offense type and weather conditions. Officers overwhelmingly reported (more than 84%) that a pursuit should be permitted for a forcible felony offense type (Falcone, et al., 1992).

Britz and Payne (1994) conducted a study which focused on the determination of whether the attitudes toward pursuit policies differed between line officers and administrators. The findings showed that 38 percent of the line officers found that their pursuit policy was difficult to understand and ambiguous and that 80 percent of supervisors reported on the survey instrumentation that they provided their patrol officers under their command with no training with regards to pursuits. In addition, 35 percent of officers reported that they had been involved in a

pursuit but had not reported the incident of the engaging in a pursuit. Although a relatively small number, 20 percent of sworn officers did not know their pursuit policy. Concerning the results of the research, there were significant differences on issues regarding perceptions of policy, supervisory support, training, and liability issues between rank structures such as patrolmen, investigators, first line supervisors and administrators (Britz & Payne, 1994).

Homant and Kennedy (1994b) conducted a study which examined pursuit tendencies among patrol officers from different agencies with different pursuit policies. The purpose of that study was to examine the effects of variations in high-speed pursuit policies on patrol officers' attitudes and behavior (Homant & Kennedy, 1994b). The sample comprised officers' responses from seven state agencies, in which each officer was asked to respond to various scenarios by indicating their willingness to engage in a pursuit. The findings pointed towards the notion that officers who are employed by agencies with restrictive pursuit policies tend to engage in pursuits less of the time versus those with lenient policies were more inclined to pursue. The study utilized a written questionnaire with two situations and the officer would then answer the probability that they would initiate a high-speed chase on a Likert probability scale. For illustrative purposes and to gauge what previous research has used in the form of scenarios, both situations are presented below:

> SITUATION A: There is light traffic on a four-lane (not divided) highway. You notice that a car's tailpipe is hanging and may drop off. The car is going at a normal rate of speed. You decide to warn the driver that he'd better do something about the tailpipe before he loses it. You pull behind him and when you think he notices you in his rear view mirror you point to the shoulder. He seems to glance at the mirror a few times, looks around from side to side, but continues on. You put your flashers on and give him a brief blast of your siren. He starts to slow down, but then makes an abrupt turn onto a side road and begins to speed away.
>
> SITUATION B: You are responding to a call from the dispatcher of a probable burglary in progress. A neighbor has reported movements in a house where the owners are known to be away on vacation. You approach the address, which is in the middle of a block in a largely residential neighborhood. It is twilight; a few people are sitting on porches, but no pedestrians or children are about. A few cars are moving, about a block away. You have your flashers but not your siren on as you pull to the curb about 100 feet from the house in question. A car suddenly pulls out from the curb in front of the house and accelerates down the

block. By the time it reaches the first intersection, it is going about 30-35 miles per hour.

The probability that I would initiate a high-speed chase is:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very high uncertain very low (or zero)

I would pursue this eluder:
1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Briefly: a short moderately vigorously
Distance at most

According to the researchers, the above scales were used so that a high score indicated an inclination to pursue (Homant & Kennedy, 1994b). In summary of the study, there is evidence that police officers are aware of their departments' pursuit policies to some extent, and that these policies do correlate with actual pursuit tendencies in hypothetical situations (Homant & Kennedy, 1994b).

Alpert and Madden (1994) conducted a pursuit study that surveyed law enforcement supervisors, recruits, and criminal justice students. The study focused on four critical pursuit factors which guided police officers' decision to continue a pursuit. The first factor was looking at what type of offense the violator was wanted for. The other factors included where the pursuit occurred and the conditions such as traffic and weather, and how these conditions were related to the need to apprehend the suspect.

Of the key findings in the study, police supervisors were more inclined to pursue and apprehend the suspect immediately even more so when considering the risks to officers and the public. The students placed the risk factors as more important than the need to immediately apprehend suspects. This led to the conclusion that the police supervisors were in direct contrast with regards to their views on pursuing offenders.

When ranking the risks in the Alpert and Madden (1994) study, the most important factor amongst the supervisors, recruits, and students was the need to apprehend the suspect. In determining whether or not to continue a pursuit, traffic conditions were the second most important consideration amongst all groups surveyed. The third most important factor was the

area in which the pursuit took place, followed by the least important factor of weather at time of pursuit (Alpert & Madden, 1994).

Alpert, et al, (1996) completed a follow-up study to the previous project which sought to follow the same methods as completed in the Alpert and Madden study in 1994. The key differences in this more recent study dealt with the respondents. This study comprised line officers who are routinely involved in pursuit decision making processes and sought to highlight any differences between the decisions across agency lines. The sample included officers and supervisors from four different law enforcement agencies. Departments included the Metro-Dade Police Department (Miami), Omaha Police Department, Mesa, Arizona Police Department, and finally the Aiken County, South Carolina Sheriff's Department.

Concerning the measurement analysis of the project, each respondent received a questionnaire that included a pursuit scenario. The authors operationalized the critical pursuit concepts in the pursuit scenarios by creating offense categories, also referred to as "Need to apprehend," and risk factors, referred to as "Chase area, traffic conditions, and weather conditions," (Alpert, et al., 1996). The offense categories were comprised of the following: Traffic violation, misdemeanor, felony-property, stolen car, DUI, violent felony-no death, violent felony-with reported death, and officer shot. Under risk factors, the chase area was comprised of the following: freeway, commercial, inner city, and residential. Also under risk factors included traffic conditions, congested and non-congested, and weather conditions, which consisted of wet and dry conditions.

Each respondent was given a scenario in the following format and was asked a simple yes or no response to avoid the confound of fatigue in completing the survey. The responses in this study were then divided between officers (N = 881) and supervisors (N = 174). Results were analyzed and separated between the officers who have five or less years of experience versus those with more than five years of experience. The major finding is that the percentage of all officers willing to engage in a pursuit and of all supervisors willing to approve a pursuit increases as the severity of the crime increases (Alpert, et al., 1996). Simply defined, the need

to immediately apprehend the suspect is the primary concern of many in law enforcement. Specific results indicated that 43 percent of officers said they would engage in a pursuit for a traffic violation under low-risk conditions, versus 10 percent under the same scenario under high-risk conditions. Alpert, et al. concluded that (1996):

Table 2.1 Chase Scenario Format

AREA:	FREEWAY
VIOLATION:	FELONY PROPERTY OTHER THAN STOLEN CAR
TRAFFIC CONDITIONS:	CONGESTED
WEATHER CONDITIONS:	DRY
	PURSUE: YES [] NO []

"The officers' responses show that they think the nature of the original offense is the most important variable in deciding whether to continue a pursuit. This factor is more than twice as important as the environmental concerns. The present study demonstrated that violent felonies are viewed as the most important offenses, which would justify even a risky pursuit. Traffic conditions, however, are reported as the most important risk to officers, the public, and the fleeing suspect. Although these two factors are commonly known to officers and supervisors and although they are logical, they must be emphasized in real-life situations rather then understood only at an intellectual level. The real impact of the original offense and of traffic must be emphasized as critical in forming opinions. The area of the chase and the weather are also important, but are less important in forming opinions," (p.358).

The study also focused on officers' perceptions as to why suspects flee. This is significant, considering officers' opinions regarding why suspects flee could influence their decisions on whether or not to engage in or approve a pursuit. One survey question asked officers to answer yes or no to three possible responses on why they believe that suspects flee.

The three responses to why suspects flee included the following: They have committed a serious offense, they have something to hide, and they are just scared and want to escape. Fifty-six percent of all officers indicated that they believe suspects flee because they have committed a serious offense. Ninety-five percent of all officers indicated that they believe suspects flee because they have something to hide, while only 39 percent of all officers selected the response that the suspects are just scared and want to escape.

An additional question posed to the respondents asked if their department had a no pursuit policy that was known to the public, what percent of suspects did they believe would flee from the officers after being ordered to stop. Just 35 percent of all officers believed that from 76 to 100 percent of suspects would flee if they knew the police had a no pursuit policy and would not engage in a chase to apprehend them. This author proposes using similar terminology and methods as this study used.

In the next chapter, the methodology will be presented. As stated previously, the purpose of the current project was to analyze differences in the way that officers respond to pursuit scenarios. This project used a survey questionnaire to gather responses from participants who read a chase scenario and considered the type of offense and risk factors to the public as they answered. Similarities and differences were analyzed in relation to demographical data regarding gender and years of experience as a police officer. Officers and supervisors were asked to respond to each scenario how they actually felt, without regard to current institutional constraints such as policies and procedures.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to elicit responses of appropriateness in relation to pursuits from police officers and supervisors who were currently assigned to the patrol and traffic division of a local police agency in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. Specifically, this project provided pursuit scenarios along with risk factors to see whether or not this influenced sworn officers' and supervisors' decision making processes as they considered the need to apprehend or let the violator go based upon the factors given.

3.1 Participants

The present study was conducted at the Arlington, Texas Police Department and involved sworn officers who were certified by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education. The Arlington Police Department is unique in its hiring standards in that it is one of only a handful of agencies nationwide that requires a baccalaureate degree before being considered in the hiring process to become a police officer. This is one of the main reasons that this city was chosen as no other study has been completed to date on attitudes and opinions of officers with regards to pursuits who have such stringent hiring requirements and meet this type of educational level as an entry prerequisite. The Arlington Police Department has an authorized sworn staff of 688 officers from the top of the command staff to newly hired recruit officers. For this study, this project focused only on sworn officers who were assigned to either the patrol or traffic divisions since these are the officers who are routinely tasked with making decisions on whether to engage in or approve a vehicular pursuit. According to the City of Arlington media relations office, approximately 225 sworn officers are assigned to the patrol and traffic divisions that encompass 24 hours of service to the community.

The Arlington Police Department divides the patrol division up into three shifts and the traffic division is divided into two shifts. In addition, the city is divided into three geographical quadrants where officers and supervisors report to duty. This sampling population included recruit officers who have recently been assigned to field training to officers who have held over 20 years of police experience. First line supervisors from the rank of sergeant to intermediate administrators who have obtained the rank of Lieutenant were asked to participate in the study if assigned to patrol or traffic operations. Involving supervisors was very important as they are generally concerned with the issues of pursuits due to their responsibilities when one occurs. In addition, policy changes usually occur at the administrator levels.

3.2 Sample Size

Out of the potential 225 officers and supervisors assigned to a patrol or traffic position, 75 completed survey instruments were received which tabulated to a return rate of approximately 33 percent.

3.3 Apparatus

This study utilized a survey instrument which consisted of twenty questions in order to measure the selections made by the participants. In order to eliminate as much ambiguity as possible, responses to questions had possible pre-defined answers that could be easily coded for data analysis later. A sample of a question included in the survey is presented in the following table.

Table 3.1 Sample Survey Question Format

It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under LOW risk conditions.				
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

There were five response categories for the majority of the questions. An ordinal level of measurement was used which included a five-point Likert Scale with 1 (one) being, “Agree Strongly,” and 5 (five) being, “Disagree Strongly.”

In the summer of 2008, application was made to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Texas at Arlington to use this type of measuring device. An application for Expedited Approval of Protocol, Form #1, was submitted to the IRB along with the Informed Consent and the pursuit survey questionnaire. The IRB approved the research protocol in late summer of 2008 and research was conducted shortly after approval.

3.4 Procedures

After IRB approval, the department head of the Arlington Police Department was contacted for permission to implement this research project on premises controlled by the City of Arlington, Texas. Police Chief Theron Bowman, Ph.D., provided approval to conduct this project and administer the survey instrument to patrol and traffic officers. The principal investigator was present at each of the three geographical duty stations and at all of the three briefing times over the course of one calendar week to distribute the survey questionnaire. Each of the three geographical districts, composed of North, East, and West, contained an approximate equal distribution of officers.

Randomization of survey distribution was accomplished by alternating different days and times the researcher was present over this one week period. During each appearance, the introduction and purpose of the study was read aloud to the group of officers and supervisors present at the briefing. It was made clear that participation was voluntary and surveys were distributed along with the Informed Consent section of the instrument. Participants were allowed to choose not to complete the survey and leave the briefing areas. Those persons willing to participate received a survey and signed the Informed Consent section after reading the document and voluntarily agreeing to participate in the study. After the Informed Consent sections were completed, this investigator read the directions section of the survey instrument. Officers and supervisors then completed the questionnaire and it was collected. To maintain

confidentiality and to keep the responses anonymous, the Informed Consent was detached from the survey instrument after completion.

Table 3.2 Police Vehicle Pursuit Survey Directions

DIRECTIONS: Answer each question by checking the most appropriate response that concurs with your feelings or thoughts regarding the matter of pursuits regardless of legal, ethical, or institutional constraints that may apply. (In other words, forget about what policy and procedures say on the issue and answer directly how you feel about the matter). Most of the questions can be answered by utilizing a scale from one (1) being AGREE STRONGLY and five (5) being DISAGREE STRONGLY. Concerning the different pursuit scenarios, please review the following two definitions concerning risk levels. LOW RISK is defined as light traffic conditions, good visibility, highway or interstate roadway, rural area and moderate speed conditions. HIGH RISK is defined as moderate to heavy traffic congestion, highway or city streets, urban and commercial area and moderate to high speed conditions.

The crucial pursuit concepts were spelled out in operational terms by creating pursuit scenarios into categories which corresponded to several existing sources of empirical information which affected officers' and supervisors' decisions to engage in or approve a pursuit (Alpert & Madden, 1994). The benefits to pursue violators, or the need to immediately apprehend included six levels of criminal activity as operationalized in the scenarios. The risks to balance pursuit decisions included two categories which defined low risk and high risk factors to be considered while making these decisions.

Participants were asked to think about and consider the chase scenario without regard to legal, ethical, or institutional constraints that may apply. In other words, participants were not to consider such items as current policies and procedures that were in place and to just answer how they would feel about the situation of engaging in or approving a pursuit based upon their attitudes and opinions of being a law enforcement practitioner.

Table 3.3 Operational Factors Influencing the Decision to Pursue

Need to Apprehend
Traffic Offense
Stolen Vehicle
Suspected DWI
Misdemeanor Property Crime
Violent Felony with Reported Death
Officer Shot
Risk Factors
1. Chase Area:
Highway or Interstate Roadway
City Streets
Rural Area
Urban and Commercial Area
2. Visibility and Speed Conditions:
Good Visibility and Moderate Speed Conditions
Moderate to High Speed Conditions
3. Traffic Conditions:
Light Traffic
Moderate to Heavy Traffic

In order to reduce participant fatigue in responding to the questions, there were a total of twelve scenarios which varied between criminal offense types and risk factors present. Quantitative variables were used so that the responses could be arranged in order of magnitude using a five-point Likert Scale to serve as a base-line for conducting further measurements. There were also three questions which dealt with familiarization of departmental policy concerning pursuits, whether or not pursuits should be subject to administrative review, and how officers felt about their current policy. The final five questions were nominal measures of

demographic variables dealing with gender, age group, years of experience, police certification level and current formal level of education held.

This quantitative study encompassed a cross-sectional design since the survey examined the attitudes and opinions of officers at the very moment in time when they completed the questionnaire. After completion of the calendar week of survey distribution, data collected from the respondents was cataloged into a software program called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16.0, which is a comprehensive system for analyzing data (SPSS, 2008). Several types of analysis were performed to present that data in a manageable format. Distributions were displayed as frequencies and percentages. Descriptive statistics was applied to several of the variables to understand the relationships between the chase scenarios and the demographical data. Relationships that were found to be statistically significant were reported.

Likewise, relationships with no level of significance were also reported. Analysis using t-tests were performed to measure if differences between two means were found to be statistically significant. The statistical significance of a relationship observed from the data collected was considered significant at the .05 level. Maxfield and Babbie (2005) offer an insight to comprehending statistical significance. They report that significance at the .05 level simply means that the probability of a relationship as strong as the observed one being attributable to sampling error alone is no more than 5 in 100.

As stated previously, the purpose of this study was to analyze differences in the way that officers respond to pursuit scenarios. This was accomplished by using a survey questionnaire to gather responses from participants who read a chase scenario and considered the type of offense and risk factors to the public as they answered. Similarities and differences were analyzed in relation to demographical data regarding gender and years of experience as a police officer. Officers and supervisors were asked to respond to each scenario how they actually felt, without regard to current institutional constraints such as policies and procedures.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter will present the results of the data analysis in a manageable format, while the next chapter will explain what this study means to administrators, academics and officers.

4.1 Demographics

First, the demographical representations of the sample group will be examined in detail. Table 4.1 displays the demographics of the sample. Included in the table are gender, age group, years of commissioned experience, TCLEOSE certification level and formal educational level.

Table 4.1 Demographical Characteristics

Variable	Characteristic	Percentage
Gender	Male	79
	Female	21
Age Group	21-26	21
	27-32	31
	33-38	32
	39-44	9
	45-50	7
	51-56	0
	Over 56	0
Years of Commissioned Experience	0-2 Years	35
	3-5 Years	20
	6-10 Years	22
	11-15 Years	13
	16-20 Years	5
	Over 20 Years	4
TCLEOSE Certification Level	Basic	71
	Intermediate	5
	Advanced	4
	Master	20
Formal Educational Level	High School/GED	0
	Some Formal College	1
	Associate Degree	0
	Bachelor Degree	96
	Master Degree	3
	Doctorate Degree	0

The initial target population consisted of a potential of 225 officers. Only 75 officers chose to complete the questionnaire (n=75) and participate in the study. The response rate was 33.3 percent which was lower than expected, however it is still considered a substantial rate for social science research according to Babbie (2002). There could be many reasons why the response rate was lower than expected. It could be that many officers were reluctant to participate on the grounds of the perceived lack of anonymity. Even though there was an informed consent spelling out the terms of confidentiality, there has always been a lack of trust between officers and those in supervisory roles. This is commonly referred to as the "Us versus them," mentality (Hunt & Manning, 1991).

As shown in Table 4.1, the sample included 59 males (79%) and 16 females (21%). A majority of the officers and supervisors surveyed fell into the 27-32 age category (31%) and the 33-38 age category (32%). Most respondents reporting having under 10 years of police experience (77%). In addition, a bulk of the respondents surveyed reported holding only a Basic TCLEOSE certification level (71%), with 5% reporting an Intermediate level, 4% advanced level and 20% having a Master certification. An overwhelming group of the sample reported that they held a Bachelor Degree (96%), with only 3% reporting a Master's degree and 1% reporting some formal college. It is important to bear in mind that the Arlington Police Department requires at a minimum an undergraduate degree at the level of Bachelor's before being hired. It is possible that an officer was hired by the agency before this requirement was in effect. The percentages in Table 4.1 were rounded up if .5 or higher were present in the data output or rounded down if less than .5 was present in the data output.

4.2 Pursuit Perception—Gender-Based Responses

The rationale for analyzing the perception-based responses against the demographics was to identify any differences or similarities that exist in attitudes and perceptions that may exist between male and female officers and officers with limited experience and extensive experience.

Table 4.2 Pursuit Perception—Gender-Based Responses

Perception-Based Responses	Male Means	Female Means	P. Values
I am familiar with my department's pursuit policy.	1.28	1.62	.270
I believe that police pursuits should be subject to administrative review.	1.81	2.06	.478
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under LOW risk conditions.	2.50	2.81	.343
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under HIGH risk conditions.	3.83	4.06	.443
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under LOW risk conditions.	1.28	1.43	.451
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under HIGH risk conditions.	2.08	2.62	.104
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under LOW risk conditions.	1.20	1.31	.579
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under HIGH risk conditions.	1.84	2.00	.605
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under LOW conditions.	2.59	2.62	.919
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under HIGH risk conditions.	3.67	4.00	.221
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent person under LOW risk conditions.	1.10	1.06	.557
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent person under HIGH risk conditions.	1.15	1.18	.715
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under LOW risk conditions.	1.06	1.00	N/A
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under HIGH risk conditions.	1.10	1.06	.557

* Significant at the .05 level
** Significant at the .01 level

In table 4.2, the reader can find the pursuit perception, gender-based responses from officers and supervisors. There were no statistically significant responses garnered during the

analysis and application of a one-sample t-test. Gender responses appeared to indicate that for both males and females, there was a general sense of agreement with all of the questions.

Question number one, “I am familiar with my department’s pursuit policy,” delivered a p-value of .270. Question number two, “I believe that police pursuits should be subject to administrative review,” had a p-value of .478. Question number three, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under LOW risk conditions,” generated a p-value of .343.

Question number four, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under HIGH risk conditions,” created a p-value of .443. Question number five, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under LOW risk conditions,” had a p-value of .451. Question number six, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under HIGH risk conditions,” yielded a p-value of .104.

Question number seven, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under LOW risk conditions,” had a p-value of .579. Question number eight, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under HIGH risk conditions,” generated a p-value of .605. Question number nine, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under LOW risk conditions,” produced a p-value of .919.

Question number ten, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under HIGH risk conditions,” produced a p-value of .221. Question number eleven, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle a pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent person under LOW risk conditions,” delivered a p-value of .557. Question number twelve, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for

a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent third person under HIGH risk conditions," had a p-value of .715.

Question number thirteen, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under LOW risk conditions," was deleted from the sample because the degrees of freedom were so close that a t-test could not produce a p-value. Question number fourteen, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under HIGH risk conditions," yielded a p-value of .557.

Some of the reasons why this author believes there were no significant findings as related to gender will be discussed in detail in chapter 5.

4.3 Pursuit Perception—Years of Experience-Based Responses

After conducting analysis with gender based responses, Table 4.3 analyzes pursuit perception and decision-making based on years of commissioned police experience. The table is included on the next page for presentation purposes.

In table 4.3, the reader can find the pursuit perception, years of experience based responses. The demographical question, "How many years have you been a commissioned law enforcement officer," was divided between two categories as mirrored in a recent study by Dr. Geoffrey Alpert (1994). In that study, percentages of officers who would engage in a pursuit were divided into two categories of, "Five years or less," and "More than five years." For similarity sake, this researcher divided officers and supervisors into the same two categories when conducting a one-sample t-test. Several responses yielded statistically significant results during the data analysis phase.

There was also a general sense of agreement between the two groups of officers with exception to the three questions which yielded a statistically significant result. Those questions dealt with a stolen vehicle and misdemeanor property crime under low risk conditions.

Table 4.3 Pursuit Perception—Years of Experience-Based Responses

Perception-Based Responses	Under 5 Means	Over 5 Means	P. Values
I am familiar with my department's pursuit policy.	1.26	1.47	.264
I believe that police pursuits should be subject to administrative review.	1.97	1.73	.237
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under LOW risk conditions.	2.41	2.76	.171
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under HIGH risk conditions.	3.82	3.94	.569
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under LOW risk conditions.	1.14	1.52	.010**
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under HIGH risk conditions.	1.85	2.61	.000**
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under LOW risk conditions.	1.14	1.32	.173
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under HIGH risk conditions.	1.75	2.02	.091
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under LOW conditions.	2.26	3.00	.006**
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under HIGH risk conditions.	3.58	3.94	.077
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent person under LOW risk conditions.	1.00	1.20	.128
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent person under HIGH risk conditions.	1.09	1.23	.261
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under LOW risk conditions.	1.00	1.11	.325
It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under HIGH risk conditions.	1.07	1.11	.688

* Significant at the .05 level
** Significant at the .01 level

Question number one, "I am familiar with my department's pursuit policy," had a p-value of .264. Question number two, "I believe that police pursuits should be subject to administrative

review," had a p-value of .237. Question number three, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under LOW risk conditions," capitulated a p-value of .171.

Question number four, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under HIGH risk conditions," produced a p-value of .569. Question number five, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under LOW risk conditions," yielded a p-value of .010 which was statistically significant at the .01 level. Question number six, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under HIGH risk conditions," had a p-value of .000 which was also statistically significant at the .01 level.

Question number seven, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under LOW risk conditions," produced a p-value of .173. Question number eight, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under HIGH risk conditions," generated a p-value of .091. Question number nine, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under LOW risk conditions," yielded a p-value of .006 which yielded a statistically significant response at the .01 level.

Question number ten, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under HIGH risk conditions," delivered a p-value of .077. Question number eleven, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle a pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent person under LOW risk conditions," had a p-value of .128. Question number twelve, "It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent third person under HIGH risk conditions," yielded a p-value of .261.

Question number thirteen, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under LOW risk conditions,” had a p-value of .325. Question number fourteen, “It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under HIGH risk conditions,” had a p-value of .688.

4.4 Agency Pursuit Policy

Table 4.4 asked officers to rate whether or not they felt that there agency pursuit policy was restrictive or lenient.

Table 4.4 Pursuit Policy Responses

Policy Responses	Restrictive Percentage	Lenient Percentage
I would consider my agency’s pursuit policy to be RESTRICTIVE or LENIENT?	93	7

In table 4.4, the reader will find the percentage responses in reference to whether respondents considered the Arlington Police Department had a restrictive or lenient pursuit policy. An overwhelming 93% (n=70) of respondents felt the policy was restrictive as compared with only 7% (n=5) who thought the policy to be lenient.

In the next chapter, the results and findings of this study will be discussed in detail. Specifically, future policy implications will be addressed as it relates to police pursuits and areas where future researchers should peer into regarding these issues will be analyzed. As stated previously, the purpose of this study was to analyze differences in the way that officers respond to pursuit scenarios. This was accomplished by using a survey questionnaire to gather responses from participants who read a chase scenario and considered the type of offense and risk factors to the public as they answered. Similarities and differences were analyzed in relation to demographical data regarding gender and years of experience as a police officer. Officers and supervisors were asked to respond to each scenario how they actually felt, without regard to current institutional constraints such as policies and procedures.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

In this study, the purpose was to analyze differences in the way that officers and supervisors respond to pursuit scenarios. This project gathered responses from participants who read a chase scenario and considered the type of offense and risk factors to the public as they answered each question. Similarities and differences were analyzed in chapter four in relation to demographical data regarding gender and years of experience as a police officer.

Officers and supervisors were asked to respond to each scenario how they actually felt, and to disregard current institutional constraints such as policies and procedures. The findings of the study revealed a certain pattern of similarity when comparing gender as a predictor in responses. The findings also revealed certain differences when comparing years of experience as a predictor in measured responses.

5.1 Gender Predictors

As previously presented in the literature review, there have been several studies which asked officers to respond to pursuit scenarios in an attempt to gather knowledge of how officers decide whether or not to pursue a violator who flees in a vehicle. In the present study, the reader can appreciate that the information gained demonstrates that the law enforcement culture has continued to progress in the area of gender decision-making.

This researcher expected to find statistically significant results when comparing the means of male and female officers as related to several of the pursuit questions. In this study, no questions in the survey yielded a statistically significant result. This researcher did not expect these types of results, however, one can appreciate the notion that males and females fell along a certain pattern of similarity in their responses. The responses gathered were not different enough between males and females to find significance between the questions.

Women account for about 10.6 percent of all police officers in the United States (Kasper, 2006).There are several implied meanings to explain some of the reasons why comparing gender did not generate any statistical significance amongst responses. The reader can appreciate that law enforcement has been making strides in recent decades by increasing the number of female officers by increasing recruitment and retention efforts. Also, advancement opportunity for females to take on supervisory responsibilities has also improved. Females serving in supervisory roles such a sergeants, lieutenants, captains and chiefs are becoming more common, if not as prevalent as males in such positions (Basich, 2008). It has been said that policing in the past was a male dominated industry with a “”macho” culture, however in recent times, this practice has began to change as the number of females entering law enforcement as a career continues to rise (Burke et al 2006).

Females still find themselves often times feeling the need to prove themselves every day, regardless of their rank or position in the agency, so it is imperative that the law enforcement community along with other social institutions look to increase female development in the police ranks (Basich, 2008). In some cases, it can be said that administrators have been questioned about the low number of women representative in their agency. Some administrators would argue and cite a lack of interest from the female applicant pool (Kasper, 2006).

This researcher does not believe there is a lack of interest. Agencies need to continue to diversify their authorized force by recruiting females through academic institutions and other social settings. Police administrators should aim to create diverse work environments and become more reflective of the jurisdiction in which they serve.

5.2 Years of Experience Predictors

Concerning years of experience as a predictor in responses, the survey administered resulted in statistically significant differences between respondents as they were divided into two categories; those with 5 years or less experience and those with more than 5 years

experience. Specifically, pursuit perception-based questions revealed several differences between means at the .01 level.

Questions regarding perception on determining appropriateness of pursuing for a stolen vehicle, regardless of low or high risk factors, appear to show that more experienced officers are less likely to engage in a pursuit versus officers with 5 years or less experience. This was particularly evident when the question presented a high risk scenario, with majority of experienced officers were strongly disagreeing with the appropriateness of pursuing a stolen vehicle under high risk conditions. Less experienced officers were much more likely to support engaging in or approving a pursuit for a property crime when low risk conditions were presented, as compared to their experienced counterparts. When it came to analyzing their support for a misdemeanor property crime under high risk conditions, responses fell into a certain line of similarity of not showing support for appropriateness of involving themselves in a pursuit.

5.3 Future Policy Implications

This study has revealed that experience plays a role in deciding whether or not to pursue a fleeing vehicle. It is also important to mention that law enforcement apparently has accomplished a great deal in similarity decision-making with respect to gender. Ultimately, there are several potential future policy implications that are likely to have an impact on how pursuits are managed and controlled.

Police executives and administrators need to understand that experienced officers are less likely to support pursuits for property offenses while inexperienced officers are much more likely to pursue and even disregard certain risk factors depending on the type of property crime. Policies need to be written in such a way that they take away some of the decision- making from the officers in order to counter for this difference in experience level. For example, one policy may prohibit pursuing suspects involved in misdemeanor property crimes all together.

If law enforcement realizes that experience tends to show a pattern of difference in decision-making, police academies need to spend additional time and training in the area of pursuits. One recommendation is that police agencies can offer yearly training in pursuits just as common as firearms training as stated in the literature review. This refresher training would enhance an agency's ability to compensate for lack of experience and possibly result in more manageable decision-making.

Administrators also need to keep a pursuit policy up to date as new case law is decided. Pursuit policies, like any other procedures, need to evolve with changes in technology, legislative rulings, and with changes in law enforcement practices that come about with successes and failures (Lesh, 2003). While reviewing the pursuit policy that is in place, executives need to remain open to examining potential errors and omissions, making modifications, or adding elements to maintain a strong and easily accessible policy.

Strong policies have several objectives. They need to protect the officer, protect the agency and should serve as a guide to officers and supervisors who are tasked with decision-making in regards to pursue or not. Policies also can serve as a check and balances system if documentation is kept on each pursuit to see if violations of policy occurred or if policy needs to be re-written to accommodate a special circumstance that previously was not thought of.

Witczak (2003), argues that training must be a top priority and needs to be realistic. "Sitting in a classroom, watching a video or driving around in a circle in a parking lot are no longer acceptable training exercises; prepare the officers to make wise and correct decisions on the spot with what if situations," (Witczak, 2003, p.131). Agencies can model a training program that is progressive and incorporate actual scenarios in the pursuit training.

Academic institutions can address pursuit issues as well by focusing on case law trends they relate pursuits to use of force issues. Judgment of pursuit outcomes from initial decisions can be measured from the initial response stage, through the intermediate continuation stage,

and the final outcome. Educational settings can also research and develop new technologies to terminate pursuits safely once they start.

There were some limitations to this study as it focused entirely on one unique agency whose requirement included a Bachelor's degree. The majority of agencies across the United States only require a high school diploma or some limited exposure to college. It is difficult to project this study's findings onto the law enforcement community as a whole. It is the hope of this researcher to expand this study to other agencies and to see if differences exist between officers who have obtained differing educational levels, age level and police certification levels.

It is the anticipation of this researcher that officers and supervisors will understand the inherent risks and liabilities associated with vehicle pursuits and weigh their decision with those risks. Officers need to also remain objective during this decision process and recognize the many facets that go into the decision of whether or not to pursue.

Further research that would benefit the existing pursuit literature could be implemented by expanding the number of agencies surveyed and gathering more potential respondents. One recommendation would also be to distinguish each responded by rank level since many officers feel that administrators who have been removed from the "streets" are no longer in touch with pursuit practices (Lesh, 2003).

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

INFORMED CONSENT

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR NAME:
Christopher Cook

TITLE OF PROJECT:
Analysis of Police Officer Perceptions and Attitudes Regarding Vehicle Pursuits

INTRODUCTION
You are being asked to participate in a research study. Your participation is voluntary. Please ask questions if there is anything you do not understand.

PURPOSE*:*
The purpose of this study is to evaluate the differences in perceptions and attitudes that harbor in the minds of different police officers who are employed by the City of Arlington, Texas Police Department. The study will focus on the decision making processes the officers embark on with regards to the issue of police pursuits.

DURATION:
The survey instrument should not take more then five (5) minutes to complete.

PROCEDURES:
A survey instrument will be distributed to each participant and officers will decide whether to engage in or approve a vehicular pursuit based upon a given scenario and risk factors apparent in each question by marking the response that reflects the officer's decision.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS:

This research will add to the body of knowledge that presenlty exists regarding the risk and benefiits of vehicular pursuits. This research may assist in the future regarding policy implications concerning police pursuits.

COMPENSATION:

None

POSSIBLE RISKS/DISCOMFORTS:

None known and none anticipated.

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES/TREATMENTS:

There are no alternative to answering the questionnaire, should you choose to participate.

WITHDRAWAL FROM THE STUDY:

Participation in the survey is purely voluntary and participants may choose to quit without any negative consequences.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

We expect 100 of participants to enroll in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. Records of this study will be stored at Dr. Alex del Carmen office, Room 362, University Hall Building for at least 3 years after the end of this research. If the result of this research are published or presented at scientific meetings, your identity will not be disclosed. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, the UTA IRB, and personnel particular to this research (individual or department) have access to the study records.

If in the unlikely event it becomes necessary for the Institutional Review Board to review your research records, then The University of Texas at Arlington will protect the confidentiality of those records to the extent permitted by law. Your research records will not be released without your consent unless required by law or a court order. The data resulting from your participation may be made available to other researchers in the future for research purposes not detailed within this consent form. In these cases, the data will contain no identifying information that could associate you with it, or with your participation in any study.

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS:

Questions about this research or your rights as a research subject may be directed to Dr. Alex del Carmen at (817)272-0742. You may contact UT Arlington Institutional Review Board Chair at 817-272-1235 in the event of a research-related injury to the subject.

CONSENT:

Signatures:

As a representative of this study, I have explained the purpose, the procedures, the benefits, and the risks that are involved in this research study:

_____

Signature and printed name of principal investigator or person obtaining consent
Date

By signing below, you confirm that you have read or had this document read to you. You have been informed about this study's purpose, procedures, possible benefits and risks, and you have received a copy of this form. You have been given the opportunity to ask questions before you sign, and you have been told that you can ask other questions at any time

You voluntarily agree to participate in this study. By signing this form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and that you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits, to which you are otherwise entitled.

_____

SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER **DATE**

APPENDIX B

POLICE PURSUIT SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Police Vehicle Pursuit Survey

DIRECTIONS: Answer each question by checking the most appropriate response that concurs with your feelings or thoughts regarding the matter of pursuits regardless of legal, ethical, or institutional constraints that may apply. (In other words, forget about what policy and procedures say on the issue and answer directly how you feel about the matter). Most of the questions can be answered by utilizing a scale from one (1) being **AGREE STRONGLY** and five (5) being **DISAGREE STRONGLY.** Concerning the different pursuit scenarios, please review the following two definitions concerning risk levels.

LOW RISK is defined as light traffic conditions, good visibility, highway or interstate roadway, rural area and moderate speed conditions.

HIGH RISK is defined as moderate to heave traffic congestion, highway or city streets, urban and commercial area and moderate to high speed conditions.

1. I am familiar with my department's pursuit policy.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

2. I believe that police pursuits should be subject to administrative review.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

3. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under LOW risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

4. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a minor traffic violation under HIGH risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under LOW risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

5. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a stolen vehicle under HIGH risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

6. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under LOW risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

7. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a suspected DWI under HIGH risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

8. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under LOW risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

9. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a misdemeanor property crime under HIGH risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

10. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent person under LOW risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

11. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit for a violent felon who had committed murder of an innocent person under HIGH risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

12. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under LOW risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

13. It would be appropriate that an officer would engage in or approve a vehicle pursuit when the suspect had killed a fellow police officer under HIGH risk conditions.

☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
1	2	3	4	5
Agree Strongly				Disagree Strongly

14. I would consider my agency's pursuit policy to be RESTRICTIVE or LENIENT?

☐ Restrictive
☐ Lenient

15. Please select your gender.
    - ☐ Male
    - ☐ Female

16. Please select you age group.
    - ☐ 21-26
    - ☐ 27-32
    - ☐ 33-38
    - ☐ 39-44
    - ☐ 45-50
    - ☐ 51-56
    - ☐ Over 56

17. How many years have you been a commissioned law enforcement officer?
    - ☐ 0-2
    - ☐ 3-5
    - ☐ 6-10
    - ☐ 11-15
    - ☐ 16-20
    - ☐ Over 20 Years

18. What is the highest TCLEOSE certification you have obtained?
    - ☐ Basic
    - ☐ Intermediate
    - ☐ Advanced
    - ☐ Master

19. What is the highest level of formal education that you have completed?
    - ☐ High School Diploma or GED
    - ☐ Some Formal College
    - ☐ Associate Degree
    - ☐ Bachelor's Degree
    - ☐ Master's Degree
    - ☐ Doctorate Degree

REFERENCES

Alpert, G., Kenney, Dunham R. and Smith, W. (2000). *Police pursuits – What we know.* Washington, DC: Police Executive Research Forum.

Alpert, G. (1998). "A factorial analysis of police pursuit driving decisions: A research note." *Justice Quarterly, 15(2),* 347-359.

Alpert, G.P., Kenney, D., Smith, W., & Cosgrove, M. (1996). "*Police pursuit and the use of force."* A final report to the National Institute of Justice.

Alpert, G., & Madden, T. (1994). "Police pursuit driving: An empirical analysis of critical decisions." *American Journal of Police, 8(4),* 23-45.

Alpert, G., & Fridell, L. (1992). Police vehicles and firearms. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Archbold, C. (2005). "Managing the bottom line: Risk management in policing." *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management,* 28(1), 30-48.

Barlow, H. (2000). Criminal justice in America. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Basich, M. (2008). "Female police officers must walk a fine Line between fitting in and making their own way in law enforcement," *WomenPolice,* 42(3), 28-29.

Becknell, C., Mays G.L., & Giever D.M. (1999). "Policy restrictiveness and police pursuits." *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management,* 22(1), 93-110.

Britz, M. & D. Payne (1994). "Policy implications for law enforcement pursuit driving." *American Journal of Police,* 13(1), 113-142.

Burke, R., Richardsen, A. and Martinussen, M. (2006). "Gender differences in policing: Reasons for optimism?" *Policing, 29*(3), 513-523.

Cavender, G. & Bond-Maupin, L. (1993). "Fear and loathing on reality television: An analysis of "America's Most Wanted" and "Unsolved Mysteries." *Sociological Inquiry,* 63(3):305-317.

Charles, M. & Falcone, D. (1992). "Illinois police officers' opinions on police pursuit issues." *American Journal of Police,* 11(3).

Connor, G. (2003). "Wrong paradigm? Pursuit terms and tactics." *Law & Order,* 51(7), 64-66.

Cordner, G. & Sheehan, R. (1999). Police administration. Cincinnatie, OH: Anderson.

Crew, R.E. & Hart, R.A. (1999). "Assessing the value of police pursuit." *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management,* 22(1), 58-73.

Crew, R.E. (1995). “Probabilities and odds in hot pursuit: A benefit-cost analysis.” *Journal of Criminal Justice,* 23(5), 417-424.

Daniels, W.H. & Spratley, L. (2003). “Brainpower, not horsepower.” *Law & Order,* 51(7), 85-89.

Daniels, W.H. (2002). “Training for pursuit driving.” *Law & Order,* 50(11), 80-83.

Eisenberg, C. (1999). “Pursuit management.” *Law & Order,* 47(3), 73-78.

Falcone, D. (1994). “Police pursuits and officer attitudes: Myths and realities.” *American Journal of Police,* 13(1), 143-155.

Falcone, D., Wells E., & Charles, M. (1992). *Police pursuit in pursuit of policy: The pursuit issue, legal and literature review, and an empirical study* (Volume II). Washington, DC: AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

Fennessy, E. & Joscelyn, K. (1972). “A national study of hot pursuit.” *Denver Law Review,* 48:389-403.

Fennessy, E., Hamilton, T., Joscelyn, K., & Merritt, J. (1970). *A study of the problem of hot pursuit by the police.* Washington, DC: United States Department of Transportation.

Hallet, M. & Powell, D. (1995). “Backstage with cops: The dramaturgical reification of police subculture in American crime info-tainment.” *American Journal of Police,* 14(1), 101-129.

Hicks, W.L. (2006). “Police vehicular pursuits: A descriptive analysis of state agencies’ written policy.” *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management,* 29(1), 106-124.

Hill, J. (2002). “High-speed police pursuits: Dangers, dynamics, and risk reduction.” *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin,* July, 14-18.

Homant, R.J. & Kennedy, D. (1994a). “Citizen preferences and perceptions concerning police pursuit policies.” *Journal of Criminal Justice,* 22(5), 425-435.

Homant, R.J. & Kennedy, D. (1994b). “The effect of high-speed pursuit policies on officers’ tendency to pursue.” *American Journal of Police,* 13(1), 91-111.

Homant, R.J., Kennedy, D., & Howton, J. (1993). Sensation seeking as a factor in police pursuit. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*. 20:293-305.

Hunt, J. & Manning, P. (1991). “The social context of police lying,” Symbolic interaction 14:51-70.

Kasper, J. (2006). “Proven steps for recruiting women.” *Law and Order, 54*(12), 63-67.

Kenney, D.J. & Alpert, G.P. (1997). “A national survey of pursuits and the use of police force: Data from law enforcement agencies.” *Journal of Criminal Justice,* 25(4), 315-323.

Lesh, D. (2003). “Reducing civil liability related to high-speed pursuits.” *Sheriff,* 55(2), 29- 30, 62.

Martin, J. (2001). “Pursuit termination.” *Law & Order,* 49(7), 30-33.

Martin, J. (2001). “3QFC pursuit decision making model.” *Law & Order,* 49(9), 16-17.

Nugent, H., Edwards, E., McEwen, T., & Mayo, L. (1990). *Restictive policies for high-speed police pursuits.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.

Payne, D.M. & Corley, C. (1994). “Police pursuits: Correlates of the failure to report.” *American Journal of Police,* 8(4), 47- 71.

Ross, D.L. (2000). “Emerging trends in police failure to train liability.” *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management,* 23(2), 169-193.

Senese, J.D. & Lucadamo, T. (1996). “To pursue or not to pursue? That is the question: Modeling police vehicular pursuits.” *American Journal of Police,* 15(4), 55-77.

Sharp, A. (2003). “The dynamics of vehicle chases in real life.” *Law & Order,* 51(7), 68-74.

Smith, M.R. (1999). “Police pursuits: The legal and policy implications of County of Sacremento V. Lewis.” *Police Quarterly,* 2(3), 261-282.

Surette, R. (1992). *Media, crime & criminal justice: Images and realities.* Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.

Witczak, T. (2003). “Proactive pursuit policies.” *Law & Order*. 51(7), 131-134.

Yates, T. (2004). “Law enforcement pursuits: Managing the risks.” *Women Policing,”* 38(4), 10-11.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Christopher Cook currently holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Criminal Justice Administration from Columbia College. He is also a law enforcement practitioner and is currently a sergeant with the Arlington, Texas Police Department assigned to the Traffic Division. He holds a Master Peace Officer Certification from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Standards and Education and serves as a police instructor. He intends to utilize his Master of Arts in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Texas at Arlington to complement his law enforcement career and begin teaching undergraduate course work.