

SEARCHING FOR RECRUITS: UNDERSTANDING THE NEW GENERATION OF  
POTENTIAL RURAL POLICE APPLICANTS

A Thesis Submitted to the College of  
Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of Master of Arts  
In the Department of Psychology  
University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon

By

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## ABSTRACT

Person-organization (P-O) fit theory is commonly used to assess the ability of an organization to match the work motives of an individual once they have started working for the organization (Chapman et al., 2005). As police services generally struggle to recruit highly educated applicants, this study used P-O fit theory to examine *potential* organizational recruits to better understand how rural police organizations can appeal to the work motives of the current generation of post-secondary educated applicants (Bruns, 2010; Hutchins, 2015). This study also answers the call for more research on rural police in Canada (Lithopoulos & Ruddell, 2013). Following P-O fit research on work motives by Ritz and Waldner (2011), the current study examined potentially important factors to consider in rural policing to determine areas that rural police organizations may wish to address when appealing to potential applicants. This study's purpose, therefore, was to explore the work motives of university students and the ability of rural police organizations to meet those work-place goals. Using regression analyses, this study revealed that participants who preferred living in a rural setting, had a lower academic average, were older, had considered applying to the military, and had a higher P-O fit score, were more likely to be attracted to a rural police organization as a potential employer. Recommendations are offered to rural police organizations for consideration when appealing to potential recruits and to researchers when applying person-organization fit (P-O Fit) theory to potential organizational applicants.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, thank you to the Centre for Forensic Behaviour Science and Justice Studies who provided me with the financial support and employment opportunities that helped to shape this research. A special thanks to Dr. Lisa Jewell, who helped advance my research and program evaluation skills during my work with the centre.

Secondly, thank you to my research committee of Dr. Tammy Marche and Dr. Mark Olver, as well as to my external examiner, Dr. Phillip Woods. Your advice and guidance on this project was invaluable.

Thirdly, thank you to my research supervisor, Dr. Stephen Wormith. While I was one among many of your students, you allowed me to focus my research in an area of personal interest and you provided guidance on the research methods, and language to use throughout.

Lastly, to my life research partner, Kaitlyn Watson, thank you for providing insight on how to approach this project in a way that ensured I questioned my own inherent beliefs as a researcher.

## DEDICATION

This thesis dedication is twofold. Firstly, it is dedicated to my wonderful life - partner, Kaitlyn Watson. Your support and patience with this process has been tremendous. Your insight on the research process has shaped my research in ways that no graduate course could have done, and for that I thank you.

Secondly, it is dedicated to the men and women of rural police organizations in Canada. You routinely risk your lives, and put your own, and your partners' lives, in difficult situations. My hope is that this research may assist your leaders, as well as researchers who may interact with those leaders, to consider person-organization fit research when evaluating their human resources practices.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **SEARCHING FOR RECRUITS: UNDERSTANDING THE NEW GENERATION OF POTENTIAL RURAL POLICE APPLICANTS**

Police services in North America struggle with recruiting and retaining qualified candidates (Wilson, Dalton, Scheer, & Grammich, 2010). Examining the supply and demand model for police officers in the current decade, Wilson (2012) stated that there is a need to better understand how police can adapt to the current generation's personal attributes and their preferences for employer characteristics. The current generation for Wilson (2012) was those individuals who were just old enough to enter the full time workforce.

A recent survey of rural police officers and executives in a rural Canadian context revealed differences between the views of executives, who ultimately shape the police organization, and those on the front line, who police organizations need to retain (Jewell, Watson, Moore, Nilson, & Wormith, 2014). An article on the website of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police regarding strategies for retaining good employees in this primarily rural policing organization similarly highlighted the changing generational preferences. This article also highlighted the need for understanding how to retain police officers, and the need to examine the police organization's workforce profile such as knowing your workforce's education level, or changes in family status, and employees' desires (Scheer, 2014). Improving our understanding of the needs of the current generation of potential rural police service applicants is therefore important for police organizations to consider in their recruitment strategies.

## **1.1 Policing in Canada**

Lithopoulos and Ruddell (2013), in their research on aboriginal policing in rural Canada, highlighted the lack of research on rural policing and therefore the importance of contributing to research in this area. Specifically, these authors argued for establishing an evidence-based best-practice database for rural policing in Canada, as those best practices established for urban contexts, the authors argued, do not transfer well to rural contexts. Ruddell and Lithopoulos (2016) pointed out that rural contexts differ on important characteristics, such as the size of the police agency, and the form of crime with which the officers have to deal.

A Statistics Canada report stated that of the 37, 654 officers surveyed in the 2014 Police Administration Survey, 29% had a university undergraduate degree at the time they were hired, and 1.6% had university graduate degrees at the time they were hired (Hutchins, 2015). While 51% had completed community college, CEGEP or other certificate or diploma program at the time they were hired, importantly, only 19% of officers had only a secondary school (high school) diploma. It is important to note that generational differences existed in terms of educational achievement among Canadian police in this report, as a higher percentage of experienced police officers (19%) reported that a secondary school diploma was their highest educational achievement compared to only 12% of recently graduated officers. While a degree is not required to join police services in Canada, there is a trend towards increasing the educational standards among police recruits (Bruns, 2010; Hutchins, 2015).

## 1.2 Educational Requirements for Police

In the United States, only one-percent of police agencies currently require recruits to have a university or college education (Bruns, 2010). While few police services require education beyond high school, statistics indicate that the majority of police officers hired in Canada do have an education beyond high school (Hutchins, 2015). While articles such as one by Paoline, Terrill, and Rossler (2015) concluded that having a college education was a benefit to police officers, there is a continuing debate in the law enforcement field on the need for a university degree among applicants (White & Escobar, 2008). White and Escobar (2008) detailed a brief history of educating police officers in the United States, which included the 1968 *President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice*. This commission provided additional funding for officers to obtain university educations, and led to the 1973 *National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals*. This commission proposed a 10-year plan to have all police departments in the United States require a baccalaureate degree for entry to employment.

Despite these efforts, currently only a small number of police services require a degree for entry (Bruns, 2010). Paoline et al. (2015) however argued that there was a lack of scientific evidence regarding the value of college education for police officers because there was no requirement for college education among police officers. Paoline et al. (2015) used a multivariate model to compare officers with no college, some college, and those with baccalaureate degrees (or higher) in terms of their job satisfaction, views of organizational leaders, and their roles within their organization at eight police departments in the United States. Similarly, their study examined officers' university



major for differences in their responses. The researchers found that those with four-year degrees were less satisfied with their jobs and with top management than those with little or no college.

In light of the recent events associated with police related deaths in the United States of America, a doctoral dissertation examined the perception of post-secondary qualifications and its perceived influence on the skills officers need to possess to be effective police officers (Middlebrooks, 2015). Those interviewed believed that officers who had a post-secondary education had a better foundation on which to build their success within the police organization. This belief was also shared among those officers who did not have any post-secondary education. Therefore, as the Canadian police are hiring university educated recruits at a high rate (29% in 2014; Hutchins, 2015), it would serve the police services well to better consider what university graduates value in their organization in order to increase their retention and recruitment.

Examining the educational training of police officers in the United States of America, Paoline et al. (2015) found that the majority of officers in their sample had criminal justice degrees (51%) while the next highest percentage of officers had social science degrees (18%), including psychology. No information was available on the educational training of Canadian police. As criminal justice degree programs are few in Saskatchewan, recruiting applicants with social science backgrounds would likely be sought by rural police services in that province, as a study by Chow (2012) found that students in a Saskatchewan university social science degree program had positive views of the police. Examining a Saskatchewan university sample would allow for a better understanding of the factors that appeal to potential rural police applicants when

considering rural policing as a career. Chapman, Uggerslev, Carroll, Piasentin, and Jones (2005) concluded that a person's positive view of a particular organization would increase their interest in pursuing a job within that organization and improve their fit within the organization. Based on this research, if students have a positive view of a police organization, it could indicate that they also are in favour of considering that police organization as a potential career employer.

### **1.3 Person-Organizational (P-O) Fit Theory for Policing**

In a 2001 special issue of *Applied Psychology: An International Review* about person-organization (P-O) fit theory, Annelies Van Vianen observed that very little research existed on the characteristics that need to be in place for persons and environments to establish a fit between those persons and environments. In other words, little is known about areas in which people desire a "fit" with a given organization, as the current literature on P-O fit does not examine perceived fit with potential applicants. In most cases, the literature instead uses current employees, or current applicants, to examine their fit with the organization to predict job satisfaction (Chapman et al., 2005).

Schreurs and Syed (2011), in their article on military recruitment, stated that current studies do not examine the similarity between applicant work values and those of the military and they argued that this is needed in order to improve recruitment strategies. This is important as the military is among the top competitors with police services for similarly qualified applicants (Wilson et al., 2010). Swider, Zimmerman, and Barrick (2015) followed job applicants before and during the recruitment process for four accounting firms. The researchers concluded that the initial perception of P-O fit became stronger over the recruitment process. This finding suggests a need to identify how

perceptions are formed about rural police organizations, and how they could do better recruiting university educated individuals.

Person-organization (P-O) fit theory was defined in Kristof (1996) as the compatibility between people and organizations. This compatibility occurred when the needs of the person were met by the organization. This definition was operationalized in four ways. The operationalization most frequently used in the literature, according to Kristof (1996), was the congruency between the values of an individual and a given organization. The second operationalization was the congruency between the goals of an individual and an organization, which was guided by the attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework of Schneider (1987). The third operationalization of fit was based on a needs-supply model that defined fit as a match between the preferences or needs and organizational structures. Fit was achieved if the working environment met a person's needs. The last operationalization of fit examined the personality of an individual and the organizational climate (e.g., communication patterns, reward systems). Note that three of the four compatibility criteria required that a person be part of the organization in order to judge their compatibility.

### **1.3.1 The Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) Framework**

The operationalization of P-O fit theory using Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework allows for a person outside an organization to make a judgment about his/her compatibility at the pre-employment, attraction, stage.

The ASA framework is based on the premise that individuals are attracted to, and selected into, organizations that are similar to their own goals; organizations that, over time, become homogenous in their values, as they attract like-minded individuals. As

person-organization fit during the recruitment process explores only the attraction part of the attraction-selection-attrition framework, the attraction element of Schneider's (1987) framework will be described in more depth.

Regarding attraction, Schneider (1987) stated that a consistent finding in the field of vocational psychology is that individuals are attracted to careers as a function of their own interests and personality. Similarly, Penny, David, and Witt (2011) arrived at this same conclusion in their study regarding career attraction. Schneider (1987) built the ASA theory on three propositions of which the second is particularly relevant when examining organizational recruitment. Proposition two states that "People are not randomly assigned to real organizations; people select themselves into and out of real organizations" (p.440). Highly influential in the 1980's, Schneider's (1987) ASA theory was a contradiction to the situational perspective of industrial-organization psychology which posited that people are shaped once in an organization. The ASA theory was based on an interactionist perspective where people form and interact with the organization. In other words, people were not solely shaped by the organization; they made the organization.

Schnieder (1987) proposed that it was the outcome of the ASA cycle that ultimately determined why organizations were different from one another. He proposed that different organizations attracted, selected, and retained different types of people. Understanding the people who are attracted or not attracted to police organizations is important for understanding the culture of a police organization, as based on the ASA theory, police organizations are shaped by the individuals that ultimately become part of the organization. Understanding how employees shape the culture of an organization was

made clearer by Schneider's (1987) third proposition that stated that "People and human settings are inseparable; people *are* the setting because it is they who make the setting" (p.440). In describing the attraction section of his theory, Schneider pointed to the work of Tom (1971) that posited that people were attracted to organizations that shared their characteristics. In more contemporary studies of P-O fit that use the ASA framework to describe their findings, Kristof (1996) and Chapman et al. (2005) outlined a variety of factors that attracted potential applicants to organizations in their meta-analyses of the correlates of recruiting outcomes. However, these two studies also discussed limitations in the measurement of P-O fit theory. One such limitation, Chapman et al. (2005) noted, was that the research to date did not allow for job pursuit intentions to be examined thoroughly, whereby studies are not being done that explore the intention of potential applicants to later apply to a given employer. They suggested using potential applicants in order to study early recruitment stages to better understand job pursuit intentions.

Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) framework proposed that as organizations grew they narrowed the field of candidates that were selected into the organization. It was assumed that the goals that the founders of an organization established directed the daily functioning within an organization and that if new individuals did not follow these goals they would leave (i.e., attrition). While organizations need individuals with a variety of competencies (for example, the YMCA needs accountants, social workers, and personal trainers), the individuals that comprised these organizations would share similar personal attributes. This restriction in range, Schneider (1987) cautioned, could be problematic when an organization was required to change. As people shaped an organization, when structures within an organization needed

to change in order to improve, Schneider (1987) posited that no major change would occur until a shift in the types of people hired into the organization changed.

#### **1.4 P-O Fit and its Empirical Evidence in the Workplace**

Chapman et al. (2005) stated that P-O fit had a substantial role in job pursuit intentions relative to most of the other predictors in their meta-analysis, which examined 71 studies and 667 coefficients. Chapman et al. (2005) used the Cable and Judge (1996) study as one of their P-O fit studies. Cable and Judge (1996) examined the values of new employees and their perceptions of the values of their new employer. P-O fit with the organization was predicted by congruence between their own values and those of the organization, measured by the adapted 40-item Organizational Culture Profile (OCP), which asked applicants to sort 40 values into nine categories ranging from “most characteristic” to “least characteristic,” as they related themselves to the perceived culture of the employer. The Cable and Judge (1996) study also had participants rate each of the 40 items, after being employed for six months at the company, in terms of how characteristic those items were of the organization. The perceived person-organization fit, however, was only measured by single-item questions asking participants to rate their perceived fit. For a study examining one specific organization, and real job applicants, as was the case for the Cable and Judge (1996) study, their methods would be appropriate. However, Ritz and Waldner (2011) used potential job applicants as their sample and the public service, generally, as the employer to be examined. Therefore, its’ methods were more appropriate for examining potential recruits to rural police organizations in general. This study was more in line with the operationalization described by Kristof (1996) that

used the ASA model. Similarly, Ritz and Waldner (2011) used potential applicants, while other studies, described by Kristof (1996), that used the ASA operationalization, did not.

#### **1.4.1. P-O Fit Framework Applied**

Ritz and Waldner (2011) used 11 work motive statements to examine what might motivate potential applicants to select a given employer. These 11 work motive statements were used in other studies in Germany to examine work motives (Lieber, 1995; Malmendier, 2006; Süß, 1996; Teufer, 1999; Wiltinger, 1997). Ritz and Waldner (2011) set out to use P-O fit to establish a theoretical framework of employer attractiveness for the field of public administration. The Ritz and Waldner (2011) study also used public service motivation (PSM) to examine their framework. However, while policing is a public service, the operationalization of PSM was related to establishing public policy rather than a public service, like policing. Most importantly, Ritz and Waldner (2011) used Schneider's (1987) ASA framework to understand the motivations of people attracted to public service, as it would be the behaviour of these people that would drive public policy. According to Ritz and Waldner (2011), the knowledge gained from understanding the characteristics of potential applicants, would then inform human resources marketing methods. The theoretical model proposed by Ritz and Waldner (2011) in Figure 1.1 is represented graphically, with the concept of PSM removed, as it was not directly relevant to policing.

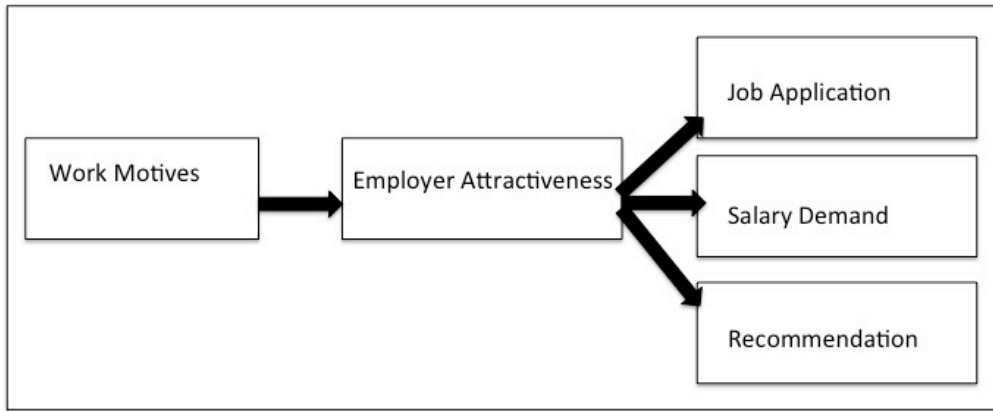


Figure 1.1. Theoretical framework of employee attractiveness (Ritz & Waldner, 2011)

Using work motives to examine employer attractiveness was in line with the ASA framework. Applicants look for organizations that suit them and organizations select people that fit (Schneider, 1987). Therefore, people apply to organizations that fit them, as they are more likely to get a job (Ajzen, 1991). Ritz and Waldner (2011) used seminal research on the Theory of Planned Behavior to explain that potential applicants' intentions to consider employment in a given area is an adequate projection of future employment behavior (i.e., applying to a given organization; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977).

Ritz and Waldner (2011) conducted a principal components analysis (PCA) on the work motives scale and found that a four-component structure explained the items on the scale. These four components included *safe future*, with statements related to job security and high salary, *development opportunities*, with statements related to challenging work, *work-life balance*, with statements that related to the location of the employer and an ability to achieve a work-life balance, and *corporate social responsibility* with one item related to this topic. The PCA was performed to identify an individual's motivational factors when looking for employment. To examine how work motives and other



individual characteristics predicted employer attractiveness, Ritz and Waldner (2011) performed a hierarchical stepwise regression. Control variables (sex, relevant work experience, and current grade) were entered in the first step, while work motive factors identified in their PCA were entered in the second step. Ritz and Waldner (2011) found that the control variables were poor predictors of employer attractiveness as they only explained 2.5% of the total variance in the employer attractiveness of public administration. When work motives were added to the regression, the change in  $R^2$  was significant at the .05 level. With the addition of the second step, 12.4% of the total variance was explained. Importantly, the component “safe future” had the most positive impact on employer attractiveness, while the work-life balance component had a negative impact, indicating that the public service was perceived to be more of a lifestyle than a job, as it was perceived to not allow for work-life balance. Ritz and Waldner (2011) then included their public service motives scale to the regression. The explained variance increased to 32% with this addition. The increase in  $R^2$  was significant at the .01 level.

To examine employer attractiveness and its relationship to behavior, Ritz and Waldner (2011) performed regression analyses. These regressions examined the impact of employer attractiveness on salary demand, application intention, and recommendation inclination. Salary demand had been used by other studies cited in Ritz and Waldner (2011), and in line with those studies, they found that generally those who perceived public administration to be more attractive as a career demanded a lower starting salary. As well, Ritz and Walder (2011) used the recommendation of a public administration employer to determine the attractiveness of public administration. While no other studies cited in Ritz and Waldner (2011) had used this measure before to determine employer

attractiveness, other studies had examined company reputation related to recommending the purchase of its stock (Caruana, Cohen, & Krentler, 2006). Ritz and Waldner (2011) did find a strong relationship in their regression between those who found that public administration was an attractive employer and their willingness to recommend public administration as an employer to others. Ritz and Waldner (2011) examined a third behavior, application intention, in their series of regressions. Specifically, this was measured by two questions related to future intentions to apply to positions within the public service (Ritz & Waldner, 2011). Again, drawing on research on the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977), Ritz and Waldner (2011) designed two questions to assess intentions to apply to an employer. The researchers found a significant relationship between employer attractiveness and intentions to apply. It should be noted that in their series of regressions, they considered employer attractiveness, experience, sex and grades to examine an individual's intentions for applying, salary, and recommending the public administration as an employer. It was, however, only employer attractiveness that significantly predicted behavioral intentions in all three regressions.

While Ritz and Waldner (2011) established P-O fit by running regressions to determine if the work motives and personal characteristics of individuals interested in a career in the public service corresponded, while other studies have used a pre-post design. Cable and Judge (1996), for example, asked job applicants to rate 40 values statements for themselves and for the organization they were seeking to join after having a job interview with someone from the organization. The researchers then calculated a congruence score by correlating the applicants' value statements for themselves and for their organizations. A multiple regression was then performed to examine the predictors

of P-O fit perceptions. The congruence score was a significant predictor of P-O fit perception. While a regression model was used by Ritz and Waldner (2011) to establish fit, in line with the method used by Cable and Judge (1996), it may also be important to examine the match between an individual's personal work motives and the perceived ability of an organization to meet those work place goals.

### **1.5 P-O Fit Influences**

The perceived fit of an organization without direct personal experience could be informed by a variety of factors. These range from word of mouth, to the media, and to websites (Chapman et al., 2005; Schreurs & Syed, 2011; Wilson et al., 2010). Describing the impact of the media for military recruiting, Schreurs and Syed (2011) stated that few scholars examined the impact of media within the context of recruiting. However, they pointed to an article by Van Hove and Lievens (2005), which was the first major study that examined the impact of negative publicity on an organization's attractiveness. This study found that negative publicity did impact an organization's attractiveness, and while positive recruitment materials and positive word of mouth could mitigate this negative impact, the impact of the negative publicity was not completely overcome. As such, understanding the source of the information that informs potential applicants' perceptions could be important for police recruiters to correct negative messages.

#### **1.5.1 Generational Differences**

The work of Wilson et al. (2010) and McCafferty (2003) described generational preferences among newer potential applicants. Specifically, younger generations who were just entering the workforce preferred more collaborative approaches for working, as well as a better work-life balance than previous generations. The current generation of

applicants also did not like the militaristic nature of the police organization or the shift work. Within the current generation of applicants, those with higher education (Wilson, 2010), as well as women (Cordner & Cordner, 2011) and those of ethnic minority groups (White & Escobar, 2008), also did not view policing as a valued potential employer. The reasons why these individuals may not consider policing as a potential career option is important to explore in order to ensure these organizations can recruit and retain their workforces.

### **1.5.2 Educational Differences**

Wilson (2010) described the current situation of increasing costs associated with obtaining a degree, as well as the possibility for employment in a wider variety of fields as dis-incentivizing applicants with high levels of education from pursuing a career in policing. Ritz and Waldner (2011) included a question in their study on the grade average of participants as they expected that those who were higher achievers would be more extrinsically motivated and therefore less apt to consider applying to the public service sector, where rewards for high achieving are not perceived to be as good as those in the private sector. As policing is a public service employer, the relationship between grade average and participants' willingness to consider rural policing as a career should also be explored.

### **1.5.3 Gender**

Cordner and Cornder (2011) surveyed female officers and police chiefs when examining women's level of employment in policing in the United States. The researchers found that women in policing perceived that the recruitment process favored

male applicants, and they described a male-dominated culture within policing as the main obstacle to the recruitment and retention of women officers.

#### **1.5.4 Ethnicity**

White and Escobar (2008) also pointed to the importance of recruiting women and minorities for police services, as both categories are recruited using proactive recruiting strategies. White and Escobar (2008), as well as Rowe and Ross (2015), pointed to poor relationships between the police and minorities in communities, as well as publicized incidents of general police misconduct as potential reasons for why proactive recruitment strategies are used with some potential police applicant groups.

#### **1.5.5 Quality of Life**

Jewell et al. (2014) included a quality of life factor in their police needs model, which highlighted community aspects that would improve the quality of life for officers and their families. For the Jewell et al. (2014) study, quality of life was described as “The features of a community that make it attractive for RCMP members and their families to live in” (p.104). Generational differences were also found within the quality of life factor in the Jewell et al. (2014) study. Specifically, they found that officers with one to fourteen years of experience placed significantly more weight on quality of life than those with more 29 years of experience. Therefore, there was a generational difference among the rural police officers in the Jewell et al. (2014) study on the importance of quality of life indicators for determining the placement of police stations in a given location.

The quality of life factor is important for future applicants as the police services for most rural provinces in Canada require police officers to move when necessary, within the province or to another Canadian province (Royal Canadian Mounted Police,

2015). In Wilson et al.'s (2010) work on generational preferences, the need for a good work-life balance was important for the current generation of potential applicants. Therefore, the ability to participate in a community after work is likely considered to be important. Schreurs and Syed (2011), examining the military recruitment best-practices literature, stated that the military also requires personnel to relocate to remote areas, or areas where there are limited recreational opportunities, and areas with a different climate and environment than the applicant is familiar with. Schreurs and Syed (2011) went so far as to recommend that the military consider recruiting "within the area in which the job is located or within areas that are similar to the job's location in terms of city size, recreational opportunities, climate, and so forth" (p.41). This has potential implications for police recruiting and should therefore be explored further.

As the military is one of the main competitors for police applicants, the participants' experience with the military, or other law enforcement roles is important to consider due to its potential impact on police employer attractiveness (Wilson et al., 2010). Experience with the potential employer being studied was asked of participants in the Ritz and Waldner (2011) study, which pertained to the public service. The researchers hypothesized that an individual with more experience within the public service would be more attracted to the public service for future employment. However, they found that it did not have an impact.

Howes and Goodman-Delahunty (2014) examined the free-response answers of Australian Police officers about their reasons for leaving policing careers. Over two-thirds of the current police officers (70%) responded that they had considered a career change. Three themes emerged among those officers. Specifically, *issues with policing*;

*need for change*; and *practical considerations*. The first theme, *issues with policing*, was characterized by a dissatisfaction with internal politics. The *need for change* theme was characterized by officers stating that they needed a new challenge or needed a change in lifestyle. The third theme, *practical considerations*, was characterized by officers experiencing a “poor work-life balance, due to weekend work and shift work (p.9)”. Many officers in this category spoke of the negative impact a policing career had on their family life, specifically “participants reported that it was difficult to manage the needs of their children with the demands of the job, or that stress associated with the job had impacted on the quality of the relationship with a significant other” (p.9). Thus, for current police officers, their quality of life was an important factor considered by those who were looking to leave the police organization. This is similar to the component of *work-life balance* that related to the location of the employer and the life balance able to be achieved described above in the study by Ritz and Waldner (2011). Work-life balance was also highlighted in a study by Helen (2015) because it related to a major area of concern for women officers. These themes spoke to the potential for future applicants to consider the quality of life they would experience in the police, and the examination of quality of life in this study will help clarify the importance of quality of life for potential rural police applicants.

### **1.5.6 Community Differences**

The study by Jewell et al. (2014) included a factor in their police needs model on community assets. This was an extensive research project that was conducted for F Division (Saskatchewan) of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, which provides provincial policing service for most of the province, particularly northern and rural areas.

The project's goal was to develop an evidence-based method for determining where police detachments should be located in the province. In order to accomplish this task, the researchers completed an extensive literature review, in-person interviews and site visits, as well as an on-line survey. The research process led to four major determinants being important for locating police detachments within the rural context of Saskatchewan, these factors were, *need for policing*, *coverage*, *quality of life*, and *community assets*.

Rural police officers have been described as generalists, at times performing work similar to social workers, animal control, and personal counselors (Payne, Berg, & Sun, 2005). During their police stakeholder consultations, Jewell et al. (2014) found that the presence of community assets such as a fire service, ambulance service, nearby hospital, and a doctor's office, aided police in carrying out their jobs.

As stated in the policing recruiting literature, McCafferty (2003) described the newer generation of police as more team-oriented, interdependent, and cooperative, which suggests that when compared to older generations they would place a higher value on the availability of community assets. The perception that rural police organization stations are built in locations with other community assets may influence the ratings of these organizations as potential employers, thus influencing the perceived P-O fit of potential applicants for joining a rural police organization.

### **1.5.7 Rural Separation**

Another factor described by Jewell et al. (2014) was *coverage*, which was concerned with the large distances rural police have to travel to respond to calls. Wilson et al. (2010) stated that there was a generational preference against long shifts. If participants in the current study are aware of the great distances needed to be travelled in



rural settings, that may influence their P-O fit with rural policing organizations. As the literature is not well established in this area, however, the generational preference against long periods of travel would likely not be as influential as the preference for community assets and an improved quality of life.

Huey and Ricciardelli (2015) examined the role of rural police in an Atlantic Canadian province and learned that rural police officers perceived a difference in the way they policed compared to their colleagues working in more urban areas. The researchers' interpretation of one of the interviewed officer's comments illustrated this perception: "He felt that policing in other more populous provinces was more law enforcement oriented, whereas police officers in his province were required to not only be generalists, but to hold a wider variety of roles simultaneously in response to community expectations borne of the fact the police are often the only on-call service providers within a fairly large geographical territory. Indeed even legally sanctioned referral services or hospitals with emergency rooms were sparse in location and even more so in availability (Huey & Ricciardelli, 2015, p.199)".

### **1.5.8 Dangers of Policing**

The *need for policing* was also a factor identified in the Jewell et al. (2014) research. This factor related to the need for a police presence in a location due to the incidence of crime (Jewell et al., 2014). While potential applicants may not like the fact that coverage, community assets, and quality of life are poor in a community, the presence of crime is not a factor that police recruiters can directly impact.

## 1.6 University Sample

Even in 1968, when explaining the origins of P-O fit theory, Behling et al. (1968) described the demand for college graduates, noting that the “demand for qualified individuals far exceeds the supply, especially among highly educated persons (p.13)”. Wilson et al. (2010), in a comprehensive review of police recruitment and retention in the new millennium, described law enforcement’s increasing education standards as being in line with other companies.

As mentioned above, White and Escobar (2008) opened the debate in the law enforcement field for the requirement that recruits have a degree. Hilal, Densley and Jones (2015) examined the only state in the United States, Minnesota, that required that its recruits have a post-secondary education prior to applying. The senior officials interviewed for this study highlighted the importance, particularly among the new generation that had specific workplace preferences, of a post-secondary education in order to determine the quality of applicants. Those with more post-secondary education were believed to be higher quality applicants for the larger local police services in the state. Again, more than 80% of Canadian police officers had some post-secondary training at the time they were hired (Hutchins, 2015). Hutchins (2015), however, found that only the Quebec Provincial Police, the Sûreté du Québec, required an education level beyond a secondary school diploma or equivalent (i.e., three-year college diploma in police foundations; Hutchins, 2015).

Despite having no requirement beyond secondary school for most services in Canada, the police seem to be moving towards a professionalized, highly educated work

force. As such, understanding the needs of university educated potential applicants is important for Canadian police organizations.

### **1.7 The Current Study**

This study explored the work motives of university students and the ability of rural police organizations to meet those work-place goals. As stated above, Wilson (2012) identified a need to better understand how police can adapt to both the personal attributes of the current generation, as well as this generation's preferences for employer characteristics. Using the Person-Organization (P-O) fit theory, operationalized by the attraction-selection-attrition framework, this study provides a better understanding of areas that may need to be addressed by rural police organizations in order to attract applicants. While findings from this study may assist rural police human resources professionals, it also adds to the literature on rural policing generally as currently there is a lack of police research related to rural environments. Therefore, it is hoped that this study will make an important contribution to the current body of literature, while also outlining the needs of potential employees, a group that tends to be overlooked in the P-O fit literature (Chapman et al., 2005; Lithopoulos & Ruddell, 2013).

It was also important to focus on university students in this study. The officers hired by Canadian police organizations, while it is not required, generally have a post-secondary education (Hutchins, 2015). The competition for applicants with post-secondary education is strong, however, as other organizations, such as the military, are also looking for recruits with this level of education (Wilson et al., 2010).

The analyses in this study evaluated the work motives of potential recruits using Ritz and Waldner's (2011) work motives measure, and compares an individual's work

motives to the perceived ability of a rural police organization to meet those work motives, thus allowing for a calculation of P-O fit. This is an innovative way to examine work motives, as it is the first to use an individual's perception of a workplace to inform an organization's ability to meet an individual's work place goals. This fills an important gap that was identified by Chapman et al. (2005) in the P-O fit literature, as it uses a sample of potential recruits (university undergraduate students). Similarly, this study examines the demographic characteristics of these potential recruits, as well as the underlying factors that may impact their perceptions of rural policing organizations as an attractive or unattractive place to work (e.g., sex, ethnicity, previous law enforcement experience, media influence, grade average). This study may be used to inform areas where rural police human resources professionals may focus in order to recruit the next generation of educated individuals.

The study's aims were fourfold. Firstly, it was conducted to contribute to the limited research pertaining to rural, Canadian policing (Lithopoulos & Ruddell, 2013). Secondly, it was conducted to contribute to person-organization (P-O) fit theory by establishing a framework to allow for *potential* organizational applicants to be considered. Thirdly, it was conducted to validate the work motives scale reported by Ritz and Waldner (2011). This scale allowed for *potential* organizational applicants to make a judgement about an organization, and therefore it was important to ensure that it was a valid measure. Lastly, a rural police organization was used as the organization under examination because such organizations struggle with recruiting and retaining qualified individuals (Bruns, 2010; Hutchins, 2015; Wilson et al., 2010). Therefore, this final aim was to understand the characteristics of individuals that would attract or dissuade them

from considering rural policing as a career option. Based on these four general aims of the study and the preceding literature review, a number of hypotheses were generated.

**Hypothesis one.** Participants who are attracted to policing as a career would have a smaller difference between their general work motives and those they believed a rural police organization could provide. This finding would lend support to the Person-organization (P-O) fit theory.

**Hypothesis two.** Participants who have a better P-O fit with rural policing would be more likely to consider applying than participants who have a poor P-O fit.

**Hypothesis three.** Participants who have a better P-O fit with rural policing would be more likely to recommend rural policing to others.

**Hypothesis four.** Participants who have a better P-O fit with rural policing would demand a lower salary.

**Hypothesis five.** Those who find rural policing as a more attractive potential employer would be more likely to consider applying, to recommend, and to accept a lower salary for this type of employment.

**Hypothesis six.** Those who prefer living in rural areas would rate rural policing as a more attractive career option than those who would prefer an urban area.

**Hypothesis seven.** Those with practical or professional experience in law enforcement would rate policing as a more attractive career option than those with no previous experience.

**Hypothesis eight.** Those who have considered the military as a career option would rate policing as a more attractive career option than those who had not considered the military as a career option.

**Hypothesis nine.** Younger potential applicants would place more weight on quality of life factors. This is similar to the factors used by younger police officers in determining the locations for police detachments in the Jewell et al. (2014) study. Specifically, potential recruits would place more weight on the quality of life factor, and less weight on the need for policing factor. Quality of life and community assets, as found in the Jewell et al. (2014) study, would be stronger deterrents from a career in policing than need for policing and coverage factors in rural and remote areas.

**Hypothesis ten.** Participants with higher academic averages would be less likely to agree that policing is a career for them than participants with lower academic averages.

**Hypothesis eleven.** Female participants would be less likely to agree that policing is a career for them than male participants.

**Hypothesis twelve.** Those who identify as part of a minority ethnic group would be less likely to agree that policing is a career for them than participants who identified as being white.

**Hypothesis thirteen.** The following themes would emerge as reasons that participants would not consider policing as a potential career: the perceived militaristic nature of rural police organization, shift work, difficult work-life balance (Wilson et al., 2010), and negative media attention (Chapman et al., 2005).

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **2.1 Participants**

There were 317 respondent entries to the survey, however after data cleaning, the sample was reduced to 196 unique participants, who were comprised of undergraduate students at a Western Canadian university (see section 2.3 for more details on the data cleaning process and the elimination of duplicate responses). By comparison, the study by Ritz and Waldner (2011), which helped to guide the current study, used a sample of 122 students.

The average age of the participants in this study's sample was 19.99 years (SD= 2.31), most participants listed "white" (66.3%) for their ethnicity, the mean academic average of participants was 3.34 (i.e., an average of between 70-90%; SD= 0.979). In the study there were 53 male, 141 female, 1 other, and 1 transgendered participant. Almost half of participants were in their first year of study (43.4%), while an additional 29.6% were in their second year of study. The most common programs of study were psychology (28.6%), physiology and pharmacology (13.3%), and sociology (5.6%). Examining the cases where participants considered becoming a police officer at some point in their life, 79 (40.3%) participants had considered becoming a police officer at some point in their life, while 117 (59.7%) had not considered the police as a potential career at any point in their lives so far.

#### **2.2 Instruments**

##### **2.2.1 Work Motives**

This instrument, from Ritz and Waldner (2011), examined 11 work motives that

applicants considered when deciding upon a potential employer. Ritz and Walder (2011) adopted this scale as researchers in Germany had used it to conduct similar research. All of the other studies cited by Ritz and Waldner (2011) that used this scale were in German, and thus, applying this scale in English in the current study contributed to the literature on the validity and reliability of this scale. No information was available on the translation process these authors used. Ritz and Waldner (2011) conducted their study in English as the other scales they used were all reported, and designed to be administered in English. This scale used 11 work motives statements, with one question examining each work motive, and had participants rate their importance on a 7-point rating scale (1 = *not important at all*, 7 = *very important*). This same scale was used in the current study.

Reporting on the reliability and validity of this scale, Ritz and Waldner (2011) stated that the scale had been used in five previous empirical studies in Germany to determine employees' work motives. As Ritz and Waldner (2011) were the first to use the scale in an English speaking context they reported that the scale loaded onto four distinct principal components. Specifically, three items loaded onto the component "safe future", four items loaded onto a component labeled "development opportunities", two items loaded onto a component labeled "work-life balance", and one item loaded onto a component labeled "corporate social responsibility".

In this study, the work motives instrument was also used a second time, with participants rating their belief that the rural police organization with which they were familiar found the work motives of its' potential employees as important. To remain consistent, the same 7-point rating scale was adopted (1 = *not important at all*, 7 = *very important*). The presentation of these items was randomized to reduce participant



“satisficing”, which is recommended to avoid participants responding to a survey with little thought (Krosnick, 2000).

### **2.2.2 Employer Attractiveness, Employer Recommendation, and Job Application**

Ritz and Waldner (2011) used four items from Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar’s (2003) *general attractiveness scale* to measure public service employer attractiveness. Ritz and Waldner (2011) used two self-formulated items to measure employer recommendations and two self-formulated items to measure job application intentions. The Highhouse et al. (2003) study developed three scales (i.e., general attractiveness, intentions to pursue, and prestige) to examine and assess how participants rate the organizational attractiveness of any company. Each of these scales was validated using factor analysis with a sample of 305 undergraduate psychology students. The items for each scale were also adopted from previous literature that had examined each of the three areas independently, and had been shown to be valid measures in their own area (Highhouse et al., 2003). Each scale used a 5-point Likert rating design, from one which was strongly disagree, to five which was strongly agree. The *general attractiveness*, *intentions to pursue* scale, and the *prestige* scale were each five item measures.

The current study used Highhouse et al’s (2003) *general attractiveness*, *intentions to pursue*, and *prestige* scales to measure participants’ thoughts about the rural police organization that each participant listed as a potential employer. Using all fifteen items gave the current study a more in-depth examination of the employer attractiveness aspect of the theoretical framework of employer attractiveness (Figure 1.1). As the current study also used a sample of psychology students, the Highhouse et al. (2003) scales were

deemed appropriate for use and the results of the current study could therefore add to the reliability of the Highhouse et al. (2003) scales. As Highhouse et al.'s (2003) original scales were designed to assess organizational attractiveness for a company, and thus the word "company" was replaced with the word "organization" where required. The phrase "please describe what made you choose your answer," was added to certain responses in order to examine participant cognition in greater depth. Krosnick (2000) demonstrated that maximizing respondent motivation can decrease some error in responding associated with "satisficing". As well, the phrase "please explain what would increase this organization as a potential employer" was also added to one question. The responses from these open-ended questions were analyzed. The results of this analysis are described in the analysis section below.

The original Highhouse et al. (2003) scales used a 5-point Likert rating design (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). Therefore, the scales for the current study used the same design. The total employer attractiveness score was calculated by adding together the answers of participants on all fifteen items. Employer recommendation was examined using the responses of participants to one question from the *intentions to pursue* scale, "I would recommend this organization to a friend looking for a job". Job application was examined using two questions similar to Ritz and Waldner (2011), specifically the current study asked participants, "have you ever considered becoming a police officer", and "would you ever consider becoming a police officer". Participants could respond with yes or no. A dichotomous score was calculated based on the responses of participants to these two questions and was used for the calculation in section 3.1.2. Those participants who had responded positively to one, or both, questions

were assigned a score of two, while those who had said no to both, were assigned a score of one. A total score was calculated based on the responses of participants to these two questions and was used for the calculation in section 3.1.3.1. Specifically, those participants who had responded positively to both questions were assigned a score of four, while those who had said no to one, or both, were assigned a score of two. Those participants who had responded positively to only one of the questions were assigned a score of three.

### **2.2.3 Rural Policing Factors**

The factors developed by Jewell et al. (2014) were used to examine potential applicant ratings of the key considerations for selecting rural policing as a career. These factors explored employer attractiveness in more depth, specifically what factors may dissuade participants from pursuing rural police organizations as an employer. Jewell et al. (2014) listed *need for policing*, *coverage*, *quality of life*, and *community assets* as the four factors to be considered in locating future rural police detachments. Their study had rural police officers rate the importance of each factor. In the Jewell et al. (2014) survey, the law enforcement participants were invited to assist “in determining how much emphasis or weight should be placed on each family of factors in the decision-making model.” The four rural policing factors used in the Jewell et al. (2014) study were specific to a rural western Canadian context and were developed through an extensive literature review, as well as consultations with police stakeholders, interviews with other emergency service professionals, and site visits to rural police stations throughout that Western Canadian province. The survey was then sent to all employees of that rural police organization. Included in the survey were open-ended questions where participants

could leave feedback on the factors considered for the survey. This process led to a confirmation of the importance of these four factors (*need for policing, policing coverage, quality of life, community assets*) for rural police organizations (Jewell et al., 2014).

The original Jewell et al. (2014) survey had participants assign points to the four categories, so that they would total 100 points. The assignment of points was based on the importance of each of the four factors as it related to the weight that should be placed on each factor when deciding the location of a new police station. The current study asked participants (i.e., potential employees) to similarly assign points to rank each factor, however the ranking was related to how much each factor contributed to why they would not consider rural policing as a career. Understanding the areas that are most negatively rated by potential applicants would provide areas where rural police organizations may need to improve in order to attract applicants. An example of this reporting scheme was given to participants in order to clarify the process (see Appendix A).

Three notes that were not included in the Jewell et al. (2014) survey were added to provide context to participants unfamiliar with rural policing. These notes were added to *policing coverage* (Note: Rural police sometimes travel 1 hour or more to respond to a call), *quality of life* (Note: Some police stations are located in remote areas with very few stores, or recreational opportunities), and *community assets* (Note: Some police stations are located in remote areas with very few community resources). Examples of each factor were also provided (see Appendix A).

As the *need for policing* factor cannot be eliminated from police work, a second rural policing factors question was asked in the current study instead, with *need for*

*policing* eliminated from the model. The factor was removed as it was anticipated that some participants would not want to be police officers as they did not want to deal with crime. In this second question, participants were asked to rank the remaining three factors in terms of which would dissuade them the most from rural policing (*policing coverage, quality of life, community assets*). An open-ended comment section was included that asked participants to “provide comments on why you ranked the factors the way you did.” The responses to this question were analyzed qualitatively, as discussed in the analysis section below.

As most participants did not indicate that the *need for policing* factor was the factor that would dissuade them most from rural policing, the question that asked about all four factors was used in the analysis for the current study (96.9% of participants assigned 50 points or less to this factor). In line with the Jewell et al. (2014) study, participants could assign a total of 100 points across all four factors. In the Jewell et al. (2014) study, the points were assigned based on which factor would be the most to least important to consider for placing rural police detachments. In the current study, points indicated which factors would dissuade participants from a career with a rural police organization (i.e., the most to least important factors for rural police organizations to consider for attracting potential applicants).

#### **2.2.4 Salary Demand**

Ritz and Waldner (2011) posed the question “What salary would the public service have to offer you for you to accept a position there?” in which a respondent could answer using \$1,000 increments. This question allowed Ritz and Waldner (2011) to examine employee attractiveness in relation to what salary participants requested. The

current study changed “public service” to “the rural police organization you listed above.” In the current study, another question was also asked that showed what salary participants would accept to work for the rural police organization in a role other than a police officer. This allowed for a better understanding of whether it was the rural nature of the job or the role of a police officer that impacted participant career pursuit intentions. Participants responded by dragging a sliding bar in \$1000 increments, starting at \$10,000 to a maximum of \$200,000.

This type of salary expectation question has been used elsewhere in person-organization fit literature as a means of determining the fit of an individual with particular organizations (Hardin & Donaldson, 2014). Therefore, the inclusion of this question was deemed appropriate for the current study.

### **2.2.5 Professional and Practical Experience**

Twelve questions were asked in the current study that related to the professional and practical experience of participants, which also included some demographic questions. Ritz and Waldner (2011) asked participants to provide their gender, academic average, and “relevant professional and practical experience” (p.301). The current study also asked participants’ gender (male, female, trans, other- please specify), and academic average. The current study also included a question related to Schreurs and Syed’s (2011) suggestion that recruiters focus their efforts on individuals who come from the same environment to which they would be deployed, by asking participants if they came from a rural or urban background, and in which context they would prefer to work. The current study determined professional and practical experience by asking the following questions,

as they related to the participant's own history with rural policing, or para-military organizations.

- a. Do you have a relative/friend who is a rural police officer? (yes, please describe)
- b. Do you have personal experience in law enforcement? (e.g., security guard, research involving police). Yes/No (yes, please describe) (give months experience)
- c. Have you ever considered becoming a police officer? (i.e., past, present) (yes/no)
- d. Would you ever consider becoming a police officer? (yes/no)
- e. Have you ever considered joining the military? (i.e., past, present) (Answer yes if you are currently in the military in some form) (yes/no)
- f. Would you ever consider becoming a member of the military? (yes/no)

A question was also asked related to the participant's rural background or preferences.

- a. Would you describe the area you spent most of your life as rural or urban?
- b. Would you describe your ideal place to live as an urban or rural setting?

A question on participant ethnicity was also included, as previous studies have found that minorities are a difficult group to recruit for policing, and thus this question was included to determine if differences existed between ethnic groups (Wilson, 2010). Academic average was coded from one (50-60%), to five (90-100%). Personal experience with law enforcement was calculated by adding together the answer to the question that

asked if a participant had any personal experience in law enforcement and the answer to the question that asked if they had a relative/friend who is a rural police officer. Scores ranged from two, where participants indicated no personal, nor relative/friend experience, to four where participants had personal, as well as relative/friend experience with law enforcement.

### **2.3 Procedure**

The survey generated 317 responses from undergraduate students. Participants were given extra credit in their psychology courses through the participant pool for taking part in this research. The survey ran from January 16, 2016 to February 25, 2016. Once the survey closed, data were downloaded from the Fluid Surveys system into IBM SPSS statistical software for analysis. In total, 243 credit points were awarded out of a possible 250 credits points allocated for this study.

Participants who volunteered accessed the survey on-line. The survey was designed and administered using the Fluid Survey on-line software. This software was accessed through the University of Saskatchewan's subscription. Participants were directed to the survey through a website link to the Department of Psychology's experimental participant sign-up system (SONA). Once a participant registered for the study they clicked a link that directed them to the Fluid Survey system.

Participants read through the consent form (see Appendix A) before continuing to the survey. The second page asked participants to think about each question carefully, and reinforced the importance of the study. This procedure was recommended by Krosnick (2000) to reduce the potential for applicants to satisfice. As stated above,



satisficing refers to participants responding to a survey with little thought (Krosnick, 2000).

The data were cleaned for duplicates using participant age, gender, discipline, area where they grew up, and area where they would prefer to live ( $n = 33$  duplicates removed), which resulted in 284 responses. This duplication screening was necessary as the experimental participant sign-up system was not able to communicate properly with the survey system used for the study in order to automatically mark each participant as completed, and therefore some participants may have inadvertently completed the survey more than once. Data were also removed if participants did not list a rural police service, prior to completing the rural police work motives scale ( $n = 69$  removed), resulting in 215 participants. This removal was necessary as the work motives scale needed to have participants reflect on the rural aspect of policing which would not be present if a participant listed an urban police organization as the service with which they were familiar. Cases were also removed if participants did not complete an entire scale within the survey, or demographics questions that would allow for data grouping (e.g., would consider applying to the police;  $n = 19$  removed), this resulted in 196 participant responses. All data cleaning processes resulted in the final sample of 196 participants (male = 53; female = 141; other = 1; transgender = 1).

### **2.3.1 Calculating Person-Organization (P-O) Fit**

To establish person-organization (P-O) fit, a difference score was calculated by subtracting the total score for each participant on the rural police organization work motives scale from the total score for each participant on the general work motives scale. The total score for each participant on the rural police organization work motives was

first reverse scored prior to the difference score calculation. This reverse scoring was done to account for the way participants were asked to respond to the rural police organization work motives questions. Participants were asked to respond on a scale of one (not important at all), to seven (very important), how important they thought the rural police organization they listed believed each work motive was for them as a potential employee. A belief that the rural police organization would not value a certain item on the work motives scale (i.e., a one, or not important at all) would indicate that that participant would be more likely to feel that they would not fit well with this organization. This would require the scale to be reverse coded to properly account for this belief in the difference score calculation. For example, on the general work motives scale a participant may indicate that “challenging work” is a very important work motive for them, a score of seven, when considering a potential employer. They may also perceive that the rural police organization they listed finds “challenging work” not important at all, a score of one, for potential employees. When calculating a difference score, the rural police organization work motives scale had to be reverse coded as a larger difference score indicates that a participant perceived that they would fit well working for a rural police organization (i.e., their general work motives are also the work motives that a rural police organization could provide).

Creating a P-O fit score from a participant’s perception that a potential employer would meet their work motive needs is an innovative way to address the gap in the recruitment literature where potential applicants have not previously been recruited as a group of participants. This way of calculating a difference score is frequently used in person-environment (P-E), and person-job (P-J) fit research to predict job satisfaction, job

strain, performance, and retention (Lee & Gallivan, 2011, May). Specifically, the difference scores are calculated using an individual's expectations, and then their reported perceptions from within the given environment or job situation.

While difference scores are used widely in organizational fit literature, there is some debate about this calculation's ability to capture the full extent of an individual's fit, with more advanced statistical modeling using polynomial regression analysis, and response surface analysis being suggested to better explain the data (Lee & Gallivan, 2011, May; Schuh, Van Quaquebeke, Keck, Göritz, De Cremer & Xin, 2016). These more advanced models have been criticized, however, for their inability to explain additional variance in a given model over and above the variance explained by the difference score calculation (Lee & Gallivan, 2011, May), as well as having problems with statistical power (Schuh et al., 2016). As such, organizational fit research continues to use, and compare, both difference score and polynomial regression analysis, and response surface analysis, to ensure the models equally explain a given organization's fit (Schuh et al., 2016). As difference scores have a long history in the organizational fit literature and provide a simple calculation for potential organizations that may adopt this study's framework, the current study used only a difference score calculation.

### **2.3.2 Data Analysis**

The work motives scale used in Ritz and Waldner (2011) was explored using a principal components analysis (PCA) to ensure its acceptability within the current study. This analysis provided additional evidence for the validity of this scale, as the current study is the second study to use the English version of this scale. As such, it provides additional evidence of the scale's psychometric properties and component structure.

To examine hypothesis one, an independent samples t-test was used. Specifically, it examined if the P-O fit scores were significantly different for those who indicated an interest in a career in policing from those participants who indicated they had never had an interest in a career in policing. A multiple regression was also used to test this hypothesis. Specifically, employer attractiveness was examined in relation to the P-O fit scores of participants. This tested the relationship between employer attractiveness and P-O fit scores as noted in Figure 1.1.

Multiple regressions were also used to explore hypothesis two (P-O fit and job application), three (P-O fit and recommend), four (P-O fit and salary), and five (employer attractiveness). These analyses provided evidence for the relationships with employer attractiveness in Figure 1.1.

Multiple regressions were also used to explore hypotheses six (rural living), seven (law enforcement experience), eight (military application considered), nine (age), ten (academic average), eleven (gender), and twelve (ethnicity).

A hierarchical stepwise regression was used to examine employer attractiveness, specifically for hypotheses six (rural living), seven (law enforcement experience), eight (military application considered), nine (age), ten (academic average), eleven (gender), and twelve (ethnicity). Hypothesis nine was also explored using multiple regression for each of the four factors explored in the Jewell et al. (2014) study. In these multiple regressions, the age of participants in the current study was used as a variable as it related to the factors found for different generational groups in the Jewell et al. (2014) study. These multiple regressions also considered variables that could provide evidence for hypotheses six to twelve as well, therefore strengthening the evidence for these

hypotheses. A statistical description of the responses that participants gave to the variables of interest is presented in Table 2.1.

To examine themes from the comments provided by participants, thematic analysis was used (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These themes provided evidence for hypothesis thirteen (themes related to why participants would not consider policing as a potential career).

Table 2.1

*A statistical description of participant responses to instrument questions*

Instrument	Mean (maximum on scale if applicable)	Mode	Standard Deviation	n
General work motives	62.321 (77)	51.000	8.790	196
Police specific work motives	57.735 (77)	60.000	9.124	196
P-O fit calculation	32.776 (77)	34.000	12.699	196
Employer attractiveness	49.351 (75)	51.000	8.790	194
Gender	1.745	2 (female)	0.482	196
Academic average	3.344	3 (70-80%)	0.979	195
Ethnicity	9.230	11 (white)	2.885	196
Age	19.990	18.000	2.305	193
Rural living preference	1.270	1 (urban)	0.445	196
Law enforcement experience	2.378 (4)	2 (none)	0.564	196
Considered military application	2.439 (4)	2 (never)	0.772	196
Job application	2.607 (4)	2 (never)	0.806	196
Salary police	106,482.050 (200,000)	80,000	41,312.406	195
Salary other role	96,476.920 (200,000)	80,000	38,656.473	195
Recommend career	3.612 (5)	4 (agree)	0.919	196
Need for policing factor	26.550 (*)	10	15.061	195
Coverage factor	22.860 (*)	20	11.188	195
Quality of life factor	30.820 (*)	30	12.374	196
Community assets factor	20.12 (*)	10	11.195	195

\* The maximum score across all four factors was 100

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

#### 3.1 Quantitative Analysis

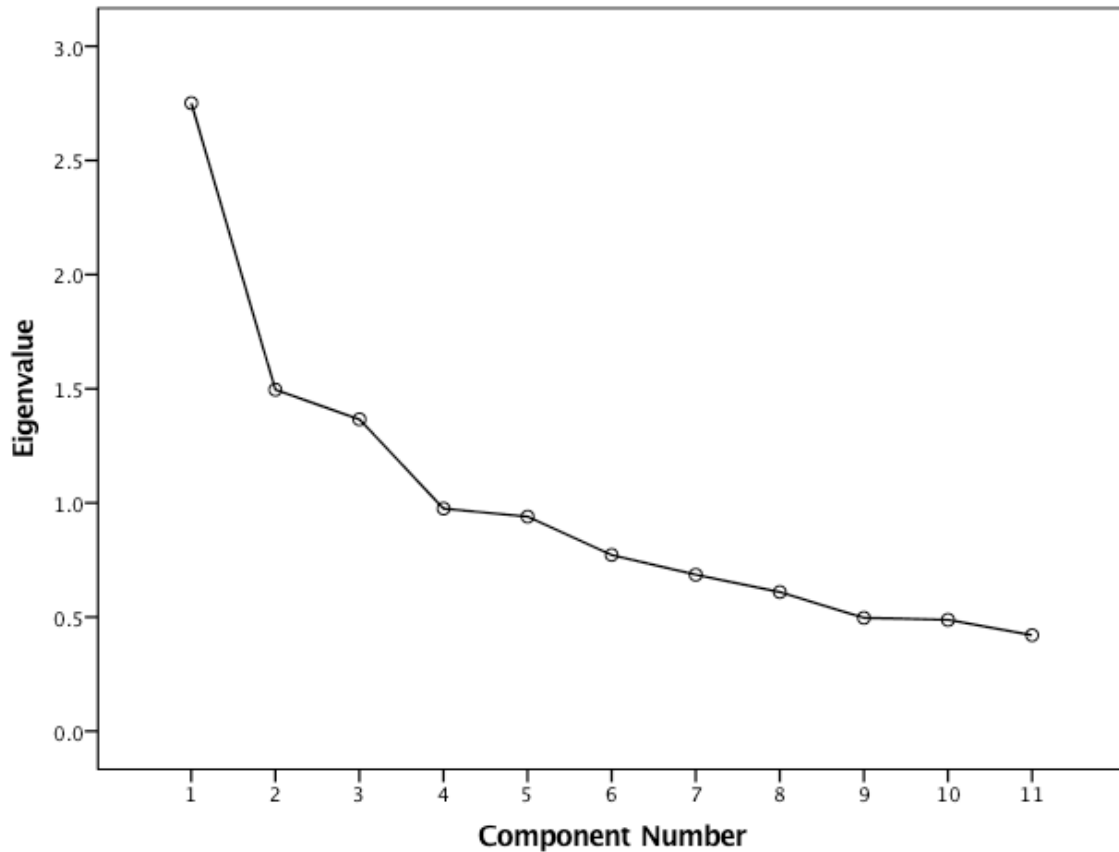
##### 3.1.1 Principle Components Analysis of Work Motives Scale

Ritz and Waldner's (2011) work motives scale was examined using principle components analysis (PCA) with orthogonal rotation (varimax with Kaiser normalization). Ritz and Waldner (2011) used a public service motivation scale in their PCA, along with their work motives scale. However, the work motives scale used in the current study loaded onto four distinct components in the Ritz and Waldner (2011) study. The first PCA in the current study was used to examine the component loadings of the participant's responses to the question relating to their general employment work motives. The second PCA in the current study was used to examine the question related to how well the work motives mapped onto how well a rural police organization could appeal to the work motives.

Before completing the first PCA, an analysis of participants' responses to the question relating to their general employment work motives, a number of preliminary analyses needed to be run to determine the appropriateness of a PCA. To examine the appropriateness of a PCA, a correlation matrix was used (Table B-1). All items correlated with one another. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.69, above the recommended value of 0.50 (Yong & Pearce, 2013). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $\chi^2(55) = 338.33, p < .001$ ). The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.48, suggesting their appropriate inclusion in the

analysis. The communalities of all except one item were above 0.46, suggesting the majority of the items shared some communality (Table B-2; Field, 2013).

The initial eigenvalues indicated that the first component explained 25.01% of the variance, the second component explained 13.60% of the variance, and the third component explained an additional 12.42% of the variance. The scree plot indicated that a three or four component model would be most appropriate (see Figure 3.1), which was in keeping with Ritz and Waldner's (2011) four-component model. The fourth component explained an additional 8.86% of the variance.



*Figure 3.1.* Scree plot for the principle components analysis of the general work motives scale

Based on the rotated component matrix, and in keeping with Ritz and Waldner's (2011) 0.44 cut off used in the original scale development process, no items were eliminated from the model. The component loading matrix for the final solution is presented in Table 3.1. In the original Ritz and Waldner (2011) component structure, one item, "company's environmentally and socially responsible behavior" remained in its own component. In the current study's components, this item grouped with two other items under the "work life balance" component on the Ritz and Waldner (2011) scale. Therefore, the name of this scale was adapted to "work life balance and outlook" in the current study to reflect the addition of this item. Outlook, in this context, reflects the focus of an organization to environmental and socially responsive behaviours.

The items "high salary" and "career and promotion opportunities" loaded on the "safe future", and "development opportunities" sub-scales respectively in the Ritz and Waldner (2011) study. However, in the current study's analysis these two items load on their own sub-scale labeled "tangible benefits". This title reflects the focus of these items on monetary benefits for potential employees.

The item "opportunities for international assignments" also loaded on the "development opportunities" sub-scale in the Ritz and Waldner (2011) study. However this item loaded on the "safe futures" sub-scale in the current study, along with two items that previously loaded on this sub-scale. This result could suggest that an organization that is large and stable enough to have international opportunities would be able to ensure a safe and stable future for a potential applicant, as that organization might be considered too large to fail.



While items loaded differently in the current study than in the Ritz and Waldner (2011) study it is understood that items reflect the unique focus of the participants of each study. The participants in Ritz and Waldner’s (2011) study were participating in a study on the public sector as an employer, while the participants in the current study were reflecting on rural police organizations as potential employers. With this difference in perspective in mind the next PCA examined the ability of rural police organizations to provide for work motives.

Table 3.1

*Component loadings based on a principal components analysis with varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization pertaining to the general work motives scale*

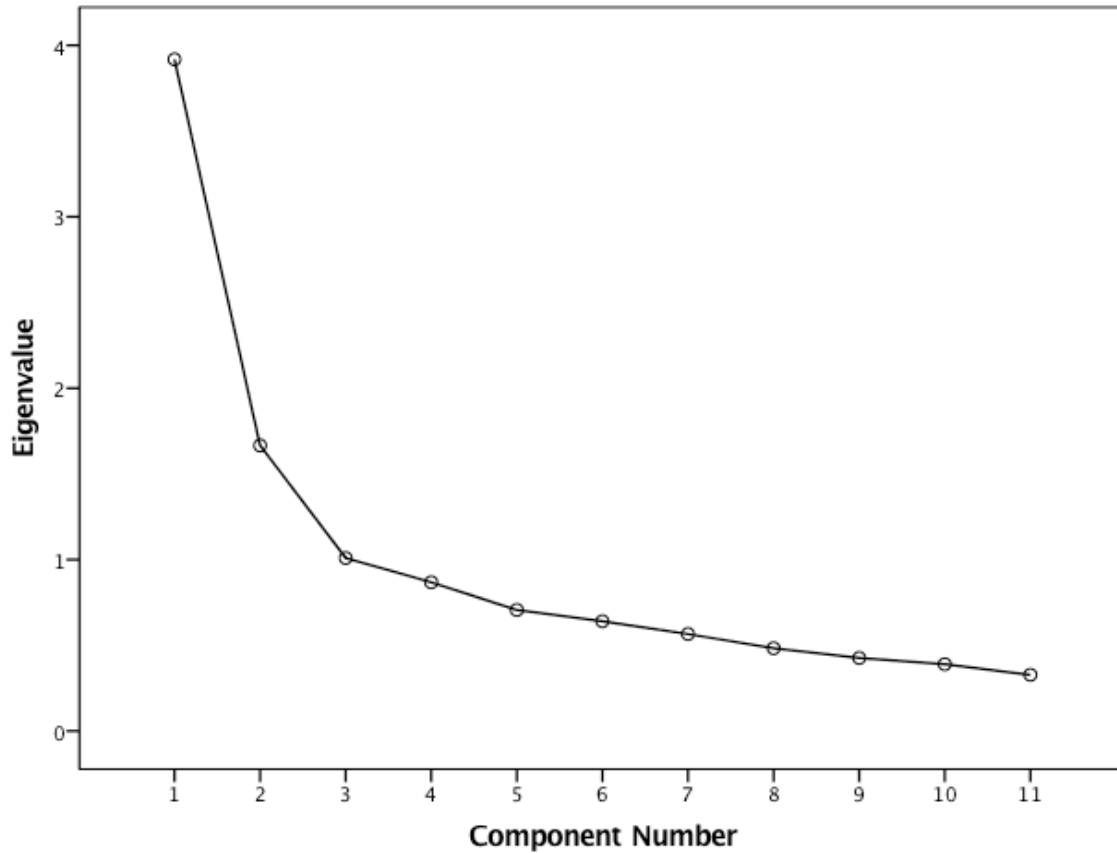
Work Motives Items	Development Opportunities	Work Life Balance & Outlook	Tangible Benefits	Safe future
Prospects of the sector	0.137	-0.143	0.396	<b>0.628</b>
Job security	-0.052	0.190	0.046	<b>0.650</b>
High salary*	-0.185	0.181	<b>0.750</b>	0.174
Opportunities for further training	<b>0.735</b>	0.053	0.129	0.056
Variety of tasks	<b>0.768</b>	0.176	-0.014	0.057
Career and promotion opportunities*	0.405	-0.027	<b>0.724</b>	-0.037
Challenging work	<b>0.763</b>	-0.050	-0.002	0.141
Opportunities for international assignments*	0.401	-0.004	-0.086	<b>0.564</b>
Work-life balance	0.150	<b>0.787</b>	-0.055	0.063
Location	-0.074	<b>0.739</b>	0.276	0.000
Company’s environmentally and socially responsible behavior *	0.394	<b>0.489</b>	-0.284	0.392

Note: \*Changed components from Ritz and Waldner (2011) structure; highest component loading for each item in bold.

The second PCA examined the question related to how well the work motives aligned with each other when participants reflected on the ability of a rural police organization to provide for these work motives. It was expected that the same component loading would be found for the general work motives question as was found in Ritz and Waldner (2011).

A correlation matrix was used to determine the appropriateness of a PCA (Table B-3). All items correlated with one another. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was 0.83, above the recommended value of 0.50 (Yong & Pearce, 2013). Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was significant ( $\chi^2(55) = 620.65, p < .001$ ). The diagonals of the anti-image correlation matrix were all over 0.77, suggesting their appropriate inclusion in the analysis. Examining the communalities, all except one item were above 0.43 (prospects of the sector), suggesting that the majority of the items shared some communality (see Table B-4). Tables for this analysis can be found in Appendix B.

The initial eigenvalues indicated that the first component explained 35.62% of the variance, the second component explained 15.15% of the variance, the third component explained an additional 9.18% of the variance, and the fourth component explained 7.89% of the variance. The scree plot also indicated that a three or four component model would be most appropriate (see Figure 3.2). In keeping with the four-component model of Ritz and Waldner (2011), a four-component model was used.



*Figure 3.2.* Scree plot for the principle components analysis of the rural police work motives scale

Examining the rotated component matrix, no items were eliminated as all items loaded above 0.44 on one of the four components. The 0.44 cut off was used in Ritz and Waldner’s (2011) original scale development process. The component loading matrix for the final solution is presented in Table 3.2. The component names were re-named in line with the types of items that fell within each category.

While the criteria to maintain one-item components differ depending on the criterion used, conceptually, within this work motives scale, retaining the single item components was justified particularly given that their component loadings were greater than 0.70 (Field, 2013). Similarly, examining the scree plots, a one-component model

may capture the data effectively; however, looking at the component tables (Table 3.1 and 3.2), a subset of items loaded together, except for the two one-item components in Table 3.2. There is also some debate in the statistical literature about the best cut off to use when examining a scree plot (Field, 2013). In keeping with the component structure of Ritz and Waldner (2011), a four-component model was retained in both analyses.

It should be noted that factor analysis was also completed with each of the work motives scales above. This analysis revealed similar findings, as expected, based on the statistical literature (Field, 2013). Therefore, principle components analyses were conducted in the current study in keeping with the analysis used by Ritz and Waldner (2011).

Table 3.2

*Component loadings based on a principal components analysis with varimax rotation with Kaiser normalization pertaining to the ability of rural police organizations to provide for desired work motives of participants*

Work Motives Items for Rural Police Organizations	Job characteristics	Job opportunities	Job security	Corporate social responsibility
Prospects of the sector	<b>0.533</b>	0.356	0.127	-0.039
Job security	0.111	0.231	<b>0.797</b>	0.227
High salary	0.194	<b>0.628</b>	0.419	-0.356
Opportunities for further training	<b>0.757</b>	0.066	0.302	0.116
Variety of tasks	<b>0.764</b>	0.063	0.077	0.280
Career and promotion opportunities*	<b>0.593</b>	0.179	0.550	-0.171
Challenging work	<b>0.834</b>	-0.004	-0.071	0.028
Opportunities for international assignments	0.407	<b>0.673</b>	-0.224	0.075
Work-life balance	-0.025	<b>0.732</b>	0.286	0.137
Location	0.015	<b>0.766</b>	0.164	0.161
Company's environmentally and socially responsible behavior	0.204	0.181	0.132	<b>0.854</b>

Note: \* loads highly on two components; highest component loading for each item in bold.

### 3.1.2 P-O Fit (hypothesis one)

For the work motives related to the rural police organization, it was expected that participant responses would be different from those found on the general work motives question, or those found in Ritz and Waldner's (2011) study. An independent sample t-test was used to determine if the P-O fit score for those who indicated an interest in a career in policing was significantly different from those participants who indicated they had never had an interest in a career in policing. There was no significant difference between the P-O fit scores for those participants who would ( $n = 79, M = 32.35, SD =$

12.73), and those who would not ( $n = 117$ ,  $M = 33.06$ ,  $SD = 12.72$ ), consider policing as a career ( $t(194) = -0.38$ ,  $p = 0.48$ ), Levene's test for equality of variances was not significant ( $F(1,192) = 0.50$ ,  $p = 0.48$ ), therefore equal variances were assumed.

It was expected that participants who indicated that they had considered policing as a potential career would have a smaller difference between their general work motives and those they believed a rural police organization could provide (i.e., hypothesis one), however this was not found to be in case.

### **3.1.3 Series of Regressions**

To examine hypotheses one through twelve, regression analysis was used. Table 3.3 shows the correlation matrix of each of the predictor variables that are discussed below. These predictor, or control variables, are similar to those used by Ritz and Waldner (2011) in their hierarchical stepwise regression analysis to examine the relationship between work motives and employer attractiveness. While a hierarchical stepwise regression analysis similar to that done by Ritz and Waldner (2011) is described later (see section 3.1.4.2), the control variables were first examined in relation to their ability to predict a number of outcome variables related to rural police organizations. Note that as general work motives and P-O fit were highly correlated, only P-O fit was used in subsequent regression analyses. The correlations between the predictor variables and the outcome variables are also shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.3

*Correlation matrix: Control variables used to predict participant outcomes related to rural police organization employment potential*

Control Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Employer Attractiveness									
2. Rural living preference	0.24**								
3. Academic average	-0.23**	-0.09							
4. Age	0.15*	-0.04	0.02						
5. Gender	0.04	0.03	-0.12*	-0.02					
6. Ethnicity	0.07	0.09	-0.06	0.13*	0.06				
7. Law Enforcement Experience	0.18**	0.04	-0.13*	0.07	-0.02	0.09			
8. Considered military application	0.18**	0.15*	0.05	-0.01	-0.22**	0.05	0.07		
9. General work motives	0.19**	-0.03	-0.05	0.05	0.19**	-0.04	-0.05	0.06	
10. P-O Fit	0.30**	0.02	-0.13*	-0.02	0.14*	-0.04	-0.06	0.06	0.82**

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 3.4

*Correlation matrix: Predictor variables by outcome variables for rural police organization employment potential*

Prediction and Outcome Variables	Outcome Variables			
	Job Application	Salary Police	Salary in other role	Recommend rural police officer career
1.Job Application		-0.332**	-0.200**	0.133
2.Salary Police	-0.332**		0.766**	-0.287**
3.Salary in other role	-0.200**	0.766**		-0.349**
4.Recommend rural police officer career	0.133	-0.287**	-0.349**	
Employer Attractiveness	0.457**	-0.552**	-0.505**	0.500**
Rural living preference	0.283**	-0.145*	-0.210**	0.082
Academic average	-0.021	0.206**	0.203**	-0.064
Age	0.133	-0.136	-0.212**	0.098
Gender	-0.154*	-0.091	-0.156*	0.100
Ethnicity	0.054	-0.013	-0.096	0.038
Law Enforcement Experience	0.260**	-0.151*	-0.112	0.037
Considered military application	0.295**	-0.084	0.003	0.003
P-O Fit	-0.003	-0.156*	-0.114	0.212**

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

### 3.1.3.1 Job application (hypothesis two).

A multiple regression was used to determine job application, with the outcome of the regression indicating if those with a higher P-O fit score were more likely to consider



applying to rural police organizations. Employer attractiveness and P-O fit score were independent variables for the regressions. The control variables from Table 3.3 were also used. This method was similar to that used by Ritz and Waldner (2011); it differed, however, by the addition of the P-O fit score.

The questions related to whether participants had considered policing as a career in their entire life was used to determine job application. A *policing in life score* combined the question “have you ever considered becoming a police officer? (i.e., past, present)” and the question “would you ever consider becoming a police officer?”. The total score was used as the dependent variable to examine the job application dimension for this study.

Table 3.5

*Multiple regression: Predictors of job application to a rural police organization*

Prediction Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	-0.820	0.609		-1.347	0.180
Employer Attractiveness	0.038	0.006	0.411	5.956	0.000**
Gender	-0.160	0.105	-0.096	-1.527	0.129
Academic average	0.054	0.051	0.067	1.061	0.290
Ethnicity	-0.001	0.017	-0.004	-0.059	0.953
Age	0.024	0.021	0.071	1.146	0.253
Rural living preference	0.307	0.114	0.169	2.692	0.008**
Law enforcement experience	0.253	0.090	0.175	2.828	0.005**
Considering military application	0.162	0.066	0.156	2.460	0.015*
P-O Fit	-0.006	0.004	-0.101	-1.573	0.117

R=0.595, R Sq.=0.354, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.354, Std. Err. Est.=0.661, F=10.97,

Sig.<0.001, \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

The multiple regression was significant ( $F(9,180) = 10.97, p < 0.001$ ), with employer attractiveness ( $b = 0.038, p < 0.001$ ), personal experience with law enforcement ( $b = 0.253, p = 0.005$ ), the preferred place to live ( $b = 0.307, p = 0.008$ ), and considering the military as a possible employer ( $b = 0.162, p = 0.015$ ) as significant predictors of participant's considering applying to a police agency in their life (see Table 3.5).

Specifically, the finding above means that for every one unit increase on the employer attractiveness score, there was a corresponding 0.04 increase in job application score. Similarly, for every one unit increase on the personal experience with law enforcement score, there was a corresponding 0.25 increase in job application score.

Similarly, for every one unit increase on the preferred place to live score, where rural locations were ranked highest, there was a corresponding 0.31 increase in job application score. Lastly, for every one unit increase on the considering the military as a possible employer scale there was a corresponding 0.16 increase in job application.

These findings are in line with hypothesis seven, whereby those with practical experience in law enforcement would rate rural policing as a more attractive career option. These findings are also in line with hypothesis six, as those who would prefer rural areas were found to be more likely to consider applying to a rural police organization. Similarly, in line with hypothesis eight, those who had considered the military as a possible career option were more likely to consider applying to a rural police organization. The finding that employer attractiveness scores contributed to job application is in line with hypothesis five. While there was a significant correlation between job application and gender in the correlation matrix (Table 3.4), and between gender and other control variables (Table 3.3), gender was not a significant predictor in the regression analysis.

#### **3.1.3.2 Salary demand (hypothesis four).**

Another two multiple regressions were performed with the same control variables shown in Table 3.3. The salary demanded by each participant as a rural police officer was used as the dependent variable in the first analysis. The salary demanded by each participant as an employee at a rural police office, in a role other than as a police officer, was used as the dependent variable in the second analysis. It was expected that those who found policing attractive would demand a lower salary.

The first multiple regression was significant ( $F(9,179) = 9.80, p < 0.001$ ), with employer attractiveness ( $b = -2478.002, p < 0.001$ ) as the only significant predictor of a participant's requested salary as a rural police officer (see Table 3.6). Specifically, the finding above means that for every one unit increase on the employer attractiveness score, there was a corresponding \$2,478.002 decrease in the salary demanded to be a rural police officer (Table 3.6).

While in the correlation matrix, Table 3.4, employer attractiveness was highly correlated with police officer salary ( $r = -0.552, p < 0.01$ ), other variables were also correlated with police officer salary, but were not significant predictors in the regression analysis, nor were they as highly correlated as employer attractiveness. Specifically, academic average, rural living preference, law enforcement experience, and P-O fit were significantly correlated with police officer salary (see Table 3.4).

Table 3.6

*Multiple regression: Predictor of rural police organization police officer salary*

Prediction Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	259058.343	32243.927		8.034	0.000**
Employer Attractiveness	-2478.002	336.308	-0.517	-7.368	0.000**
Gender	-7484.852	5553.767	-0.086	-1.348	0.179
Academic average	3765.559	2726.502	0.088	1.381	0.169
Ethnicity	552.628	901.209	0.038	0.613	0.541
Age	-1258.619	1130.855	-0.070	-1.113	0.267
Rural living preference	-1303.874	6034.934	-0.014	-0.216	0.829
Law enforcement experience	-3315.985	4743.887	-0.044	-0.699	0.485
Considered military application	-622.247	3493.472	-0.012	-0.178	0.859
P-O Fit	68.071	213.731	0.021	0.318	0.750

R=0.575, R Sq.=0.330, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.296, Std. Err. Est.=34959.586, F=9.801,

Sig.<0.001, \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

The second multiple regression was also significant ( $F(9,179) = 9.86, p < 0.001$ ), with employer attractiveness ( $b = -2121.800, p < 0.001$ ), participant's gender ( $b = -11133.745, p = 0.0134$ ), and participant's age ( $b = -2472.170, p = 0.020$ ) as the significant predictors of a participant's requested salary to be at a rural police office in a role other than a police officer (see Table 3.7). In other words, for a one unit increase on the employer attractiveness score, there was a corresponding \$2,121.80 decrease in the salary demanded to be at a rural police office, in a role other than as a police officer. Similarly, for a one unit increase on the gender scale, there was a corresponding \$11,133.75 decrease in the salary demanded to be at a rural police office, in a role other

than as a police officer, whereby women, and other gender identifications, were assigned scores that were higher than men on the scale. Finally, regarding age, for a one unit increase on the age scale there was a corresponding \$2,472.17 decrease in the salary demanded to be at a rural police office in a role other than as a police officer (see Table 3.7).

While academic average and rural living preference were also significantly correlated with salary for the role other than a police officer variable (see Table 3.4), they were not significant predictors in the multiple regression. This was likely due to a strong correlation between the salary for a role other than a police officer variable and the employer attractiveness variable ( $r = -0.505, p < 0.01$ ), as well as the correlations between predictor variables (see Table 3.3). In comparison with the first multiple regression (see Table 3.6), this regression had stronger correlations between the salary for a role other than a police officer variable and those variables that were significant predictors in the regression when examining the correlation matrix (see Table 3.4). This would explain why not just employer attractiveness was the significant predictor of salary in the current regression.

Table 3.7

*Multiple regression: Predictors of salary for a role other than police officer with a rural police organization*

Prediction Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	262290.688	30180.532		8.691	0.000**
Employer Attractiveness	-2121.800	313.107	-0.477	-6.777	0.000**
Gender	-11133.745	5203.003	-0.137	-2.140	0.034*
Academic average	3062.197	2519.399	0.078	1.215	0.226
Ethnicity	-568.996	845.683	-0.042	-0.673	0.502
Age	-2472.170	1050.275	-0.148	-2.354	0.020*
Rural living preference	-7166.518	5695.292	-0.081	-1.258	0.210
Law enforcement experience	603.440	4412.573	0.009	0.137	0.891
Considered military application	2834.506	3256.156	0.057	0.871	0.385
P-O Fit	143.986	198.282	0.048	0.726	0.469

R=0.576, R Sq.=0.331, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.298, Std. Err. Est.=32516.341, F=9.862,

Sig.<0.001, \*  $p<0.05$ , \*\*  $p<0.01$

The salary demanded findings are mostly in line with the hypotheses of this study. Specifically, in line with hypothesis five, those who were more attracted to a rural police organization as a potential employer demanded a lower salary. Interestingly, the finding that female applicants demanded a lower salary than men to work in a role other than as a police officer for a rural police organization suggests that hypothesis eleven is contradicted. In line with hypothesis nine, younger potential applicants were more likely to request higher compensation to work for a rural police organization than older potential applicants.

### 3.1.3.3 Recommendation (hypothesis three).

One question from the *intentions to pursue* scale, “I would recommend this organization to a friend looking for a job”, was used in another regression. Specifically, it was predicted that those with a lower P-O fit would be less likely to recommend rural policing as a career.

The regression was significant ( $F(9,180) = 6.85, p < 0.001$ ), with employer attractiveness ( $b = 0.049, p < 0.001$ ) as the only significant predictor of a participant’s likelihood to recommend the rural police organization (see Table 3.8). Specifically, the finding above means that for every one unit increase on the employer attractiveness score, there was a corresponding 0.05 increase in recommendation score.

In the correlation matrix, Table 3.4, while there was a strong correlation between the recommending a rural police organization variable and the employer attractiveness variable ( $r = 0.500, p < 0.01$ ), there was also a correlation with the P-O fit variable ( $r = 0.212, p < 0.01$ ). The stronger correlation between the recommending a rural police organization variable and employer attractiveness, than between the recommending a rural police organization variable and the P-O fit variable, likely explains why the P-O fit variable was not a significant predictor in the multiple regression analysis. In line with hypothesis five, those who were more attracted to a rural police organization were more likely to recommend applying to this organization to others.

Examining the correlations between the outcomes variables from each regression analysis above (see Table 3.4), there was a correlation noted between the recommending a rural police organization variable and each of the outcomes variables. Specifically, there was a strong correlation with the salary for a role other than a police officer variable



( $r = -0.349, p < 0.01$ ), the police officer salary variable ( $r = -0.287, p < 0.01$ ), and with the job application variable ( $r = 0.155, p < 0.05$ ).

Table 3.8

*Multiple regression: Predictors of recommending a rural police organization to a friend looking for a job*

Prediction Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	0.858	0.726		1.183	0.238
Employer Attractiveness	0.049	0.008	0.479	6.465	0.000**
Gender	0.080	0.125	0.043	0.639	0.524
Academic average	0.043	0.061	0.048	0.708	0.480
Ethnicity	-0.002	0.020	-0.007	-0.114	0.910
Age	0.006	0.025	0.017	0.250	0.803
Rural living preference	-0.009	0.136	-0.005	-0.070	0.944
Law enforcement experience	0.044	0.107	0.027	0.408	0.683
Considered military application	-0.126	0.079	-0.109	-1.602	0.111
P-O Fit	0.006	0.005	0.087	1.255	0.211

R=0.505, R Sq.=0.255, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.218, Std. Err. Est.=0.787, F=6.846,

Sig. <0.001, \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

### 3.1.4 Employer Attractiveness (hypotheses five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve)

Highhouse et al. (2003) used factor analysis to confirm the three scales on their organizational attraction scale. Their three scales were *general attractiveness*, *intentions to pursue*, and *prestige*. A total score of the general attractiveness scale was used to determine the attractiveness of rural policing as a career. It was hypothesized that

participants who are attracted to policing as a career would have a smaller difference between their general work motives and those they believed a rural police organization could provide (see hypothesis one). Specifically, a high score on the employer attractiveness scale was hypothesized to correspond to a high P-O fit score, while those low on the employer attractiveness scale, it was hypothesized, would also be low on the P-O fit score. This finding would lend support to the Person-Organization fit theory, and would correspond to the relationship between these two variables in Figure 1.1.

#### **3.1.4.1 Linear regression.**

A linear regression was conducted with the general attractiveness total score and the P-O fit score. Examining the skewness and kurtosis of the employer attractiveness scores and the P-O fit scores, there was confidence that the assumptions for the normality of distribution were not violated, using a z-score of <1.96 as an acceptable cut off (Field, 2013). For employer attractiveness, the z-score for skewness was 0.15 and for kurtosis it was 1.22. For P-O fit scores, the z-score for skewness was -0.82 and for kurtosis it was 0.71. Participants' P-O fit score significantly predicted the general attractiveness total score for the listed rural police organization ( $F(1,192) = 17.63, p < 0.001, R^2 = 0.084$ ). This finding lends support to the person-organization fit theory as predicted. Specifically, the finding above means that for every one unit increase on the P-O fit score there was a corresponding 0.20 increase in employer attractiveness score ( $\beta=0.20$ ).

Table 3.9

*Linear regression: Person-organization fit scores predicting the general employer attractiveness scores for a rural police organization*

Prediction Variable	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	42.76	1.68		25.40	0.000**
P-O Fit	0.20	0.05	0.29	4.20	0.003**

R=0.29, R Sq.=0.084, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.079, Std. Err. Est.=8.434, F=17.63, Sig.<0.001,

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

### 3.1.4.2 Hierarchical stepwise regression.

Following Ritz and Waldner's (2011) analysis, a hierarchical stepwise regression was used to examine the relationship between work motives and the employer attractiveness of rural police organizations. The first step used the control variables of gender, relevant personal experience with law enforcement, personal consideration of applying to the military, rural living preference, ethnicity, age, and grade average. The second step included general work motives. The third step included the person-organization fit score. Different from Ritz and Waldner (2011), the current study used the P-O fit score in the third step whereas Ritz and Waldner (2011) used attraction to public policy making and another factor related to wanting to pursue a career in public administration. The current study also differed in that the total score for the general work motives was included, and not the factors of the work motives scale. The factors were not examined, as the component structure of this scale was also an area of examination for the current study, as was discussed previously (see 3.1.1). Table 3.10 displays the correlations between all of the variables in the analysis. Table 3.11 shows the final step of

this analysis. A table for each step of the hierarchical stepwise regression is found in Appendix C (see Tables C-1 to C-5).

At step one of the analysis, the rural living preference was entered into the regression equation and was significantly related to employer attractiveness ( $F(1, 188) = 11.59, p = 0.001$ ). At step two of the analysis, the rural living preference again was entered into the regression equation, as well as academic average ( $F(2, 187) = 10.62, p < 0.001$ ). At step three of the analysis, age was also entered into the equation and all three were significant ( $F(3, 186) = 9.24, p < 0.001$ ). At step four, personal consideration of applying to the military was added to the model  $F(4,185) = 8.58, p < 0.001$ . At step five, general work motives was added to the model, along with the previous items ( $F(5, 184) = 8.35, p < 0.001$ ). At the final step, step six, the P-O fit score was added to the model  $F(6,183) = 9.16, p < 0.001$ . The multiple correlation coefficient was 0.48, indicating that approximately 20.6% of the variance of employer attractiveness could be accounted for by rural living preferred, academic average, age, consideration of applying to the military, general work motives, and P-O fit score. In this model step, step six, however general work motives was no longer significant (see Table 3.11).

Three items were not used at any step, namely personal experience with law enforcement, ethnicity, and gender. However, in Table 3.10 it is noted that there was a significant correlation between employer attractiveness and law enforcement experience even though they were not significant predictors in the regression analysis.

Hypothesis six (rural living preference), seven (law enforcement experience), eight (considered military), nine (age), ten (academic average), eleven (gender), and twelve (ethnicity) were also examined in the series of regressions (section 3.1.3).

Table 3.10

*Correlation matrix: Hierarchical stepwise regression variables to predict the employer attractiveness of a rural police organization*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Employer Attractiveness									
2. Rural living preference	0.24**								
3. Academic average	-0.23**	-0.09							
4. Age	0.15*	-0.04	0.02						
5. Gender	0.04	0.03	-0.12*	-0.02					
6. Ethnicity	0.07	0.09	-0.06	0.13*	0.06				
7. Law enforcement experience	0.18**	0.04	-0.13*	0.07	-0.02	0.09			
8. Considered military application	0.18**	0.15*	0.05	-0.01	-0.22**	0.05	0.07		
9. General work motives	0.19**	-0.03	-0.05	0.05	0.19**	-0.04	-0.05	0.06	
10. P-O Fit	0.30**	0.02	-0.13*	-0.02	0.14*	-0.04	-0.06	0.06	0.82**

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 3.11

*Hierarchical stepwise regression: Step six, employer attractiveness of a rural police organization*

Predictor Variables Entered	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	35.60	9.24		3.86	0.000**
Rural living preference	3.88	1.31	0.20	2.97	0.003**
Academic average	-1.63	0.59	-0.18	-2.78	0.006**
Age	0.67	0.25	0.18	2.74	0.007**
Considered military application	1.70	0.75	0.15	2.28	0.024*
General work motives	-0.19	0.16	-0.14	-1.21	0.23
P-O Fit	0.26	0.08	0.38	3.31	0.001**

R=0.480, R Sq.=0.231, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.206, Std. Err. Est.=7.779, F=9.16, Sig.<0.001,

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

The final step beta values indicate that for every one unit increase in P-O fit score, there was a corresponding 0.26 unit increase in employer attractiveness. Note that in step five, general work motives contributed positively to employer attractiveness, while in the final step it did not contribute to the model. This is likely due to the inclusion of the general work motives score in the calculation of the P-O fit score. The ability of the P-O fit score to account for employer attractiveness lends support to the person-organization fit theory. In accordance with hypothesis two, participants who were attracted to policing as a career, as indicated by their employer attractiveness score, had a higher P-O fit score.

The finding that for every one unit increase in the consideration of applying to the military, there was a corresponding 1.70 unit increase in employer attractiveness is support for hypothesis eight, which suggested that those that had considered the military

as an attractive employer would also view working for a rural police organization as a favorable option.

The finding that for every one unit increase in age there was a corresponding 0.67 unit increase in employer attractiveness, suggests that older participants were more likely to view rural policing as a career option than younger potential applicants. This is support for hypothesis nine, which suggested that younger participants would not view rural policing as a potential employer.

The finding that for every one unit increase in academic average there was a corresponding 1.63 unit decrease employer attractiveness suggests that those participants with lower academic achievement viewed rural policing as a potential career option. This is consistent with hypothesis ten that suggested that participants with higher academic averages would be less likely to agree that policing is a career for them.

The finding that for every one unit increase in preferring to live in a rural environment there was a corresponding 0.24 unit increase in employer attractiveness is consistent with hypothesis six, that suggested that participants who would prefer to live in a rural environment for their career, would be more likely to consider a career with a rural police organization. The finding that the model did not include gender (hypothesis eleven), ethnicity (hypothesis twelve), or experience with law enforcement (hypothesis seven), is contrary to those hypotheses.

The ability of demographic questions to impact employer attractiveness was determined by their influence in the stepwise regression, as explained above. Specifically, it was only academic average, age, considering the military as a potential employer, and the rural living preference that was significantly predictive for participants.

The gender, personal experience with law enforcement, and ethnicity of participants did not impact employer attractiveness.

Specifically, for academic average, those who had a lower academic average were more likely to prefer the police as a potential employer. For age, those who were older preferred the police as a potential employer. Those who preferred living in a rural environment were also more attracted to rural police organizations as a potential employer.

### **3.1.5 Rural Policing Factors (hypothesis nine)**

The participant rating of police factors was compared to the findings of Jewell et al. (2014). As the Jewell et al. (2014) study asked participants to rate the importance of each factor for locating a police detachment, the current study first examined the question that included the *need for policing* factor. The responses to this question were directly compared to those in the Jewell et al. (2014) study.

Specifically, generational comparisons were made between the current study's responses to the generational groups of police officer responses in the Jewell et al. (2014) study. In Jewell et al. (2014), the scores of the police officers were categorized into groups by their years of police experience (i.e., 1 to 7, 8 to 14, 15 to 21, 22 to 28, and more than 28 years). Regression was used to compare the responses of the potential applicants in the current study to the responses from the generational groups examined in the Jewell et al. (2014) study. The four factors were used as dependent variables (i.e., need for policing, coverage, quality of life, and community assets). For this analysis, the academic average of participants was removed as it was shown in the above analyses not to be an influence on the participant responses for this study. The rural living preference



was also removed as the quality of life factor captured this element. Table 3.12 shows the correlations between the factors, and the predictive variables that were used in the regression analyses. Ethnicity was also removed as it was not a significant variable in any of the previous regression analyses.

Table 3.12

*Correlation matrix: Rural policing factors and the predictive variables for the importance placed on each factor*

Predictor and Outcome Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Need for policing									
2. Coverage	-0.21**								
3. Quality of life	-0.56**	-0.32**							
4. Community Assets	-0.50**	-0.33**	-0.01						
5. Employer Attractiveness	-0.05	0.17*	-0.03	-0.06					
6. Age	-0.01	-0.12	-0.02	0.12	0.15*				
7. Gender	0.07	0.07	-0.11	-0.06	0.02	-0.01			
8. Law Enforcement Experience	-0.08	0.10	-0.07	0.08	0.14*	0.07	-0.02		
9. Considered military application	0.00	-0.02	0.04	-0.02	0.20**	-0.01	-0.22**	0.07	
10. P-O Fit	0.07	0.10	-0.07	-0.14*	0.29*	-0.02	0.14	-0.05	0.06

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table 3.13

*Multiple regression: Predictive variables of the rural policing factors, coverage factor scores*

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	19.890	9.072		2.193	0.030
Employer Attractiveness	0.201	0.101	0.157	1.993	0.048*
Age	-0.715	0.352	-0.147	-2.032	0.044*
Gender	0.931	1.728	0.040	0.539	0.591
Law enforcement experience	2.402	1.487	0.118	1.615	0.108
Considered military application	-0.625	1.093	-0.043	-0.572	0.568
P-O Fit	0.049	0.067	0.056	0.730	0.466

R=0.259, R Sq.=0.067, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.036, Std. Err. Est.=11.026, F=2.187, Sig.= 0.046\*, \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

The regression for the coverage factor was significant ( $F(6, 183) = 2.187, p = 0.046$ ). The employer attractiveness score ( $b = 0.201, p = 0.048$ ), as well as participant age ( $b = -0.715, p = 0.044$ ), significantly predicted the score given on the coverage factor, while personal experience with law enforcement, considering applying to the military, and the P-O fit score, did not predict the score participants gave for coverage (see Table 3.13).

This indicates that a one-unit increase on the employer attractiveness scale corresponded to a 0.20 unit increase in the perception that coverage was a factor that would dissuade potential rural police applicants. Similarly, a one unit increase in age corresponded to a 0.72 unit decrease in the importance of coverage as a factor. This is in

line with hypothesis nine, which suggested that younger participants will not view rural policing as a potential employer. Interestingly, as shown in the correlation matrix, Table 3.12, age was not significantly correlated with the coverage factor, however, it was a significant predictor in the regression analysis.

The regression for the need for policing factor was not significant ( $F(6,183) = 0.602, p = 0.729$ ). The employer attractiveness score, participant age, participant gender, personal experience with law enforcement, considering applying to the military, and the P-O fit score did not predict the score participants gave for need for policing (see Table 3.14).

Table 3.14

*Multiple regression: Predictive variables of the rural policing factors, need for policing factor scores*

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	28.475	12.550		2.269	0.024
Employer Attractiveness	-0.155	0.140	-0.090	-1.111	0.268
Age	0.038	0.486	0.006	0.078	0.938
Gender	2.153	2.388	0.068	0.902	0.368
Law enforcement experience	-1.396	2.055	-0.051	-0.679	0.498
Considered military application	0.657	1.503	0.033	0.437	0.663
P-O Fit	0.093	0.093	0.078	1.003	0.317

R=0.139, R Sq.=0.019, Adjusted R Sq.= -0.013, Std. Err. Est.=15.253, F=0.602,

Sig.=0.729, \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

The regression for the quality of life factor was not significant ( $F(6, 184) = 0.845$ ,  $p = 0.537$ ). The employer attractiveness score, participant age, participant gender, personal experience with law enforcement, consideration of applying to the military, and the P-O fit score did not predict the score participants gave for quality of life (see Table 3.15).

Table 3.15

*Multiple regression: Predictive variables of the rural policing factors, quality of life factor scores*

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	41.480	10.110		4.103	0.000
Employer Attractiveness	0.051	0.113	0.036	0.455	0.649
Age	-0.086	0.391	-0.016	-0.220	0.826
Gender	-2.568	1.922	-0.101	-1.336	0.183
Law enforcement experience	-2.504	1.654	-0.113	-1.514	0.132
Considered military application	0.302	1.209	0.019	0.250	0.803
P-O Fit	-0.060	0.075	-0.062	-0.802	0.424

$R=0.164$ ,  $R\text{ Sq.}=0.027$ ,  $\text{Adjusted } R\text{ Sq.}=-0.005$ ,  $\text{Std. Err. Est.}=12.295$ ,  $F=0.845$ ,

$\text{Sig.}=0.537$ , \*  $p<0.05$ , \*\*  $p<0.01$

The regression for the community assets factor was not significant ( $F(6, 183) = 1.392$ ,  $p = 0.220$ ). The employer attractiveness score, participant age, participant gender, personal experience with law enforcement, consideration of the military as a potential employer, and the P-O fit score did not predict the score participants gave for community assets (see Table 3.16).

Table 3.16

*Multiple regression: Predictive variables of the rural policing factors, community assets*

*factor scores*

Predictor Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	12.132	9.213		1.317	0.190
Employer Attractiveness	-0.083	0.103	-0.064	-0.809	0.420
Age	0.620	0.357	0.127	1.736	0.084
Gender	-0.395	1.753	-0.017	-0.226	0.822
Law enforcement experience	1.388	1.509	0.068	0.902	0.359
Considered military application	0.234	1.104	0.016	0.212	0.832
P-O Fit	-0.016	0.068	-0.121	-1.561	0.120

R=0.209, R Sq.=0.044, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.012, Std. Err. Est.=11.197, F=1.392,

Sig.=0.220, \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$

As described in the instruments section above (see section 2.2.3), the *need for policing* factor cannot be eliminated from the work police do; therefore, a second rural policing factors question was asked in the current study with *need for policing* eliminated from the model. It was anticipated that some participants would not want to be police officers, as they did not want to deal with crime. In this second question, participants were therefore asked to rank the remaining three factors in terms of which would dissuade them the most from rural policing (*policing coverage, quality of life, community assets*). As most participants did not indicate that the *need for policing* factor was the factor that would dissuade them most from rural policing, the question that asked about all four factors was used in the analysis for the current study (96.9% of participants

assigned 50 points or less to this factor). Tables C-6 to C-9 show the multiple regressions where participants rated the factors with the need for policing factor removed. Using the original question in the current study's analysis allowed for a better comparison with the Jewell et al. (2014) study.

### **3.2 Qualitative Analysis (hypothesis thirteen)**

All qualitative comments were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Specifically, all comments were examined for similar patterns across participants, and then terms were developed that described those patterns. The process for identifying these themes, as outlined in Braun and Clarke (2006), involved examining the qualitative data for repeating phrases or ideas which related to the research question. Quotations of key terms were included as much as possible to illustrate the themes for the reader, and their inclusion was recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006) to give the viewer an indication of the concepts within a given theme. There were 10 open-ended questions asked of participants throughout the survey instrument (see Appendix A). Four major themes emerged from all responses.

#### **3.2.1 Environment**

This theme included many comments on the rural nature of the work, the requirement to move frequently, as well as the general work environment of the job dissuaded several potential applicants. Environment was also mentioned in a positive context for some. Key terms in this theme that dissuaded potential applicants from the job included: "remote", "move", "relocated", "I'd like to settle in one place", "I want to live in a city", "working environment", "do not want to travel", "difficult to have a proper work-life balance", "this job is potentially dangerous and involves shift work", and "it is

the external factors such as living in a small town that I would not enjoy”. More comments classified in this theme referred to the above key terms in a negative manner (i.e., as dissuading them from considering rural policing as a career). Positive examples did exist for why participants saw rural policing as a potential career, and those key terms included: “unique opportunities”, “opportunities to move around the country”, “good way to survive and reproduce”, “it’s outdoors”, “if I didn’t have a kid and husband, I’d be cool going somewhere remote”, “small towns”, and “I would really enjoy the job part of being a police officer”. In line with hypothesis thirteen, this theme included the impact that work-life balance, and shift work may have on dissuading potential applicants from opportunities with rural police organizations (see Table 3.17).

Table 3.17

*Environment theme: Direct quotations from study participants*

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### **Dissuading from rural policing**

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“I would not like to live or especially work in an isolated, **remote** police station; I would feel extremely vulnerable. I would additionally not enjoy living in a community with so few amenities and poor access to fundamental things like grocery, recreation, etc. This accounts for why I gave Quality of Life the largest number of points. Close behind is Community Assets; I find I would be very frustrated policing a community where the people have such poor access to these services, as well as myself not having “back up” from these services. As for Policing Coverage, I feel like that is not as much of a deterrent as the other two. It is sort of a no-brainer to me that rural police have to **travel** more to arrive at a call than an officer working in an urban setting.”

“I do not believe that the commuting is the issue with this job, but living in a **remote** area would be very difficult for me!”

“The long drive to respond to domestic dispute or be the first to respond to an emergency is of little care to me, unless you have to deal with volatile situations where you may be shot and have no escape or help. The community and **remoteness** of where you live is of the most importance for me and my family. I've lived in the NWT and know how isolated communities can be, and then have to be a police officer there where you're not to be making too much of a relationship with people or you can't do your job correctly and then have to move after a certain amount of years in order to keep familiarity and congeniality

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down. The lack of services isn't as important but it is a sign of isolation or remoteness.”

“I would not necessarily want to **move** far away for work”

“I would not want to be **relocated** as often as most RCMP members are”

“Too much opportunity to travel; I'd like to **settle in one place.**”

“There's lots of reasons. The primary reason is probably because I was raised in a city and therefore **want to stay in a city.**”

“I am mostly very concerned with the quality of life as a rural police. I know living in a rural area will be very tough for me as a **city** boy. Therefore, I would not want to become a rural police.”

“If it was known that the employer is very mindful and considerate of employee needs such as having a **work-life balance**. This is not to say that they currently have a reputation of being bad for this but when I think of the RCMP, I tend to think of the officers in the field dealing with tough situations on **shift work with long hours**”

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### **Attractive for rural policing**

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“If I didn't have a kid and husband, I'd be cool going somewhere **remote.**”

“Policing coverage - recall a story of an officer responding to a call solo - he was shot and died. The thought of having to wait for backup for up to an hour is very dissuading. Quality of Life - I like **small towns**. I have gotten used to city life, but I think small town life would dissuade me less than other factors. Community Assets - Would prefer to live somewhere with a hospital, fire and ambulance services, as well as mental health, additions, and social services.”

“good **working environment**, job security and health benefit plans”

“it would be an interesting experience with **unique opportunities**”

“It is a very rewarding place providing opportunities to advance to new positions, with great benefits and **opportunities to move** around the Country.”

“**It's outdoors**, conserving the environment and keeping the peace”

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Note: emphasis added to terms or phrases in the quotations.



### 3.2.2 Personality Characteristics

This theme included comments on the personal characteristics perceived to be required to be a rural police officer. Key terms in this theme included: “not brave enough”, “I lack the ability and education”, “I avoid conflict”, “I lack the assertiveness and confidence”, “I don’t feel safe”, “not cut out for”, “passive personality”, “not physically fit enough”, “not a person who likes violence”, “I do not think I could handle the stress of the job”. There were only a small number of comments mentioned that related to participants seeing themselves as possessing these “personality characteristics”, these included: “ability to serve for keeping the peace”, and “valid career option after experiencing the life of a member” (see Table 3.18).

Table 3.18

*Personality characteristics theme: Direct quotations from study participants*

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#### **Dissuading from rural policing**

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“I can't see myself doing the work that police officers do. I'm not that **brave**.”

“I **lack ability and education** to work for this type of organization. Would just not be the right type of person.”

“I am not interested in police work. I **avoid conflict** all the time if I can.”

“I am not interested in becoming a police officer. I lack the **assertiveness and confidence** required.”

“Sometimes there is criminal case involve which I **don't feel safe to deal with**.”

“I'm **not cut out for** that type of work.”

“I am an **introverted, passive personality**. The concept of working with the RCMP seems like a crucial job for society and requires admiral individuals with brave personalities.”

“I am **not physically fit enough** to work in the police force”

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“I am **not a person who likes violence**”

“I don't think I could handle the **stress of the job.**”

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### **Attractive for rural policing**

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“the ability to serve for keeping peace”

“I lived with my cousin in an isolated Northern reserve to work as a jail guard and I now consider the RCMP to be a valid career option after **experiencing the life of a member.**”

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Note: emphasis added to terms or phrases in the quotations.

### **3.2.3 Informed About Policing Career Options**

This theme included comments related to not being informed enough, or having intimate knowledge about what a rural police officer does. Comments were also related to how police organizations function. Key terms from this theme that dissuaded potential applicants from rural policing, included: “I would face discrimination working.... impressions from media”, “I don’t believe the degree I’m working towards will present me with job opportunities in this sector”, “I’m sure it doesn’t pay enough”, “a rural Canadian town isn’t exactly a hot spot for crime”, “you’d probably spend more time handing out speeding tickets than actually responding to emergencies”, “I don’t know much about the inner workings of the organization”, “I don’t believe my degree would have any value in this organization”, “current trend of police militarization”. While key terms from this theme that attracted potential applicants to rural policing included: “whole idea sounds appealing”, “believe they offer decent wages”, “seems like a reputable organization”, “I like the idea of working together and being close with the people you work with and I feel like the RCMP would provide that”. As hypothesized in hypothesis thirteen, this theme included the impact that the media, and the perceived

militaristic nature of rural police organizations, might have on dissuading potential applicants from rural police organizations (see Table 3.19).

Table 3.19

*Informed about policing career options theme: Direct quotations from study participants*

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**Dissuading from rural policing**

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“As a female, I feel like I would face discrimination working at a rural RCMP station. **This is not based on facts, but on impressions from media.** I wouldn't say that it would be a last resort, but I think I would prefer a larger city where there would be greater diversity.”

“**I don't believe the degree I'm working towards will present me with job opportunities in this sector**”

“**I'm sure it doesn't pay enough,** and I want to live in a city.”

“**I have a feeling** most of the time you wouldn't have a lot of pressing issues, **a rural Canadian town isn't exactly a hot spot for crime.** You'd probably spend more time handing out speeding tickets than actually responding to emergencies or fighting crime.”

“**I don't know very much about the inner workings of the organization.** If I were to work for them though, it would be in an office/admin position”

“It has never been a type of work I've been interested in and **I don't believe my degree would have any value in the organization.**”

“The work of the field doesn't appeal to me, nor does the **general modal and current trend of police militarization**”

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**Attractive for rural policing**

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“because the whole **idea sounds appealing**”

“I believe they offer **decent wages and job security.**”

“**Seems like a reputable** organization”

“**I like the idea of working together** and being close with the people you work with and i feel like the RCMP would provide that.”

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Note: emphasis added to terms or phrases in the quotations.

### 3.2.4 Government Organization

This theme draws on participants' impressions of the benefits, and drawbacks of working for a government organization. Key terms attracting potential applicants to rural policing included: "government job", "job security", "reputable organization", "space for growth", "stability", "it's a government paid job, so I think this job is better than any non-government paid jobs", "RCMP is a federal and national police force. I assume jobs at RCMP are very secure". This last term also spoke to the *informed about policing career options* theme, as the word "assume" highlighted this participant's uncertainty about job security. A small number of comments related to dissuading factors for potential applicants to consider rural policing as a career option included: "just as the military, you need to have strict rules", and "government job". Contrary to hypothesis thirteen, this theme included the potential positive impact the perceived militaristic nature of rural police organizations may have on potential applicants considering rural police organizations for career opportunities (see Table 3.20).

Table 3.20

*Government organization theme: Direct quotations from study participants*

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#### **Dissuading from rural policing**

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Government job

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#### **Attractive for rural policing**

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"It's a **government paid job**, so I think this job is better than any non-government paid jobs. However, one thing I am little sad about this job is that the location. I want to live in a bigger city because I am a single and I might be single for a long time if I work in rural area since there will be less people living and less potential to find a good partner. Nevertheless, I am still young, so its not that big of a deal, so overall I am happy about this job opportunity."

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#### **"Job Security and space for growth"**

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“Seems like a **reputable organization**”

“**Stability**”

“An organization like this, just as the **military, you need to have strict rules** and it must be robust. I just assume that they would treat their employees with the most respect and they are all collectively together (to a certain degree)”

“RCMP is a **federal and national police force. I assume jobs at RCMP are very secure.**”

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Note: emphasis added to terms or phrases in the quotations.

### 3.2.5 Ranking Themes

The same four themes emerged for the question that specifically asked participants to comment on how they ranked the police factors (i.e., need for policing, coverage, quality of life, and community assets) as those identified by Jewell et al. (2014), in order to better understand why participants ranked the factors in the way they did. However, these responses were the most detailed, and lengthy, of all the open-ended questions. Responses from these questions may be included in the examples provided above (see Tables 3.17-3.20), as such the same results from sections 3.2.1 to 3.2.4 can be said for these responses.

A selection of participants’ responses to these questions are also in Table D-1 in Appendix D to highlight the four themes that emerged from ranking the police factors. The comments in Appendix D are arranged in order from those who put the least weight on the “need for policing” factor, to those who put the most weight on that factor. The scores participants assigned to each of the four factors is also listed next to their comment to provide the reader with additional context.

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

As police organizations in North America struggle to attract and retain qualified individuals, the current study provides some insight as to how these organizations may modify their structure and climate to suit the needs of future recruits (Wilson, 2012). The specific focus on rural police organizations in this project is, in part, a response to a call for more research on rural specific police services (Lithopoulos & Ruddell, 2013), because their characteristics (e.g., working in remote locations) differ from police organizations that recruit candidates in an urban context (Lithopoulos & Ruddell, 2013; Ruddell & Lithopoulos, 2016). An examination of post-secondary students for recruitment to rural police organizations is particularly relevant in light of a Statistics Canada's report that 19% of police officers only had a secondary school diploma (Hutchins, 2015). This percentage was even lower for police officers who had only recently started their careers (12%; Hutchins, 2015).

#### 4.1 P-O Fit

Using person-organization (P-O) fit theory was a unique approach to conceptualize the characteristics of a rural police organization that need to be in place to attract *potential* applicants (Chapman et al., 2005). As highlighted by Chapman et al. (2015), little work in the P-O fit literature has examined potential organizational applicants, and no work to date has been done examining P-O fit in relation to rural police organizations, despite evidence that suggests that P-O fit has a substantial role in job pursuit intentions relative to other predictors (Chapman et al., 2005). Using a difference score to calculate P-O fit was also a unique method to examine organizational

fit, particularly with policing, despite the fact that difference scores have been used in a similar manner in person-environment (P-E) literature (Lee & Gallivan, 2011, May).

Another novel aspect of this study was the calculation of P-O fit using the perception of how well an organization would meet participants' needs (Chapman et al., 2005). Ritz and Waldner's (2011) work motives scale, while designed to be answered by potential organizational applicants, served well in the calculation of P-O fit scores. However, the finding that those who stated that they had considered policing as a career were no different in their P-O fit scores than those who stated that they would not consider policing as a career. This finding directly contradicts hypothesis one of the current study. The ability of P-O fit scores to predict the employer attractiveness scores for rural police organizations, however, suggests that the relationship portrayed in Figure 1.1 between these two variables holds true. Specifically, P-O fit scores predicted the employer attractiveness of a given rural police organization, as it was found that for every one unit increase on the P-O fit score, there was a corresponding 0.20 increase in the employer attractiveness score (see Table 3.9). Even when accounting for other demographic factors, the ability of P-O fit scores to account for employer attractiveness suggests that a P-O fit score, calculated using a difference score for potential applicants, is a useful method for use in the P-O fit literature moving forward.

#### **4.2 Generational Differences**

As generational differences have been identified as a concern for organizations when recruiting the new generation of employees (McCafferty, 2003; Wilson et al., 2010), the current study found relationships that may be of use to rural police organizations. Specifically, age contributed to the attractiveness of rural policing as a potential employer

in accordance with hypothesis nine (i.e., for one unit increase in age, there was a corresponding 0.67 year increase in employer attractiveness, see Table 3.11). This finding is in keeping with previous literature that suggested that older participants would be more likely to prefer rural police organizations as a potential employer than younger participants (McCafferty, 2003; Wilson et al.,2010). Importantly, the current study also identified that, within this group of young potential applicants (the mean age of participants was 19.99 years), the working environment for those employed with rural police organizations was a concern. Specifically, participants mentioned the remote nature of the job and the possible inability to maintain a proper work-life balance were some of the factors that dissuaded this study’s participants from pursuing jobs with rural police organizations.

The finding that older participants would demand a lower salary than young participants for a role in a rural police organization other than a police officer also suggests that it is not just the policing nature of the potential job, but also the rural nature that is not attractive for the young participants in this study. Similarly, when considering the factors that may make a rural police organization an unattractive employer, older participants perceived the coverage factor, defined in Appendix A as “the ability to efficiently respond to calls and provide an adequate level of service within a geographic area”, to be less important than younger participants. More specifically, participants in the study were given an example to add context, “rural police sometimes travel 1 hour or more to respond to a call”. Therefore, the younger participants were likely dissuaded by the remoteness of the job. These findings are consistent with the current generational preference against possible long shifts, the ability to maintain a work-life balance, and the



quality of life in remote location work places generally (McCafferty, 2003; Wilson et al.,2010).

### **4.3 Educational Differences**

Participants' grade average was explored as a possible contributor to the attractiveness of rural police organizations as an employer, as past research had explored this variable as it relates to P-O fit (Ritz & Waldner, 2011). Similarly, the inclusion of this variable was important for police organization recruitment as police organizations seek to recruit applicants with a high level of education (Wilson et al., 2010). The current study found that academic average was a significant contributor to the attractiveness of rural police organizations as a potential employer. In line with past research that suggested police organizations struggle to attract highly educated individuals (Wilson et al., 2010), those with lower academic averages were more likely to perceive rural police organizations as an attractive employer (i.e., supporting hypothesis ten). Considering the academic homogeneity of participants who took part in the current study (the mean academic average of participants was 3.34, between a 70-90% average), academic average may be an important contributor to employer attractiveness for future studies examining P-O fit. In particular, future studies may be well served by examining the characteristics of all academic groups (i.e., those students with 90-100% average, and those with an average below 70%).

Rural police organizations may wish to explore in more detail the opinions of those with different academic averages in order to better understand the different perceptions of these groups. As police organizations compete with other organizations for

highly skilled candidates (Wilson et al., 2010), this remains an area for future research to explore.

#### **4.4 Gender**

Contrary to the hypothesis of the current study (hypothesis eleven), the gender of participants in the current study did not impact the attractiveness of employment with a rural police organization as predicted. Those who were not male showed no difference in the attractiveness of rural policing organizations as a potential place for employment (Cordner & Cornder, 2011). The study did however find that the gender of participants did impact the salary demanded to work for a rural police organization in a role other than as a police officer. Specifically, those who identified as men demanded a significantly higher salary than those of other genders. This finding is reminiscent of past research that found that there is a perception that the police-specific role is designed to favour male applicants in the recruitment process, and that the police environment itself is a male-dominated culture (Cordner & Cornder, 2011). This finding should be explored further in future studies, as the current study found that those who identify as women would actually demand a lower salary than men to work for a rural police organization, not just in a front line policing role.

#### **4.5 Ethnicity**

Past research has suggested that police organizations struggle to recruit an ethnically diverse workforce. The inclusion of ethnicity as a variable in the current study was important (Rowe & Ross, 2015; White & Escobar, 2008). The current study did not find ethnicity to be an important factor in any analysis, contrary to hypothesis twelve, related to the employer attractiveness of rural police organizations as a potential

employer. This may have been due to the fact that the most common ethnicity identified in the current study was “white” (66.3%) and the remaining participants were from a wide array of backgrounds. Past research indicated that it may only be specific ethnicities (e.g., African, First Nations) that are dissuaded from a career in policing (Lithopoulos & Ruddell, 2013; Rowe & Ross, 2015). Future studies exploring potential applicants for police organizations should recruit both a more ethnically diverse sample, as well as specific samples from those ethnicities that have been identified in past research as having a negative view of policing as a potential career option (Rowe & Ross, 2015; White & Escobar, 2008).

#### **4.6 Military Application**

The military has been identified as a main competitor for potential rural police organization applicants (Wilson et al., 2010). The current study’s finding that for every one unit increase in employer attractiveness scale there was a corresponding 1.70 unit increase in the consideration of applying to the military, on a four point scale, supports these previous findings, and is in accordance with hypothesis eight of this study. Future studies may add to this finding by exploring the characteristics of the military and police organizations in order to determine which characteristics may best be used to persuade potential applicants to join each organization. This is particularly important for rural police organizations as, in the current study, those who had considered the military as a potential employer were significantly more likely to consider applying to a police organization in their lifetime. Therefore, it would conceivably be worthwhile to explore what more police organizations could do to attract these potential applicants to policing.

#### **4.7 Personal Law Enforcement Experience**

Contrary to the findings of past literature, in particular those by Wilson et al. (2010), personal experience with law enforcement was not a contributor to employer attractiveness. Personal experience was however identified as a factor that significantly contributed to participants considering applying to a police agency. Therefore, this is a mixed finding relating to hypothesis seven. The capacity of personal experience to contribute significantly to considering applying to a rural police agency is of particular interest, considering that there were very few participants in the current study who had personal experience with law enforcement. Specifically, 66.3% of participants did not have *any* personal experience with law enforcement (e.g., security guard, research involving police), nor did they have a relative in law enforcement (i.e., relative/friend who is a police officer). Future studies exploring potential applicants for police organizations should consider, in more depth, the influence of personal law enforcement experience by using a sample with more diverse law enforcement experiences.

#### **4.8 Rural Separation**

Considering the environment (i.e., rural, urban) where potential applicants grew up, and where they wished to live is an important factor to consider based on the research on military recruitment (Schreurs & Syed, 2011). Findings from the current study add to this literature, as a significant relationship was found between employer attractiveness and preferring to live in a rural environment. This is in line with hypothesis six of the current study. Similarly, these rural participants were more likely to consider applying to a police agency in their lifetime. Future studies should explore in more depth why those who would prefer to live in a rural environment, might be more attracted to policing than

those who are from an urban environment. This is particularly interesting as this question referred not to whether study participants would consider applying to a *rural* police organization, but to become a police officer generally. Through future studies it may become clear that those who would prefer rural areas may not be attracted to rural policing simply because they may have grown up in a rural environment but because they enjoy being outdoors, hunting (i.e., using firearms), and enjoy physical activity, and, as such would consider rural policing regardless of where they grew up.

#### **4.9 Employer Attractiveness**

The capacity of employer attractiveness to significantly predict job application (hypothesis two), the likelihood of recommending employment with a police organization (hypothesis three), as well as the requested salary (hypothesis four), suggest that the relationships between these variables shown in Figure 1.1 hold true. This finding supports hypothesis two, three, and four of this study and the findings of Ritz and Waldner (2011). These relationships were reported by Ritz and Waldner (2011) in their study of P-O fit and employer attractiveness. Similarly, the ability of work motives to significantly contribute to predicting employer attractiveness also suggests that the relationship between work motives and employer attractiveness proposed by Ritz and Waldner (2011) holds true. The validation of the work motives scale for general work motives, and the validation of work motives specific to rural police organizations in the current study suggests that future P-O fit studies that wish to use potential applicants as their participants have a valuable tool available to explore relationships with work motives.

#### **4.10 Qualitative Findings**

The qualitative research elements of this study allowed for a more in-depth understanding of the study's quantitative results. By asking participants to explain their reasoning for the way they ranked, quantitatively, rural policing factors, this added to previous research using these factors (Jewel et al., 2014). It also allowed for the identifications of themes (i.e., personality characteristics, the environment, informed about policing career options, and government organization) which rural police organizations may wish to consider when examining their recruiting practices and their working environment. The ability to capture how potential applicants form their perceptions about a given organization should provide valuable insights for human resources professionals. By asking study participants to reflect on the reasoning behind their answers, human resources professionals gain insight into ways to craft information about their organization for potential applicants.

#### **4.11 Limitations**

While the current study was innovative in a number of ways, there were three principle limitations to this study.

One, it was the first to operationalize P-O fit using a total score with general work motives and the ability of an organization to meet those work place goals. Therefore, while informative, the extent to which this procedure captures the full extent of the reasons a potential applicant would not consider a given workplace is unclear.

Second, the current study used a university sample to explore potential applicants for rural police organizations. Generalizing the findings of this study to other samples should be done with caution. A university sample is one source of police recruits, which

means that this study does help inform the research on rural policing and police human resource challenges, however future studies should also include participants from other settings and educational backgrounds.

Third, this study used a hypothetical situation as study participants were not identified through active engagement with the recruiting process for a rural police organization. As such, participants did not necessarily have the knowledge about how a rural police organization functions in order to make judgments about the ability of a rural police organization to meet their needs as a future employee. Despite this potential lack of knowledge about rural police organizations, the research on the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977) suggests that even intentions to consider employment with a given organization is an adequate projection of future employment behavior. Due to the hypothetical nature of the study, participants also self-defined what constituted a “rural” police organization, as no definition of “rural” was provided in the survey. Future studies should use individuals who have begun the application process for a rural police organization in order to better understand how the current study’s findings apply to those who would be, potentially, more informed about rural police organizations.

One caution should be noted in this study. The way participants assigned factor weightings in the current study cannot be directly compared with the weightings assigned by police officers in the Jewell et al. (2014) study. While the participants in the current study indicated the extent to which each factor would dissuade them from policing, police officers in the Jewell et al. (2014) study indicated the importance of each factor for the location of future police stations. These are two different study objectives. Nonetheless, the information gained from this study should provide police organizations with a better

understanding of what potential recruits will look for in the locations where they would want to live.

#### **4.12 Conclusion**

This study was able to conceptualize the person-organization fit of potential applicants to rural police organizations. It suggested aspects of a rural police organization's working environment that may prove useful for human resources and recruiting professionals within these organizations. The comments provided by study participants provided an elaboration of the quantitative findings about the characteristics of participants that significantly contribute to potential applicants considering a career in rural policing. Specifically, those study participants who had a preference to live in a rural setting, who had a lower academic average, were older, have considered applying to the military, and have a higher person-organization fit score, were more likely to find a rural police organization an attractive potential employer. It is suggested that it would serve rural police organizations well to target their recruiting practices at these specific demographic groups. Similarly, rural policing organizations should conduct a more in-depth examination of those demographic groups that were found not to be interested in rural policing as a career (e.g., those who were younger, who had a higher academic average) to attract applicants from those groups in order to ensure a sustainable workforce into the future.

This study provides a framework that any organization may use to target a demographic group of interest to better understand their work motives, and the perceived ability of their organization to address these motives. This framework also offers organizations a means of better understanding how the opinions of potential recruits were



formed, and which sub-groups within the target sample may be more inclined to apply to their organization. This framework is unique because it not only targets those who are already engaged in an organization's recruitment process, but also those who are part of a demographic group from which the organization wishes to attract applicants.

#### **4.13 Recommendations**

It is recommended that future person-organization fit researchers consider using potential organizational applicants. As shown in the current study, and suggested by others (Chapman et al., 2005), this study may provide insight for organizations wishing to better understand the characteristics of those already interested in a job with their organization, and what may need to be addressed to better attract those with the characteristics they wish their applicants to possess (e.g., post-secondary education).

Considering the rural police focus of the current study, these organizations would be well served by examining their perceived working environment and addressing those areas in the future, as policing organizations, particularly rural policing organizations, generally struggle to find applicants (Scheer, 2014; Wilson et al., 2010).

Other organizations outside of policing are also encouraged to consider the framework developed in this study and to adapt it to their needs, in order to examine demographic groups that are not yet engaged with their organization. Through examining different potential applicant groups, human resources professionals may gain added insight into how individuals form opinions about their organization and who may be more inclined to consider future employment within their organization.

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## Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Page 1: Ethics Form.

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**Purpose and procedure:** Currently many employers are seeking a highly skilled applicant pool, such as university education individuals. As such understanding what potential applicants seek when looking for employment choices is important. Relatively little research exists on what university educated potential applicants may look for when considering a career in rural policing. By participating in this study you will assist in clarifying what you, as a highly educated individual, may look for when considering employment with a police organization.

As a participant this survey will ask questions about what you look for in potential employment organizations. The survey will begin with general questions, and then examine your preferences regarding employment with a rural police organization. The survey questionnaire should take no more than 20 to 30 minutes to complete. If you are participating through the Psychology Participant Pool, you will be compensated in the form of course credit. **This study is intended for undergraduate students only.**

**Potential Benefits:** Your responses may assist you in clarifying what you may look for in potential employers, which may assist you in the future as you look for a career. You will also assist in contributing to the literature on rural police employment, as little research currently exists in this area.

**Potential Risks:** There are no known risks to participating in this survey; however, as with any online related activity the risk of breach of confidentiality is always possible. This survey is hosted by Fluid Survey, a USA owned company, see the following for more information on [Fluid Survey Data Privacy in Canada](#)

**Storage of Data:** The research data will be stored on the secure servers in University of Saskatchewan's Arts building by the Faculty Supervisor. The data will not be accessible by the general public.

**Confidentiality:** Your participation is confidential. Although the data from this research project will be published and presented at conferences, the data will be reported in aggregate form, so that it will not be possible to identify individuals. Please do not put your name or other identifying information in the online questionnaire's fields. You may

be asked to provide your NSID, and PAWS email address following the study in order to be provided with compensation, but this information will not be associated with your survey responses.

**Right to Withdraw:** Your participation is voluntary and you only have to answer questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time, without penalty of any sort. Withdrawing from the study will not affect your grades or research credit. You will still be entered into the draw, and will not lose your research credit. Note that since there is no link between the survey answers and each participant, once the survey is submitted, there will be no way to remove your data from the study. **Click “Discard” on any page to end the survey and any data that you have contributed will be destroyed beyond recovery.**

**Questions:** If you have any questions concerning the research project, please feel free to ask the researchers at any point by contacting Craig Moore or Steve Wormith at the contact information above. This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Behavioural Research Ethics Board on [insert date of ethics approval]. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Ethics Office (966- 2975; ethics.office@usask.ca).

**Consent to Participate:** By completing and submitting the questionnaire, YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED and indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study. Consider printing this page for your records and information. You may also contact the researcher, Craig Moore, for a copy of the consent form.

I have read the consent form and agree to participate (yes, no) (yes goes to next page) (no skips to the end of the survey)

Page 2:

Please take time to think carefully about each response. Each question will help the researcher, and potentially employment organizations, make better evidence-based decisions. Your attention to each question is important to the quality of this research.

Will you take the time to think about each question? (yes/no).

Page 3:

Thinking about work motives that would help you select a future employer:

- 1) Please rate the importance of the following work motives for your decision of employer: (7-point scale: 1=not important at all, 2=low importance, 3=slightly important, 4=neutral importance, 5=somewhat important, 6=moderately important, 7=very important) (randomized)
  - a. Challenging Work
  - b. Variety of tasks
  - c. Opportunities for further training
  - d. Career and promotion opportunities
  - e. Work-life balance
  - f. High salary
  - g. Prospects of the sector
  - h. Opportunities for international assignments
  - i. Company's environmentally and socially responsible behaviour
  - j. Location
  - k. Job security

Page 4:

- 2) Which police organization comes to mind when thinking about rural policing?

Page 5:

- 3) Thinking about your answers to the first question, how important do you think the rural police organization you listed believes each work motive is for you as a potential employee? (7-point scale: 1=not important at all, 2=low importance, 3=slightly important, 4=neutral importance, 5=somewhat important, 6=moderately important, 7=very important) (randomized)
  - a. Challenging Work
  - b. Variety of tasks
  - c. Opportunities for further training
  - d. Career and promotion opportunities
  - e. Work-life balance
  - f. High salary
  - g. Prospects of the sector
  - h. Opportunities for international assignments
  - i. Company's environmentally and socially responsible behaviour
  - j. Location
  - k. Job security

Page 6:

- 4) Thinking about the rural police organization you listed: (5-point scale 1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree) (not randomized);
- i. General Attractiveness
    - a. For me, this organization would be a good place to work.
    - b. I would not be interested in this organization except as a last resort.
    - c. This organization is attractive to me as a place for employment. Please describe what made you choose your answer.
    - d. I am interested in learning more about this organization.
    - e. A job at this organization is very appealing to me. Please describe what made you choose your answer.

Page 7:

Thinking about the rural police organization you listed:

- i. Intentions to pursue
  - a. I would accept a job offer from this organization.
  - b. I would make this organization one of my first choices as an employer; please explain what would increase this organization as a potential employer
  - c. If this organization invited me for a job interview, I would go.
  - d. I would exert a great deal of effort to work for this organization
  - e. I would recommend this organization to a friend looking for a job. Please explain your answer.

Page 8:

Thinking about the rural police organization you listed:

- I. Prestige
  - a. Employees are probably proud to say they would at this organization; Please explain what you thought about to answer this question
  - b. This is a reputable organization to work for.
  - c. This organization probably has a reputation as being an excellent employer; please explain what you thought about to answer this question
  - d. I would find this organization a prestigious place to work. please explain what would increase the prestige of this organization as a potential employer
  - e. There are probably many who would like to work at this organization.

Page 9:

- 5) What salary would the rural police service have to offer you for you to accept a position there? (sliding bar, start \$10,000, top \$200,000)
- 6) What salary would the rural police service have to offer you for you to accept a position there in a role other than a police officer? (sliding bar, start \$10,000, top \$200,000)

Comments (not required):

We will now explore four areas important for rural police organizations. These four families of factors have been identified by past research that should be taken into consideration for rural police in Canada.

Think about each factor as it relates to why you would not become a rural police officer:

<b>Factor Family</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Determined by:</b>
<b>Need for Policing</b>	The current or anticipated presence of crime in a given location.	Calls for service, crime rates, types of crimes, predictors of crime, and victimization rates
<b>Policing Coverage</b>	The ability to efficiently respond to calls and provide an adequate level of service within a geographic area.  <b>Note:</b> Rural police sometimes travel 1 hour or more to respond to a call	Response times, back-up times, the centrality of a detachment, geographic distance between communities, and proximity to other detachments
<b>Quality of Life</b>	The features of a community that make it attractive for rural police officers and their families to live in.  <b>Note:</b> Some police stations are located in remote areas with very few stores, or recreational opportunities	Access to housing, schools and health care services, job opportunities for spouses, and amenities (e.g., grocery stores, recreational facilities)
<b>Community Assets</b>	The presence of additional human services agencies and amenities in a community that facilitate the provision of policing services.  <b>Note:</b> Some police stations are located in remote areas with very few community resources	The presence of fire and ambulance services, hospitals, mental health and addictions services, social services, probation offices, courts, and civic engagement

**QUESTION:**

**You have a total of 100 points to allocate among the four families of factor. Please allocate the number of points according to the weight each factor family would**

**dissuade you from considering a career in rural policing. Please ensure you allocate at least some points to each factor.**

Consider the following points allocation as an example:

40 points Need for Policing (means that mostly the presence of crime would dissuade you from wanting to consider rural police organizations as an employer),

20 points (Policing Coverage- the distance required to travel would dissuade you from wanting to be employed by a rural police organization)

30 points (Quality of Life- Quality of life in rural Canada is not as important as dealing with crime as a deterrent for working with a rural police organization)

10 points (Community Assets- the lack of community assets is the least important reason for why you would not work for a rural police organization)

Quality of Life

Community Assets

Need for Policing

Policing Coverage

Page 11:

**Now, considering rural police organizations are required to deal with crime (*Need for Policing*), it has been removed from the model.** Please now rate *Community Assets, Policing Coverage, and Quality of Life* in terms of the most likely to the least likely to dissuade you from joining a rural police organization.

Again, think about each factor as it relates to why you would not become a rural police officer:

<b>Factor Family</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Determined by:</b>
<b>Policing Coverage</b>	The ability to efficiently respond to calls and provide an adequate level of service within a geographic area.  <b>Note:</b> Rural police sometimes travel 1 hour or more to respond to a call	Response times, back-up times, the centrality of a detachment, geographic distance between communities, and proximity to other detachments
<b>Quality of Life</b>	The features of a	Access to housing, schools

	community that make it attractive for rural police officers and their families to live in.  <b>Note:</b> Some police stations are located in remote areas with very few stores, or recreational opportunities	and health care services, job opportunities for spouses, and amenities (e.g., grocery stores, recreational facilities)
<b>Community Assets</b>	The presence of additional human services agencies and amenities in a community that facilitate the provision of policing services.  <b>Note:</b> Some police stations are located in remote areas with very few community resources	The presence of fire and ambulance services, hospitals, mental health and addictions services, social services, probation offices, courts, and civic engagement

**QUESTION:**

**You have a total of 100 points to allocate among the three families of factor. Please allocate the number of points according to the weight each factor family would dissuade you from considering a career in rural policing. Please ensure you allocate at least some points to each factor.**

Example:

- 50 points Policing Coverage
- 30 points Quality of Life
- 20 points Community Assets

This ranking would mean that the determinants of Policing Coverage (example: response time, back-up times) would most dissuade you from applying to a rural police organization, while Quality of Life (example: access to housing and schools) would be the next highest factor dissuading you, while Community Assets (example: presence of fire or ambulance) would be least likely to dissuade you from applying to a rural police organization.

Policing Coverage

Quality of Life

Community Assets

Please provide comments on why you ranked the factors the way you did:

Page 12:

- 1) Would you describe the area you spent most of your life as rural or urban?
- 2) Would you describe your ideal place to live as an urban or rural setting?

Page 13:

Demographics

- 3) Sex (male, female, trans, other-please specify)
- 4) Age (given all numbers)
- 5) Degree of study (given list of choices)
- 6) Year of study (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, Other please specify...)
- 7) Academic average (50-60, 60-70, 70-80, 80-90, 90-100)
- 8) Ethnicity (Aboriginal (First Nations, Metis, Inuit), Arab, Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Latin American, South Asian (e.g., East Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, etc.), Southeast Asian (e.g., Vietnamese, Cambodian, Malaysian, Laotian, etc.), West Asian (e.g., Iranian, Afghan, etc.), White, Other, Prefer Not to Answer)

Page 14:

Relevant experience:

- a. Do you have a relative/friend who is a rural police officer? (yes, please describe)
- b. Do you have a relative/friend who is a police officer? (yes, please describe)
- c. Do you have personal experience in law enforcement? (e.g., security guard, research involving police). Yes/No (yes, please describe) (give months experience)
- d. Have you ever considered becoming a police officer? (i.e., past, present) (yes/no)
- e. Would you ever consider becoming a police officer? (yes/no) (please explain your answer to the question above)
- f. Have you ever considered becoming a member of the military? (i.e., past, present) (Answer yes if you are currently in the military in some form) (yes/no)
- g. Would you ever consider becoming a member of the military? (yes/no)
- h. Thank you. **Please click submit below to complete the survey. Once you submit the survey you may receive an "invalid-code" error from the SONA system. Please ignore this error- your responses have been submitted.**

**To receive credit please e-mail your participant ID number to Colleen (the SONA system administrator) [psych.pool@usask.ca](mailto:psych.pool@usask.ca) once the survey is submitted, or you withdraw from the study.**

If you would like to receive a copy of the final research report please e-mail the researchers at [craig.moore@usask.ca](mailto:craig.moore@usask.ca) or [s.wormith@usask.ca](mailto:s.wormith@usask.ca).

As stated in the consent form, this study will contribute to a better understanding what potential applicants seek when looking for employers. Relatively little



research exists on what university educated potential applicants may look for when considering a career in rural policing. By participating in this study you assisted in clarifying what you, as a highly educated individual, may look for when considering employment with a rural police organization. Your responses will assist in contributing to the literature on rural police employment, as little research currently exists in this area. It will also assist in examining Person-Organization fit (P-O fit) theory with respect to potential employees, an unexplored area in the P-O fit literature. P-O fit relates to the ability of an employer to adequately address your work motives.”

## Appendix B: Principal Components Analysis Results

Table B-1

*Correlation matrix: General work motives scale items*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Prospects of the sector										
2. Job security	0.171									
3. High salary	0.169	0.119								
4. Opportunities for further training	0.156	0.075	-0.010							
5. Variety of tasks	0.112	0.128	-0.071	0.388						
6. Career and promotion opportunities	0.279	0.074	0.277	0.284	0.247					
7. Challenging work	0.171	0.108	-0.059	0.429	0.516	0.187				
8. Opportunities for international assignments	0.222	0.076	0.070	0.305	0.268	0.063	0.288			
9. Work-life balance	0.033	0.186	0.019	0.160	0.207	0.072	0.042	0.055		
10. Location	0.053	0.072	0.267	0.021	0.058	0.036	0.007	0.047	0.307	
11. Company's environmentally and socially responsible behavior	0.124	0.154	-0.063	0.249	0.337	0.029	0.261	0.352	0.366	0.182

Table B-2

*Communalities general work motives scale*

Variables	Extraction
Prospects of the sector	0.591
Job security	0.463
High salary	0.659
Opportunities for further training	0.563
Variety of tasks	0.624
Career and promotion opportunities	0.691
Challenging work	0.604
Opportunities for international assignments	0.486
Work-life balance	0.649
Location	0.628
Company's environmentally and socially responsible behavior	0.629

Table B-3

*Correlation matrix: Police specific work motives scale*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Prospects of the sector										
2. Job security	0.246									
3. High salary	0.312	0.350								
4. Opportunities for further training	0.371	0.310	0.296							
5. Variety of tasks	0.349	0.237	0.103	0.537	0.415					
6. Career and promotion opportunities	0.402	0.378	0.446	0.534	0.587					
7. Challenging work	0.310	0.096	0.149	0.517	0.285	0.386				
8. Opportunities for international assignments	0.337	0.202	0.346	0.325	0.186	0.262	0.255			
9. Work-life balance	0.262	0.349	0.441	0.122	0.186	0.245	0.016	0.305		
10. Location	0.201	0.314	0.433	0.154	0.159	0.230	0.087	0.349	0.505	
11. Company's environmentally and socially responsible behavior	0.205	0.249	0.046	0.300	0.285	0.159	0.168	0.227	0.210	0.229

Table B-4

*Communalities police work motives scale*

Variables	Extraction
Prospects of the sector	0.428
Job security	0.752
High salary	0.735
Opportunities for further training	0.683
Variety of tasks	0.673
Career and promotion opportunities	0.715
Challenging work	0.702
Opportunities for international assignments	0.675
Work-life balance	0.637
Location	0.639
Company's environmentally and socially responsible behavior	0.822

## Appendix C: Hierarchical Regression, and Need for Policing Regression Results

Table C-1

*Hierarchical stepwise regression: Step one, employer attractiveness of a rural police organization*

Variables Entered	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	43.4	1.87		23.18	0.000**
Rural living preference	4.76	1.40	.24	3.40	0.001**

R=0.241, R Sq.=0.058, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.053, Std. Err. Est.=8.493, F=11.59,

Sig.=0.001, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Table C-2

*Hierarchical stepwise regression: Step two, employer attractiveness of a rural police organization*

Variables Entered	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	50.12	2.88		17.40	0.000**
Rural living preference	4.39	1.38	0.22	3.19	0.002**
Academic average	-1.87	0.62	-0.21	-3.03	0.003**

R=0.319, R Sq.=0.102, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.092, Std. Err. Est.=8.314, F=10.62,

Sig.<0.001, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Table C-3

*Hierarchical stepwise regression: Step three, employer attractiveness of a rural police organization*

Variables Entered	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	37.46	5.92		6.32	0.000**
Rural living preference	4.53	1.36	0.23	3.33	0.001**
Academic average	-1.89	0.61	-0.21	-3.11	0.002**
Age	0.63	0.26	0.17	2.44	0.016*

R=0.360, R Sq.=0.130, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.116, Std. Err. Est.=8.207, F=9.24, Sig.<0.001,

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Table C-4

*Hierarchical stepwise regression: Step four, employer attractiveness of a rural police organization*

Variables Entered	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	33.82	6.04		5.60	0.000**
Rural living preference	4.00	1.36	0.20	2.95	0.004**
Academic average	-1.99	0.60	-0.23	-3.31	0.001**
Age	0.63	0.26	0.17	2.48	0.001**
Considered military application	1.88	0.77	0.17	2.42	0.016*

R=0.396, R Sq.=0.157, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.138, Std. Err. Est.=8.101, F=8.58, Sig.<0.001,

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Table C-5

*Hierarchical stepwise regression: Step five, employer attractiveness of a rural police organization*

Variables Entered	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	19.84	8.12		2.44	0.015*
Rural living preference	4.15	1.34	0.21	3.09	0.002**
Academic average	-1.91	0.60	-0.22	-3.20	0.002**
Age	0.60	0.25	0.16	2.38	0.018*
Considered military application	1.74	0.76	0.15	2.28	0.024*
General work motives	0.23	0.09	0.17	2.53	0.012*

R=0.430, R Sq.=0.185, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.163, Std. Err. Est.=7.986, F=8.35, Sig.<0.001,

\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01



Table C-6

*Multiple regression: Predictive variables of the rural policing factor scores with the need for policing factor removed, coverage factor scores*

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	26.052	11.728		2.221	0.028
Employer Attractiveness	0.399	0.131	0.238	3.052	0.003
Age	-0.434	0.454	-0.069	-0.956	0.340
Gender	-0.545	2.227	-0.018	-0.245	0.807
Law enforcement experience	-3.501	1.924	-0.132	-1.819	0.071
Considered military application	0.085	1.401	0.005	0.061	0.951
P-O Fit	0.089	0.086	0.078	1.031	0.304

R=0.286, R Sq.=0.082, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.052, Std. Err. Est.=14.240, F=2.727,

Sig.=0.015\*, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Table C-7

*Multiple regression: Predictive variables of the rural policing factor scores with the need for policing factor removed, quality of life factor scores*

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	59.998	13.303		4.510	0.000
Employer Attractiveness	-0.291	0.121	-0.191	-2.401	0.017*
Age	0.014	0.420	0.002	0.034	0.973
Gender	-0.608	2.061	-0.022	-0.295	0.768
Law enforcement experience	1.604	1.782	0.067	0.900	0.369
Considered military application	0.564	1.297	0.033	0.435	0.664
P-O Fit	-0.071	0.076	-0.072	-0.936	0.350

R=0.225, R Sq.=0.050, Adjusted R Sq.= 0.019, Std. Err. Est.=13.182, F=1.622,

Sig.=0.143, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Table C-8

*Multiple regression: Predictive variables of the rural policing factor scores with the need for policing factor removed, community assets factor scores*

Variables	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized Coefficients- Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
Constant	20.112	10.283		1.956	0.052
Employer Attractiveness	-0.109	0.115	-0.076	-0.949	0.344
Age	0.419	0.398	0.078	1.052	0.294
Gender	1.143	1.953	0.044	0.585	0.559
Law enforcement experience	1.894	1.687	0.084	1.122	0.263
Considered military application	-0.666	1.229	-0.041	-0.542	0.589
P-O Fit	-0.013	0.076	-0.013	-0.169	0.866

R=0.146, R Sq.=0.021, Adjusted R Sq.= -0.011, Std. Err. Est.=12.486, F=0.681,

Sig.=0.681, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01

Table C-9

*Regression variables: Descriptive statistics*

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Standard Error of Skewness	Kurtosis	Standard Error of Kurtosis
Employer Attractiveness	49.351	8.790	0.026	0.175	0.422	0.347
Age	19.990	2.305	1.738	0.175	3.062	0.348
Gender	1.745	0.482	-0.284	0.174	1.399	0.346
Academic average	3.344	0.979	-0.170	0.174	-0.498	0.346
Ethnicity	9.230	2.885	-1.390	0.174	0.502	0.346
Rural living preference	1.270	0.445	1.042	0.174	-0.924	0.346
Law enforcement experience	2.378	0.564	1.188	0.174	0.440	0.346
Considered military application	2.439	0.772	1.355	0.174	0.064	0.346
P-O Fit	32.776	12.699	-0.143	0.174	0.247	0.346

Notes: Academic average was coded as 50-60:1, 60-70:2, 70-80:3, 80-90:4, 90-100:5; -

## Appendix D: Qualitative Comment Examples

Table D-1

*Comments to describe the rationale for participant's ranking of factors*

Comment	Need for Policing Factor Score	Coverage Factor Score	Quality of Life Factor Score	Community Assets Factor Score
More social services in rural areas could likely ease the burden on police services. Lack of backup is my next largest concern.	1	1	3	95
I would not want to have to drive so far to respond to a call. I want to live somewhere that I have easy access to community resources. I don't think I would need to be in the city to find recreational opportunities although it would be easier.	10	30	30	30
I think quality of life is important in an individual's life and I feel community assets are essential for a community to thrive. To me, these two go hand-in-hand as having more community assets would open up more opportunity and access to services for families of the officer. Community assets would also be beneficial for the whole policing process, e.g. courts, probation, etc. I think policing coverage is almost expected in a job with a rural police organization.	10	20	40	30
I want a work life balance. If I was a rural officer, that would be hard to attain. It is a sacrificial job for your personal life.	10	20	40	30
If I were to be in a situation where I was there to serve and protect, it would be beneficial to have a high quality of life to combat the already desolate area.	10	20	50	20

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<p>Travelling far distances is something that is indifferent, although it would be nerve racking making it to an emergency call 1 hr away. If the community has sufficient assets it would be beneficial, however it is not important as the quality of life.</p>				
<p>First, if I have a family, I would want ensure that my family has access to good schools, housing, amenities, etc, and I would not want to have to travel far away on calls and be away from my family. Second, I would also want my family to have access to a hospital in case of an emergency.</p>	20	50	25	5
<p>Policing coverage is important because if there is not enough police coverage in the area it will lead to high crime which in turn would be putting the extra burden on existing police resources, making people and officers vulnerable to excessive crime and violence. Moreover, under excessive work burden police might get too aggressive which can result in bad public relations. Secondly, quality of life is important but when a person is getting into rural policing they should know before applying that they might not be able to enjoy the facilities available in the city. The presence of other community services is also very important because without them police alone cannot handle all the emergency situations they might face, but the fact is that public resources are often limited and are allocated according to the population. This lack of resources makes rural policing a more challenging and I like challenging work, so this factor will not be a significant one in dissuading me from working for rural police.</p>	20	30	30	20
<p>The quality of life would be a big one for me as it would mean night shifts, on call, etc. that could take away from time with</p>	30	20	40	10

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my family. It would also be hard to be social if you were in a very small area. I think policing coverage is the next important one because it would be very difficult to have to spread yourself thin over such a large area. It can also be hard if you had to travel long distances in bad weather”, “the biggest factor would be what community assets are available, not only for me and my family but the community as a whole. If the community does not have the proper support, policing will always be a challenge.				
Personally, a job is just one generally isolated component of my life. I would not want to waste large portions of my time travelling from place to place (ie police coverage) or allow all other components of my life to suffer because of a job (ie quality of life).	35	20	35	10
I am a conservative minded individual who values security and public protection over social services and redistribution of wealth.	40	20	30	10
It would not deter me from a rural position to have to drive long distances, etc. as much as the quality of life and community assets. Quality of life is very important because I feel that this concept can have a large impact on workplace performance, emotional state, and determination to succeed.	50	5	25	20
I enjoy rural communities because they are small, and more close-knit. You do not apply for a job as police officer in a rural community thinking "back-up" will be right behind me or anything like that. If that's what you think the job is like you shouldn't even apply. Quality of life would still be good in the majority of places; it may not be as convenient, but you would just buy everything in bulk	70	0	20	10

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when you went to the city. The thing is, if you ever had to arrest someone from the community (which is part of your job), you would probably be arresting a friend or a neighbor. I wouldn't enjoy that. That would affect the rest of the community's opinion of you (right or wrong) and I'm pretty sure that falls under quality of life, because afterwards you would be treated different, even though you just did your job.

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*Note:* comments are a selection of the responses, and are in order from those who put the least value on the “need for policing” factor, to those who put the most weight on that category.