Since the 1960s, women have occupied a greater variety of jobs within the criminal justice system (Martin and Jurik, 2007). Over that period of time, their experiences and work-related attitudes have been the subject of considerable research (e.g., Morash and Haarr, 1995; Worden, 1993). Specifically, studies have examined if the levels and predictors of work-related burnout differ between female and male police officers (Gachter *et al.*, 2011; McCarty *et al.*, 2007).

Burnout, defined as a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job, is a severe form of job strain that plagues individuals working in human service professions, including law enforcement (Bradley, 1969). While excessive, ill-managed stress is an essential prerequisite for this condition, burnout is unique from other forms of job strain and work-related stress through the added dimensions of individuals feeling overwhelmed and hopeless without the energy to cope or respond (Cooper *et al.*, 2001). As such, burnout takes longer to develop than other forms of job strain and subsequently tends to be more difficult to eliminate.   The implications are thus severe as this condition can affect workers' health and undermine an organization by speeding staff turnover (Maslach *et al.*, 2001). In law enforcement agencies, organizational goals can also be compromised as burnout among sworn officers can hinder interactions with community members (Kop *et al.*, 1999) and decrease the overall efficiency of the department (Goodman, 1990).

The existing studies of gender differences in burnout among sworn personnel, however, have focused predominantly on first-line officers. Police supervisors, especially sergeants, are often in the background of such research, representing a small percentage of the overall sample or viewed as one of the sources of strain among first-line officers (Chapin *et al.*, 2008). How, or

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whether, the levels of work-related burnout and its predictors vary between female and male sergeants has not been examined empirically.

This inattention to burnout among sergeants is surprising given the difficulty of their job as well as the importance of their role in achieving organizational goals. When supervisors are emotionally exhausted at work or begin to feel detached from interpersonal encounters, their attention to supervisory functions may decline and they may not lead by example. As such, the current study examines burnout issues in samples of nearly 200 female sergeants and more than 700 male sergeants representing a municipal police department located in a large Midwestern city. The study has two goals. First, it determines whether gender differences exist in levels of burnout among female and male sergeants in municipal policing. Second, regression analyses are used to examine whether the predictors of burnout differ between female and male sergeants. Typically, the number of females in police supervisory positions is too small to conduct a reliable test of differences, but this obstacle can be overcome by focusing on a single large department. A discussion of the implications of the findings for both research and practice is then presented.

<div align="center">**Brief History of Women in Policing**</div>

While the inclusion of women in policing can be traced to the 19th century, their roles and protections changed in the 1960s and 1970s (Schulz, 1995). Spurred by social and economic changes during the 1960s, the Equal Opportunity Act (EEOA) of 1972 was passed to extend the antidiscrimination provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to state and local governments. The EEOA was a significant factor in changing the gender composition of law enforcement agencies throughout the United States. Prior to its passage, women only represented approximately two percent of all sworn personnel (Martin and Jurik, 2007). Since its passage and despite a recent

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plateau (Cordner and Cordner, 2011), this percentage has increased with women comprising 11.7 percent of all municipal officers in 2009 (U.S. Department of Justice, 2010). Promotion of women to the supervisory ranks has come slower. Data collected from 247 agencies with more than 100 officers demonstrate that in 2001, women comprised only 9.6 percent of supervisory personnel (Lonsway *et al.*, 2002).

Work Environment of Female Police Officers

Although women legally have equal access to employment as police officers, this does not guarantee that they will receive equal access to resources and informal networks within the organization. A broad masculine culture has pervaded law enforcement organizations and created an environment where female officers may feel uncomfortable (Martin and Jurik, 2007). As Haarr (1997, p. 55) argued, this culture has promoted competition to establish formal and informal hierarchies, accepted violence as the primary mechanism for resolving disputes, and supported displays of masculinity, sexism, and racism. Consequently, female officers may be viewed as deviant and experience difficulty gaining acceptance from their male colleagues, which can affect adversely performance evaluations and opportunities for promotion (Martin and Jurik, 2007).

There is, however, evidence of change in some police organizations as shifts toward community policing and away from authoritarian management systems have expanded the qualities that police officers see as necessary to accomplish their work, including female-associated expressiveness and communal orientation (Morash and Haarr, 2012, p. 4). As Horne (2006) argued, women may be better than men at carrying out the philosophies of community policing due to their unique problem-solving and communication skills, attributes that even male officers may recognize (Morash and Haarr, 2012). As a result, in some departments,

discrimination and harassment of female officers may be abating somewhat as organizational culture becomes more accepting of women (Rabe-Hemp, 2007). Despite this evidence of progress, female officers still endure differential treatment and derogatory comments made by male police officers and supervisors (Archbold and Hassell, 2009). This is also true for female police executives who often do not feel accepted in the organization, despite their advancements (Rabe-Hemp, 2012).

Difficulties for female officers of all ranks may also stem from conflicts that take place outside of the organizational setting. As Chafetz (1997) explained, women often bear the majority of home and childcare responsibilities. When full-time employment as a police officer is added to those responsibilities, additional conflicts and strain can be the result. These strains can be especially acute for female sergeants, or for those who are trying to make rank, as assignment and shift changes can affect family and child-care issues (Rabe-Hemp, 2012).

Gender and Burnout in Policing

Despite the recent work of Morash and Haarr (2012), the historical dominance of males within the policing profession and the potential conflicts over balancing work and life responsibilities almost compels one to conclude that there are significant differences between the two genders with regard to their work-related attitudes (Worden, 1993). In particular, the historical backdrop of resentment and hostility has resulted in many researchers hypothesizing that female officers express higher levels of burnout than their male counterparts (McCarty *et al.*, 2007).

Despite the intuitive appeal of the role of gender as a significant correlate of burnout, the empirical results are inconsistent. Researchers such as Johnson (1991) have found that female officers had high levels of emotional exhaustion, which represents one component of burnout.

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Etzion (1984) and Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) reported similar findings concerning elevated levels of burnout among women when compared to their male colleagues. Conversely, other researchers have found that despite the historical dominance of males within the policing profession, the implications for burnout are minimal. In a study of 947 male officers and 157 female officers working in the Baltimore Police Department, McCarty *et al.* (2007) found no significant differences in their average levels of burnout. Similarly, in a study of Dutch police officers, Kop *et al.* (1999) found no difference in the levels of burnout between female and male officers.

Although the findings outlined above are conflicting, they have added considerably to an understanding of how gender is related to burnout among law enforcement personnel. The results, however, are limited in that they focus predominantly on the experiences of first-line personnel. How, or whether, these results apply to female and male police sergeants is unknown. It is possible, however, that organizational and other job-related stressors could become more pronounced for women who make rank, thereby exacerbating their levels of burnout when compared to their male counterparts.

Martin and Jurik (2007, p. 86), for example, argued that after successfully traversing the "cult of masculinity" that pervades the rank and file, women who make rank in a law enforcement organization may then have to encounter a gendered environment in which a "managerial masculinity" dominates. This managerial culture has an acute focus on meeting performance indicators and targets, which is believed to foster a competitive masculinity that links success to decisive action, productivity, and risk taking. As a result, those who are promoted face a high-pressure work environment characterized by longer hours and a workaholic ethos that equates managerial competence with masculinity (Silvestri, 2003, p. 65).

Even after making rank and adapting to the many demands of the position, female sergeants may be susceptible to additional stressors that may exacerbate burnout, assuming that some degree of sexism remains intact in the workplace. Taking disciplinary action against subordinates, a prominent stressor for all law enforcement supervisors, may be especially difficult for female sergeants as their charges may stop performing their duties to undermine the authority of a female supervisor (Martin, 1990). Ultimately, female sergeants may still be considered tokens in the organization. Drawing upon Kanter's (1977) work, tokens are susceptible to unique stressors within an organization, including heightened scrutiny and less social support from other employees. In particular, women who are promoted have difficulties forming interpersonal relationships with their peers (Martin and Jurik, 2007). Further, they may face the perception that they were promoted just because of their gender (Archbold and Hassell, 2009). These realities may hurt the overall well-being of female sergeants and lead to higher levels of work-related burnout (Nelson and Quick, 1985).

Finally, longer hours and greater responsibilities held by sergeants may result in less time spent at home taking care of family responsibilities. When time is available, the strain of additional responsibilities associated with a supervisory role at work may still spillover and affect what takes place at home (Greenhaus and Parasuraman, 1999). Research has found that these feelings of work-life conflict are strong predictors of burnout (Martinussen *et al.*, 2007). Furthermore, these feelings can be more pronounced among female employees, who often bear the most responsibility for raising children and taking care of other responsibilities at home (Cowan and Bochantin, 2009). As a result, female sergeants may express higher levels of burnout than their male colleagues.

Conversely, it is possible that the stressors outlined above are not felt differently by female and male sergeants and levels of work-related burnout may be similar. As Morash and Haarr (2012) suggested, women who move up in rank may be more aware of their multifaceted characteristics and capabilities and thus more resistant to stereotypical assumptions of their shortcomings, feelings that may ameliorate their feelings of burnout. Or, given the strong organizational culture found in law enforcement agencies, it would be expected that the socialization process has a larger and more uniform effect with longer tenured employees (Fry and Greenfield, 1980). All of the sergeants in the current sample have at least 6 years of experience in the organization, with the average being between 16 and 20 years. These additional years of service could result in more symmetry in work-related attitudes, including burnout, expressed by female and male sergeants. Ultimately, being a sergeant could represent a "master status," which results in all non-organizational factors, including gender, being inconsequential to work-related attitudes, including feelings of burnout (Hughes, 1958).

Current Study

In sum, existing empirical knowledge of the role of gender in shaping work-related attitudes, including burnout, does not corroborate the existence of widespread differences between female and male officers, nor does it convincingly illustrate that socialization into the police role extinguishes any effect that gender might have on job-related attitudes. The current study assesses these competing perspectives with a focus specifically on whether the levels and predictors of work-related burnout differ between female and male sergeants. The data and methods used to test these propositions are outlined below.

Methods

Participants

The participants in this study were 171 female and 737 male sergeants who work in a large Midwestern municipal police department. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1. Among female sergeants, approximately 23% were African American and 12% Hispanic. Roughly 37% had earned a master's degree or above. The largest concentration of female sergeants had 16 to 20 years of experience with this agency. A majority of the female sergeants were married. Among male sergeants, approximately 14% were African American and 12% Hispanic. Exactly 27% had earned a master's degree or above. The largest concentration of male sergeants had 16 to 20 years of experience with this agency. Almost 79% of the male sergeants were married.

- Table 1 goes about here –

Data and Measures

All data and measures for this study were drawn from a 188-item survey. The purpose of the survey was to better understand police supervision and identify opportunities for improvement. A paper-and-pencil questionnaire was administered to police supervisors who were attending a week-long in-service training session in 2009. The research team introduced the survey as a precursor to a national project designed to advance knowledge and practice in policing. The researchers explained that participation was voluntary and survey responses were anonymous. Written informed consent was obtained. The participants included supervisors at all ranks, although the current study focuses solely on those at the rank of sergeant. The overall response rate was 90%.

Dependent Variables

Traditionally, work-related burnout has been considered a three-dimensional construct, consisting of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment

(Maslach *et al.*, 2001). A desire to capture a breadth of concepts and avoid an overly onerous

instrument limited the number of items and concepts that were measured. As emotional

exhaustion and depersonalization have common correlates that are only marginally related to

personal accomplishment (Leiter, 1993), they are the two dimensions that were measured and

examined in this study. Emotional exhaustion, which represents a depletion of emotional energy,

was measured using a three-item composite scale (alpha = .88). The items were modified, with

permission, from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach and Jackson, 1981).

Responses were scored on a 7-point Likert scale from never to daily. A high score on the

composite measure indicates frequent manifestations of emotional exhaustion.

Depersonalization, which involves a tendency to treat other individuals in the work setting as

objects rather than people (Maslach, 1982), was measured using a two-item composite scale

(alpha = .82). The items, also based on the MBI, were scored on a 5-point Likert scale from

strongly agree to strongly disagree. The categories were reverse coded so that higher scores on

the composite measure indicate stronger feelings of depersonalization. A full list of the survey

questions can be found in the Appendix.

Independent Variables

In order to assess whether the predictors of burnout varied between female and male

sergeants, five independent variables germane to police sergeants and consistent with the general

burnout literature were included in the analysis. As burnout can occur when resources, including

social support, are lost at work, two independent variables were included to assess the sergeants'

views of those relationships. First, a three-item composite scale (alpha = .83) was used to

measure sergeants' view of subordinates. Sergeants were queried about how favorably they

viewed the attitudes, cooperation, and attentiveness of their charges. Social support of this

nature has a strong mitigating influence on burnout (Schaufeli and Buunk, 1996). Items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from very satisfied to very dissatisfied and were reverse coded so that higher scores relate to more favorable views of subordinates. Second, a two-item composite scale (alpha = .56) was used to measure satisfaction with peers and supervisors. McCarty *et al.* (2007) found a similar measure to have a significant mitigating effect on burnout among male and female police officers. In this study, sergeants were asked about their level of satisfaction with fellow supervisors and their immediate supervisor. Both items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from very satisfied to very dissatisfied and were reverse coded so that higher scores indicate higher levels of satisfaction with peers and supervisors.

Third, given the additional responsibilities and changing hours experienced by a police sergeant, the study measured attitudes of work-life conflict, which has been found to be a strong predictor of burnout (Martinussen *et al.*, 2007). Work-life conflict was measured by a three-item composite scale (alpha = .57). Two items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale with response categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The third item was measured on a 4-point Likert scale from never or rarely to very often. A high score on this index indicates high levels of work-life conflict.

Fourth, a six-item composite scale (alpha = .71) measured perceptions of unfairness. Items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Features of organizational climate, like those measured in this scale, have been found to exacerbate burnout among sworn police officers (McCarty and Skogan, 2013). A high score equates to high levels of perceived unfairness.

Finally, sergeants were asked about their approach to discipline. While the role of this variable in the burnout process has not been examined empirically, studies of the related, but

distinct, concept of job stress have found discipline to be the preeminent stressor among police

supervisors (Kroes *et al.*, 1974). Further, as burnout often results from excessive demands from

individuals in the work environment, it is expected that supervisors who engage in more hands-

on forms of discipline with their subordinates may experience higher levels of burnout than those

who do not. A three-item composite scale (alpha = .73) was used to measure this construct. The

three items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Respondents were asked how they would respond to a situation in which they observed an

officer talking to citizens in an unnecessarily aggressive or insulting way. A high score on the

index equates to a more hands-on and assertive method of discipline.

Control Variables

Four demographic control variables were also included in the analysis: race, education,

years on the job, and marital status. Race was divided into three dummy variables that captured

respondents self-identifying as African American, Hispanic, or an "Other" category (i.e., Asian,

Native American, or multi-racial). Self-identifying Whites served as the reference category. As

only a small percentage of respondents were in the "Other" category, this variable was omitted

from the multivariate models. Education was dichotomized to compare those with a master's

degree or above with those with less than a master's degree. An ordinal variable was used to

capture the number of years the respondent had been employed at this agency. Marital status

was dichotomized to compare those individuals who were not married to those who were married

or had a live-in partner.

Results

The first goal of this study was to determine if there are significant differences in the

levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization described by female and male sergeants.

As Table 1 indicates, the average emotional exhaustion level was 3.57 for female sergeants and 3.25 for male sergeants, a difference that is statistically significant (t = 2.31, p < .05). Translating these scores into the response categories found in the survey, both female and male sergeants reported episodes of emotional exhaustion between "once a month" and "2-3 times per month."

The results were entirely different for depersonalization. On a five-point scale, the average depersonalization score was 2.97 for female sergeants and 3.32 for male sergeants, a difference that is also statistically significant (t = -3.84, p < .05). This difference indicates that female sergeants reported less depersonalization, or less emotional detachment from others in the work environment, than male sergeants.

Fewer significant differences were detected among the burnout-related aspects of their jobs discussed above. Female and male sergeants only differed significantly (t = 3.52, p < .05) in their approaches to discipline, with females more likely than their male counterparts to adopt a hands-on or assertive approach to disciplining a subordinate for talking to citizens in an unnecessarily aggressive way.

The second goal of this study was to determine whether the predictors of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization differ significantly between female and male sergeants. Table 2 contains the results of ordinary least squares regression analysis for emotional exhaustion and depersonalization, which were regressed with the independent and control variables for female and male sergeants, respectively. The unstandardized b-coefficients are reported, along with the standard errors, the difference in the b-coefficients, and the corresponding z-values. There are similarities between the emotional exhaustion models as satisfaction with peers and supervisors was a negative and statistically significant predictor for female and male sergeants, signifying

that when satisfaction with peers and supervisors increased, emotional exhaustion decreased. Work-life conflict also had a positive and statistically significant effect on emotional exhaustion for female and male sergeants, indicating that as work-life conflicts increased so too did emotional exhaustion.

- Table 2 goes about here –

The emotional exhaustion models for females and males also showed contrasts. Perceptions of unfairness had a positive and statistically significant effect on emotional exhaustion, but only for male sergeants, indicating that as their perceptions of unfairness increased so too did their feelings of emotional exhaustion. African American male sergeants also reported significantly lower levels of emotional exhaustion when compared to their White male counterparts. Years on the job had a negative and statistically significant effect on emotional exhaustion for male sergeants, indicating that as their years on the job increased, their reports of emotional exhaustion decreased. The adjusted R-square measures for female (.20) and male (.29) sergeants were moderate.

There are similarities between the two depersonalization models. For female and male sergeants, work-life conflict had a positive and statistically significant effect on depersonalization, meaning that as these conflicts increased so too did feelings of depersonalization. Also, African American female and male sergeants had significantly lower levels of depersonalization than their White counterparts, respectively.

Differences between the depersonalization models are also apparent. Satisfaction with peers and supervisors had a negative and statistically significant effect on depersonalization for female sergeants only, signifying that as their satisfaction with these groups increased, their feelings of depersonalization decreased. Further, as years on the job increased for female

sergeants, their feelings of depersonalization decreased. Perceptions of unfairness and the approach to discipline were statistically significant predictors of depersonalization for male sergeants only, indicating as their perceptions of unfairness in the organization increased, so too did their reports of depersonalization. Also, as male sergeants took a more hands-on orientation to discipline, their feelings of depersonalization decreased. Finally, Hispanic male sergeants expressed significantly lower feelings of depersonalization than their White male counterparts. The adjusted R-square measures for female (.16) and male (.21) sergeants were moderate.

The following formula outlined by Paternoster *et al.* (1998) was used to test whether the estimated *b*-coefficients for female and male sergeants were equivalent, or significantly different:

$$z = \frac{b_1 - b_2}{\sqrt{SEb_1{}^2 + SEb_2{}^2}}$$

b_1 is the unstandardized coefficient for female sergeants and b_2 is the unstandardized coefficient for male sergeants. SEb_1 is the standard error of the unstandardized *b*-coefficient for female sergeants and SEb_2 is the standard error of the unstandardized *b*-coefficient for male sergeants. Columns in Table 2 display the differences in the unstandardized coefficients (marked "Diff. *b*s") between female and male sergeants for all independent and control variables for emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and whether the corresponding *z*-values are statistically significant. Looking at the z-values for emotional exhaustion in Table 2, the effects of all of the independent and control variables are invariant between female and male sergeants. Looking at the z-values for depersonalization in Table 2, the effects of virtually all of the independent and control variables, with the exception of perceptions of peers and supervisors, are invariant between female and male sergeants. The statistical significance of the z-value associated with the difference in unstandardized *b*-coefficients indicates that the effect of satisfaction with peers

and supervisors on depersonalization is greater for female sergeants than male sergeants. A discussion of the implications of these findings for research and practice is outlined below.

Discussion

The historical dominance of males within the policing profession has resulted in many studies that have explored the work-related attitudes of female police officers. Several of these studies have examined gender differences in burnout, a unique form of psychological strain that can have deleterious implications for workers' health and job performance as well as the overall efficiency of the department. Prior studies of this condition among police officers have focused predominantly on first-line personnel, but there are reasons to suspect that supervisors also endure burnout-inducing on-the-job challenges that may be magnified, or ameliorated, for females occupying the rank of sergeant.

This study had two goals. First, the average levels of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were compared between 171 female sergeants and 737 male sergeants employed by a municipal law enforcement agency in a large Midwestern city. Female sergeants had significantly higher average levels of emotional exhaustion than male sergeants, indicating they felt used up at the end of the workday, burned out from work, and frustrated by their jobs more often than their male counterparts. Conversely, female sergeants had significantly lower levels of depersonalization than male sergeants, indicating that they were less likely than their male colleagues to feel that the job was hardening them emotionally or making them feel callous towards people.

These findings suggest that the role of gender in the formation of burnout is different depending on the component of burnout studied. Empirical studies in organizational contexts other than policing have reached similar findings. In a recent meta-analysis of approximately

200 studies, Purvanova and Muros (2010) found that women scored somewhat higher on emotional exhaustion than men while men scored somewhat higher on depersonalization than women. Also, Innstrand *et al.* (2011) found that among a sample of approximately 5,000 people representing eight occupational groups, women experienced significantly more exhaustion and significantly less disengagements at work than men. As Purvanova and Muros (2010, p. 169) argued, this pattern of findings is consistent with gender role theory, which suggests that women are likely to express feelings of emotional and physical fatigue (i.e., emotional exhaustion) because they are socialized to display their emotions whereas men are socialized to conceal their emotions and shut off and withdraw (i.e., depersonalization) when experiencing prolonged stress (Eagly and Wood, 1982).

These findings also suggest that female sergeants may feel more emotionally exhausted than male sergeants because they do not depersonalize. Trying to treat everyone in the work setting as individuals, not objects (i.e., personalize) is a difficult task, and as a result, a small amount of depersonalization is functional and often essential in human services professions to mitigate emotional arousal and exhaustion (Golembiewski *et al.*, 1986). Looking at the findings in this study, it could be that the higher average levels of emotional exhaustion among female sergeants compared to male sergeants could be a by-product of them not depersonalizing enough, while the higher levels of depersonalization among male sergeants may be more functional in mitigating their emotional exhaustion. Whether depersonalization ultimately leads to emotional exhaustion among female sergeants would be an excellent avenue of future research using a longitudinal research design as it would help clear up the extensive debate about the temporal order of the components of burnout (Golembiewski *et al.*, 1986).

The second goal of the study was to determine whether the predictors of burnout differed significantly between female and male sergeants. Separate regression models, and subsequent tests of the differences in unstandardized *b*-coefficients, demonstrated that the burnout process is almost entirely consistent between female and male sergeants. The effects of virtually all of the independent and control variables on emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were invariant when comparing female and male sergeants. The one exception was satisfaction with peers and supervisors, which had a significantly greater suppressing effect on depersonalization for female sergeants than for male sergeants.

While the mitigating effects of peer and supervisor acceptance on work-related burnout have been well documented among all types of employees of both genders (Schaufeli and Buunk, 1996), this finding is seen as indicative of the importance of relationships for women who occupy supervisory positions in a historically male-dominated work environment. Even though in the aggregate there was no significant difference in the average level of satisfaction with peers and supervisors between male and female sergeants, this finding underscores the importance of maintaining good relationships with peers and supervisors for mitigating excessive depersonalization among females who occupy this position. Human development research in the fields of psychology and gender studies suggest that women are generally more "relational" than males and seek out interpersonal connections, especially with other females, to provide emotional support, friendship and gender-specific validation (Gilligan, 1982). Whether female police supervisors prefer social connections with other females within the organization remains to be determined, but this would be a reasonable hypothesis based on prior research.

Other findings warrant discussion. First, female and male sergeants did differ significantly with regard to their orientations toward discipline, with female sergeants more

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likely to adopt a more hands-on and assertive method of discipline. This finding is seen as consistent with Martin and Jurik (2007, p. 87), who argued that in order for women to succeed in law enforcement management, they must learn how to communicate messages of power and authority through presence and voice and avoid being seen as weak.

Second, various demographic variables were significant predictors of burnout. For example, younger sergeants felt more burned out than older sergeants, a finding that suggests adjusting to the job can be stressful early in one's career as a supervisor, but that burnout may not be a "permanent" psychological state, as some researchers have assumed. Also, the analyses demonstrated that racial and ethnic minority sergeants (i.e., African American female and male sergeants, Hispanic male sergeants) had significantly lower average levels of burnout than their White colleagues, findings that run counter to expectations created by past research (Dowler, 2005). The underlying reasons for these findings are beyond the scope of the current study, but provide an avenue for further research into how burnout differs between races, ethnicities, and ranks of employees.

The findings of this study have implications for both research and practice. For researchers, the results highlight the importance of studying the different components of burnout. Emotional exhaustion has become synonymous with burnout, with researchers considering it as the primary aspect of this condition. When studies only examine gender differences in emotional exhaustion, a picture of women being more burned out than men becomes apparent. As Purvanova and Muros (2010) argued, this conclusion can have serious, and negative, implications. First, it perpetuates the stereotype than women are more prone to burnout, which can result in discrimination in employment or promotion decisions because they are assumed to develop chronic stress reactions. Second, it could have negative implications for male

employees, whose burnout experiences may go unrecognized. In fact, depersonalization can be an important problem in today's work environment, where great emphasis is being placed on supervisors treating their employees with respect and encouraging their officers to engage with members of the public in a fair and respectful manner. As such, future research should be cognizant of these differences and recognize that males and females may experience burnout differently.

Implications for policy are also apparent. Recognizing that both female and male sergeants experience difficulties with burnout, greater organizational resources should be allocated to mitigating this condition. For female sergeants, recognizing the added importance of peer and supervisor support, mentoring and networking programs could be of particular benefit to those in supervisory positions. In addition to having a positive effect on social support and health effects, programs of this nature help an organization develop a greater talent pool of individuals to move further up the organizational hierarchy. In light of work-life conflict being a significant predictor of emotional exhaustion and depersonalization for female and male sergeants, other family-friendly initiatives such as paid maternity/paternity leave, flexible work hours, and in house day-care options may also help all sergeants balance work and family responsibilities (Cowan and Bochantin, 2009). These initiatives may be especially important for sergeants married to other officers, which adds additional strain on balancing work and life responsibilities (Archbold and Hassell, 2009). Further, these initiatives may encourage qualified women, who may have been on the "mommy track" and delayed or foregone opportunities for advancement, to try to move up in the organizational hierarchy (Rabe-Hemp, 2012). Finally, recognizing that burnout levels may be higher for younger sergeants indicates that new

supervisors may need additional support and coaching from middle management as they adjust to the challenges of an entirely new set of responsibilities.

Limitations of the current study must be acknowledged. First, the survey was only fielded in one organization, which may or may not be typical of large municipal law enforcement agencies and is unlikely to represent smaller agencies. Second, the data were only cross-sectional. Longitudinal data would add considerably to the knowledge about how attitudes of male and female sergeants either converge or diverge over time and the temporal order of the components of burnout.

An obvious next step in this line of research would be to expand the number of participating agencies as that would allow examinations of the attitudes of supervisors in small law enforcement agencies, which are more common in the United States than large agencies. Studying multiple agencies would also allow modeling the influence of organizational-level variables on burnout, as factors such as bureaucratization may exacerbate or mitigate this condition. Additionally, studies that systematically compare burnout levels between supervisors in different occupational settings would be beneficial as there is a need to benchmark these results. While much of the research in policing has highlighted the obvious dangers associated with the profession and the implications for burnout, studies that systematically compare levels of this condition in sworn officers to employees in other types of work are rare. Ultimately, it is hoped that researchers will continue to explore the experiences and perceptions of police sergeants, who occupy an integral role in the functioning of law enforcement agencies.

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Appendix

Scale Construction

Emotional exhaustion (alpha =. 88)

1. I feel used up at the end of the workday.

2. I feel burned out from my work.

3. I feel frustrated by my job.

Responses never (1), less than once a month (2), once a month (3), 2-3 times a month (4), once a

week (5), 2-3 times a week (6), and daily (7).

Depersonalization (alpha = .82)

1. This job is hardening me emotionally. (reverse coded)

2. I've become more callous toward people since I took this job. (reverse coded)

Responses from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree)

View of subordinates (alpha =.83)

How does the group of employees who work directly for you most of the time compare with

other similar groups in the department? Compare your group to the typical group in the

department.

1. Officers' positive feelings about belonging to this group (reverse coded)

2. Cooperation among group members (reverse coded)

3. Willingness to follow my direction (reverse coded)

Responses from 1 (Very satisfied) to 5 (Very dissatisfied)

Satisfaction with peers and supervisors (alpha = .56)

How satisfied are you currently with:

1. Fellow supervisors (reverse coded)

2. Your supervisor (reverse coded)

Responses from 1 (Very satisfied) to 5 (Very dissatisfied)

Work-life conflict (alpha = .57)

1. The department provides me with the support I need to balance my work and personal life.

(reverse coded)

2. My job is having a negative impact on my time for leisure or family affairs.

Responses from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree)

3. Over the past month, how often have you relaxed outside of the job? (reverse coded)

Responses from 1 (Never or Rarely) to 4 (Very Often)

Unfairness (alpha =.71)

1. The rules are applied consistently across people and situations.

2. Resources are allocated fairly among employees.

3. Landing a good assignment is based on who you know. (reverse coded)

4. The procedures used to determine promotions are fair.

5. Officers who consistently do a good job are likely to be rewarded.

6. Employees are treated fairly regardless of their race, gender, age, sexual orientation or other

characteristics.

Responses from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree)

Discipline (alpha = .73)

From time to time, all supervisors face employees with problems. Suppose on several occasions,

you observe an officer talking to citizens in an unnecessarily aggressive or insulting way. How

likely would you be to respond in the following ways?

1. I would wait to see if it happened again before taking any action.

2. I would meet with this employee right away. (reverse coded)

3. I would consider this no big deal and say nothing.

Responses from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 5 (Strongly Disagree)

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Female (n = 171) and Male Sergeants (n = 737) in a Large Midwestern Municipal Law Enforcement Agency

Variables	Female		Male		
	Mean (SD)	**N (%)**	**Mean (SD)**	**N (%)**	**Mean Diff.**
Dependent					
Emotional exhaustion	3.57 (1.67)		3.25 (1.53)		0.32*
Depersonalization	2.97 (1.05)		3.32 (1.05)		-0.35*
Independent					
Views of subordinates	3.68 (0.75)		3.73 (0.76)		-0.05
Peers and supervisors	3.90 (0.99)		3.93 (0.86)		-0.03
Work-life conflict	2.79 (0.74)		2.90 (0.72)		-0.11
Unfairness	3.99 (0.67)		3.97 (0.64)		0.02
Discipline	4.21 (0.60)		4.02 (0.67)		0.19*
Control					
Race/ethnicity					
African American		40 (23.4)		104 (14.1)	
White (Ref. Category)		110 (64.3)		526 (71.4)	
Hispanic		20 (11.7)		85 (11.5)	
Other		1 (0.6)		22 (3.0)	
Education					
Less than M.A. = 0		108 (63.2)		536 (72.7)	
M.A. or above = 1		63 (36.8)		199 (27.0)	
Years on job					
6-10		12 (7.0)		30 (4.1)	
11-15		29 (17.0)		199 (27.0)	
16-20		61 (35.7)		211 (28.6)	
21-25		46 (26.9)		167 (22.7)	
26 or more		23 (13.5)		128 (17.4)	
Marital status					
Married = 0		89 (52.0)		580 (78.7)	
Not married = 1		81 (47.4)		154 (20.9)	

* $p < .05$

Table 2: Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalization Regression Results for Female (n = 171) and Male (n = 737) Sergeants in a Large Midwestern Municipal Law Enforcement Agency

Variables	Emotional exhaustion						Depersonalization					
	Female		Male				Female		Male			
	b	Std. error	b	Std. error	Diff. bs	z-value	b	Std. error	b	Std. error	Diff. bs	z-value
Independent												
Views of subordinates	-0.32	0.17	-0.12	0.07	-0.20	-1.10	-0.09	0.11	-0.05	0.05	-0.04	-0.35
Peers and supervisors	-0.41*	0.13	-0.24*	0.06	-0.17	-1.16	-0.19*	0.09	0.01	0.04	-0.20	-2.05*
Work-life conflict	0.47*	0.17	0.82*	0.07	-0.35	-1.90	0.26*	0.11	0.42*	0.05	-0.16	-1.32
Unfairness	0.26	0.20	0.20*	0.08	0.06	0.27	0.09	0.13	0.17*	0.06	-0.08	-0.56
Discipline	0.08	0.21	-0.02	0.07	0.10	0.44	-0.10	0.14	-0.17*	0.05	0.07	0.46
Control												
African American	-0.38	0.31	-0.40*	0.14	0.02	0.06	-0.52*	0.20	-0.68*	0.10	0.16	0.70
Hispanic	-0.02	0.36	-0.17	0.15	0.15	0.39	-0.11	0.23	-0.28*	0.11	0.17	0.64
Education (M.A. or above)	-0.26	0.24	0.09	0.11	-0.35	-1.32	-0.17	0.15	-0.04	0.08	-0.13	-0.72
Years on job	-0.16	0.11	-0.15*	0.04	-0.01	-0.09	-0.14*	0.07	-0.02	0.03	-0.12	-1.57
Marital status (not married)	-0.19	0.25	-0.02	0.12	-0.17	-0.62	-0.16	0.16	-0.01	0.09	-0.15	-0.84
Intercept	4.94	1.72	2.53	0.64			4.51	1.11	2.51	0.46		
Adjusted R^2	0.20		0.29				0.16		0.21			

* $p < .05$