

Trauma in Police Officers: A Psychosocial Process and a Call for Support

Abstract

This study explored the traumatic experiences following life-threatening events among police officers. Participants' lived experiences were gathered in detail. The study was designed to explore the research question, and responses were analyzed using a qualitative approach based on interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Six police officers were interviewed as a sample who had traumatic experiences, each with a minimum of three years of service. After a demographic form, an in-depth semi-structured interview protocol was used to obtain rich data. The six major themes were finalized in light of the sub-themes as follows: violent experiences, rapid response situations, public reactions and tensions, psychological and emotional wellbeing, protective measures and job-related challenges, while the sub-themes were produced based on codes. Results indicated that training and education for rehabilitation and mental well-being must be given as training courses that teach cops how to spot symptoms of trauma in both them and their peers. Future studies must focus on the interventions for trauma informed care practices.

Keywords: occupational stressors, posttraumatic growth, longitudinal resilience, proactive coping, global suicidal risk