Chapter 16
Attitude Training for Police Cadets:
Addressing the Problem of Arresting Suspects With a Mental Illness

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ABSTRACT

The news has not been good for mental health training programs for police in Australia, Canada, the U.S., and the UK. Police training is seen as inadequate to prepare police officers to identify and deal with persons with a mental illness. This chapter describes one approach of writing a proposal to conduct a comparison of attitude-training programs with police cadets. The main aspects of writing a proposal are covered: the background, problem statement, hypothesis, and the design of the treatments for comparison. Isolating the main features of each treatment requires designing some instruction based on factors that can influence police attitude toward suspects with a mental illness. Contemporary design guidelines are recommended, which should be informed by the designer's personal assumptions about how people learn from multimedia.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE PROBLEM

Defining a critical problem in law enforcement begins with describing the background and context. Thirty-two years ago, police in the U.S. were *more likely* to arrest suspects if they knew they had a mental illness (Teplin, 1984). Seventeen years later police officers were *less likely* to arrest suspects if they knew about their mental illness (Engel & Silver, 2001). Three years after that, a prediction that information about a subject's mental illness would have a significant effect on officers' responses, was in fact, *not supported* (Watson, Corrigan & Ottati, 2004). Among the possible reasons for inconsistencies in findings among these studies include: a disconfirmatory response pattern, an expertise reversal effect, or Type III error.

Among the possible reasons for inconsistencies in findings among these studies include a *disconfirmatory response patterns* among learning objectives, or even prerequisite relationships on a hierarchical instructional analysis flowchart (Bart & Airasian, 1972). A disconfirmatory response pattern is one in which an individual achieves mastery of a high level task but fails to master a lower level task. This requires revisions of the instructional analysis flowchart.

A second possible reason for inconsistent findings is *expertise reversal effect.* An expertise reversal effect is a result indicating that an instructional technique that was effective with below-average police cadets loses some of its effectiveness and even becomes ineffective with average and above-average cadets. If, for example, the experimental materials are not difficult enough to split attention, the reason may be due to expertise reversal (Kalyuga, Chandler & Sweller, 1999; Witteman & Segers, 2010). Whereas novices' dominant cognitive activity require appropriate instructional supports, experts tend to retrieve and apply available long-term memory knowledge structures to handle situations and tasks within their area of expertise.

A third possible reason for inconsistent findings is *Type III error.* Type III error, consistent with Gary Henry's formative evaluation of rival explanations, point to erroneous inferences about program outcomes due to implementation flaws (Henry, Smith, Kershaw & Zulli, 2013, p.467). Michael Dawes offers two definitions for a Type III error (Dawes, 2010): When a study provides the right answer but for the wrong question or research hypothesis. For example, when the results support a different question; or when a possible explanation of the failure to demonstrate an effect might be the failure to consider interactive effects of the interventions.

General or Specialized?

Whereas the majority of police academies already provide some kind of specialized training for police cadets, not only in lecture form, but also through scenarios and simulations, there are still notable gaps, including the common failure of neglecting people with mental illnesses in the development and delivery of the instruction. Some jurisdictions have only basic recruit training (e.g., Saskatchewan Police College). Others offer extensive recruit training (e.g., Edmonton Police Service) with online courses, hands-on practice with mental health professionals, and a 5-week Police and Crisis Team Training (e.g., Calgary) (Yasmeen, Krameddine, DeMarco, Hassel & Silverstone, 2013). A report of Police Sector Council determined that not all police applicants perceive 'policing' as an 'honourable profession', nor as 'employers of choice', nor even as 'progressive' (Police Sector Council, 2007). "Specialized training and education in mental health is important… Sensitivity, empathy, and communication, are key" (CBC News, 2018).

Two attitude training treatments (i.e., TEMPO and CIT programs) will be considered for use with a sampling of police cadets, and; a prediction on the probability of similar effects occurring with different samples of police cadets under similar conditions. Could these methods become a template for replicating this research with different samples of police cadets? Replication of the research is the main criterion for a good methodology.

Mental Health Training Programs

Grant Edwin McLeod died in 2008 during the arrest by the Defendants RCMP members due to excessive and deadly force applied and failure of the said defendants to provide first aid care to McLeod after applying excessive and deadly force to him (*Carlick v. Canada (Attorney General), 2013)*. Justice Veale

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