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Living a Nightmare: A Study on the Reluctance of Native American Women to Report Violent Crimes to Police

Misty Marie Neal

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Living a Nightmare: A Study on the Reluctance of Native American Women to Report Violent
Crimes to Police


by
Misty Neal

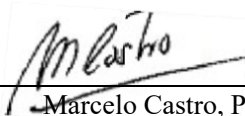
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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy


Nova Southeastern University
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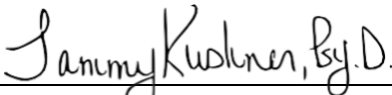
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July 11, 2023

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Abstract

Living a Nightmare: A Study on the Reluctance of Native American Women to Report Violent Crimes to Police. Misty M. Neal 2023: Applied Dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice. Keywords: Native American female, law enforcement, Indian Reservation, Indian land

To address this problem, this study will explore, if at all, the differences, and relationships between Native American women's reluctance to report a violent crime to the police with their perception of police, previous interactions with police, prior victimization, tribal affiliation, and specific demographic factors. The population for this research will be Native American women from federally recognized tribes between 18 and 55 years of age. In addition, the participant's marital status, sexual affiliation, religion, level of education, and geographic location will be examined. From this population, a sample size of 500 - 600 participants will be constructed for this study. The data will be collected, transcribed, and analyzed. The study will use a quantitative approach to analyze the data to determine the possible differences and relationships between Native American women in Oklahoma and on Indian Lands to report violent crimes to police.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A mother from the Yankton Sioux Reservation asks, "What should I tell my daughter when she is raped?" (Bonner, 2016, p.1). It is becoming a normal conversation in many Native American homes where a mother prepares her daughter for not "if" but "when" a violent or sexual assault will victimize her. Research indicates that 1 in 4 Native American women have experienced sexual assault (Wieskamp & Smith, 2020). So, in response, a handbook was created. It addresses rape and sexual violence issues for young Native American women. It is titled "*What to Do When You're Raped: An ABC Handbook for Native Girls.*" The handbook begins with a dedication "*for all you will face as a Native girl*" (Bonner, 2016, p.3). It is dedicated to the high numbers of rape and sexual violence incidents in Native American communities. The handbook focuses on the Native American tradition of sharing information about what happens when a Native woman becomes a victim.

Walsh and Bruce (2014) constructed a quantitative study with 834 participants on crime-reporting behavior. Of these participants, there were no Native American participants identified in the study. In the survey, 80% of the study participants were women. Its findings were consistent with prior research that indicates that female victims' decisions to report crimes to the police are determined by many factors that will vary with time for each victim (Wolitsky-Taylor, 2011). Walsh and Bruce (2014) found significant differences in those victims that suffer more significant symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and are shown to be more likely to file a report with the police than previous research reported. Bachman et al. (2008) explain that Native American women are just as likely as any race to report the crime of rape, violence, or sexual assault to the police. However, Bachman et al. (2008) further explain that the most significant difference with Native American female victims is that, in most cases, it is not the

victim who reports the crime to the police but a friend, family member, or another vested official. Riley (2020) found through an investigation on the Sioux reservation at Standing Rock that several doctors report treating multiple rape and sexual assault victims.

Consequently, these doctors note rarely performing rape kits or testifying at any trials to prosecute the perpetrators. Walsh and Bruce (2014) explain that these sexual assaults harm the victims physically and mentally. Walsh and Bruce (2014) further clarify that female victims that want to keep the sexual crime private will often view the incident as “*trivial*” or see it as “*less serious*,” resulting in no crime being reported to the police.

Murphy and Barkworth (2014) explain that social class, police contact, community status, and victimization often influence public perception. According to Callahan and Rosenberger (2011), earlier research indicates that a person who has suffered prior victimization is more likely to have a negative view of the police. Also, violence experienced vicariously can create a lower level of trust in police. McDonald and Stokes's (2006) research indicates that public perception of police is often impacted by race, but this specific research did not examine Native American women's perception of police.

Riley (2020) explains that the government has termed independent Native American lands in the United States *Indian Country*. As a result, the terming of *Indian Country* now labels almost half of Oklahoma as Native American territory. The increasing numbers of Native American women raped, murdered, and missing each year in Indian Country are now commonly labeled as the *Missing and Murdered*. Berthelot et al. (2018) explain that the shift in recognition of *Indian Lands* demonstrates that tribes have increased power to administer justice when a Native American experiences a violent crime in *Indian Country*.

Bubar and Thurman (2004) explain that Native Americans are twice as likely to become victims of a violent crime than any other race in the United States. To further support this, Rosay (2016) reports that 4 in 5 Native American women have experienced violence in their lifetime. Bonner (2016) adds that violence has become an accepted part of life for Native American women. Bonner (2016) estimates that 9 out of every 10 Native American women have had sex against their will in their lifetime. According to Wieskamp and Smith (2020), rape happens so frequently in Native American communities that it has become "*normalized*." Wieskamp and Smith (2020) explains that the normalization of rape contributes to the stereotypical "*squaw*" depiction of Native American women. They are often described as hideous, sexually permissive, and, overall, very callous women (Whitt, 2020). According to Smiley (2016), societal perception blames the high number of violent crimes against Native American women being their fault due to their "*risky*" lifestyle choices. Pember (2016) explains that Native Americans are often unwilling to report a missing Native woman due to their surrounding communities' accepted cultural expectations and perceptions.

Deer (2005) found that 90% of Native women report that their offender hit them during their sexual assault, significantly more than the 74% of non-Native victims of rape. There is a physical injury in 50% of cases, compared to 30% of non-native victims. Deer (2005) further reports that weapons are used in Native women's sexual assaults and rapes three times more often than non-native attacks. Concomitantly, Rosay (2016) says that more than 84% of Native women will experience some form of violence in their lifetime. A 2016 National Institute of Justice survey shows that 4 out of 5 Native women reported being a victim of violence, and 96% of these women describe their perpetrators as non-Indians. The perpetrator being non-Indian is a critical factor for prosecution in these cases.

The National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (2016) reports that many Native American women are reluctant to report violent crimes to the police for several reasons. The Centers for Disease Control (2022) explains that every tribe contains its traditions, languages, and social ties to its communities. Often, this contributes to the actions of its tribal members. A study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (1999) indicates that as little as 45% of Native American victims report violent crimes to the police. In 2017, the Strong Hearts Native Helpline (SHNH) was created using a culturally appropriate domestic, dating, and sexual violence helpline for Native American female victims. The program focuses on sexual violence, intimate partner violence, and non-intimate partner violence for Native American women. In 2020, the SHNH reported receiving 3,074 calls for assistance due to sexual violence. The data suggest that only a minute percentage of Native American female victims of violence seek outside help from law enforcement for these incidents.

According to the World Health Organization (2021), violent crimes against women are an issue that every culture experiences. Bruce and Walsh (2014) suggest minimal research is available about crime reporting behavior and the victim's decision to report a crime to the police. Greenberg and Beech (2004) propose that the level of fear of the victim and perception of the outcome of the criminal act contributes to the likelihood that the victim will report the crime. Nevertheless, Stillman and True (2014) say that Native American women are more than twice as likely as any other ethnicity to be the victim of a violent crime. The United States Department of Justice estimates that one in three Native women will experience rape at least once in their lifetime.

Kahn et al. (2017) found that a segment of the ethnic population in the United States does not trust law enforcement compared to the White population. Kahn et al. (2017) further explain

that individuals who trust the police are more likely to access the services of the police in their communities. Munoz and McMorris (2002) suggest that the stereotypical person's perception of "race-based social identity" causes trust in the police to be less, and individuals will be less likely to interact with the police. In their study, Findling et al. (2019) found that 38% of Native Americans have experienced discrimination when interacting with police. Of these findings, only half of the respondents were female Native Americans. No tribal affiliation was considered in this study. The study's results suggested that Native Americans experience discrimination independent of geographic location that affects seeking medical attention, social services, and assistance from police interactions.

Native American women's reluctance to report a violent crime to police in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands* is an area of study that needs exploring to determine if the perception of police and past police interactions are factors when choosing to report a violent crime to police. For this reason, the research for this study will provide an in-depth examination of the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands*.

Nature of The Research Problem

The nature of the research problem will be the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to police in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands*. Leavitt et al. (2015) research suggests that Native Americans' perception of themselves stems from a homogenous identity reference group that often restrains self-understanding. Fryberg (2002) also explains that these social identities represent the ideas and meanings that Native Americans develop to communicate with others in their communities in specific situations. Warner (2007) explains that earlier studies indicate that the perception of police often determines whether a victim will report a crime.

Each victim of a violent crime can remain silent or choose to report a violent crime to the police. However, according to Brewer (2021), when a Native American woman chooses not to report lesser violent crimes such as domestic or sexual violence, these criminal acts often contribute to the increasing number of missing and murdered Native American women in the United States. Echohawk (2002) suggests that some Native female victims may not report a violent crime due to a lack of trust in legal and social authorities in their communities, resulting from negative experiences or interactions with law enforcement officers. Deer (2015) also explains that violent crimes experienced by Native American women today do not represent the actual numbers of sexual and violent crimes happening in these communities, nor the lasting harms that these crimes inflict in the Native American communities.

The Accountability Project (2019) asserts that between the years 1999 to 2017, law enforcement agencies failed to report more than half of all Native American murders to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The study further found that 2,406 Native American homicides were not reported to the FBI by police agencies. Contrary to a report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that reported 4,821 murders, police agencies only reported 2,415 murders to the FBI during this same time. Nearly all states require medical examiners and coroners to report homicides to the state bureaus of vital records and the Center for Disease Control. Police departments are not legally required to register crimes to the FBI, which results in crimes not being calculated in the Uniform Crime Report.

Rosay (2016) explains that murder is the third leading cause of death for Native American women ages 1-19 and the sixth leading cause for Native American women ages 20 - 44 in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control (2010) reports that 49% of Native women have claimed to be victims of sexual violence. Equally important, Truman and Langton

(2014) report that less than 37% of all female victims report their crimes to any law enforcement agency. They are coupled with an earlier study by the U.S. Department of Justice, which indicates that less than 52% of all violent crimes committed against females are reported to law enforcement (Langton et al., 2012). In a recent study, 83% of the participants were enrolled in a federally recognized tribe, indicating that over 1.5 million American Indian and Alaska Native women had experienced violence (Rosay, 2016).

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) reauthorization is taking significant steps to recognize violent crimes against Native women better. It includes better tracking of violent acts committed against Native American women. However, Bachman (2008) found that tracking victimization rates of Native American women can still be problematic. Using police data to track violent crimes against Native women faces issues that cannot be quickly resolved with current law enforcement data collection practices. The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) both collect data only on crimes that are reported to the police, then the police report to the agency (Nolan et al., 2006). To further this claim, Bachman (2008) suggests that the National Crime Victim Survey (NCVC) does indicate a higher rate of victimization of violent crimes for Native American women. The violent crimes against Native American women must be reported to law enforcement to be documented. For this reason, this study will explore the reluctance of Native American women to report a violent crime to police in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands*.

Background & Significance

Leavitt et al. (2015) study advocates that media influences and perpetuates Native American women's perceptions of themselves and others. Fryberg and Townsend's (2008) theory of invisibility proposes that when the media underrepresents a group of people, they are

disadvantaged by the messages and strategies of how they should be as people. The media can influence the perception of a person's understanding of different groups of people in other domains and contexts (Mastro, 2009). He further explains that the media affects the perception of how people are supposed to act, experience, and understand specific situations. Mastro (2009) also proposes that the media contributes significantly to the perception of social messages, representations, and ideas for Native Americans. Fryberg et al. (2008) explain that the media portrayal of Native Americans affects their perception of identity, often determined by their image as uneducated, poor, and suffering from substance abuse issues. Mastro (2015) proposes that the impressions of Native Americans are direct representations of the media rather than face-to-face interactions. Mastro (2008) further explains that the media conveys that Native Americans do not belong and cannot survive in "atypical" America. The perception of negative imagery by the media of Native American women by normalizing the associated stereotypes while decreasing empathy for the Native American female victims increases the negative perception that, according to (Mastro, 2008), further perpetuates the Invisibility Theory of Native American women.

The U.S. Department of the Interior reported that in 2016 the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) estimated there to be 5,712 missing Native American and Alaska Native women. At the same time, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) and the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System (NAMUS) only reported 116 of these missing Native women missing. These results are indicative of discrepancies in the data. According to the National Institute of Justice (2018), most female homicide victims have been victims of other violent acts before becoming murder victims. On reservations, the U.S. Department of Interior Affairs estimates violence can be more than ten times higher than the average; data is still missing (Urban Indian Health

Institute, 2016). The Urban Indian Health Institute (2016) further reports that there is no reliable count as to the actual number of Native American women victims of homicide and the total number of missing Native American women.

A study by the Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center (WYSAC) at the University of Wyoming gathered data from archival databases, media coverage, and interviews and found that statistically, more Native women are reported missing than White women. Bachman et al. (2008) point out that the homicide rate of Native American women is second only to African American women but still higher than White women. The number of homicides for Native American women is ten times more than the national average on *Indian lands*. Bachman et al. (2008) further explain that the number of homicides on *Indian Land* is not always included in the national standards due to data collection issues. Grant et al. (2020) report that the phenomenon of not reporting the victimization of Native women is not limited to just Indian reservations or Indian lands. It is a rising issue across the United States and Canada. Overall, the studies by Grant et al. (2020) and Bachman et al. (2008) represent the increasing number of Native American women victims on and off Indian Land.

The Urban Indian Health Institute, a section of the Seattle Indian Health Board, argues that despite the above statistics that 71% of Native American women currently live in urban areas, and there is little to no research on the rate of violence in these specific areas (Vines & Hoeffel, 2016). The Native American female is estimated to be 7% more likely to be killed from a resulting rape or sexual assault. A study by Petrosky et al. (2017) found that one month before the homicide victim's death, 1 out of every ten women experienced some form of violence. In addition, the study found that the most common type of crime that precipitates the homicide of a female 45.6% is assault, 11.1% rape or sexual assault, or burglary 9.9%. Petrosky et al. (2017)

also found that in 29.7% of cases, an argument precedes Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The study found that in most homicides, the female victim's death results from a firearm. However, Petrosky et al. (2017) found that for Native American women, the most likely instrument to be murdered with is a knife or blunt object.

Focusing this study on the epidemic of murdered, abducted, and missing Native American women in the United States would not address the predisposing violent crimes that Native American women are victims of but do not report to law enforcement. A National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) study claims that rape and other sex crimes are much higher for Native American women than for White or Black women. Research to collect data on nonfatal violent victimizations presents a challenge in many communities, but more so in the Native American community (Bachman, 2000). According to a 2016 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) study, 2,473 American Indian and Alaskan Native women participants found that 4 out of every five had experienced violence in their lifetime. Rosay (2016) found that 56.1% of Native American women experienced sexual violence, 55.5% experienced physical violence by a sexual partner, 48.8% experienced stalking, and 66.4% experienced psychological aggression from an intimate partner. Rosay (2016) further explains that Native American women are 1.2 times more likely to have a violent encounter in their lifetime than white women.

Hannon (2021) describes reservations, *Indian lands*, and communities with large Native American populations as breeding grounds for violence against Native American women. Hannon (2021) explains that the distance of travel, the physical and emotional harm, financial costs, and prosecutorial requirements to prosecute an offender all contribute to the violent act's impact on the Native women victim. As a result, Amnesty International (2002) suggests that non-

Indian perpetrators have little to no consequences for the violent acts committed against Native American women.

Grant et al. (2021) discusses that of the violent crimes reported to law enforcement by Native women, non-Indians commit 97% of these violent crimes. Garcia-Olp (2018) suggests that the resulting atmosphere only perpetuates Colonialism's ideology that is still forced on the Native American culture. Garcia-Olp (2018) explains that Colonialism is a recognized part of Native American history. Today it influences the Native American female population. According to the University of Wyoming (2021), there are barriers to Native American women reporting violent crimes. Casey et al. (2019) show how history paints a distorted picture of Native American women. They suffer from being victimized for centuries through violence, segregation, discrimination, and trauma by law enforcement. Casey et al. (2019) explain that lesser violent crimes are often not reported to the police in many cases. It often results in the victimized Native woman not receiving counseling or additional assistance for their victimization. Casey et al. (2019) further explain that this furthers the normalized cyclic pattern of violence the Native American woman suffered. The World Health Organization defines violence against a female as any act that causes physical, sexual, or psychological harm. While the description of violence against a female provides a general overview of the types of damage, identifying the more specific crimes is necessary to understand the commonality of the violent crimes that Native American women experience in their lifetime.

Burnette (2015) advocates that Native American women are not exempt from the pressures of societal expectations from their culture to remain quiet when victimized. The dehumanizing practices of Western civilization have been the forerunner in the traditions that continue to keep Native female victims silent. Wiescamp and Smith (2020) explain that the

routine victimization of Native American women is gaining recognition across the United States. Wiescamp and Smith (2020) argue that the systematic violence Native women experience indicates the institutional practices and policies of historical oppression and trauma that stand to degrade and destroy Native American communities and their culture. A qualitative study by de Finney (2014) found that Native women are aware of the risk of being victims of violence daily.

According to the National Institute of Justice (2016), Native American women are more likely to need services after a violent crime but are less likely to seek assistance. In most cases, medical and legal services are the most common services required, but 38% do not receive these services in their communities. Langton et al. (2012) propose that the overhanging issue is that when a Native woman victim does not report a violent crime, the repercussions are widespread for the victim, their community, and future Native American women victims.

The reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to the police must be explored to understand the relationship of the underreporting of violent crimes to the factors in this study. Hartman (2021) argues that the current statistics of violent crimes committed against Native American women are, in all probability, inaccurate due to the underreporting of these crimes to the police. A previous study, Futures Without Violence (2011), indicated that the lack of data is further complicated by the perception of the expected "*cultural wall of silence*" in the Native American culture.

Barriers and Issues

Due to the frequent violent victimization of Native American women in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands*, the Native American women may be hesitant to answer the questions in the survey when approached to be a participant in the study. A common mistrust of local law

enforcement and outsiders could create a barrier to Native American participants completing the survey.

Further, the culture of Native Americans may cause the participants in the study to distrust the researcher due to not being Native Americans. It could cause a participant to answer only some of the survey questions. Further, the researcher will be sensitive to privacy and confidentiality issues, and all attempts will be made to protect the participants in the study. The study will accomplish this by not requiring the participant to provide personal information to be published.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the study is to explore the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to police in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands*. The study will examine factors that affect the underreporting of violent crimes. As part of the study, the perception of police, previous interactions with police, procedural justice, demographics, and tribal affiliation related to the underreporting of violent crimes to police by Native American women will be examined.

While there are barriers and challenges to the reluctance of all victims of violent crimes to report crimes to the police, few studies have examined the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to the police. However, the available studies do not specifically address Native American women's perception of police, procedural justice, prior victimization, or specific demographics in their reluctance to report violent crimes to the police. Thus, to create an environment that will encourage a Native American woman to report a violent crime to the police, law enforcement must understand the perceptions of the experiences of Native American women's interactions with police. Understanding Native American women's reluctance to report a crime and the relationship to their perception of police, previous interactions with police,

procedural justice, demographic factors, and tribal affiliation when reporting a violent crime might uncover strategies that could build a bridge to a successful curriculum that could empower Native American women victims' relationship with police in the communities. Future violent crimes may be preventable if Native American women are equipped with knowledge that leads to improved relationships and trust in the police.

Definitions and Terms

Colonialism: A policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.

Education level: General Education Equivalent (GED), High school diploma, Associate degree, Bachelor's degree, Graduate degree, or Doctorate degree.

Indian land: The land from a reservation divided between individual members of the specified tribes during the allotment period.

Indian Reservation: The land reserved for a tribe or tribal members under a treaty or other agreement with the United States or executive order, administrative action, or federal statute establishing permanent homelands for the Tribe.

Indian country: The area of primary jurisdiction for the federal government and tribal nations.

Law enforcement: All law enforcement departments, including Tribal Police, BIA, FBI, State and City police, and Sheriff departments.

Native American: An Indigenous person that is a registered member of a federally recognized tribe.

Native American Woman: Any Indian female between 18 and 55.

Tribal affiliation: A tribe where a participant is a documented member.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review will show that research on the reluctance of Native American women in Oklahoma and Indian Lands to report violent crimes is limited. To begin to understand the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to the police, it is necessary to review the literature in-depth. This literature review will examine the history of Native American women in Colonization and through the Native Critical Race Theory. It will explain the effects of historical oppression and trauma on Native American women today. Also, it will explore past studies of public perceptions of the police, previous interactions with police, procedural justice, and the lack of reporting to police by female victims of a violent crime. The following literature evaluation will demonstrate the relationship between Native American women and the deficiencies of the crimes reported to law enforcement when Native American women are victimized.

Colonialism

Kohn and Reddy (2017) define Colonialism as the domination and subjugation of one population by another. It happens when a population transfers to a new territory to live permanently, holding on to the laws and beliefs of their country of origin. At its core, Colonialism created the accepted practice of rape as a weapon. Mantegani (2021) suggests that rape became a standard tool used by white male settlers to destroy the Native American female's autonomy. Sexual violence was used as a form of power to control Native women. It was never an isolated incident but standard practice in Colonization (*Oliphant v. Suquamish Indian Tribe*, 1978). It is beyond the scope of this study to provide a complete review of Colonialism due to the complexity of its effects on Native American culture. However, it is helpful to have a basic understanding of the progression of Colonialism regarding Native American women. Overall,

Mantegani (2021) proposes that Native American women have greatly suffered due to Colonialism.

Matamonasa-Bennet (2014) introduces that Native women historically were described as respected and having a sacred status in their tribe. It may appear that women in Native American culture were passive members of their communities to some. Nevertheless, most Native women were valued, protected, and completely autonomous over their bodies within their tribal communities. It was not uncommon for Native American women to hold political positions and make critical decisions for their tribe. Mantegani (2021) supports the claim that in most Native American cultures, the Native female played a significant role in their community.

Deer and Nagle (2005) explain that Native women were allowed to make their own sexual choices, much to the shock of the white male European settlers. However, to the Europeans, autonomous Native American women were an ideology they had not encountered and did not accept. Deer and Nagle (2005) report that one male European wrote in 1722 that a Native American woman was the "*mistress*" of her body. To further support this ideology, writing by a Lakota female describes that a female owns her body and has all the rights that come with that ownership. The Cherokee tribe furthers this sanctity of the Native female belief by claiming that the Indian Tribe's sovereignty is connected to the female members of their tribe. A Cheyenne Indian proverb says, "A nation is not conquered until the hearts of its women are on the ground. Then it is done, no matter how brave its warriors or how strong their weapons." (Portman & Herring, 2001, p. 185). Historical teachings further the ideology that Native American women were respected as equally valuable members of tribal standings until Colonialism changed the path of the Native female.

Mantegani (2021) finds that European records are primarily the only documentation that recorded the offenses and punishments of offenders of sexual violence against Native women. A scientist, William Bartram, who witnessed Creek Indian culture in 1773, reported that he had never seen or heard any form of physical or sexual abuse of Native women by the males in the tribe (Deer & Nagle, 2005). One of the first criminal codes created by the Creek Nation in 1824 was criminal violence against women. If a man violated the criminal code, the victim determined the offender's punishment. Deer and Nagle (2005) said Native Americans despised sexual violence. Axel (1981) documented that Native American tribes sentenced male offenders to death for a sexual offense in some situations. In another example, Deer and Nagle (2005) explain how the Iroquois Indian community would not let any man that committed a sexual crime against a female hold any position of power in the tribal community. Most importantly, Deer and Nagle (2005) found that if an Iroquois female reported being raped, there was no doubt; they believed her.

Mantegani (2021) explains the significant difference in the mentality of sexual violence against Native American women between the European and Native American cultures. To the Native Americans, sexual violence against women represented humiliation and affected the whole tribal community. Sexual violence against the Native American woman was ultimately a property crime to the Europeans. Deer and Nagle (2005) point out that Europeans did recognize that the Native American culture detested sexual violence yet continued in this behavior.

Mantegani (2021) explains that Colonizers held that women did not have the same social status as men of the time. With this belief of their women, the Native American woman was subjugated to vicious attacks. As the United States grew and more states were instituted, the violent mentality towards Native American women did not change. Mantegani (2021) further

explains how violence against Native women has been codified into American culture for decades. It is evident through the enduring legacy of Colonization. During a congressional debate addressing sex crimes on Indian land in 1909, a U.S. representative said, "The morals of Indian women are not always as high as those of a white woman, and consequently the punishment should be lighter against her." (Mantegani, 2021, p. 338). These words still exemplify the accepted mentality of violence against Native American women due to their lifestyle choices.

Historical Oppression

Burnette and Figley (2016) define historical oppression as the continuous, permeating, and in many cases, intergenerational experiences of Native Americans that cause violent acts to be normalized. Burnette, Renner, and Figley (2019) explain that the historical oppression experienced by Native Americans expands on historical trauma. Native Americans bear the experiences of "exposure to chronic, pervasive, and intergenerational experiences of oppression." (McKinley et. al., 2020, p. 288). It furthers the continual oppression that only normalizes and internalizes the historical oppression into modern Native American society's daily lives.

Burnette et al. (2019) conducted a mixed-method study on the framework of historical oppression, resilience, and transcendence concerning depressive symptoms in Native American people. Their study used a mixed method approach that focused on data through culturally congruent storytelling methodologies from a critical ethnography viewpoint of 127 participants. Burnette et al. (2019) indicate that the results of their study show an empirical connection between historical oppression and the mental wellness of Native Americans. The study does point out that no other research has been done on Indigenous family resilience related to depression, health, or satisfaction with life to the best of their knowledge.

Burnette (2015) further explains that historical oppression often accompanies discrimination, microaggression, poverty, and the continuous marginalization of Native American women. It details how historical events affect the experiences of Native American women today in society. Burnette and Figley (2017) suggest that the literature frequently references the power dynamics of historical oppression. The result of historical pressure is that it promotes inequality in an already hostile environment. The Centers for Disease Control (2013) describes the effects of intimate partner violence (IPV) that can lead to physical, sexual, and psychological violence. Burnette (2015) argues that historical oppression materializes from the critical theory of perpetuating inequalities and oppressing weaker races. Overall, the Native woman has faced centuries of subjugation, resulting in an environment of oppression that leads to mistrust.

Amnesty International (2007) reports that violent acts happen frequently enough to be described as a human rights issue. For unspecified reasons, the incidents, and experiences of IPV by Native women are not adequately represented and often go unreported. Burnette (2015) suggests that the lack of research on IPV in Native American populations is another example of historical oppression. It further demonstrates the inequality that Native American culture faces even in the study. Burnette (2015) points out that the resulting power imbalance reflects the lack of knowledge of the issues that Native American women face today.

Historical Trauma

Yellow Horse Brave Heart (2019) from Stanford Medicine defines historical trauma as the accumulative emotional and psychological pain over an individual's lifespan and across generations that results from large amounts of group trauma. Stanford Medicine (2019) reports that historical trauma can result in different effects, such as grief, depression, high mortality,

increased alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and instances of child abuse. Burnette (2015) further characterizes historical trauma as the unresolved emotional trauma that manifests as IPV.

Although IPV is recognized as an element of historical trauma, Burnette (2015) cautions that there is currently little to no research that links IPV and historical trauma.

Burnette (2015) explains that historical trauma is a concept that originates from historical oppression. Today, it often materializes through discrimination and cultural disruption. Evans-Campbell (2008) claims that cultural disorders occur through social factors such as education, employment status, income level, and gender. Indigenous historical oppression has caused gross amounts of cumulative and intergenerational trauma resulting from the history of the loss of their Native lands. In addition, the forced removal from their lands, followed by disease, loss of life, and the associated losses with war, has caused lasting trauma. In addition, the forced discontinuation of religious practices, the forced sterilization, the dumping of toxic materials, and the flooding of Native lands only further the trauma.

Burnette (2015), in a qualitative study, found and identified five themes that contribute to historical trauma resulting from the historical oppression of Native American women. The identified themes are historical losses, contemporary losses, cultural disruption, manifestations of pressure, and dehumanizing beliefs. The study results demonstrate the interconnections between Native American women who experienced traumas. One example is that some participants in the study claim that the legacy of historical oppression has resulted in definitive changes in their perception of their Native culture. One specific recognized difference is that it is not openly discussed when a Native woman is the victim of a violent crime. Burnette (2015) found that 92% of the Native American participants in the study claimed that violent crimes were to be kept

"*hush-hush*." To further demonstrate this, another study participant claims that young Native American girls are taught to trust no man, especially any man that is non-Indian.

Breiding et al. (2014) point out that the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey found that Indigenous women's lifetime prevalence of rape is 27%, compared to 20.5% of white women and 21.2% of Black women and only 13.6% of Hispanic women. Equally important, the survey found that stalking, physical violence, psychological aggression, and sexual violence are higher for Native American women than any other race in the study.

Amnesty International (2007) strongly suggests that future research must remain mindful of the historical oppression and trauma experienced in Native American cultures when exploring the constructs of violence. Otherwise, there is the risk of creating social stigmas due to the many social problems facing Native American culture.

Evans-Campbell (2008) explains that the depth of the impact of historical trauma experienced by Native Americans is experienced differently by each Native American and their tribe. Historical trauma is generational. It is passed down from generation to generation through shared and accepted tribal rituals and established "norms." As a result, Burnette (2015) stresses that Native American women experience historical trauma through the interrelated conditions that normalize violent and sexual crimes in the Native American community. The trauma stands to further centuries of the subjugation of the Native woman. The current Native American environment readily accepts that the threat of violence is a normal part of life for the Native woman. Gone (2014) explains that the depiction of historical trauma needs further research to understand the relationship with social issues in the Native American community.

Theoretical Framework

Tribal Critical Race Theory

The principal ideology of the Tribal Critical Race Theory (TCRT) is Colonialism. Brayboy (2005) suggests the TCRT is "the continuing quotidian dominance of European American epistemology and power structures." TCRT focuses on the historical devaluation of the Native American identity and culture through historical encounters and experiences with Whites over the last 500 years. Native Americans continue to struggle to be defined by the United States. In many settings, Native Americans continue to work to identify with their own legal, political, and racial groups. Identifying people with equal power and culture is critical to Native Americans. Brayboy (2005) continues to explain that the focus of the TCRT is relevant to explaining modern-day happenings in the lives of Native Americans. McKinley and Brayboy (2007) define the nine principles of the TCRT as follows: (1) The issue of Colonization is endemic to society; (2) The United States' policies towards Native Americans are rooted in imperialism, white supremacy, and a desire for profit; (3) The Native Americans occupy a "liminal space" for our own identity's political and racialized nature; (4) The Native Americans seek to obtain self-determination and identity, tribal sovereignty, and tribal autonomy; (5) The ideas of culture, knowledge, and power when observed by a Native American; (6) The governmental and education policies towards Native Americans are linked to the troublesome goal of assimilation; (7) The tribes' beliefs, philosophies, traditions, customs, and visions for their future play a key role in understanding the reality of Native American lives while exemplifying the differences and adaptability among Native Americans; (8) The stories and theories are natural and consist of legitimate sources of information and represent a way of life for Native Americans; and (9) The practice and theory of Native Americans are deeply connected to specific ways that cause scholars to have to work for social change. The study will apply the theoretical framework of the tribal critical race theory.

Procedural Maze of Prosecution

Mendoza (2020) explains that the jurisdictional maze begins with determining who committed the crime, who is the victim, where the crime happened, and the nature of the crime. Federal, tribal, and state governments have had jurisdiction over criminal acts. Each branch throughout the history of the government has contributed to the complicated jurisdictional maze that currents. Tribal criminal jurisdiction lacks jurisdictional transparency applied in every aspect of American law. It has created blurred procedural rules where all parties seek to vindicate substantive rights. Mantegani (2021) explains that a Native American female victim faces jurisdictional battles, unlike any other racial group. The likelihood that an offender will not see prosecution for their crime only furthers a Native woman's trauma suffered at the hands of their offender. Law enforcement officers are seen policing these communities yet still fail to protect the Native American woman.

The rule of law, explains Riley (2016), handles the prosecution of a non-Indian offender on Indian land established over the last 200 years through US Supreme Court decisions and congressional legislation. In 1978, in the case of *Oliphant v Suquamish Indian Tribe*, the Court's decision created a barrier to any autonomy that any tribe may seek. The circumstances make precedence that does not allow any Native American tribe jurisdiction over a non-Indian offender. *Oliphant* held that an Indian tribe could not have jurisdiction over a non-Indian offender that committed a crime on a reservation or *Indian land*.

The Court further held that a tribe, as a domestic dependent nation, does not contain the same sovereignty as the states or the federal government, most notably in handling non-Indian cases of criminal acts. Lastly, the Court held that "even a violent crime committed by a non-Indian husband against his Indian wife, in the presence of her Indian children, in their house on

the Indian reservation, could not be prosecuted by the tribe." (*Oliphant v Squamish Indian Tribe*, 1978, p.435.) Hartman (2021) explains that the Native American tribes have constitutions but cannot prosecute violent crimes committed by non-Indians on reservations or Indian land. It is the responsibility of a federal prosecutor to determine if and who will be charged with domestic abuse and violent crimes. These laws and policies were established without the consent of the Indian nations and have been left unchanged. Overall, it has created more dangerous communities for Native Americans than other areas in the United States.

Hartman (2021) reveals that these actions have left Native American communities dependent on the federal government to investigate and prosecute crimes. Criminal cases are investigated by tribal law enforcement agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), or by investigators from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and then presented to the US Attorney General's Office (USAO). It is at the discretion of the USAO to prosecute or decline a criminal case according to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO, 2011).

A 2011 GAO report indicated that 52% of violent crime cases presented to the USAO were declined for prosecution. At the time of the study, of these crimes, 26% were sexual abuse crimes. Typically, one reason to refuse to prosecute a case is the lack of evidence or cooperation of the victim due to the relationship with the offender (GAO, 2011). The high number of these cases declined for prosecution has caused many victims to lose confidence in the judicial process and the ability to obtain justice for the crime committed. The reality of only the federal government prosecuting the cases that involve non-Indian perpetrators has caused many victims not to report when they are the victim of a crime. Enid (2015) describes through the Indian Law and Order Commission (18 USC Section 1151) that the federal government, which prosecutes

these crimes have produced an environment that has created a significant gap in public safety for the Native American community.

Hartman (2021) explains that the commonality of interracial marriage and dating among the Native American population has created victims that often have little to no recourse when non-Indian offenders victimize Native women. Martin and Danner (2017) explain that Native Americans experience higher rates of violent crimes than any other ethnic group despite only making up a little over 1% of the population in the United States. The Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that Native Americans experience violent crimes twice as often as African Americans and 2 ½ times more than Whites. Martin and Danner (2017) suggest in most communities that, the public perceives that law enforcement serves and protects. However, for Native Americans, this perception is far from the reality they live in

The *Violence Against Women Act of 2013* (VAWA) did create an avenue for some justice for Native female victims (Hartman, 2021). There are three goals of the VAWA: (1) to decrease dating and domestic violence in Indian land, (2) to strengthen tribal capacity to control crime, and (3) to hold sexual offenders accountable for their actions. The VAWA allows the tribe jurisdiction over specific dating and domestic violence crimes and protection from offenders who break restraining orders in Indian countries regardless of race (Sacco, 2015). The new power delegated to the Indian tribes is Special Domestic Violence Criminal Jurisdiction (SDVCJ). Gaines-Stoner (2019) explains that the complex procedural maze of tribal, federal, and state jurisdictions often creates barriers to enforcing protection orders.

Furthermore, specific factors must be met for the tribes to have the power to prosecute non-Indian offenders (VAWA, 2013). The first requirement is that the victim must be Native American. Second, the crime must have happened on the Indian land of the prosecuting tribe.

Third, the non-Indian perpetrator must have significant ties to the prosecuting Indian tribe. These ties must be: (1) living in an Indian country, (2) being employed by the Indian tribe, (3) being a spouse, dating, or intimate partner of a Native American who resides on the Indian land of the prosecuting tribe.

If the factors for prosecution are satisfied, the VAWA gives the tribes the power to execute criminal jurisdiction over some non-Indian perpetrators. The tribes have adopted the federal and state court models but still attempt adjudication through "peacemaking and sentencing circles" (US et al. Office [GAO], 2011, p.10). Even in these cases, the tribe's ability to sentence an offender is limited to three years imprisonment per offense with no regard to the severity of the crime (Hartman, 2021). Federal prosecution of the perpetrator allows for a much stricter punishment. Eaglewoman and Leeds (2019) report that the Indian Civil Rights Act (ICRA) delivers a Bill of Rights to the tribal courts with protections and restricted punishments. The ICRA allows offenders to be sentenced to up to one year in jail and fines of up to \$5,000. The Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA) further expands these limited actions by allowing tribal courts to sentence a non-Indian offender to up to three years of imprisonment and a 15,000 fine if the precise requirements of the crime and offender are met. Mantegani (2021) explains that ICRA removes the ability of any tribal court to sentence felony crimes.

Rosay (2016) found in a National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence survey that 84.3% of Native American women have experienced some form of violence in their lifetime. Most crimes are interracial and often remain unprosecuted. Rosay (2016) explains that domestic violence rates on Indian reservations and Indian lands are still higher than the national average. Tighe (2014) suggests that the marginalization of Native American men and women in

mainstream American society has resulted in these higher incidents of violence with less prosecution. Native American women are victims of violent crimes every day.

Crime Reports in the United States

According to Gramlich (2020), two primary sources of government crime reporting agencies report the number of crimes received from police agencies and law enforcement. These are the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Justice (BJS). Despite current attempts to improve the reporting of crimes, each of these agencies still needs to report the actual number of crimes committed; in the United States, the Department of Justice uses two statistical programs that track and measure crimes' impact. These are the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) from the FBI and the National Crime Victimization Survey (BJS). Each uses different methods to track crimes and document various facets of criminal acts. The US Department of Justice (2014) claims that each program produces information about crimes that together allow a more comprehensive aggregation of knowledge of the current crime problem in the United States that each program could not put together.

Uniform Crime Reports—FBI. The UCR program accumulates information monthly. The data is gathered from law enforcement agencies or single crime incident reports sent directly to the FBI or centralized agencies such as the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). Information from NIBRS allows for additional details from 23 categories of crimes that may otherwise not be available to the UCR (US Dept. of Justice, 2014). The UCR then evaluates the information to ensure accuracy and tenability and accounts for any possible error. The UCR is responsible for national crime counts, including colleges and universities, cities, counties, states, regions, and tribal law enforcement. It allows for analyzing crimes determined by homogenous populations and other similar traits. The FBI reports findings of the data

collected yearly in the spring of the following year and is followed up with a report on crime in the United States in the fall of the same year. The information provides crime trends of solved crimes and arrested persons. Additional information provided pertains to law enforcement officers, the demographics of the homicide victims, the relationship of the victim/offender, and weapons used with available circumstances of the crime.

National Crime Victimization Survey—BJS. The National Crime Victimization Survey provides information about crimes, such as trends in crimes, victims of crimes, and details of the crimes (US Dept. of Justice, 2014). Annually, the BJS interviews 169,000 participants 12 years of age and older who reside in the United States. The information collected is from the six months before the interview of the selected participants. The information collected is about crimes. The Department of Justice (2014) explains the importance of the NCVS to cover crimes reported and unreported to police and the reasons for both. It collects data on the victim and each specific crime. More importantly, the NCVS asks participants about their *experience* with the criminal justice system. It discusses the self-protection each victim uses each victim's self-protection and if any substance abuse is present. The NCVS randomly covers other crime categories, such as school crimes and interactions between citizens and police officers. An annual publication by NCVS *Criminal Victimization* provides data collected about rates of victimization and crime characteristics in categories like intimate partner violence (IPV), workplace violence, hate crimes, and crimes against individuals with disabilities.

Comparison of Crime Reporting Agencies in the United States. The Department of Justice (2014) urges the importance of UCR and NCVS when observing reported crimes. Each program is designed for two distinct purposes, but both provide informative data that complement the other. Their methodologies that define specific crimes are different. The UCR

includes data on the number of crimes reported to law enforcement. In comparison, the NCVS provides additional details of criminal characteristics of victimizations that otherwise would not be available. Each program offers an understanding of crime trends and the nature of specific crimes in the United States. According to the Department of Justice (2014), the data gathered can help understand crime trends affecting whether a victim will report a crime to the police. However, most importantly, the NCVS provides data for crimes not reported to law enforcement.

Violent Crimes in the United States

The FBI (2019) estimated that 379.1 violent crimes were committed per 100,000 people in 2019. Aggravated assault is the most common offense (Gramlich, 2020). The FBI reported that violent crime rates had decreased by 49% between 1993 and 2019. Murder and non-negligent manslaughter decreased by 47%, and aggravated assault was down by 43%. According to Gramlich (2020), the change in the percentages of rape is impossible due to the FBI's revision of the definition of rape.

A BJS survey of crime victims in 2019 indicated that the number of violent crime victims dropped to 1.2 million in 2019, excluding simple assaults. It coincides with the decline in rape and sexual assault crimes from 2018 to 2019 (Morgan & Truman, 2019). It is the first significant decrease in violent crimes since 2015. Female victimization of reported crimes from simple assault decreased by 27% from 2018 to 2019. There were 22% fewer white victims and 22% fewer black victims from 2018 to 2019. The reporting of violent crimes to police in 2019 was less, with white victims reporting crimes at three at 1.07%, Blacks at 1.10%, and Hispanics at 1.28%.

Morgan and Truman (2019) report that there were 1.2 million violent victimizations, such as domestic violence, committed by an intimate partner or family member at a rate of 4.2 per

1,000 persons over the age of twelve. It is not significantly different from 2018. It includes stranger violence, intimate-partner violence, and violent crimes involving injury and weapons from 2018 to 2019. Overall, from 2018 to 2019, violent crime victimization decreased. In addition, persons aged 25 to 34 years of age and 35 to 49 years of age saw a decrease in violent victimization. Morgan and Truman (2019) explain that the data indicates that divorced persons reduced the rate of violent victimization. Household incomes of less than 25,000 a year saw a reduction in violent victimizations, while households with more than 200,000 yearly incomes increased in violent crimes.

The 2019 BJS survey results indicate that women reported violent crimes to police 46%, while males reported violent crimes 36% (Morgan & Truman, 2019). It should be noted that these crimes did include simple assaults. With simple assault excluded, the results indicate that only 37% of Whites reported crimes to police, whereas Blacks reported 49% and Hispanics 49% in the BJS survey. The BJS survey found that from 2018 to 2019, overall, whites and Asians' rates of violent victimization decreased.

Native American Women-Victims of Violent Crimes

The 2020 Census Bureau reports 6.79 million Native Americans in the United States, less than 2.9% of the total population. According to the National Congress of American Indians (2020), 574 federally recognized tribal nations are located within 35 states in the United States. Only 15 states have a population of more than 100,000 Native Americans. Oklahoma has one of the largest Native American populations, 7.62%, and is ranked #2 overall for its Native American population. Nevertheless, despite their low population numbers compared to other ethnicities, the number of crimes committed against Native American women is reported to be considerably higher than in other races.

Most Native Americans are grouped into a particular group. These tribes speak over 200 known languages; each is considered their sovereign nation. Classifying all Native Americans into one group does not allow for the acknowledgment of their independent identities and the cultural needs of each tribe. Murphy (2009) explains that each Native American woman victim is a member of a tribe. When a Native American woman is the victim of a violent assault, Dabiri (2012) reasons that the perpetrator is attacking the victim and her culture and tribal sovereignty. The result is that the gender violence experienced by the Native American woman is rarely discussed, and often the victim remains silent compared to other ethnicities.

According to Walsh (2017), law enforcement often underestimates the violent crimes committed against Native American women, contributing to the "normalization" of these crimes. One study that used statistical research and interviews with 580 documented Indigenous female victims further substantiated that Native American women are victimized disproportionately compared to non-Indian female victims (Native American Association of Canada, 2010). Jones et al.'s (2021) research is indicative that Native American women in their lifetime will experience marginalization and oppression that will lead to an exceptionally high risk of lifetime violence.

Historically, Native American women have been the target of non-Indian perpetrators. Mendoza (2020) suggests that the crimes committed against Native women are often violent and gruesome, yet are prosecuted far less than the national average. Between 2005-2009 federal prosecutors declined, according to Mendoza (2020), to charge 67% of sexual perpetrators that offended Native women. To further support this, between 1997-2006, the federal prosecutors rejected an estimated two-thirds of all criminal cases brought from the reservations by the FBI

and BIA investigators. Mendoza (2020) argues it is twice the rejection rate of all other federally prosecuted criminal cases.

In a 2015 study by the Bureau of Justice, 4 out of five Native American female rape or sexual assault victims were victimized by white male offenders, with one in ten incidents reported by a black male (Griffith, 2015). The incidents of interracial rapes are very high compared to non-Indian women in the United States. Gillette and Galbraith (2013) report that a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 46% of Native American women have been victims of physical violence and stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime. Mendoza (2020) suggests that it has led to an atmosphere of lawlessness where non-Indian perpetrators know the jurisdictional gaps and risk little consequences for their actions. It has led to negative interactions and further mistrust of law enforcement. Findley et al. (2019) found that Native Americans have increased odds of facing discrimination when interacting with law enforcement, with diverse geographic and neighborhood locations affecting the findings in the study. The study further showed that one-third of the participants reported discrimination experienced by law enforcement or the court system at one time or another. Findley et al. (2019) explain that less than one-quarter of the White participants reported discrimination experiences with law enforcement or the court system. The study did focus on both genders of Native Americans. Findley et al. (2019) further explain that the current problems that Native Americans face are systemic and often left untreated. The study further found that discrimination caused 22% of the Native American participants to avoid calling law enforcement when needing help. The study suggests that Native Americans experience a higher discrimination rate across multiple areas.

There has been considerable research about intimate partner violence and the crimes associated with female victims, but Murphy (2009) explains how little specifically for Native American female victims have been collected. Hartman (2021) explains that Native American women are victimized more violently than white victims. It estimates that 56% of Native female victim injuries require medical attention versus 38% of white victims' injuries (Bachman et al., 2010). To further this, Hartman further explains that Native women are more likely to be the victim of homicide at the hands of their intimate partner. The available data shows that Native women are the most at risk in Indian countries of being victimized. However, Hartman (2021) stresses that the available statistics do not tell the complete story because the violence suffered by Native American women is not reported in many cases. Futures Without Violence (2011) says no comprehensible data is collected on violence against Native women on lands under tribal jurisdiction because no federal or Indian agency systematically collects the information. Even so, Hartman (2021) claims one of the significant issues in collecting data is the existence of an expectation of silence when a crime happens on Native lands and in Native American culture.

Farley et al. (2016) conducted a study with 105 Native women participants using four questionnaires of quantitative and qualitative questions. The questions covered crime, racism, and Colonialism. Results indicate that 79% of participants were sexually abused as children, and 92% were raped at least once during their lifetime. The study also found that 84% have been physically assaulted while engaging in prostitution. Then, two-thirds of the participants had family members that attended boarding schools, with 62% of the participants showing a connection between prostitution and Colonialism. Lastly, 33% of participants discussed the importance of Native culture and spiritual practices as essential to who they are. Farley et al. (2016) further suggest that in many situations, Native American women live in an environment

that subjects them to two times higher rates of violent victimization than the national average. Hyman (2009) explains that a Native American female is more likely to be victimized through rape, prostitution, physical abuse, and racism.

The National Violent Death Reporting System from 2003-2108 gathered data from 30 states using intercensal and postcensal bridged-race population estimates. The 2,226 Native American homicide data comprised 545 female victims, 25% of those female victims aged 25-34. Petrosky et al. (2021) explain that 25% of the homicides followed a previous act of violence. Over half of the homicides happened in residence residences and the victim's homes. Crossland et al. (2013) report that multiple violence studies against Native American women have shown that violent assaults are more severe and widespread than any other ethnicity. Tjaden and Thoennes's (2006) earlier study showed that Native American women are more likely to be raped or stalked in their lifetime. Callahan and Rosenberger (2011) suggest that current literature supports minorities' perception of law enforcement as unfair and abusive. Furthermore, Cochran and Warren (2012) suggest that prior studies indicate that when minorities perceive law enforcement as racially biased and unfair, it often is determined by past experiences and interactions.

Underreporting of Violent Crimes

Walsh and Bruce (2014) report that a victim of a violent crime suffers multiple effects when victimized. These effects include physical, mental, and economic fallout. Walsh and Bruce (2014) further explain that a victim who does not report a crime will often lose eligibility to receive services to secure care and overcome the harms caused by the crimes. Although crime reporting agencies often include reasons why a victim may or may not report a crime to police, Walsh and Bruce (2014) explain that the psychological symptoms that appear after the event

affect a victim's decision to report the crime to police are often not accounted for in the collection of data.

Walsh and Bruce (2014) propose that a victim suffers various hardships after becoming a victim of a violent crime. Holder et al. (2021) further explains that in recent studies, the victim will not report a crime to law enforcement after suffering a violent crime for multiple reasons. Predictably, Baumer (2002) suggests that the most prevalent predictor of a victim reporting a crime is the severity of the crime. Hence, the more serious the crime, the more likely the victim will notify the police. A crime is more likely to be reported to the police if a weapon or robbery is used. Langton et al. (2012) expand the discussion by explaining that the severity of the criminal act alone does not appear to determine the rationale of the victim when choosing to report the crime.

An NCVS survey from 2019 reported that only 2 of every five violent victimizations are reported to law enforcement agencies. Morgan and Truman (2019) explain that the rate of unreported violent crimes increased from 2015 to 2019. The unreported rate of violent crimes from 2015 was 9.5 per 1,000 persons to 12.1 per 1,000 persons in 2019. Langton et al. (2019) suggest that the decision to report a violent crime is attributed to the characteristics of the victim and offender in many situations. In less severe offenses, the victim describes the reason for not reporting the crime committed against them as being "not important enough" or "dealt with in another matter," or the victim will consider it a "personal matter" (Langton et al., 2012, pp. 2-4). One significant factor that contributes to the police being notified of a crime is if the offender is under the influence of alcohol or drugs when the crime is committed. Baumer (2010) claims that if the offender is African American, the offense is more likely to be reported to the police. Baumer (2010) further explains that the offender's age, status in the community, and the number

of offenders that participate in the criminal act often will contribute to whether a victim will report the crime to authorities.

Underreporting of Violent Crimes by Women. The Bureau of Justice Statistics (2018) suggests that sexual violence against women is highly underreported. The underreporting of these crimes leads to the perpetrator's higher probability of recidivism (Denti & Lammarino, 2021). The World Health Organization has gone as far as to label the issue a "*global public health problem of epidemic proportions*" (WHO, 2013, p.5). In 2018, WHO reported that globally, 27% of women in relationships or married had experienced physical and sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. Denti & Lammarino (2021) argue that sexual violence is reported as one of the most "*taboo*" and "*stigmatizing*" crimes of violence still in society. Thus, one of the least likely crimes to be reported to the police.

Matos et al. (2016) claim that the prevalence of violent crimes against women is often the result of cultural attitudes toward violent acts. Truman and Langton (2014) explain that the decision of the victim to report a violent crime to the police is one of the essential steps in the criminal justice process. Reporting a crime is more than just calling the police (Truman & Langton, 2014). So much more is considered, such as the victim's relationship with the offender, the person they talk to about the crime, and the community the victim resides in is critical when choosing to report the crime. Knoth and Ruback (2019) explain that the decision to report a crime is often determined after the victim confided in another person, the victim's age, gender, and location when the crime happened.

Knoth and Ruback (2019) suggest that crimes are less likely to be reported if the offender is within the same triumvirate as the victim. Also, if the person being confided in about the crime is too. If the perpetrator is a stranger, the offense is more likely to be reported to authorities.

Males are more likely to advise against reporting a violent crime if they are friends with the offender, while women will more likely protect their female friends that are the victims and encourage them to report the crime. The victim's relationship with where the crime was committed can affect the likelihood of reporting the crime. The victim often seeks out victims of similar crimes to determine if they should report them (Knoth & Ruback, 2019). It is especially true with victims of rape. The research indicates that rape victims are more likely to accept the advice given by another victim of rape. When determining whether to report a violent crime, victims' decisions are often affected by the stereotypes and societal attitudes toward the victims in their communities. The stereotypical misconception of "she asked for it," "she enjoyed it," or "lied about it" is still a victim-blaming method in Native Americans and other communities (Knoth & Ruback, 2019).

The prevalence of violent crimes against women is often the result of cultural attitudes toward violent acts (Matos et al., 2016). Current research defines these victims as weak, passive, or often flawed. Goodey (2005) explains that the preconceived notion demonstrates the societal urge to intervene with education to fix the victims. Prevalent research in victimology shows that individual violent victimization ignores specific collective forms of victimization, such as police and institutional violence, which mainly affect the female victims already disadvantaged by society. These victims often suffer economic destitution. It causes an accumulation of other victimizations through interpersonal violence, which leads to prejudice and discrimination by the institutions meant to protect and aid them in their time of need (Matos et al., 2016). According to Finkelhor et al. (2007), consistent exposure to multiple facets of victimization can cause psychological difficulties in understanding the female victim's actions. Matos et al. (2016)

further explain that the extent of psychological changes female victims experience due to numerous violent acts is undecided.

Perception of Police

Brown (2002) explains that studies of minorities' perception of police most often focus on Blacks. Brown (2002) further explains that perception of police research repeatedly shows that the Black population views police more negatively than the White population. Race, gender, education, occupation, residence, and previous victimization are often compared. Race is usually the predominant factor that predicts a person's perception of the police. It is quite often the case in the Native American communities.

Nadal and Davidoff (2015) explain that several factors complicate the relationship between law enforcement and the communities they serve. The perception of law enforcement often determines whether a person will cooperate with the police and report a crime. From the available literature, Fatello et al. (2013) suggest positive societal perceptions of law enforcement. Huggins (2012), through extensive aggregated research over twenty years, means that the most prevalent factors that affect the perception of police are race, age, contact with police, and neighborhood. Results indicate that areas with Blacks and Latinos have less trust in law enforcement primarily due to racial profiling.

Yung-Lien and Zhao (2010) suggest that a person that is a past crime victim is more likely to perceive law enforcement negatively. Current research indicates that victims often feel like law enforcement failed them when they experience victimization in their community (O'Connner, 2008). Yung-Lien and Zhao's (2010) study using 756 participants conducted through a telephone survey found that the general attitude towards law enforcement is greatly affected by the quality of their work in their community. The study further revealed that when

community members are happy with the outcome of law enforcement, they are more likely to have a positive perception and an increased trust in law enforcement. Another study by Nadal et al. (2015) measured the attitudes toward law enforcement and police bias. The study used the Perception of Police Scale (POPS) survey to gather data. The study compared 543 diverse ethnic participants to white participants and found that Blacks viewed law enforcement more negatively than whites/Latinos, with no significant differences in gender. It should be noted that Native Americans were not explicitly identified in this study.

The Washington Post (2018) studied 50,000 homicides in the United States. It found that 63% of white murder victims' perpetrator was apprehended. In cases with Latin victims, 48% of the perpetrators were arrested and charged; only 46% of black victims' perpetrators were charged (Quandt & Jones, 2021). In addition, the survey found that in socioeconomically depressed neighborhoods, the arrest rates were significantly lower. According to Pew Research Center (2016), these results reflect Black and Whites perceptions of law enforcement. Morin and Stapler's (2016) study indicates that 1/3 of the Black participants believe the police are doing an “*excellent job*” in their communities compared to 3/4 of White participants.

MacAlister (2011) points out the public perception of law enforcement in several scenarios applying different demographics. Warner (2007) advocates that the perception of law enforcement determines whether a victim will report a crime to the police. Warner (2007) further explains that it is even more of a determining factor in ethnic minorities. In one study with young adults, Fratelli et al. (2013) demonstrated that most of the participants in the survey reported that they do not trust law enforcement. Campbell and Raja (2005) suggest that the reality is that many victims that choose to write a sexual or violent crime to law enforcement are often further victimized when they decide to report the crime to the police.

Nadal and Davidoff (2015) explain that the relationship between law enforcement and Native American communities is complicated and often misunderstood on both ends of the spectrum. Nadal and Davidoff (2015) further suggest that misunderstanding can create fear and commonality among victims that there is no justice. Prior research is indicative that past negative interactions with police can cause emotional, physical, and psychological effects on the victim. Walsh and Bruce (2014) explain that the impact of the crimes can cause the victim to not contact the police due to the emotional stress of getting the police and reliving the crime.

Worden and McLean (2017) suggest that the members of communities' individual experiences with law enforcement are related to their attitudes toward law enforcement. These experiences include contact when reporting a crime, requesting assistance, or requiring involuntary connection with law enforcement. Worden and McLean (2017) further explain that individual communication significantly affects law enforcement satisfaction and perception. Braga et al.'s (2014) study suggest that a citizen's opinion of law enforcement conduct is often affected by the context of the contact with the police.

Morris (2016) study reported that out of 110 Aboriginal families that had lost a family member to violence, the average rating of law enforcement that investigated the crime was 2.8 out of 10. Jones et al. (2016) study indicates that four out of every five law enforcement officers policing Native American communities described the crimes in these communities as unsolvable. The study concluded that the perception of law enforcement in Indigenous communities is that the police are less engaged in their communities than in the past. Jones et al. (2019) further explain that these communities present several challenges for law enforcement officers, including high workloads, inadequate policing, community resources, and funding.

Martin and Danner (2017) describe the perception of law enforcement officers by the Native American communities as controversial. Martin and Danner (2017) further suggest that it is complicated and derives from a long history of mistrust and misunderstanding. Martin and Danner (2017) completed a study that found through interviews with tribal police officers that Colonialism still affects social, political, and economic oppression in the Native American community.

The Native American culture would benefit from this study. It may help to understand the reluctance of Native American women victims to report violent crimes to the police. It could help to understand the complex nature of the perception of police and past interactions with police in the communities the Native American women reside. It could aid in accelerating programs to dissolve misperceptions of local police agencies and encourage reporting violent crimes against Native American women.

Police Interactions

Zare et al. (2022) suggest that the race or ethnicity of an individual is often related to the reporting of positive and negative interactions with police. Zare et al. (2022) further explain that race and ethnicity play a considerable role in policing practices and community violence.

Policing interactions can determine a victim's likelihood to interact with police when a crime occurs. Watson et al. (2021) explain that victims of crimes often view the police as ineffective and partly to blame for their victimization. Watson et al. (2021) research found that females with secondary education and who have been victimized often have a negative perception of police following procedural justice rules. Watson et al. (2021) further suggest that individuals that report feeling safer in their community have a higher perception of trust in the police. The study

further says that more positive police interactions and visibility in the community encourage accessibility, which increases the positive perception of police.

Research Questions

Native American women face social and institutional obstacles that stem from a history influenced by Colonization that engages in a common perception of mistrust of law enforcement. Previous research is indicative that race is a factor in the perception of police (Nadal et al., 2017). Understanding Native American women's reluctance to report a violent crime to the police is pivotal. Earlier research has concluded that perception of police, past interactions with police, and demographic factors influence the victim's reluctance to report violent crimes to police of other races.

The central research theme asks if there are differences in Native American women's perception of police when reporting violent crimes to the police when they have not been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime in Oklahoma or on *Indian Land*. Is there a difference in the perception of police and the perception of past police interactions? Is there a relationship between demographic factors and tribal affiliation and reporting a violent or forced, and unwanted sex crime to the police?

Research Question #1 Is there a difference in perception of police between the Native American women who have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and Native American women who have not been the victim of crime?

Research Question #2 Is there a difference in Native American Women's perception of past police interactions for Native American women who have been a victim of violent crimes compared to Native American women who have not been a victim of violent crimes?

Research Question #3 Is there a relationship between the demographic factors of age, level of education, and sexual orientation and the reporting of violent crimes to the police between Native American women who are victims of violent crime and Native American women who have not been a victim of violent crimes?

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this quantitative, descriptive, and cross-sectional study will examine the reluctance of Native American women in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands* to report violent crimes to the police. How the data will be collected, analyzed, evaluated, and distributed for future research will be discussed. This research will focus on the differences between Native American women that have been victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and Native American women that have not been a victim of a crime and whether they reported the crime to police in Oklahoma and on *Indian Land*. The differences in the perception of police and the perception of past interactions with police will be examined. The past victimization, demographic factors, and participants' tribal affiliations will be investigated. The sole purpose of reporting violent crimes to the police is to prosecute the offender and provide justice for the victim. The researcher believes that perception of police, previous interactions with police, past victimization, tribal affiliation, and participants' demographics influence the reporting of violent crimes to police. The idea will be examined further by exploring possible relationships between the factors outlined to understand the participant's reluctance to report violent crimes to the police. The research will explore the tribal affiliation and demographics of the participants, such as age, employment, level of education, marital status, religion, and geographic location, which will be essential to differentiate and analyze in the results phase of the study. This study is specifically interested in whether Native American women's perception of police, previous

interactions with police, and past victimization affect the reluctance to report a violent crime to police in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands*.

Participants

The Institutional Review Board will approve the study from Nova Southeastern University. The target population for recruitment for this study is Native American women with current tribal enrollment or are members of a federally recognized tribe in Oklahoma ages 18-55. The term "Indian" has not been defined successfully to satisfy all legal, social, and personal requirements (National Institute of Justice, 2016). Purposive sampling will ensure that each participant is within the parameters established for the study (Creswell, 2012). The reason for this method, as suggested by Bachman & Schutt (2017), is that purpose sampling is the best method to study a population. The following guidelines, as indicated by Bachman and Schutt (2017), will be suggested for each participant: (1) be knowledgeable of the culture; (2) be willing to talk; and (3) be representative of the points of view of the population. In addition, the completeness and saturation of the population of participants will ensure that the female Native American population will be fully represented in this study. The study will set the inclusion and exclusion of participants (Sertia, 2016). This will ensure there is less chance for potential bias and credibility.

Sample Size. The sample size of 500-600 participants ensures an accurate insight into the Native American population of women in Oklahoma and the *Indian Lands* to be studied (Bachman & Schutt, 2017). The selected participants will be the sample, with the individual Native American women being the elements of the study. The sampling frame will be developed from the selected parts of the population. The sample of participants from the study will determine the sample generalizability.

Sampling Design for Recruitment. The study uses single and multistage strategies for participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The single stage will be done from a list of names from the Native American Scholastic Society and relatives. The participants will be recruited from the Native American Scholastic Society at Cameron University to include their female family members and friends who meet the eligibility study requirements. In addition, the female student Native American population at Cameron University will be contacted. Also, contacts at local tribal headquarters will be established to secure additional participants. Then, the multistage part of the participants will be done at the Powwows and Headquarters of the specified tribes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The participants will be recruited from local Powwows in the surrounding region. All participants will be asked to complete a survey about “the reluctance to report violent crimes to police.” To participate in the study, each participant will have to meet eligibility criteria requirements of (1) be over 18 years of age, (2) be female, (3) be Native American and registered with a recognized tribe, and (4) give informed consent (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). Bachman and Schutt (2017) caution that generalizability is a concern in research design.

Instruments

The sample participants will be provided with a 66-question questionnaire. Statements and questions concerning the perception of police, procedural justice, prior victimization, tribal affiliation, and demographics. The survey instrument will be available electronically through SurveyMonkey.com. Hard copies will be provided to capture Native American participants from areas of Oklahoma and Indian Land that may not have access to the Internet and technology to complete the survey electronically. The questionnaires will use a Likert Scale to measure participants' answers. The tribal affiliation and prior victimization questions will not use a Likert Scale. The questionnaire will require participants to choose answers ranging from strongly

disagree to strongly agree. Then other questions will ask participants to answer not at all, too high, or completely. The questionnaire and future study appendices will include elements of the survey instruments, consent forms, and debriefing information. Each part of the survey was selected to proffer previous research that instituted each mechanism separately in previous studies. Using the combined questionnaires will produce a better validity of the reluctance of Native American women in Oklahoma to report violent crimes to the police. The questionnaires for this research will be explained in detail below to ensure clarity.

Perception of Police Scale. The survey instrument, the Perception of Police Scale (POPS) (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015), is a two-part, self-reporting scale for participants to rate their perception of police and police bias. The first subscale of POPS is General Attitudes Toward Police which contains nine items. The second subscale: Perceptions of Police Bias, will have three items. The survey includes 12 statements to measure a person's attitude toward the police (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015).

Each participant is asked to determine the degree to which they agree or disagree with each statement. A five-point Likert Scale will be used. The range of scores will begin with one being "I disagree" and a five being "I strongly agree." Some sample statements include: "Police protect me,"; "Police are friendly,"; "Police treat people fairly,"; and "Police do not discriminate" (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015, n.p.). The higher scores indicate a more favorable perception of police, and a lower score indicates a less clear perception of police. Nadal and Davidoff (2015) suggest that examining a historically marginalized group's views and interactions with police can assist in understanding the psychological processes. The instrument developers have granted permission to use this instrument for this study. Nadal and Davidoff (2015) used this instrument in their research and had reliable scores to assure the validity of the instrument.

Procedural Justice Scale. The survey instrument, the Procedural Justice Scale (Elliott et al., 2011), is a 10-question scale used to examine the relationship between participants' perception of the authority of the police with past interactions with the police. Each participant is asked to determine the degree to which they agree or disagree with each statement. Participants will rate items on a 7-point Likert scale (*1 = not at all to 7 significantly or entirely*). Some sample statements include “police treated me with dignity and respect,”; “Police tried to do the right thing by me,”; and “I trusted the police with my case” (Elliot et al., 2011). The higher scores will indicate more positive past interactions with police, and a lower score will mean a less favorable past interaction with the police. The instrument developers have granted permission for educational use. Elliott et al. (2011) used this instrument with reliable scores to ensure validity.

Reason for Calling Police (RCP1) Scale. RCP1 is a 17-item questionnaire developed to collect information about why a person may not have contacted the police after an unwanted or forced sexual or violent offense (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). The RCP1 asks the participants, “I did not contact police or ask someone to contact the police after an unwanted or forced sexual or violent offense because...” (Walsh & Bruce, 2014).

The 17-item questionnaire is constructed to follow commonly cited reasons for not calling the police. The questions are structured to allow the participant to indicate how they feel after the crime within two years after the unwanted and forced experience (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). Each question uses a factor structure that contains four possible answers: (1) seriousness (how serious the participant thinks the event is and if it is a crime; (2) privacy (does the participant want the event to remain private); (3) triviality (the participant's perception of the event and whether the police will take the event seriously; and (4) safety (the participant's

concern for safety). A scale will be used for each question. Each participant will be asked to rate how strongly they feel about each word on a scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). An example of the statements are listed as follows: “I didn’t contact the police because ...” (e.g., “I did not think the police would keep me safe (safety factor)”; “I didn’t think the police would care about the event (triviality factor)”; “I was embarrassed (privacy factor)”; and “I did not think the event was serious (seriousness factor)” (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). This instrument in their research and had reliable scores to assure the validity of the instrument (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). The instrument developers have permitted this instrument to be used in this study.

Reason for Calling Police (RCP2) Scale. The RCP2 17-item questionnaire was developed to determine why a participant may have contacted the police or had someone on their behalf contact the police after an unwanted or forced violent or sexual experience Walsh and Bruce (2014). The RCP2 asks the participants, “I did not contact the police or ask someone to contact the police after an unwanted or forced violent or sexual experience because ...” (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). A list of statements will be provided to the participants about why a participant did not or did not have someone else contact the police.

Each participant will be asked to rate how strongly they feel about each statement in the two years since the offense on a scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The following questions are asked, e.g., “I thought the police could protect me from the offender (safety factor)”; “I thought the police would take the event seriously (triviality factor)”; “I wasn’t embarrassed (privacy factor)”; and “I wanted the offender to be punished for the crime (seriousness factor)” (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). As Walsh and Bruce (2014) recommended, there will be four control questions that each participant must answer correctly ($n=4$) and will be

excluded from the results. Walsh and Bruce (2014) also recommend that this scale be reverse-scored. The instrument developers have permitted this instrument to be used in this study. Walsh and Bruce (2014) used the instrument in their research with reliable scores to ensure accuracy.

Participant Information Sheet. The researcher will construct a locally designed participant information sheet (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). It will be a 3-item self-report measure intended to gather information. It will allow each participant to self-report violent or sexual victimization within the last two years. It will enable the researcher to collect data by asking about (1) characteristics of the unwanted or forced sexual or violent experience, (2) the date of occurrence if within two years, and (3) whether the crime was reported to the police or not. These questions will be yes/no or prefer not to say answers if applicable. The type of victimization will be characterized by subgroups for the participant to choose from. After these questions, information will be provided for local assistance to the participants that have been victimized.

Demographic Questionnaire. The 8-question demographic questionnaire will ask participants to disclose their age, occupation, income, level of education, sexual orientation, relationship status, religion, and geographic location. This will be through continuous and categorical scales.

Tribal Affiliation Questionnaire. The questionnaire will ask the participants to identify their tribal affiliation. The researcher will provide 12 choices for tribal affiliation identification that are native to the state of Oklahoma and the geographical location.

Procedures

Design and Data Collection Procedures

The research will employ a cross-sectional correlational design that will explore and measure the strength and direction of possible relationships between the variables of the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to police in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands* with the perception of police, previous victimization, past interactions with police, demographics, and tribal affiliation. This is the best method of study due to more than two variables being investigated with no manipulation or intervention and to determine if there is any association between the variables. The sampling will not involve a random sample. It will be nonexperimental (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017). The validity has a high external validity to generalize the findings to the Native American women population in Oklahoma. The method will allow additional support for relationships between Native American women and the variables.

Data Collection

There was a total of 526 participants from which the data was collected. After removal of the participant's that did not meet the study criteria there was 417 participants. The data was collected through an anonymous survey using an online platform hosted by Survey Monkey. Internet access was controlled through emails to the student population identified as Native American in their enrollment at Cameron University. The social media sites used to allow access to the survey were presented to be Native American. Access to the survey was further controlled by asking each participant to self-report their tribal affiliation with a federally recognized tribe. If the participant was not a member of a federally recognized tribe, they could still complete the study but were later removed for not meeting the study's criteria. The researcher utilized the study online and provided paper copies to participants upon request. These methods were chosen to ensure reaching individuals that did not have Internet access or were uncomfortable completing the survey online.

The researcher created eight demographic questions, two tribal affiliation questions, and three questions relevant to victimization. The researcher combined four instruments to complete the 66-question survey. These instruments were the Nadal and Davidoff (2015) Perception of Police Scale (POPS), the Elliott et al. (2011) Procedural Justice Scale (PJS), and Bruce and Walsh (2014) Reasons to Call Police #1 and Reasons to Call Police #2 scale. There was a total of 66 questions for the survey.

Once the IRB approved the study at Nova Southeastern University, a complete copy was sent to Cameron University for approval. The approval of the survey by Cameron University was necessary to acquire access to the female Native American student population currently enrolled at Cameron University. After approval, the survey was emailed every Monday for four weeks to the female Native American student population at Cameron University beginning October 10, 2022, and ending October 31, 2022.

The researcher used Native American social media to gain access to additional respondents for the survey. The survey link was sent through email, text, and social media sites that interested Native American women in the local area. Lastly, the researcher tabled at the annual Comanche Nation Fair and Pow Wow from 8 am until 5 pm on October 1, 2022. All survey responses collected in person were anonymous and voluntary. The data from the hard copies was then entered into SPSS (version 26).

The electronic survey was open from October 1 thru December 1, 2022. Once the survey was closed, the data was exported from Survey Monkey to the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 to perform the statistical analysis. The data collected from the survey will be discussed in depth in this chapter.

Data was collected through an electronic survey, through direct administration of the questionnaire through Surveymonkey.com, or delivered and assembled in paper format (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018). For the tabling event at the Pow Wow, anonymous participants could choose to complete the survey electronically or through a hard copy printed from Surveymonkey.com. These methods ensured that participants needing Internet access or feeling comfortable with the Internet would complete the survey. In addition, the survey was emailed out through a mailing list of the recognized Native American female student population at Cameron University after approval from Cameron University. Lastly, the researcher made the anonymous survey available through Native American social media sites. Each of these methods was used to access participants with Internet access while including those who did not have Internet access. It was used to measure the variables and determine possible relationships between the pre-described variables (Fraenkel et al., 2012). Johnson and Christenson (2010) caution that using a correlational design cannot be construed or implied as causation.

Four foundational research questions will establish the study. These questions will be used to explore the relationship between the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to the study's variables. Utilizing Native American women of the tribes in Oklahoma, the research will identify a possible relationship between the reluctance to report a violent crime to the police, perception of police, past interactions with police, past victimization, tribal affiliation, and demographics. The participants will be divided into groups that have been the victim of violent crimes in the two years before the study and those who have interacted with police. This will ensure accuracy in the study.

The study will measure the participant's answers to the six questionnaires. First, the participants must read the Research Consent Form (Appendix A) (Bolton, 2010). This will

ensure an understanding of the possibility of sensitivity to future questions. A demographic questionnaire will be administered (Appendix B) along with tribal affiliation (Appendix C). These questions will provide an essential characteristic, non-identifying, of the participants. Next, the participants will be asked to complete the POPS (Appendix D) and the Procedural Justice Scale (Appendix E). The RCP1 and RCP2 questionnaires will be administered (Appendix F). Then, the victim's willingness to cooperate with the police survey will be completed (Appendix G). The study will generate a questionnaire to identify the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to the police. It will ask questions about the perception of police, procedural justice, past police interactions, prior victimization, demographics, and tribal affiliation.

Data Analysis Procedures

The study is interested in the reluctance of Native American women to report violent crimes to the police in Oklahoma and on *Indian Lands*. It will be a population-based survey in Southwest Oklahoma and *Indian Lands* (Setia, 2016). The data will be collected using a self-administered, cross-sectional questionnaire to measure each variable. A purposive sampling method will manage the survey participants' data.

Frequencies. According to Huck (2012), the frequency distribution illustrates how many subjects are similar in a study in the same category. There are two types of frequencies in research. The two methods are simple frequency distribution and grouped frequency distribution. For this research, simple frequency distribution will be used to illustrate the frequency of the data in the study.

Descriptive Analysis. All statistical analyses for the independent and dependent variables will be conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 26 for Mac for statistical analysis

(Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018). It will be done with two approaches: descriptive and inferential. According to Bachman and Schutt (2014), descriptive comparative research looks to understand an issue's structure, nature, or scope. Descriptive statistics will be used to describe and characterize the values of each variable of this study for the sample of the Native American population through the scores of the mean, standard deviations, mode, and median. Any missing data will be reported. Each participant that did not complete the survey will be removed from the study, as well as any participant that does not disclose tribal affiliation with a federally recognized tribe. The response bias will be determined through the response/non-response of the participants (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018).

Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's alpha is used to measure internal consistency. It will determine the consistency of the instruments used to collect data in the survey (Morgan et al., 2002). The reliability checks the internal consistency will be Cronbach alpha statistic (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018). Each participant that did not complete the survey will be reported. The response bias will be determined through the response/non-response of the participants (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018).

Independent Samples t-test. The t-test will be used to analyze Native American women participating in the study. The participants will be divided into two groups. The two independent samples will have no relationship (Huck, 2012). For the study, the Native American women participants will be asked to self-report violent crime victimization. In comparing the means of Native American women who have victims of violent crimes and Native American women that have not been a victim of a violent crime, the purpose is "inferential in nature" (Huck, 2012). This will be used to test the null hypothesis of the two independent samples.

Cohen's d. The effect size of the differences between the means of the groups that compare the differences. According to Morgan et al. (2002), Cohen's d and Pearson's r are the most widely relevant acceptable effect size indicators. The effect size is essential as it allows the researcher to determine and make decisions about the observed findings of the research to determine if they are trivial or substantive to the study being conducted.

Cross Tabulation. Cross tabulation is a statistical tool used for categorical data. It will be used to examine the number of survey participants with the same specific characteristics needing to be reviewed by the researcher. It provides essential data about the relationship between the variables being analyzed.

Chi-Square Test. The chi-square test is inferential (Fitzgerald & Fitzgerald, 2014). It allows determining whether frequencies across variable categories are distribution-related (Morgan et al., 2002). It will enable the researcher to identify whether the crosstabs data are statistically significant. It will allow the researcher to observe and compare expected cell frequencies that can be used to determine the probability of the null hypothesis.

Univariate Analysis of Variance. (ANOVA). The analysis of variance will test for the differences between three or more means from the study (Bachman & Schutt, 2014). It is used when the IV is nominal or ordinal, and the DV is interval or ratio. Nadal et al. (2017) recommend using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine if there are any significant differences. To determine other demographic differences, a one-way ANOVA will be used.

Positive Correlational Research. Positive correlational research will be used if two variables correspond, creating an increase or decrease in the other variable. The *correlation coefficient (r)* will measure the relationship between the suggested variables. Mertler (2021)

indicates that two variables may appear related but does not mean that one causes the other. Scores will be collected for two or more variables; then, a correlation coefficient will be determined. Once completed, the direction of the correlation coefficient will indicate the strength of the relationship.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed description of the study's process in collecting and analyzing the data. The study explored the differences in perception of the police, perception of past police interactions, and the perception of privacy and safety in past police interactions between Native American women who have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime compared to Native American women that have not been a victim. The study went further and examined the perception of police, perception of past police interactions, and perception of privacy and safety in past police interactions between the victims that did not report the crimes to police and the victims that did. The study then focused on determining the relationship between the selected demographics, precisely age, level of education, and the relationship status of Native American victims that reported the violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to the police and those victims that did not. The cross-sectional study was conducted through a 66 - question survey through the online platform Survey Monkey and available in hard copy from October 1, 2022, through December 1, 2022.

Sample Size

Cresswell suggests reporting the total participant samples (Cresswell & Cresswell, 2018). Of the 526 participants who participated in the survey, 109 (20.7%) of the participants were excluded for not meeting the criteria of the study, as 63 participants did not report their tribal affiliation, and 46 participants did not complete the survey. The remaining 417 ($N = 417$)

individual survey responses were used for the study. Creswell and Creswell (2018) suggests that research bias can cause non-responses on surveys. Before administering the survey to participants, to counter the lack of responses on the survey the researcher ensured the questions were not leading and the anonymity for the participants. Attention to sensitive questions was addressed through neutral and plain language. Access to digital and paper surveys was made available to participants in an additional attempt to counter the response bias.

The target population for this study was Native American women in Southwest Oklahoma that were members of federally recognized tribes, specifically Native American women from the Kiowa, Comanche, Apache-Fort Sill Apache/Caddo, Wichita-Delaware tribes. The estimated population of Native American women in this geographic location is 5,182 (Census Bureau, 2020). The researcher did allow other tribal members to complete the survey to enable the inclusion of all Native American women that were members of a federally recognized tribe.

To determine the necessary number of participants, a population calculator was used to obtain an adequate sample size of Native American women needed for the study in Oklahoma through a Qualtrics (2020) calculator. The Qualtrics statistical software calculated the number of participants necessary for the study to be 358 Native American women. The projected number of respondents allowed for a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%.

Participant Demographics

The cross-sectional study investigated the demographics of the 417 Native American women who participated in the survey. A frequency distribution analysis was conducted on the demographic variables of the participants to identify and categorize the demographic configuration of the participants for research. The survey contained seven demographic

questions: age, relationship status, sexual orientation, location, employment, religion and tribal affiliation. The study's frequency distribution is shown in Table 1. It represents the 417 participants of the study.

The frequency analysis indicates six age groups: 18 - 24 years, 25 - 34 years, 35 - 44 years, 45 - 54 years, 55 + years, and "*prefer not to say.*" 153 (36.7%) of the participants belonged to the 18 – 24 years group, while 73 (17.5%) were 25 - 34 years group, 64 (15.3%) were 35 - 44 years group, 48 (11.5%) were in the 45-54 years group, 76 (18.2%) 55 + years, and 3 (0.7%) that did "*prefer not to say.*"

The frequency analysis for the level of education was divided into four groups. 210 (50.4%) reported having a high school diploma or equivalency (GED) degree. 167 (40%) individuals report having a college degree (associate, bachelor, master, or higher). While 39 (9.4%) individuals report having Certificates of Training or another formal schooling, and 1 (0.2%) selected "*prefer not to say.*"

Furthermore, of the 417 participants, 379 (90.9%) participants defined as heterosexual. While 37 (8.9%) participants identified as homosexual, pansexual, or other. 1 (0.2%) "*prefer not to say.*" The 417 participants that completed the survey, 271 (65%) participants identified as Christian. While 128 (30.7%) report other forms of religion, and 18 (4.3%) "*prefer not to say.*"

In addition, the analysis revealed that of the 417 participants, 203 (48.7%) reported their residence in Lawton, Oklahoma. While the remaining participants were categorized into these geographic areas: Apache, Anadarko, Chickasha, Cyril, Fletcher, Cache, Walters, Duncan, and Southwest Oklahoma or other, and 4 (1.0%) "*prefer not to say.*" For employment, the frequency analysis indicated that 315 (75.5%) participants claim to be employed, 88 (21.1%) report being unemployed or unable to work, and 14 (3.4) "*prefer not to say.*" See Table 1.

Table 1*Demographics and Contextual Characteristics of Native American Participants*

Characteristics	N	%
Age		
18-24 years	153	36.7
25-34 years	73	17.5
35-44 years	64	15.3
45-54 years	48	11.5
55 + years	76	18.2
Prefer not to say	3	0.7
Location		
Lawton	203	48.7
Apache, Anadarko, Chickasha, Cyril, Fletcher	52	12.5
Cache, Walters, Duncan	87	20.8
Southwest Oklahoma/Other	71	17.0
Prefer not to say	4	1.0
Employment		
Employed	315	75.5
Unemployed	88	21.1
Prefer not to say	14	3.4
Education		
GED/High School Diploma	210	50.4
College Degree	167	40.0
Certificate of Training/Other	39	9.4
Prefer not to say	1	0.2
Sexual Orientation		
Straight/Heterosexual	379	90.9
Gay/Lesbian/Other	37	8.9
Prefer not to say	1	0.2
Relationship Status		
Single	157	37.6
Married/In a relationship	183	43.9
Divorced/Separated	75	18.0
Prefer not to say	2	0.5
Religion		
Christian	271	65.0
Other religion	128	30.7
Prefer not to say	18	4.3

Note. N = 417.

Tribal Affiliation

A total of 417 participants claimed to be members of a federally recognized tribe. The disclosure of membership in a federally recognized tribe was required of each individual to participate in the study. In Southwest Oklahoma, there are seven tribes primarily located in the study's geographic location. These tribes are Kiowa, Comanche, Apache, Wichita, Caddo, Delaware, and Fort Sill Apache (Goodin, n.d.). The Cherokee tribe was included because of its tribal population in northeast Oklahoma, of over 141,000 (Cherokee Nation, 2023). See Table 2.

Table 2

Participant Tribal Affiliation

Tribe	N	%
Apache	54	12.9
Caddo	17	4.1
Cherokee	32	7.7
Comanche	198	47.5
Kiowa	54	12.9
Tribe not listed	57	13.3
Total 100	417	100

Note. N = 417.

Participant Victimization. A total of 417 individuals self-disclosed their answer to the victimization question on the survey "*Have you been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime?*" Of these 417 participants, 236 (56.6%) reported being a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. The remaining 181 participants (43.4%) reported not being a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. See Table 3.

Table 3*Participants Reporting Being the Victim of a Violent or Forced and Unwanted Sex Crime*

	N	%
Yes	236	56.6
No	181	43.4

Note. ($n = 236$) Victim. ($n = 181$) Not a victim.

The participants were then asked, “If you have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sexual crime, did you report the crime to the police?” Of the 236 (56.6%) report being a victim, 148 (62.7%) victims did not report the crime to the police, and 10 (4.2%) victims “prefer not to say” if they reported the crime to the police. In contrast, 78 (33.1%) victims did report the crime to the police. See Table 4.

Table 4*Victims Reporting the Crime to Police*

	N	%
Did not report the crime to the police	148	62.7
Prefer not say	10	4.2
Did report the crime to police	78	33.1
Total	236	100

Note. ($n = 148$) Victims did not report crime to police. ($n = 10$) Victim “prefers not to say” if crime was reported to police. ($n = 78$) Crimes reported to police.

Data Analysis

According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), presenting the data analysis plan is critical for understanding the data. In this quantitative research, the data analysis comprised of descriptive analysis, frequencies, independent samples t-tests, univariate analysis, cross-tabulation, and Chi-Square Tests to analyze data. To ensure internal consistency, Cronbach's Alpha was employed to determine the internal consistency of the four instruments used in the

survey to collect data. Moreover, the analysis required condensing data into manageable and coherent variables for further analysis. It was done through the SPSS (version 26).

Research Questions

The exploration of the differences in perception of police, perception of past police interactions, and perception of privacy and safety in past police interactions between Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime compared to Native American women that have not been a victim of a crime was compared and analyzed. Then the study investigated to determine the possible relationship between the demographics of age, level of education, and the relationship status of Native American women victims that did and did not report the crime to police.

Research Question #1

Is there a difference in perception of police between the Native American women who have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and Native American women who have not been the victim of a crime?

Perception of Police Scale. There was a total of 417 Native American women participants that responded to the survey. Of these 417 Native American women, 236 (56.6%) have been victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. Moreover, of these 236 victims, 148 (62.7%) did not report the crime to the police, and 10 (4.2%) chose not to disclose if they reported the crime to the police, while 78 (33.1%) did report the crime to police. The researcher tested the Native American women's perception of police using the Perception of Police Scale (POPS) (Nadal & Davidoff, 2015). The POPS scale was used in this study to analyze the perception of police by Native American women. The POPS scale contains 12 items. The scale asks questions like "*Police treat all people fairly,*" "*The police are helpful,*" and

“Police officers treat all people fairly.” The instrument provides a 5-point Likert Scale for the participants to rate their responses strongly agree (1), agree (2), neutral (3), disagree (4), and strongly disagree (5). The items were scored in a negative direction, with the higher scores indicating a higher negative perception of police. The POPS scale demonstrated a high consistency ($\alpha = .938$), respectively, for this study. The scale’s score was then computed into a single variable for further analysis.

To assess whether Native American women’s perception of police affects the reporting of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to police, the researcher functionalized the POPS scale into one variable. The responses to the POPS scale were calculated across the answers of all 417 participants excluding any missing values. The individual responses to the POPS scale were then aggregated into a single variable for the perception of police. The POPS scale results were merged. The analysis was then calculated in SPSS by transforming and recoding the POPS into a new variable without changing the original variable not to alter the original data.

The 417 Native American women were placed into two groups: (1) Native American women that were victims of a violent or forced and unwanted crime 236 (56.6%), and (2) Native American victims that were not victims of a crime 181 (34.1%). By comparison, the number of Native American women that have not been the victims of a crime was considerably smaller.

To test if there is a significant difference in perception of police associated with Native American women being the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime, an independent samples t-test was performed. The Native American victims and non-victims were adequate for conducting an independent samples t-test for analysis. The results of the independent samples t-test showed the means for the perception of police between Native American victims that did not report the crime to the police ($M = 3.00$, $SD = .696$, $n = 236$) and

the Native American women that were not victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime, ($M = 2.58$, $SD = .704$, $n = 181$). The independent samples t-test, $t(415) = 6.107$, $p = < .001$, 95% CI [0.286, 0.558]. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(415) = 1.745$, $p = .187$. As measured by Cohen's d , the effect size was $d = 0.69$. There was a medium effect on the Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime has a medium effect on their perception of police when compared to the Native American women that have not been the victim of a crime. See Table 5.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for Native American Women's Perception of Police

Native American Women	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Victims of Crime	236	3.00	.696
Not victims of crime	181	2.58	.704

Note.($n = 236$) Victim of a crime. ($n = 181$) Not a victim of a Crime.

Of the 236 (56.6%) Native American women reported being a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime, 148 (62.7%) did not report the crime to the police, with 10 (4.2%) Native American victims who chose not to disclose if they reported the crime to the police. There were 78 (33%) Native American victims that did report the crime to police. The 10 (4.2%) participants were excluded from this part of the analysis. From this point, the researcher explored the differences in perception of police between the 226 Native American women that have been a victim of a crime but did not report the crime to the police and the 78 victims that did report the crime to the police. See Table 6.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for Native American Victims Not Reporting/Reporting Crimes to Police and POPS Scale

Native American Women victims	N	M	SD
Did not report crime to police	148	2.79	.625
Did report crime to police	78	3.05	.710

Note. ($n = 148$) Victims did not report crime to police. ($n = 78$) Victims did report crime to police.

The POPS was then tested through an independent samples t-test between Native American victims that reported the crime to the police and the Native American victims that did not report the crime to the police. The dependent variable is the perception of the police. The independent variables are the Native American women divided into two groups, victims and non-victims. The number of participants was adequate for conducting the independent samples t-test for analysis.

The results of the independent samples t-test showed the means for the perception of police between Native American victims that did not report the crime to the police ($M = 2.79$, $SD = .625$, $n = 148$) and the Native American victims that did report the crime to the police ($M = 3.05$, $SD = .70$, $n = 78$). The independent samples t-test results $t(224) = -2.778$, $p = .006$, 95% CI $[-.045, -.074]$. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(224) = .556$, $p = .457$. The effect size, as measured by Cohen's d , was $d = 0.42$. Therefore, there was a small effect of the perception of police on Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime that did not report the

crime to police when compared to the Native American women that have been the victim of a crime that did report the crime to police.

Research Question #2

Is there a difference in Native American Women's perception of past police interactions for Native American women who have been a victim of violent crimes compared to Native American women who have not been a victim of violent crimes?

The Procedural Justice Scale (PJS). The PJS scale was created by Elliott et al. (2011). The PJS scale contains nine statements like "*Police show concern for my rights,*" "*I trust the police officers that handled my case,*" and "*Police treat me politely.*" The PJS scale uses a 7-point Likert Scale. Higher scores indicate a more positive past police interaction, while lower scores indicate less favorable past police interaction. The PJS has adequate reliability ($\alpha = .941$), respectively, for this study. The PJS score was then computed through SPSS into a single variable for further analysis.

To assess whether the Native American women's past perception of police interactions affects the reporting of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to police, the researcher functionalized the PJS scale into one variable. The responses to the PJS scale were then calculated across the answers of all 417 participants. Any missing values were excluded. The individual responses to the PJS scale were then aggregated into a single variable. The PJS scale results were then merged. The analysis was calculated in SPSS by transforming and recoding the PJS into a single variable without changing the original variable not to alter the original data.

Of the 417 Native American women participants, 236 (56.6%) reported being victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. Of these, 181 (43.4%) have not been the victim of a crime. The dependent variable for this study was the perception of past police interactions when

reporting a crime to police using the PJS Scale. The independent variables were the Native American women victims separated into two groups by whether the Native American woman was a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime.

The researcher focused on the perception of past police interactions with police by the Native American women to see if there was a statistically significant difference in perceptions of past police interactions with the Native American women that have been a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and those Native American women that have not been a victim.

An independent samples t-test was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant mean difference in the perception of past police interactions between the two groups of Native American women. The results of the independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference in the perception of past police interaction when the Native American woman was the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.20$, $n = 236$), and Native American women not a victim of crime ($M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.26$, $n = 181$). The independent samples t-test results, $t(415) = -6.640$, $p = <.001$, 95% CI [-1.045, -0.567]. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(415) = 0.026$, $p = .873$. As measured by Cohen's d , the effect size was $d = 0.66$. Therefore, there was a medium effect of the perception of past police interactions for Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime when compared to the Native American women that have been the victim of a crime. See Table 7.

Table 7*Descriptive Statistics of Native American Women Victims and the PJS Scale*

Native American women	N	M	SD
Victims of crime	236	3.43	1.20
Not victims of crime	181	4.24	1.26

Note. ($n = 236$) Victims of a Crime. ($n = 181$) Not victims of a crime.

The researcher further investigated to determine if there were differences in perception of past police interactions when reporting crimes to police for Native American women that have been a victim of violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes that did not report the crime to police when compared to the Native American women that have been a victim of violent crime that did report the crime to the police. Of these victims, 148 (62.7%) that did not report the crime to the police, 78 (33.1%) Native American victims did report the crime to police, and 10 (4.2%) Native American victims chose “*prefer not to say*” if they reported the crime to police. The Native American victims that chose not to disclose if they reported the crime to the police were excluded from the this section of analysis.

The PJS scale was then tested through an independent samples t-test between Native American victims that reported the crime to the police and the Native American victims that did report the crime to the police. The dependent variable is the perception of past police interactions when reporting a crime to police, with the independent variables being the two groups of Native American victims of a violent crime: (1) 148 (62.7%) that did not report the crime to police, and (2) 78 (33.1%) did report the crime to police. The number of participants was adequate for conducting the independent t-test for analysis. The results of the independent samples t-test revealed a difference in the perception of past police interactions with the Native American

woman who was victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime that did not report the crime to the police ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 1.33$, $n = 148$), compared to Native American women that were the victim of a crime that did report the crime to the police ($M = 3.81$, $SD = 1.27$, $n = 78$). The independent samples t-test results, $t(224) = -0.108$, $p = .914$, 95% CI [-0.382, 0.342]. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(224) = 0.464$, $p = .497$. The effect size, as measured by Cohen's d , was $d = 0.02$. Therefore, there was a small effect of the perception of past police interactions on Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime that did not report to police when compared to the Native American women that have been the victim of a crime and did report the crime to police. See Table 8.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics of Native American Victims That Did/Did Not Report Crime to Police and PJS Scale

Native American Women victims	N	M	SD
Did not report crime to police	148	2.79	.625
Did report crime to police	78	3.05	.710

Note. ($n = 148$) Victim did not report crime to police. ($n = 78$) Did report crime to police.

Reasons for Calling Police Scale (RCP1 and RCP2). RCP1 and RCP2 contain 14 items created by Bruce and Walsh (2014). It uses a 5-point Likert scale scored in a positive direction. A higher score indicates a positive relationship with police, while a lower score indicates a less favorable relationship with police. Both scales, RCP1 and RCP2, contain four factors: (1) seriousness, (2) safety, (3) triviality, and (4) privacy. The scales had questions for safety like “*I didn't think the police would keep me safe*” and “*I didn't think the police could protect me from*

the offender.” The scale contained questions for privacy, like “*I didn’t want anyone to know what happened to me*” and “*I didn’t want to make the forced and unwanted sexual experience public.*” The researcher used this study's safety and privacy factors to analyze Native American women's perceptions of past police interactions. The RCP1 and RCP2 had an internal consistency of ($\alpha = .858$), respectively, for this study. The RCP1 and RCP2 scales were then aggregated and recoded into the variables of privacy and safety for further analysis. The data was calculated in SPSS (version 26) into a new variable without changing the original variable so as not to alter the original data. Then, to assess whether the Native American women's perception of privacy and safety in past police interactions affected the reporting of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to police, the researcher functionalized the RCP1 and RCP2 scale into a variable for privacy and safety.

Of the 417 Native American women participants, 236 (56.6%) individuals reported being victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. Of these, 181 (43.4%) participants reported not being a victim of a crime. Therefore, the dependent variable for this study was the perception of privacy and safety in past police interactions. The independent variables were the Native American women separated into two groups by whether they were victims of a crime.

First, the researcher focused on the perception of privacy in past police interactions by the Native American women in the study to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between Native American women that have and have been a victim of violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and those that have not.

The results of the independent samples t-test revealed a difference in the perception of privacy in past police interactions with the Native American woman who were victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime ($M = 2.99$, $SD = .560$, $n = 236$) when compared to

Native American women that were not the victim of crime ($M = 2.89$, $SD = .357$, $n = 181$). The independent samples t-test results, $t(415) = 2.311$, $p = .021$, $d = 0.48$, 95% CI [0.015, 0.193]. In addition, there was an assumption of homogeneity of variance testes through Levene's F test, $F(415) = 24.90$, $p = < 0.001$. However, the Levene's F test revealed that the homogeneity of variance assumption was not met ($p = < .001$). As such, the Welch's F test was used. An alpha level of .05 was used for the subsequent analyses. The one-way ANOVA of perception of privacy in past police interactions with Native American women that have been the victim of a crime and did not report the crime to police was insignificant Welch's $F(2, 3.275) = 2.707$, $p = .202$. See Table 9.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics of Native American Women Victims/Non-Victims Perception of Privacy

Native American Women	N	M	SD
Victims of a crime	236	2.99	.560
Not victims of a crime	181	2.89	.357

Note. ($n = 236$) Victims ($n = 181$) Non-Victims.

Second, the researcher focused on the perception of safety in past police interactions by the Native American women in the study to determine if there was a statistically significant difference between the 236 (56.6%) Native American women that have and have been a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and those 181 (43.4%) Native American women that have not been a victim.

The results of the independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference in the perception of safety in past police interactions with the Native American woman who were victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .561$, $n = 236$), compared

to Native American women that were not a victim ($M = 2.77$, $SD = .431$, $n = 181$). The independent samples t-test results, $t(415) = 5.062$, $p = <.001$, 95%, CI [0.155, 0.353]. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(415) = 3.69$, $p = <.055$. The effect size, as measured by Cohen's d , was $d = 0.50$. Therefore, there was a medium effect size on the perception of the safety of past police interactions for Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime when compared to Native American women that have not been the victim of a crime. See Table 10.

Table 10

Descriptive Statistics of Native American Women Victims Perception of Safety Scale

Native American Women	N	M	SD
Victim of a crime	236	3.02	.561
Not a victim of a crime	181	2.77	.431

Note. ($n = 236$) Native American victims. ($n = 181$) Non-victims.

The researcher further investigated to determine if there was a difference in perception of privacy in past police interactions for Native American women that have been a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and did not report the crime to police compared to Native American women that have been a victim of a violent crime and did report to police. The dependent variable is the perception of privacy in past police interactions, and the independent variables are the 148 (62.7%) that did not report the crime to the police, the 10 (4.2%) Native American victims that chose not to disclose if they reported the crime to police, and the 78 (33.1%) that did report the crime to police. The Native American victims that chose not to disclose if they reported the crime to the police were excluded from this step of the analysis.

Privacy. First, the researcher focused on the perception of privacy in past police interactions by the Native American women in the study to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in perception of privacy in past police interactions between Native American women that have and have been a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and did not report the crime to the police and the Native American victims that did report the crime to police.

The results of the independent samples t-test revealed a difference in the means of the perception of privacy in past police interactions between Native American women who were victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime that did not report the crime to the police ($M = 2.99$, $SD = .472$, $n = 148$) when compared to Native American women that were a victim of a crime that did report the crime to the police ($M = 2.87$, $SD = .472$, $n = 78$). The independent samples t-test results, $t(224) = 1.587$, $p = .114$, 95% CI [-0.027, 0.255]. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(224) = 2.99$, $p = .085$. As measured by Cohen's d , the effect size was $d = 0.23$. Therefore, there was a medium effect of the perception of past police interactions on Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime that did not report to police when compared to the Native American women that have been the victim of a crime and did report the crime to police. See Table 11.

Table 11*Descriptive Statistics of Native American Women Victims and Perception of Privacy Scale*

Native American Victims	N	M	SD
Not report crime	148	2.99	.472
Report victims	78	2.87	.584

Note. ($n = 148$) Victim did not report crime to police. ($n = 78$) Victim did report crime to police.

Safety. Second, the researcher focused on the perception of safety in past police interactions by the Native American women in the study to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in perception of safety in past police interactions between Native American women that have been a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and did not report the crime to the police and the Native American victims that did report the crime to police.

The results of the independent samples t-test revealed a difference in the means of the perception of safety in past police interactions between Native American women who were victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime that did not report the crime to police ($M = 2.82$, $SD = .534$, $n = 148$) when compared to Native American women that were a victim of crime that did report the crime to police ($M = 2.97$, $SD = .601$, $n = 78$). The independent samples t-test results, $t(224) = -1.949$, $p = .53$., 95% CI [-0.306, 0.001]. In addition, the assumption of homogeneity of variance was tested and satisfied via Levene's F test, $F(224) = .786$, $p = .376$. The effect size, as measured by Cohen's d , was $d = 0.26$. Therefore, there was a small effect of the perception of safety in past police interactions on Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime that did not report to the police when compared to the Native American women that have been the victim of a crime and did report the crime to police. See Table 12.

Table 12

Descriptive Statistics of Native American Women Victims that Did Not/Did Report Crime to Police and Perception of Safety Scale

Native American Victims	N	M	SD
Not report crime	148	2.82	.534
Report Crime	78	2.97	.601

Note. (n = 148) Victims did not report crime to police. (n = 78) Victims did report crime to police.

Research Question #3

Is there a relationship between Native American women's demographic factors of age, level of education, and relationship status and the reporting of violent crimes to the police between victims of violent crime and Native American women who have not been victims of violent crime?

Demographic Questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire consisted of seven questions at the time of the study. The researcher focused on the three demographics questions of age, level of education, and relationship status. It asked the participants to disclose their age, level of education, and relationship status. Of the 417 participants in the study, 236 (56.6%) report being victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. Of these, 148 (62.7%) did not report the crime to the police, 78 (33.1%) did report the crime to the police, and 10 (4.2%) “*preferred not to say*” whether they reported the crime to the police. Participants who did not disclose reporting the crime to the police were excluded from this step of the analysis. See Table 13.

Table 13

Frequencies and Chi-Square Results for the Age of Native American Women Victims That Did/ Did Not Report the Crime to Police

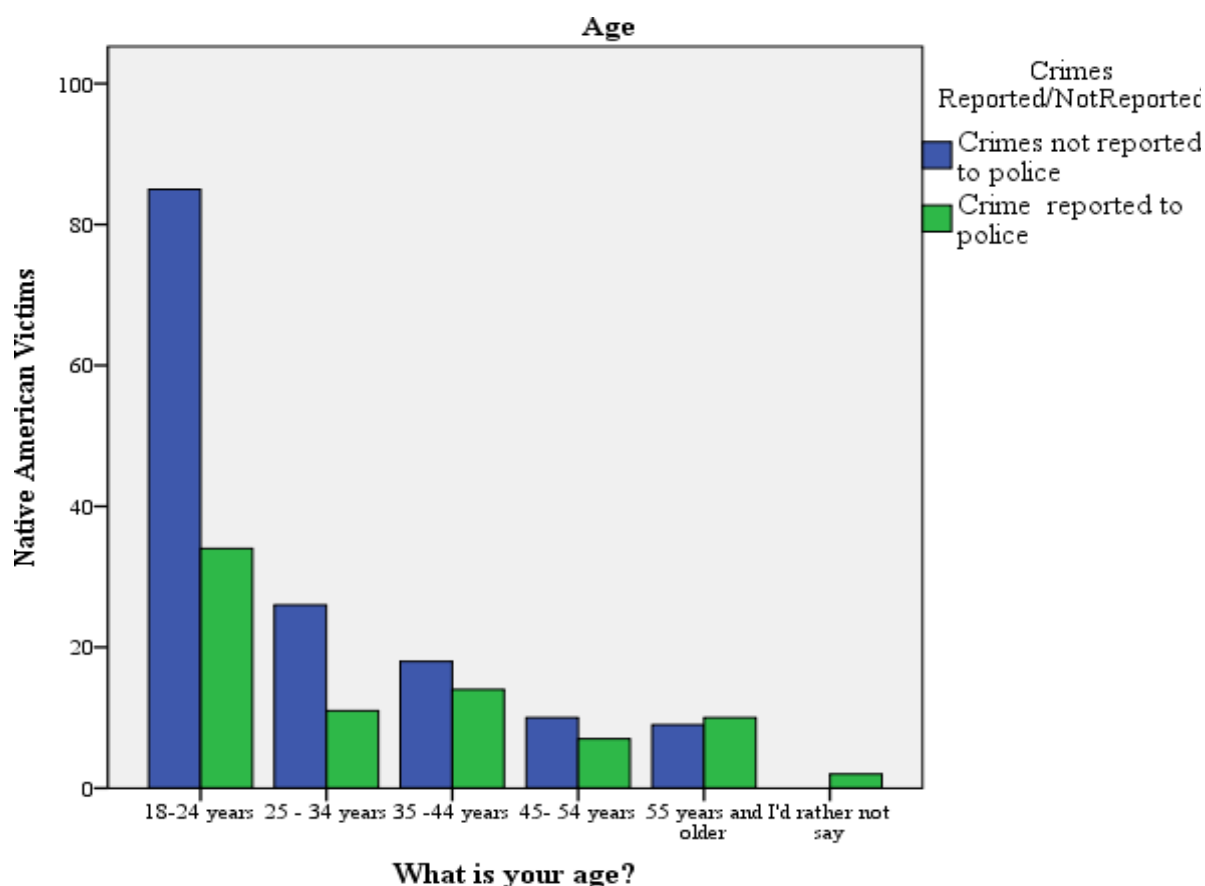
Group	Age of Victims					Total
	18-24 Years	25-34 Years	35-44 Years	45-54 years	55 + years	
Did not report crime to police	85	26	18	10	9	178
Did report crime to police	34	11	14	7	10	78
Total	119	37	32	17	19	226

Note. $\chi^2(5, n = 226) = 10.330, p = .06$.

A Chi-Square Test was performed to evaluate the relationship between Native American women's age and reporting a violent, forced, or unwanted sex crime to the police. The relationship between age and reporting a crime to police was insignificant, $\chi^2(5, n = 226) = 10.330, p = .06$. See Table 13 above. See Figure 1 below.

Figure 1

Age of Native American Women Victims and Reporting Crimes to Police



A Chi-Square Test was performed to examine the relationship between Native American women victims' relationship status and the reporting of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to the police. The relationship between these variables was significant, $\chi^2(4, n = 226) = 12.127, p = .016$. Native American women victim's relationship status was likely to influence the victim to report a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. See Table 14 below. See Figure 2 below.

Table 14

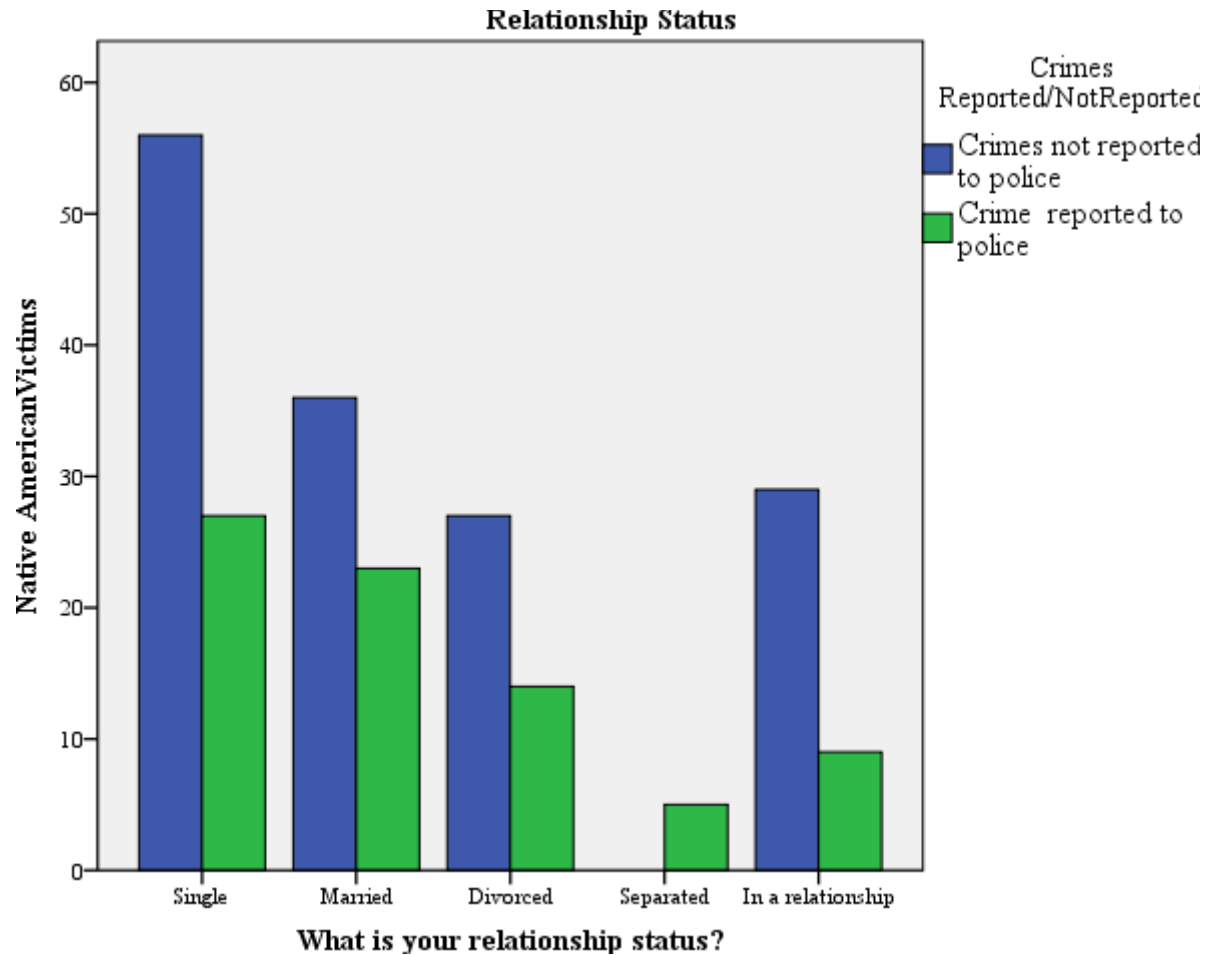
Frequencies and Chi-Square Results for the Relationship Status of Native American Women Victims That Did/Did Not Report Crime to Police

Group	Relationship Status		Total
	Single, Divorced, Separated	Married, In a relationship	
Did not report crime to police	83	65	148
Report crime to police	46	32	78
Total	129	97	226

Note. $\chi^2(4, n = 226) = 12.127, p = .016$.

Figure 2

Native American Women Victims Relationship Status and Reporting/Not Reporting Crimes to Police



A Chi-Square Test was performed to evaluate the relationship between the level of education and Native American women victims reporting a violent and forced or unwanted sex crime to the police. The relationship between these variables was insignificant, $\chi^2(6, n = 226) = 10.221, p = .116$. See Table 15 below.

Table 14

Frequencies and Chi-Square Results for Level of Education of Native American Women Victims That Did/Did Not Report Crime to Police

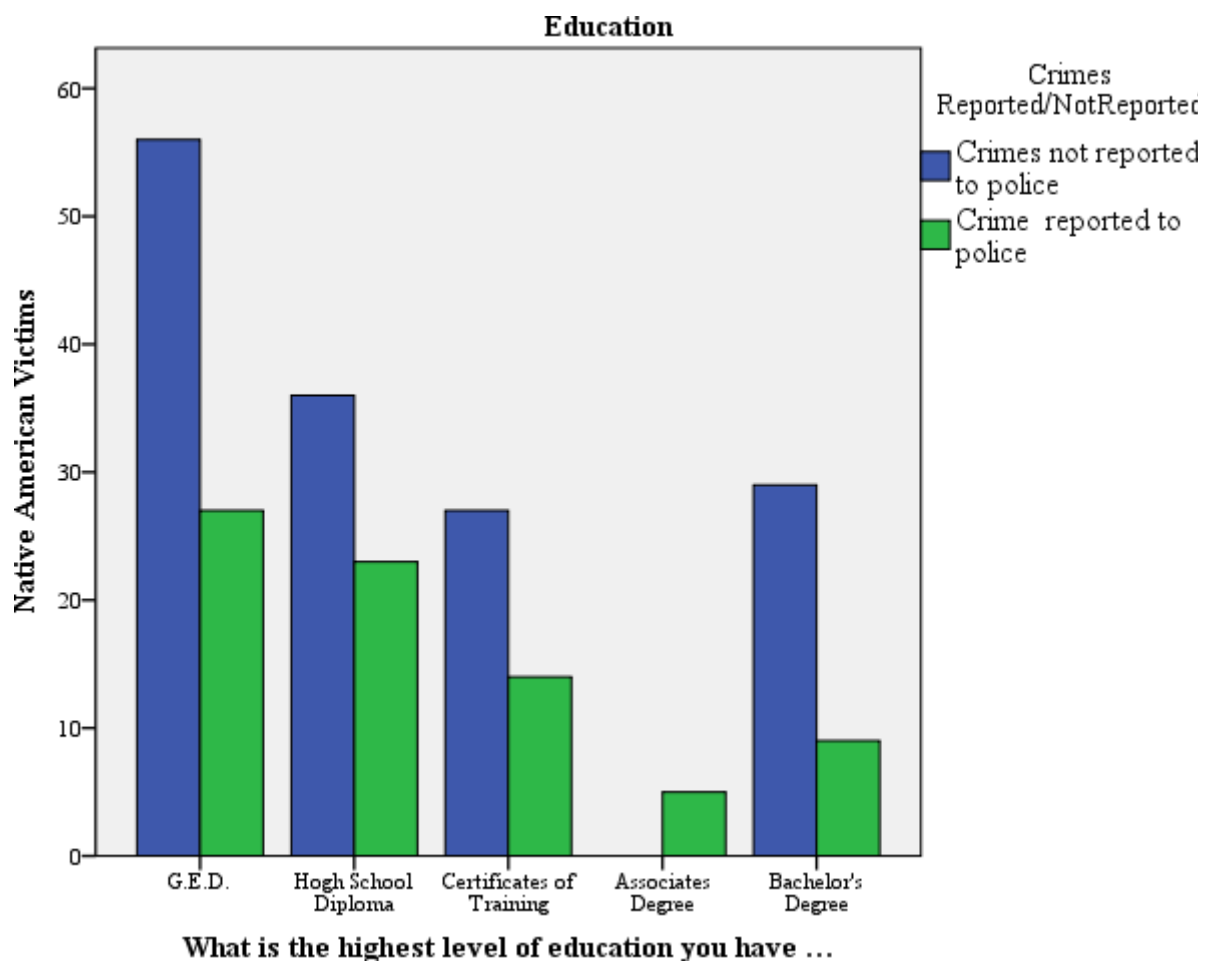
Group	Level of Education							Total
	G.E.D.	High School Diploma	Certificates of Training	Assoc. Degree	Bach. Degree	Master's degree or higher	Other	
Did not report crime to police	11	76	7	21	23	9	1	148
Did report crime to police	7	25	6	20	16	4	0	78
Total	29	91	21	40	37	16	2	226

Note. $\chi^2(6, n = 226) = 10.221, p = .116$.

The Native American women victims' level of education did not significantly affect their reporting of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to the police. See Figure 3 below.

Figure 3

Highest level of Education of Native American Women Victims and Reporting/Not Reporting Crimes to Police



Summary

Chapter 5 will expound, interpret, and summarize the study's findings. The study findings will be linked to other relevant research in the literature review. The limitations and threats to internal and external validity will be explained. Lastly, the recommendation for future research will be discussed.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

Perception of police influences a victim to report a crime to police seeking justice against an offender. Native American women's perception of police ubiquitously exposes a lack of accountability and trust in a system that exploits access to justice for Native American women victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. The liberties most American women experience are muddled for Native American women caught in a system influenced by Colonialism that is further facilitated through implications of the Tribal Critical Race Theory. Lee Anne Bell said, "Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable, and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure...in which individuals are both self-determining (able to develop their full capacities) and interdependent (capable of interacting democratically with [it] involves social actors who have a sense of their agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole." (Writer, 2008, p. 3).

This chapter provides the process by which the data was collected, analyzed, and reported. It examined the perception of police, perception of past police interactions, and perception of privacy and safety in past police interactions with Native American women that have not and have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. The study further investigated to determine if there is a relationship between the demographics of age, level of education, and the relationship status of the Native American women victims with the reporting of the crime to police or not reporting the crime to police.

According to Meloy and Miller (2021), education, prevention, and intervention are facets of societies' attempts to acknowledge violence against women. Mannell et al. (2021) acknowledges the increase over the last twenty years in research about violence against women.

However, for Native American women victims, there is still a disconnect. The victimization of Native American women is not a new phenomenon in the United States. It is historical. Native American women have been targeted since Colonization through genocide and the overpowering of the Native American people (Whyatt, 2023). The victimization by non-Indians began as early as 1492 when Columbus's expedition to what is now the United States. Early Native American societies valued Native women and viewed their leadership role as a shared responsibility among all members (Whyatt, 2023). Since Colonization, Native American woman has been victimized. As a result, the trauma of these past violent acts still resonates in today's Native American culture inducing an environment that promotes silence among Native American victims of violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes.

The current study delineates to understand the significance of Native American women's perception of police when reporting a violent crime. Nevertheless, it must be understood that Native Americans' perception of White privilege has been observed for centuries through forced assimilation into White society. Sturm (2021) explains that over the last 60 years, there has been a movement to move away from the process of forced assimilation that many Native Americans have adapted to through each generation to survive during long periods of anti-Indian policies. In many cases, Native American women do not perceive that they have the same entitlement that White privilege allocates to white female victims of the same level of crime. Perception is the reality that Native American women face when victimized today.

Tribal Critical Race Theory (TCRT) is applied to explain "*why*" Native American women victims' perception of police is negatively perceived and why the perception of privacy and safety is significant when a Native American victim chooses not to report a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to police. Native American women's perception is based on, to some

degree, the generations of Colonialism and the social stigmas attached to Native American women.

Accepting that TCRT impacts today's Native American culture is the first step to understanding the world that Native American women face daily. A key aspect of TCRT is the necessity for Native American women to have tribal autonomy and self-determination and be able to self-identify. The study found that 236 (56.6) of the 417 participants have been a victim of violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. Moreover, of these 236 victims, 148 (62.7%) did not report the crime to police. Of these victims, the study found that age and education was not a significant factor, but the relationship status of the victim is significant when a victim decided to report a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to police. It is significant as it indicates that the culture of Colonization and the impact of historical oppression still induces a “*code of silence*” impacting Native American women today.

Native American women's perception of police has not been overly documented. Past research often pivots on the numbers of reported victimization of Native American women and the historical impacts of past crimes against Native American women. The purpose of the study was to determine the differences in the perception of police and the perception of past police interactions by Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime compared to the Native American women that have not been the victim of a crime. Further, the study explored privacy and safety factors when reporting violent crimes to the police. The study then examined the demographic characteristics of age, education, and relationship status with the reporting of violent and forced and unwanted sex crimes to police between Native American women that have been the victim of a violent crime and Native American women who have not been a victim.

Today, the racial hierarchy that persists through the victimization of Native American women is under-represented in the number of victims reporting crimes of violence and forced and unwanted sex crimes to the police. The researcher embraced Native American women in Southwest Oklahoma that are members of federally recognized tribes from many backgrounds to ensure the accuracy of Native American women's perception of police. The participants in the study self-reported their victimization and self-disclosed whether they reported the crime to the police.

This chapter examines the findings' implications, the results' plausibility, and relatedness to the literature review and theoretical implications. The interpretation of the results of the study will be made through the comparison of the theoretical framework and previous studies. Moreover, the study results will be explained thoroughly, ending in a summary with the conclusion. In closing, future research recommendations will be discussed.

Summary of Findings

A sample of 417 Native American women aged 18 – 55+ from federally recognized tribes participated in this quantitative study. Of the 417 participants, 236 (56.6%) reported being victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime, while 181 Native American women participants in the study have not been the victim of a crime. Of the 236 victims, 148 (63.7%) did not report the crime to the police, 10 (4.2%) chose not to disclose if the crime was reported to the police, and 78 34.1% did report the crime to police. The study focused on the differences in the perception of police, the perception of past police interactions, and the perception of safety and privacy when reporting violent crimes to police. Lastly, the study investigated whether there is a relationship between the demographics of age, education level, and relationship status when

a Native American woman victim chooses to report a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to the police.

Research Question 1 used an independent samples t-test to explore if there was a significant difference in perception of police between Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime compared to the Native American women that have not been victimized. Then, an independent samples t-test was done between the Native American women victims that did report the crime to the police and the Native American women that did not report the crime. The Native American victims that chose not to disclose whether they reported the crime to police were not included in the analysis.

For research Question 1, an independent samples t-test determined that there was a significant difference in perception of police by Native American women that have been a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime when compared to Native American women that have not been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. However, there was a significant difference in perception of police between the Native American women victims that did not report the crime to the police compared to those victims that did report the crime to the police. The Native American victims that did not report the crime to police had a significantly more negative perception of police than the victims that did report the crime to police.

For Research Question 2, an independent samples t-test was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference in the perception of past police interactions when reporting violent crimes to the police when comparing Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime versus Native American women that have not been a victim.

The independent samples t-test resulted in a significant effect in the perception of past police interaction with Native American women that have been victims of violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes when compared to Native American women that have not been the victim of a crime. There was no significant difference in perception of past police interactions between the Native American women that did not report the crime to the police when compared to the Native American women that did report the crime to the police.

Subsequent testing of the factors of perception of privacy and perception of the safety of past police interactions when reporting the crime to police was conducted through an independent samples t-test on the Native American victims that have been victims and the Native American women that have not been a victim. The Native American victims that chose not to disclose if they reported the crime to the police were excluded from the test. Perception of privacy and safety in past police interactions was significant for the Native American women that have been a victim of a crime when compared to Native American women that have not been a victim. There were no significant differences in perception of safety and privacy in past police interactions found between the victims that did not report the crime to the police and those victims that did report the crime to police.

As for Research Question 3, a Chi-Square test and cross tabulation were conducted to determine if age, relationship status, and level of education related to the Native American victims reporting or not reporting crimes to the police.

For Research Question 3, a Chi-Square test was performed to examine the relationship between the age of Native American women victims of violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes and the reporting of the crime to the police. The relationship between age and reporting the crime to police was insignificant $\chi^2(5, n = 226) = 10.330, p = .06$. Of the 226 Native

American women victims in the study, 85 (37%) were in the age group 18-24 years that did not report the crime to the police. Then 63(42%) of the other victims in the rest of the age groups did not report the crime to the police. The other age groups of victims are as follows: 25-34 (18%), 35- 44 (12%), 45-54 (7%), and 55+ (6%). The results of age were insignificant in influencing a victim of a crime to report or not report a crime to the police.

A Chi-Square test was performed to examine the relationship between the level of education of Native American women victims of violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes and the crime reporting to the police. The relationship between the level of education and reporting the crime to the police was insignificant $\chi^2(6, n = 226) = 10.221, p = .116$. The level of education does not significantly affect whether Native American victims report a crime or not to the police.

A Chi-Square test was performed to examine the relationship between the relationship status of Native American women victims of violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes and the reporting of the crime to the police. The relationship between the relationship status and reporting the crime to the police was significant $\chi^2(4, n = 226) = 12.127, p = .016$. Relationship status significantly affects whether Native American victims report a crime or not to the police.

Interpretation of Findings of the Study

In the present section, the results of the study are presented. The results will be interpreted and compared to similar studies and theoretical implications. Of the 417 participants in the study, 236 reported being victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime, and 181 reported not being the victim of a crime. Of these 236 victims, 148 did not report the crime to the police, and 10 preferred not to disclose if they had reported the crime to the police. When a Native American woman is the victim of a violent crime, Dabiri (2012) explains that the

perpetrator attacks the victim, her culture, and her tribal sovereignty. The result is that the Native American woman victim often remains silent compared to other ethnicities. The trauma resulting from the historical implications of Colonialism is perpetuated through the ongoing silence of the Native American victim. A study by Amnesty International (2007) reported that violent acts happen frequently enough to Native American women to be described as a human rights issue for Native Americans. Crossland et al. (2013) further explain that studies of violence against Native American women have shown that violent assaults are more severe and widespread than any other ethnicity. It aligns with the results of the current study. Again, of the 417 Native American women participants in the study, 236 (56.6%) reported being the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. Of the 236 victims, 178 did not report the crime to police, while 78 Native American victims did report the crime to police.

Walsh and Bruce's (2014) quantitative study with 834 participants on crime-reporting behavior, that should be noted did not have any Native American female participants but did find that 80% of the female victims' decisions to report a crime to the police were determined by a variety of factors that varies with time for each victim (Wolitsky-Taylor, 2011). Nevertheless, Bachman et al. (2008) explain that Native American women are just as likely as any race to report the crime of rape, violence, or sexual assault to the police. However, most notably, Bachman et al. (2008) argue that the most significant difference between Native American women victims and other ethnicities is that it is not the Native American woman victim that reports the crime to the police but typically a friend, family member, or another vested official. The data from this study did not focus on whom the Native American female victims reported the crime to, if not to the police. However, the results indicate that 58.6% of the participants have been a victim of a crime, and 178 of these victims did not report the crime to the police.

Walsh and Bruce (2014) explain how violent and sexual assaults harm victims physically and mentally. It can be inferred that the Native American women victims' perception of privacy and safety when reporting a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime to police indicates a negative perception of police and a lack of trust when reporting a crime. It is supported further in the literature. Walsh and Bruce (2014) further explain that often a female victim will want to keep the sexual offense private and perceive the incident as "trivial" or see it as "less serious," which results in a crime not being reported to the police.

Research Question #1

Research Question 1 asked: Is there a difference in perception of police between the Native American women who have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and Native American women who have not been the victim of a crime?

The result of the independent samples t-test conducted showed a significant difference in the perception of police between the Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted crime compared to those Native American women that have not, $t(415) = 6.107, p = < .001, d = 0.69, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.286, 0.558]$. With this result, it can be inferred that perception of police has a medium effect on Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime when compared to the Native American women that have not been a victim. Further, the independent samples t test results indicate that there is a significant negative perception of police of the Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime and not reported the crime to police when compared to the Native American victims that did report the crime to the police, $t(224) = -2.884, p = < .004, d = 0.42, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.424, -0.080]$. With this result, it can establish that Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime

and not reported the crime to police have a significant negative perception of police when compared to Native American victims that report the crime to police.

The study found that Native American women that have been the victim of violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes have a significantly higher negative perception of police than Native American women that have not been the victim of a crime. Brown (2002) put forward that race is often the predominant factor that predicts a person's perception of the police. In Native American communities, this is the case. Nadal and Davidoff (2015) explain that the perception of law enforcement often determines whether a person will cooperate with the police and report a crime—most of the studies in the literature focus on other races of women besides Native Americans. Of the available studies, the victimization of Native American women often is a repercussion of Colonialism and the Tribal Critical Race Theory (TCRT). Burnette, Renner, and Figley (2019) explain that Native American women bear the experiences of a history of being exposed to “*chronic, pervasive, and intergenerational experiences of oppression.*”(p.38). It normalizes and internalizes the historical oppression into modern Native American society's daily lives. According to the National Institute of Justice (2013), studies frequently show that public perception of police is critical in interactions with police.

TCRT suggests that Native Americans seek to obtain self-determination, identity, tribal sovereignty, and autonomy. Brayboy (2005) explains that TCRT is relevant to explaining the modern-day happenings and experiences of Native Americans today. Brayboy (2005) supports that the TCRT is relevant to explaining the modern-day happenings and experiences in the lives of Native Americans. The tribes' beliefs, philosophies, traditions, customs, and visions for their future are significant to understanding Native American culture.

Research Question #2

Research Question 2 asked the following: Is there a difference in Native American Women's perception of past police interactions for Native American women who have been a victim of violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes compared to Native American women who have not been a victim?

The results of the independent samples t-test indicate a significant difference in perception of past police interactions between the Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime when compared to the Native American women that have not been a victim, $t(415) = -6.640, p = < .001, d = 0.66, 95\% \text{ CI } [-1.045, -0.567]$. The findings indicate that the women that have been a victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime have a significant negative perception of past police interactions than Native American women that have not been the victim of a crime. There was not a significant difference in perception of past police interactions between the Native American women that did not report the crime to police when compared to the Native American women that did report the crimes to police.

The perception of privacy and safety of past police interactions when reporting a crime to police was analyzed from the 417 participants through an independent samples t-test for privacy and safety. There was a significant difference in perception of privacy in past police interactions between the Native American women that have been the victim of a crime, $t(415) = 2.186, p = < .029, d = 0.48, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.015, 0.193]$, when compared to Native American women that have not been the victim of a crime. Also, a significant difference in the perception of safety in past police interactions when reporting the crime to police by the Native American women that have been

the victim of a crime, $t(415) = 5.062, p = < .001, d = 0.48, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.050, 0.155]$, when compared to the Native American women that have not been a victim.

The results further indicated that the perception of privacy and safety from past police interactions is a factor when Native American victims report a crime to the police. Of the 236 victims, 148 did not report the crime to the police, ten chose not to disclose if they reported the crime to the police, and 78 victims did report the crime to the police. The victims that chose not to disclose whether they reported the crime to the police were not included in this portion of the analysis. The perception of privacy of past police interactions between the victims that did and did not report the crimes to police was not significant, $t(224) = 1.587, p = < .114$, and the perception of safety between the victims that did and did not report the crimes to the police was insignificant, $t(224) = -1.949, p = < .053$.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked the following: Is there a relationship between the demographic factors of age, level of education, and relationship status and the reporting of violent crimes to the police between Native American women victims of violent crime and Native American women who have not been a victim of violent crimes? The data from the 226 Native American women that reported being victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime that did and did not report the crime to the police was analyzed through Chi-Square and cross-tabulation. There was no relationship between the age of the Native American victim and reporting of the crimes to the police. The results were insignificant, $\chi^2(5, n = 224) = 10.330, p = .066$. There was not a relationship between the level of education and the Native American victim reporting the crimes to the police. The results were insignificant, $\chi^2(6, n = 224) = 10.221, p = .116$. But, the results of the Chi-square and cross-tab analysis for the relationship status of the

Native American victim when reporting the crime to police, there is a relationship. The relationship status of the victim is significant when reporting the crime to police $\chi^2(4, N = 224) = 12.127, p = .016$. This is an area that should be investigated in future research.

Implications of Study

The implications of the study results have the potential to initiate change to create programs to build better relationships between Native American women and the police agencies in their communities. For police agencies, the study is indicative of the need for further education to train police agencies to respect Native American culture while honoring privacy and ensuring safety when victims report violent or sex crimes.

For Native American women, education is needed in communities to encourage growth and acceptance of the history of strength and longevity of survival of Native American women. For Native American women; it is vital to build programs based on their culture's historical precedence that Native American women are strong (Mantegani, 2021). Native American women, according to Deer and Nagle (2005), historically had autonomy over their bodies before Colonialism changed societal beliefs that reign free today in Native American and White cultures. This can be instilled as a “norm” versus the current “norm” of not “if” but “when” you are a victim for women in Native American communities. Teaching not victimization but teaching courage as ancestral women of the past. Education on the importance of coming forward to help protect themselves and prevent future victimization of other Native American women in their communities is essential in rural and urban locations.

Policy Changes

Micro-Level Policy Implications. This study's results indicate that it can be inferred that a negative perception of police impacts the decision of a Native American woman to report a

crime to the police when, and if she is victimized. The study results indicate that Native American victims are concerned about their perception of privacy and safety when reporting a crime to the police. From the data, it can be inferred that a negative police perception and past police interactions have created a lack of trust in the police impacting the likelihood that a Native American victim will not report a crime to the police. In the limited number of participants in the study, the high percentage of victims, and even more so, the high number of victims that did not report the crime to the police, indicates a much bigger problem brewing in the Native American communities across Southwest Oklahoma.

According to the National Institute of Justice (2016) (NIJ), crime in Indian country is poorly documented. The subsequent lack of data results from growing issues of culture, geography, and economics. Further complicating data collection is the culture of policing which, according to the NIJ (2016), is in a crisis. The results of the current study indicate the deeper ongoing issues police agencies are facing internally that need to be further researched and are beyond the scope of this study.

Mezzo-Level Policy Implications. Building positive relationships between Native American women and police agencies will ensure a positive perception of privacy when reporting crimes to the police and increase trust in the police so more crimes are reported to policing agencies. As recently as 2016, the U.S. Department of Justice suggested incorporating programs that build trust between policing agencies and Native American communities. It was to promote trust in policing since it is essential to safety. Golf (2018) explains that over the last century, research has indicated the importance of police legitimacy and trust, but most importantly, it is a factor when race is involved. The Department of Justice (2021) reported that four in five Native American women, regardless of location, have experienced violence in their

lifetime, but this number is underreported. This study's findings further support that 56.6% of the 417 Native American women participants have been victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. Of these victims, 75% of the 236 victims did not report the crime to police.

Macro-Level Policy Implications. Native American women face a more significant challenge when victimized than women of other races. The issues of jurisdiction, victim assistance, and offender prosecution are often compounded by the complexity of the lack of staffing and sources to substantiate the victim's claims and to receive justice. The complexity of this issue affects Native American women on reservations, Indian lands, and urban areas across the United States. The issues are more complex than the current study can account for in the limited amount of the current research. It is an area that needs to be further investigated.

At the societal level, the study's results represent the silent crisis that Native American women face daily. Not just in Oklahoma but, as the literature supports, across the United States and Canada. The study's results indicate that the perception of police is a significant factor when a Native American woman is a victim of a crime. As police forces across the country are under scrutiny, this is another example of the negative perception of police and the lack of trust by marginalized people. The study shows the necessity for an intervention to be implemented in these areas of high Native American concentration, such as Oklahoma.

Practice Implications

When a Native American woman is the victim of a violent assault, Dabiri (2012) reasons that the perpetrator is not only attacking the victim, but her culture, and tribal sovereignty. One explanation for the crisis of Native American women victims is the underreporting of violent crimes to the police. The historical implications of practicing silence involve modern Native American culture that denotes the problematic nature of the practice of silence. Research from

Burnette and Figley (2016) suggests that historical oppression is continuous and still permeating through the intergenerational experiences of Native American women today that, cause violent acts to be normalized. This study found that perception of privacy when reporting a crime to the police was a significant factor for the Native American victims in the study when choosing to not report the crime to the police. This is further proof of the “*normalcy*” of the systematic pattern of violence that is becoming the “norm” in Native American communities.

Mantegani (2021) argues that violence against Native women today has been codified into American culture for decades. It allows for the further stigmatization and acceptance of violence against Indigenous women. Gonzales (2023) explains that action can occur through education on Indigenous people's history and subsequent treatment. Further, Fox et al. (2022) spells out that using education to remove stigmas associated with stereotypes of Native Americans and the perception that Native Americans are forgotten by society will be beneficial to today's Native American women and for future generations.

The notion that privacy and relationship status would hinder a female Native American victim from reporting a crime to the police derives from the current study's observation that historical oppression and trauma are still contributing factors to the silence created from “*cultural norms*.” Contrary to the statistics reported by the UCR and NCVS, the number of Native American victims is much higher, as the study results indicate. Current analysis of the findings with the ongoing social movement in the United States of recognizing the crisis of violence that Native American women are facing does support the need for education of the police agencies and Native American women on reservations, Indian lands, and urban areas.

Previous research has determined that women do not report violent or forced and unwanted sex crimes to the police for many reasons. The focus of this study was just a few

reasons that a victim may not report a crime to police. Matos et al. (2016) explain that the prevalence of violent crimes against women is often the result of cultural attitudes toward violent acts. It often leads to victims being perceived as weak, passive, or in some extreme cases deserving. Despite current crime reporting agency findings being flawed, the national average for the victimization of Native American women is 1.2 times higher than White women (National Institute of Justice, 2016). Furthermore, federal government studies through the U.S. Department of Justice have consistently indicated that Native American women are victims of sexual violence more than other races of women (2008). Over half of the current study's participants have been the victim of a crime, with 62.7% not reporting the crime to the police. These results of this study can help to provide the foundation for future research in Southwest Oklahoma's Native American community.

Limitations of the Study

In this section, the limitations of the study will be described and explained. There are several limitations of this study. The participant sample does not represent all Native American women in Oklahoma and Indian Lands. Originally the researcher attempted to assimilate tribal affiliation into the study. But after the data was collected, it was determined that due to the limited number of Native American participants that the sample would be biased if accepted into the study, therefore, it was excluded. Next, disclosure of tribal affiliation was required of all participants in the study. It was done with the intent that participants would be truthful in their answers, and if a participant answered no, then the participant was removed from the study. This was done to attempt to collect only Native Americans that are federally recognized.

There was a limitation of time to collect the data. The survey was open for sixty days in the fall. Had the researcher been able to access more Native American events to the table and

have more access to the Native American communities more participant could have been access theoretically.

The researcher attempted to collect data from various Native American women of different ages and backgrounds that are organic to Southwest Oklahoma to collect a well-rounded sample. The researcher used a self-administered survey composed of proven instruments and some questions designed for the specific study. There were no face-to-face interviews of participants. The survey participants who responded were likely subjective in their views and substantiated biases. The unwillingness of the participants to complete the survey due to the researcher being non-Indian was also likely when tabling at the Comanche Pow Wow. The probability of the prejudices of the non-Indian researcher should be noted. Interacting with Native Americans, even though anonymous contact, when asking questions of this nature was met with some resistance and prejudice. Future interactions to gain Native American perspective should be initiated in the future to gain clarity of the ongoing crisis of violence.

A third variable explanation for the significance of the 236 (56.6%) victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime out of the 417 participants in this study could be identified as a lingering result of historical trauma. The fact that relationship status affects the likelihood of the victim reporting the crime to the police is an area that could be the result of generational historical oppression and a learned behavior. The current Native American environment readily accepts that the threat of violence is a normal part of life for the Native woman; as previously mentioned in the Literature Review, Historical trauma is generational. It is passed down from generation to generation through shared and accepted tribal rituals and established "*norms*." To further support the third variable explanation, Burnette (2015) stresses that Native American women experience historical trauma through the interrelated conditions that normalize these

violence and sex crimes. Future studies should focus on acquiring new data as there is limited knowledge specifically of the impact of the perception of police by Native American women that have been the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted crime when deciding to report the crime.

Recommendations for Future Research

The study found many participants to be the victim of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. More disturbing, was that the reported findings of the study found that many victims did not report the crime to police and were influenced by their relationship status. This is an area that should be explored. The ideology that perception of privacy and safety influence a Native American victim's decision to report a crime to the police when victimized indicates the need for change to recognize the sensitivity of these victims. In the future, research needs to be continued to gain an understanding of the atrocity in the number of Native American victims in Southwest Oklahoma.

Future research must publicly share historical facts to acknowledge the generational trauma and oppression that Native American women face today. Society often perceives that they know the history of the United States, but to understand the epidemic of violence that Native American women are facing requires knowledge to improve understanding and increase empathy. These incidents affect the Native American women yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Then, further research can explore the relationships between police agencies and Native American women. The historical implications should be further evaluated, or whether other contributing factors are to blame. There needs to be a better understanding of Native American culture, rather than relying on historical implications as the reasoning for the number of victims in Southwest Oklahoma.

Conclusion

The findings of the study were covered in this chapter. The data was interpreted, and the implications were explained. The quantitative research examined Native American women's reluctance to report violent crimes to the police. The perception of police, perception of past police interactions, the perception of privacy and safety of past police interactions, and demographic factors of age, education, and relationship status of the 417 participants in the study were examined and explained. Of these, 236 (56.6%) were victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime. An incredible number of 148 Native American victims did not report the crime to police, while 78 victims did report the crime to police. First, it can be inferred that Native American women victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime have a negative perception of the police. Second, after the crime, these victims worry about their privacy and safety when reporting the crime to the police. Third, if the victim's relationship status can affect the reporting of the crime to police. It can be inferred from the results of the study that Native American women that are victims of a violent or forced and unwanted sex crime have a negative perception of police that leads to a lack of trust that unknowingly leads to future victimizations and further oppression of the Native American community, to attack one is to attack all.

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