

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVENESS FOR
BRAZILIAN JIU JITSU TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

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An Exploratory Study of the Perceptions of Effectiveness for Brazilian Jiu
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ABSTRACT

This study is designed to explore a possible solution to a variety of the current issues in the law enforcement field. The purpose of this study is to assess the views through purposive sampling of ten key informants in the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and law enforcement field on the potential impact that routine Jiu Jitsu style training for officers would have. The current study outlines personal experiences for officers with prior Jiu Jitsu style training. This assessment also discusses the key informant's thoughts on benefits, limitations, and recommendations of the theoretical implementation of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers. Overall, each participant provided a unique perspective through the series of twelve questions. There was unanimous support for the idea with the central themes of 'adding another tool' for officers to use and increasing officer confidence.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my friends and family who have supported me in so many ways throughout my undergraduate and graduate program. This also is dedicated to my Brazilian Jiu Jitsu coach Dylan Spicer. I got assaulted while working in corrections, so I signed up for Jiu Jitsu with Dylan not knowing much about it. He has since been a great professor and motivator to train for my overall health and to improve my hands on capabilities and apply it to my current job in corrections and future career in law enforcement. Lastly, this is dedicated to the past, present, and future law enforcement officers. The goal will always be to explore new ideas to the field that will help keep our officers and communities safer.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the training quality, officer accountability, and overall function of law enforcement has come into question by separate groups around the United States (Mangual et al., 2021). Major incidents across the United States have raised questions about the training protocols for law enforcement agencies. These incidents such as the George Floyd incident in Minneapolis in 2020, created a strong uproar against law enforcement around the country. Floyd died because of an inappropriate restraint inflicted by Officer Derek Chauvin. The incident was captured on video from bystanders demanding Officer Chauvin move from the suspect as he could not breathe. The video quickly circulated the internet and made headlining news. As a result, there were riots, protests, and social movements around the country claiming that police officers must be held accountable for their conduct and demanded that changes be made to restraint protocol to ensure these incidents do not reoccur.

One of the solutions to avert further negative publicity incidents for law enforcement would be to implement better and more intensive training techniques. Law enforcement officers respond to a variety of different calls ranging from domestic disputes, armed robberies, or aggravated assaults. If there is not an adequate level of control and defense training for law enforcement, even well-intentioned officers can put themselves and others at risk.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has the potential to aid law enforcement officers in several ways if it is implemented through weekly training. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, often referred to as 'BJJ' is described as "a marital art that focuses on the skill of taking an opponent to the ground, controlling one's opponent, gaining a dominant position, and using a number of techniques to force them into submission" (*Brazilian jiu-jitsu*, 2021). This technique can be employed to improve self-defense,

teach safe control techniques, reduce excessive use of force, minimize suspect or officer injuries, and improve mental and physical health among officers (*Brazilian jiu-jitsu*, 2021)

The translation of the name 'Jiu Jitsu' means 'gentle art' as it uses nonviolent techniques and submissions of one's opponent (*What is Jiu-Jitsu?*, n.d.). Brazilian Jiu Jitsu's origins have been said to date back to over 4,000 years ago to Buddhist monks in India (*What is Jiu-Jitsu?*, n.d.). In its' earlier years it was utilized as a self-defense and war tactic (*What is Jiu-Jitsu?*, n.d.). Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is a grappling combat sport in which athletes aim to immobilize and finish the fight from joint locks (wrist, elbow, knee, and ankle locks), strangling, and pressure techniques (Andreato et al., 2016). Many teachings of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu may aid to defend against different techniques that assaultive assailants use in terms of war, combat, or on street confrontations.

According to a study in 2018 from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), 10.8 of every 100 sworn officers were assaulted on the job. Of those, 30.6 percent sustained injuries because of the assault (FBI, 2018). Of the officers in the 2018 study, 79.3 percent were assaulted by personal weapons, i.e., feet, fists, or hands (FBI, 2018). While violent noncompliance may appear to lack high statistical occurrence in the law enforcement field, it may not seem like a huge concern to agencies until there is one mistake on the officers' end that makes major headlines. In recent years, claims-making groups have pushed the narrative that excessive use of force against criminals is out of control (Vera, 2018; Shoichet, 2020). There tends to be a triggering event that is followed by a social movement to reform policing use of force practices.

This thesis seeks to assess the impact of integrating Brazilian Jiu Jitsu into law enforcement training and if the training could reduce injuries to suspects law enforcement personnel. The Chauvin and Potter cases in Minnesota both involved officers making critical mistakes in obtaining and maintaining proper control of the individual they were apprehending.

These mistakes and others have allowed social movement groups to rally and demand radical reform be made to law enforcement agencies (Merrefield, 2021). Some of this reform has taken on the guise of simply eliminating law enforcement (Merrefield, 2021). Instead, this thesis seeks to assess the impact of a prospective shift in restraint strategy through an intense training regime that includes Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.

In May of 2020, Officer Derek Chauvin was called to Cup Foods in Minneapolis, MN for an individual under the influence attempting to use a fake bill. When Officer Chauvin arrived at the scene, he got into a struggle with George Floyd, the suspect. Floyd was brought to the ground and placed on his side with handcuffs on. Chauvin used his knee to keep Floyd on the ground by placing it on his shoulder and neck region. People began filming this incident and demanding Chauvin move off him. Floyd ended up dying because of the incident. During trial, the defense for Chauvin claimed he did what he did due to Floyd's significant size difference and strength compared to Chauvin (Gray, 2021). In some instances, there may just be unscrupulous officers. Other times it can be a lack of training on how to control individuals of greater strength and size in a safe way. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has an abundance of techniques to combat that.

Another incident that made major news was also in Minnesota, in April of 2021. Officer Kim Potter of Brooklyn Center Police Department accidentally discharged her firearm killing Duante Wright. Potter and her partner were arresting Wright during a traffic stop for a warrant out for his arrest. While trying to help her partner handcuff him, she had an improper grip on Wright, and he broke free. He quickly shrugged off both officers then hopped back into his vehicle. Potter grabbed what she thought was her taser and yelled "TASER TASER" and fired a single shot which killed Wright (Li, 2021). From this incident, there are two significant issues we can see; lack of strong physical control techniques and inability to quickly perform under high

stress situations. With better training in these two areas, it is likely that this situation could have ended differently. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu routinely teaches proper control techniques and performing well under stress (Samuel, 2018). Specifically in high stress and adrenaline situations, athletes are frequently being submitted and transitioning with opponents (Samuel, 2018). This allows them to learn how to maintain composure and go back on their training in those moments to get them out of a bad position (Samuel, 2018). This is a key principle for law enforcement personnel.

From both Chauvin's incident and Potter's accidental discharge, there was an extremely negative societal shift in the attitude towards policing. There were activist groups who formed to push to defund the police, take away handguns from police, and even proposed to disband police all together as a response to incidents like these (ProCon.org, 2021). Up to 26 million people around the United States participated in protests, rallies, and fundraising events in support of change ("*George Floyd, racism, and law enforcement,*" 2021). In some cities, there were even riots with violence, looting, and the burning of buildings. This response has been ongoing since the Chauvin incident. The solution to the problem will not likely be found defunding, unarming, or disbanding the police. The resolution will likely come with an increase in resources to police departments so they can be professionally trained and routinely tested on their knowledge and skills.

During times of societal pushback against law enforcement, there may be an increase in mental health issues with law enforcement personnel. Law enforcement officers face a wide variety of stressors that impact them internally and externally. Officers tend to be first responders to emergencies or disasters which can present dangerous situations, hostile individuals, or require emergency aid to save a life. Officers also respond to post-emergency situations which can

include crowd control, removal of bodies, or the transportation of an individual to jail. These different situations that officers are routinely subject to have been linked to causing certain psychological problems (Laufs & Waseem, 2020). Officers may develop post-traumatic stress disorder, trauma, anxiety, depression, stress disorders, and substance abuse issues (Laufs & Waseem, 2020). While many of the routine activities that lead to mental health issues need to be performed by police, there are steps agencies can take to aid with warding off mental health issues. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has shown numerous benefits to one's physical and mental health. With the integration of mandatory Jiu Jitsu training, law enforcement agencies may see a positive change in a variety of the issues they face.

By weekly mandatory Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers, an internal evaluation has shown there are less deployments of tasers, less use of force injuries to officers, less use of force injuries to suspects, and a decrease in spending (Kay, 2021). Brazilian Jiu Jitsu can be tailored to law enforcement specific movements. These movements may focus on gun retention, defending against an individual with a knife, securing a hold, or getting oneself out of another person's control (Kay, 2021). Building different skills, poise, mental health, and confidence in all law enforcement officers is a suitable place to start.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Over time, policing has evolved by developing new tactics and changing policies to adapt to the current societal aspects at a given time. Recently, we have seen changes in technological advances, increases in race and gender training, and an addition of policies focused on officer accountability (Changes to policing policy in the States and 100 largest cities, 2020 2021). With the increased demand for officer accountability, we can see underlying issues that need to be addressed. With the recent police officer excessive use of force events that have taken place around the country over the last decade, there have been social groups pushing for change in how police apprehend and control subjects. These groups seek to eliminate officer shootings, injuries to suspects, and reform training all around (ProCon.org, 2021). This review seeks to discuss trends found among the literature about Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. This will also outline current success or downfalls of current programs already in place for law enforcement agencies. With implementing mandatory Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in local law enforcement agencies, researchers should start by looking at current law enforcement use of force training at the academies and the continued training within departments. Those training courses will be cross examined with the current use of force rates among agencies. This review will then discuss the current physical and mental health issues law enforcement officers are facing. Finally, this review will discuss how Brazilian Jiu Jitsu may provide positive benefits to law enforcement agencies around the country.

Current Defensive Tactics Training

In the United States, there are hundreds of law enforcement training academies. While they may differ in execution, the curriculum addresses the same components in some way.

Academies train officers most often in operations with an average of 213 hours, followed by roughly 168 hours of use of force, self-defense, and firearm training. Other areas include self-improvement, legal education, and mental illness awareness (Reaves, 2006). Upon completion of the academy, the national average for in-service yearly training is 21 hours (ICJTR, n.d.).

In law enforcement training academies, the hands on and self-defense tactics strongly resemble tactics taught in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. An Alabama police department walks officers through two 40-hour courses in how to ‘defend against common grabs, holds, strikes, and attacks on the officer’s weapon in standing or ground situations. They also teach officers how to gain control and compliance over an actively aggressive subject in both standing and ground grappling situations. They also teach defense against headlocks, common grips, bear-hug defense, tackle defense, and escaping from the bottom (NALEA, n.d.). All these different techniques are routinely taught, practiced, and implemented in Jiu Jitsu training.

According to a study completed in 2000, a sample of approximately 600 officers were surveyed of how they felt with current control and defense tactics that are taught to them. For arrest, control, and defensive tactics, 58% -72% agreed they were easy to learn but when asked if they were easy to apply when assaulted, 50% disagreed. When asked about time for in-service training, 79%-88% reported they did not have an adequate amount of time training takedowns, wrestling, punching, kicking, and defense against multiple assailants. Also, 58% of officers said that the police department training did not adequately prepare them for being assaulted (Kaminski & Martin, 2000).

The types of defensive and control tactics training are standard among agencies. It is common to find techniques to perform and defend against takedowns, grip fighting, headlocks, kicking, punching, gun retention, and escapes. The problematic theme for current law

enforcement is that there needs to be an increase in time spent training (Bengtson, 2017; Blumberg et al., 2019; Kaminski & Martin, 2000). The training needs to be taken from the academies and integrated into a reoccurring routine for officers. While some officers are dissatisfied with training procedures, there are also physical and mental concerns that law enforcement faces.

Current Physical and Mental Health Issues Faced by Law Enforcement

For full-time law enforcement officers, it is critical they maintain a high level of health and skills on a day-to-day basis. The use of force rate is 3.61 per 10,000 service calls (Blumberg et al., 2019). While that does not seem like a likely occurrence for many officers, it is unpredictable. That is why every officer needs to have their tactics and skills sharp, physical fitness at an elevated level, and their mental health taken care of. It only takes one incident and one mistake by an officer to cause public scrutiny of police all over the nation.

Physical Health

Physical health is important for police officers to maintain throughout their careers. In emergency situations, an officer's health impacts more than themselves. Officers may be called to provide emergency medical treatment, rescue someone, or must chase down a suspect, all of which require an officer to have the physical capability to do so. Officers should have routine exercise and a well-balanced diet to perform well on the job, prevent injuries, and minimize unnecessary risks that are associated with poor health.

With overall health concerns, researchers have found that police officers have a higher risk of developing diseases like different cancers, arthritis, stress ulcers, diabetes, and cardiovascular issues (Achim, 2014). Multiple studies have found a trend among law enforcement agencies that anywhere from 50%-90% of officers are classified as overweight or

obese (Nabeel et al., 2007; Tharkar et al., 2008). Since being obese leads to many other health problems, a 2005 study found that nearly one third of officers retire early because of health issues (Tuohy et al., 2005).

Researchers have found that during assaults on officers, anywhere from 25 % - 50% of officers sustained injuries from the altercation (Smith et al., 2010). When officers attempted to use different techniques, such as kicking, take-downs, striking, wrestling, or joint locks, it accounted for 68% of officer injuries (Dunham & Alpert, 2000). It seems evident that these officers do not have the routine practice and knowledge of how to employ these techniques safely.

Law enforcement officers have a physically difficult job. They are called to service for a variety of incidents and must be ready to respond and perform. Therefore, it is important for officers to work on their physical health through proper diet and daily exercise. With improved physical health, it also benefits mental health. Mental health is an increasing problem in law enforcement that also has a significant impact on performance (Stogner et al., 2020).

Mental Health

Over the last decade, there has been a more societal focus on mental health issues in the criminal justice field (Stogner et al., 2020). Law enforcement officers routinely encounter traumatic scenes, suffer from psychological stress, and in turn have higher rates of suicide (Dixon, 2021; Violanti et al., 2017). The daily duties of law enforcement are difficult to deal with and process for many officers. It is important for there to be support and intervention programs for law enforcement officers. Also providing access and allocating time for healthy outlets to deal with their stressors would be necessary for agencies.

The traumatic events that officers are routinely exposed to have been known to lead to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Violanti et al., 2017). An individual with PTSD often suffers from negative cognitions in mood, sleep problems, self-destructive behaviors, re-living traumatic events, or avoidance of people or things (Violanti et al., 2017). Research shows that officers with PTSD have reported lower quality of life, health issues, increased sick leave, and higher hospital and doctor appointments than those officers who did not have PTSD (Martin et al., 2009). The rates of reported PTSD in officers is relatively low ranging from 7%-19% (Schütte, 2012; Violanti et al., 2014). Although reported rates are low, it is likely that many officers suffer from some degree of PTSD that goes unreported and undiagnosed.

Officers have reported suffering from different sleep disorders, stress-related disorders, substance abuse, depression, and aggression issues (Alvarez, 2015; Dixon, 2021). These different issues lead to law enforcement officers being at higher risk for suicide (Roberts, 2018). Roberts identifies six variables associated with suicide in law enforcement officers: relationship problems, job burnout, current mental health treatment, alcohol as a coping mechanism, substance abuse, and work-based incident trauma (Roberts, 2018). In recent years, among law enforcement officers the reported number of suicides per year has been on the rise. According to the Blue H.E.L.P. organization, in 2017, 124 officers died by suicide, 154 in 2018, and 197 in 2019 (Blue H.E.L.P., 2021). Suicide prevention should continue to be a major focus for law enforcement.

It is evident that law enforcement agencies face issues with an officer's physical and mental health. The job requires intense daily operations, critical decision-making skills, and mental toughness. By mandating officers to train Brazilian Jiu Jitsu weekly, these problem areas

could improve. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu's has a long history around the world. Many different populations have used Brazilian Jiu Jitsu for a variety of distinct reasons and benefits.

History of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is a form of martial arts that is of Japanese origin and utilizes levers, torsions, and pressure to take an individual to the ground and control them (The history of Brazilian jiu-jitsu, 2019). The translation of the name 'Jiu Jitsu' means 'gentle art' as it uses nonviolent techniques and submissions of one's opponent (What is Jiu-Jitsu?, n.d.). Brazilian Jiu Jitsu's origins have been said to date back to over 4,000 years ago to Buddhist monks in India. Monks needed to protect themselves from their attackers while traveling. The technique then spread to Japan and became an effective martial art that was utilized as a war tactic (What is Jiu-Jitsu?, n.d.). In the early 1900s it made its way to Brazil.

In 1915, Mitsuyo Maeda arrived in Brazil and began teaching Judo and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu to the now founders of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Carlos and Helio Gracie and Luiz Franca. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu spread to the United States in the 1970's but was not extremely popular until the 1990's when the Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) brought mixed martial arts to public media. In 2002, the International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation was formed to begin competitive tournaments all around the world for BJJ athletes (What is Jiu-Jitsu?, n.d.). Since its' arrival to the United States, it has only been growing in popularity (What is Jiu-Jitsu?, n.d.). Jiu-Jitsu's different fighting styles and techniques are attractive to many athletes as it aids in overall fitness and health benefits (Andreato et al., 2016).

What is Brazilian Jiu Jitsu?

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is a grappling combat sport in which athletes aim to immobilize and finish the fight from joint locks (wrist, elbow, knee, and ankle locks), strangling, and pressure

techniques (Andreato et al., 2016). There are two main forms of Jiu-Jitsu, Gi and NoGi. The uniform for Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is called a Gi. It is a loose-fitting top and bottom that is commonly worn in other combat sports. It is closed with a cloth belt that varies in color and number of stripes based on an athlete's skill level. NoGi is when the Gi is not worn to train, and tight clothing is worn instead. As an individual progresses in skill, they are subject to promotions.

Promotions come in stripes or moving to a new colored belt. An individual must receive 4 stripes per belt to move to the next belt level. The belt levels in order from beginner to master are white, blue, purple, brown, and black. Purple, brown, and black belts tend to be instructors of the classes and are the ones to determine promotions for those of lower belts (Skoczylas, 2020). With skill development, athletes can earn promotion potential which may increase confidence and motivation. According to multiple studies, just training alone increases fitness and health benefits (Andreato et al., 2016; Faro et al., 2019; Jordan et al., 2020; Michael et al., 2018; MMA & Evolve MMA Evolve Mixed Martial Arts®, 2021).

Health Benefits of Jiu Jitsu

Studies have shown that Jiu Jitsu improves body fat percentages, flexibility, self-confidence, and over time with increases in skill level it reduces anxiety (Andreato et al., 2016; Faro et al., 2019). For police officers and law enforcement personnel, it is critical that they maintain their health and fitness. The routine incidents officers are subjected to can be life or death. In these situations, if they are not in great physical and mental condition, it could cause them or others serious injuries or even death (Otu, 2015).

As mentioned above, law enforcement officers have high body fat percentages and are at risk for different cancers, arthritis, stress ulcers, diabetes, and cardiovascular issues (Achim, 2014). An extensive study and systematic literature review was done by a group of researchers in

2017. Researchers wanted to know the physiological, nutritional, and performance profiles of Jiu Jitsu athletes, and found key health benefits from training Jiu Jitsu (Andreato et al., 2016). It was found that body fat percentages are low and in healthy ranges for Jiu Jitsu athletes (Andreato et al., 2016). Data showed that it did not matter if it was an expert or a novice Jiu Jitsu athlete (Andreato et al., 2016). Having a low bodyfat percentage can lead to many other physical and mental benefits. Longer term benefits physical benefits of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu include improved body posture, increase flexibility, increased strength levels, improved endurance, better cardiovascular fitness, and higher and stronger bone density (Brett, 2019; Davies, 2021; Michael et al., 2018). While all of those physical benefits can only help the effectiveness of law enforcement officers, the mental health benefits of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu are a major advantage to the athletes as well.

Psychological Benefits of Jiu Jitsu

With the physical benefits of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, it would play a positive role in improving the mental health issues and concerns among law enforcement officers. These ways are to include but are not limited to boosting motivation and energy levels, increasing cognitive function, stress relief, improvement of mental concentration, enhances awareness senses, increases personal confidence, increasing resiliency, and reducing symptoms of PTSD (Jordan et al., 2020; Michael et al., 2018; MMA & Evolve MMA Evolve Mixed Martial Arts®, 2021). Physical activity in general, releases endorphins into the bloodstream which tends to create a feeling of mental clarity and an improvement in mood (Ruegsegger & Booth, 2018). Exercise has more than physical benefits and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu would be a creative way to aid in defense tactics and mental enhancement.

As referenced earlier in this review, post-traumatic stress disorder is an issue that law enforcement officers may face throughout their careers. Researchers performed a study that was published in 2021, that found that Brazilian Jiu Jitsu had a significant impact on reducing PTSD symptoms. 32 first responders, military members, and veterans who displayed symptoms of PTSD completed questionnaires prior to Jiu Jitsu training and after every 20 hours of training completed. They reported that there were major therapeutic benefits of Jiu Jitsu such as self-confidence, self-control, patience, empathy, assertiveness, mindfulness, and improved sleep (Weinberger & Burraston, 2021). Another study in 2019 indicated very similar results of just military members with PTSD. They found a significant impact in reported reductions of depressive disorders, general anxiety, and decreased alcohol use after the 40 sessions of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training (Willing et al., 2019).

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has been found to improve mood and self-rated health in athletes. Researchers found that athletes reported high vigor, moderate tension, and low depression, fatigue, confusion, and anger when training (Andrade et al., 2019). Another study in 2019 interviewed Jiu Jitsu athletes and found that 26.1% reported excellent health and mood, with 52.2% reporting good health and mood (Silva et al., 2019) The significance level of this study was $p < 0.05$ for Jiu Jitsu being the contributing factor. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has a strong positive impact on improving mood and perception of person health. Law enforcement officers can benefit from these effects. Having a team of officers with increased positive moods and mental clarity will help improve personal lives and on the job performance.

Jiu Jitsu helps with cognitive function by allowing for use of problem-solving skills and building discipline (Jordan et al., 2020). In Jiu Jitsu, you learn that you may need to wait for the proper position to attempt a submission or retreat if you are no longer in an advantageous

position. This forces the athlete to focus on position and patience as opposed to out-of-control actions and strength. This helps the athlete develop discipline in their actions and mind. There are intense physical and mental moments on the mat that can help individuals cope with fear and anxiety in those moments (Mickelsson, 2021). Having a police force that routinely trains the skill of decision-making and problem solving while overcoming fear and anxiety would aid in better police-public relations and increase confidence in oneself (Queen, 2016).

Researchers have found that with Brazilian Jiu Jitsu athletes have decreased levels of aggression (Mickelsson, 2020). While it is an innate human trait to have some level of aggression when in a threatening situation (Wojdat & Ossowski, 2019), Jiu Jitsu is more of an educational sport which indirectly decreases aggression (Mickelsson, 2020). While decreasing aggression, martial arts sports also have a unique aspect to them. Martial arts concurrently build humility, confidence, and resiliency (Mickelsson, 2021). Research has shown that martial arts training for law enforcement officers is a key indicator in an increase of confidence when going hands on with individuals on the job (Torres, 2018). For Brazilian Jiu Jitsu specifically, athletes are learning how to submit an opponent, control another person, while their opponent is doing the same to them. It is a difficult sport to have an ego in because having an ego during live matches can result in major injuries for an individual. Athletes learn very quickly the importance of ‘tapping’ out, which means to submit to your opponent, if they are being dominated by their opponent. While they learn the importance of leaving their ego at the door, they also learn confidence throughout their training sessions. If an individual just got submitted by their opponent, they may turn around and submit their opponent the next round. The confidence and humility that Jiu Jitsu brings to an individual follows them outside of the gym doors. These traits are extremely important for officers to have to avoid an abundance of issues.

The psychological benefits of Jiu Jitsu are a critical factor that are to be accounted for when considering mandating Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for officers. Jiu Jitsu has been shown to increase motivation and energy levels, increase cognitive function, stress relief, improves mental concentration, enhance awareness senses, and increases personal confidence (Jordan et al., 2020; Michael et al., 2018; MMA & Evolve MMA Evolve Mixed Martial Arts®, 2021). If implementing Jiu Jitsu can aid in the mental health epidemic among law enforcement officers, the effects seem even more worth it.

Current Police Department Jiu Jitsu Program

In 2019, the Marietta Police Department in Georgia, implemented a mandatory Brazilian Jiu Jitsu weekly training session for new recruits. This went on for the first five months during the academy and field training. The program became a success for them so on July 1st of 2020, they opened training opportunities to all their officers (Fathi, 2021; Gracie University, n.d; Marietta PD, 2021). There has not been an official evaluation of this study, but the department posted their results. The agency reviewed injuries, taser deployments, and financial implications before and after the program begins.

When it came to injuries, during the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training sessions there has only been one reported injury of the 95 officers training (Fathi, 2021; Gracie University, n.d; Marietta PD, 2021). During use of force incidents, the department compared officer injuries during use of force incidents before and after implementation of Jiu Jitsu. There was a 48% decrease in officer injuries department wide with none of the injuries being Jiu Jitsu training officers (Fathi, 2021; Gracie University, n.d; Marietta PD, 2021). With injuries to suspects during use of force incidents Jiu Jitsu officers were 53% less likely to seriously injure a suspect and were 59% less likely to engage in use of force at all (Fathi, 2021; Gracie University, n.d; Marietta PD, 2021).

While the hands-on use of force incidences indicates benefits for the Jiu Jitsu officers, they also had less taser deployments (Fathi, 2021; Gracie University, n.d.; Marietta PD, 2021).

In use of force incidents, non-Jiu Jitsu officers used their taser 77% of the time. The Jiu Jitsu officers used their taser in 54% of use of force incidents (Fathi, 2021; Gracie University, n.d; Marietta PD, 2021). A proper evaluation would help discern these numbers better based on the factors specifically involved in each situation. With a decrease in injuries and taser deployments, it also helps reduce overall financial cost to the department (Fathi, 2021; Gracie University, n.d.; Marietta PD, 2021).

The Marietta Police Department reported a \$40,752 net savings after implementing the Jiu Jitsu program. This came from the estimated \$66,752 savings in workers comp from the reduction of injuries. The program itself cost the department \$26,000 which was due to the cost per class for each participant (Fathi, 2021; Gracie University, n.d.; Marietta PD, 2021).

An official evaluation should be completed on this program and data, but the initial findings and reports indicate it was a major success. According to their review, it saved the police department a substantial amount of money, reduced injuries to officers and suspects, and reduced the amount of taser deployments. This was one of the first programs to mandate Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in the country, so it is a developing idea in the field. With proper implementation and evaluation, based on these outcomes, it could be a huge benefit to agencies across the nation.

METHODOLOGY

Purpose for Study

The purpose of this study is to assess the views of key informants in the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and law enforcement field on the potential impact that routine Jiu Jitsu style training for officers would have. The study outlines personal experiences for officers with prior Jiu Jitsu style training. This assessment also discusses the key informant's thoughts on benefits, limitations, and recommendations of the theoretical implementation of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers.

Research Design

This study used a qualitative interview approach. I was interested in professional and expert ideas and logic behind law enforcement agencies mandating Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training weekly for law enforcement officers. I used standardized, open-ended interviews with all ten interviewees answering the same 11 questions. These answers were compared to one another to identify themes and patterns. I also note outlier answers to try and eliminate bias in results by considering even answers not in favor of the idea. The study is based on the perception of professionals on whether the implementation of Jiu Jitsu would be an effective and efficient policy. All participants are qualified in areas of martial arts, law enforcement, or both. Participants were explicitly informed that their participation is voluntary, and no compensation or reward will be given for their contribution. There is an informed consent form that the NDSU Institutional Review Board has approved (Warren & Karner, 2015).

Sample Selection and Interview Site

There are 10 participants for this study. I obtain my sample through purposive sampling through the Mixed Martial Arts gym I currently train at, through the local police department, and

via email. I explain my study to each individual and ensure there is informed consent for all prospective participants. They each read through the informed consent form, signed, and dated it (Warren & Karner, 2015). If an individual chose not to participate, I continue down the list of prospective participants.

The sample for my study was selected by specific criteria. To participate, the individual must meet at least one of the following: works as a law enforcement officer, trains law enforcement officers on use of force tactics, or is a black belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. Individuals who work as a law enforcement officer currently will be selected because they have experience of the application of current training with use of force incidents. Some officers will have previous martial arts training which will be identified. An individual who trains law enforcement use of force will be an individual who is employed at an agency and teaches hands on tactics to current officers. Lastly, an individual who is considered a professional in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu must have a black belt to be considered for the study. This is due to the high level of expertise and knowledge of the art to make an informed contribution to the research objectives.

Interviews were to be conducted based upon the participant's availability. They were done at either the police department or done via zoom. It was necessary for the location to be quiet enough to get a clear voice recording of the interview. Once the participant agreed to contribute to the study, they were asked what location, time, and date best works for them.

Interview Protocol

The protocol was the same for each participant. Each participant read the informed consent form and then signed and dated it. Participants will sign either a physical copy or send the signed document back via email (Warren & Karner, 2015). Upon the start of the interview, I read verbatim instructions for the interview.

“You will now be taking place in an interview to help assess the prospective effects of mandatory Brazilian Jiu Jitsu for local law enforcement. This interview should take approximately 30 minutes but more or less time is allocated in needed. This interview will ask questions about your personal training history, work experience, and thoughts on the research topic. This interview will be recorded via phone recorder or computer recorder. This is only for the researcher to use when reviewing interviews and results. Do you have any questions, comments, or concerns before we start the interview?”

I address any of questions, comments, or concerns accordingly then asked the participant if they are ready to begin. I then asked a series of 11 questions with each follow-up questions which are listed below;

1. How long have you been in law enforcement?
 - a. What different positions have you held?
2. Do you practice any form of marital arts outside of the organization you work for?
 - a. If yes, for how long?
 - b. What level?
3. How much time during your initial training would you say was spent on combative and hands on training?
 - a. How much time is allocated to reinforcing those skills upon entering your agency annually?
4. In terms of training content and training effectiveness, how does your martial arts experience compare to the training you received from the academy or your agency?

- a. What would be some similarities?
 - b. What would be some differences?
5. Approximately how many times have you been assaulted on the job?
 - a. Note any times the individual did have a weapon.
6. How do you feel your martial arts background impacted your response to an assault?
 - a. Was there ever a time an individual had some sort of weapon you were able to apprehend them without outside force multipliers due to your background?
7. Can you describe a time that you used your BJJ or martial arts experience to gain control of an individual or defend yourself without causing harm?
8. What impact do you believe mandatory BJJ training would have on the use of tasers, mace, or firearms with officers?
9. How do you think agency-wide mandatory BJJ twice weekly training would impact police effectiveness?
 - a. Officer physical health
 - b. Officer mental health
 - c. Injuries, suspect and officer
10. What social, financial, or physical limitations would likely arise if this was made universally mandatory?
11. In recent years there has been a public pushback against police officers due to excessive force instances, how do you feel funding and mandating officers to train BJJ at minimum twice weekly would improve public relations?

- a. Outside of BJJ training, what is the fix to improve community relations and public perception?

Data Collection, Management, and Qualitative Analysis

For all ten interviews, they were recorded via phone recording or computer recording. They were transcribed using trint.com and through my own work. They were saved on a locked file on my personal computer protected with a passcode in order to maintain human subject identity protection (Warren & Karner, 2015). Each participant is given a number based on the years of experience in law enforcement they have. Each recording file is named their assigned number to aid in further confidentiality with data storage.

For the study, I pick out themes and patterns among the answers from the professionals (Warren & Karner, 2015). From each participant's answer, the apparent themes will be identified for each specific question. All responses for each question will be provided in the results section to allow the reader proper insight on the data collected.

RESULTS

For the study, 10 total interviews were conducted with various personnel. These personnel were selected by using purposive sampling. The selection criteria required individuals to meet at least one of the following: have a black belt in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, work in law enforcement, or work as a use of force instructor. There were common themes among the interviews with a few outlying perceptions. This results section seeks to discuss those themes for each question that was asked during the interviews.

The structure of this section is broken down by each question. The first paragraph of each question is a summary of the trends I identified among every answer given for individual questions. This is then followed by each participant's answer. If there is a particular question that lacks a specific participants' answer, it is due to a lack of a direct response to that specific question. Each individual was given a participant identification number. This number will be used to distinguish participants and allow the readers to identify an individual's background in contrast with their answers to each question.

Table 1*Summary of Themes and Patterns*

Question	Main Themes	Direct Quote
1, 2	See Table 2 and 3	
3, 5	See Table 4	
4	Current law enforcement training is kept simple, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu principles are present, and hands on training for officers is not reinforced enough.	“Very basic training but a lot of Jiu Jitsu. They taught a handful of the same takedowns and control holds.” - Participant 4
6	Participant martial arts background for officers was beneficial due to the acclimation of violence, increased level of confidence, more self-control, and reduction in emotional responses.	“I think it gives you more confidence to go hands on with people. Your stress level is significantly less when going hands on” -Participant 6
7	Of the officers who had previous martial arts training, each example of going hands on went well due to quick and rational decision making, ability to maintain control, and had muscle memory from frequent training. All of these examples were incidence free. One participant without martial arts experience appeared to struggle more.	“I don’t tase them, I don’t pepper spray them, I literally just grab them like a pathetic child and put handcuffs on them” -Participant 1
8	With the use of tasers, mace, and firearms, all participants believe there would be a decrease in officer use of each tool. Participants view the addition of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training to be ‘adding another tool’ for officers to use and having an increased level of confidence when using any tool.	“The more you train, the more tools you have. It is not the more tools I give you, the more tools you have.” - Participant 1
9	All participants believe there would be positive benefits with officer physical health, mental health, and injuries to suspects and officers with the addition of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for officers.	“The lives it would save is the most important thing.”-Participant 1
9A	Officer would have an increase in physical health from the high intensity workout and motivation to maintain health and fitness.	“By requiring that physical exercise it will improve our officer’s overall health.”-Participant 7
9B	Brazilian Jiu Jitsu would have a positive impact on mental health by acting as a stress reliever, it would provide officers with a sense of community, and increase overall confidence.	“Having officers that really connect at a community level would be invaluable”-Participant 9
9C	For officer and suspect injuries, all participants believe there would be an overall decrease in injuries.	“You are controlling somebody more safely and working through those situations better.” -Participant 5
10	The main limitations discussed by participants for BJJ for law enforcement is department funding, time allocated to train, and a misconception about fighting.	“As a civilian, I think defunding the police is the wrong answer. I think that people need to be educated on what Jiu Jitsu would be to support that funding of training” -Participant 10
11	Participants believe that Brazilian Jiu Jitsu would improve public relations because it would optically look better for officers to use Brazilian Jiu Jitsu techniques.	“The public would see that we are making changes and being held accountable to train more and improve those skills.”-Participant 4
11A	Outside of BJJ training, to improve community relations and public perception departments need to increase community involvement and transparency.	“Making sure we show the good things our officers are doing instead of focusing on the bad. Having community outreach is super important. -Participant 3

Question 1 and 2

1. *How long have you been in law enforcement? What different positions have you held?*

Table 2

Participant Law Enforcement Demographics

Participant Law Enforcement Background	Gender	Years in Law Enforcement	Type of Agency	Specialized Task Force Involvement
Participant 1	Male	23	Private, Local, Federal, Military	Green Beret, USARMY SOF Comabtives Instructor and Curriculum Creator, Cartel Operations
Participant 2	Female	14	Local, Federal	Patrol, Narcotics, Violent Crime, Bank Robberies
Participant 3	Male	13	Local	Patrol, Riot Control, Resource Officer
Participant 4	Male	8	Local	Patrol, Narcotics, Defense Tactics Instructor
Participant 5	Male	8	County, Local	Patrol, General Crime Investigations, Narcotics
Participant 6	Male	6.5	Local	Patrol, Special Operations Teams, Field Training Officer
Participant 7	Male	6	Local	Patrol, Riot Control, UOF Instructor, SWAT, Training Officer
Participant 8	Male	5	Local	Patrol, SWAT, Defense Tactics Instructor
Participant 9	Male	3	Local	Patrol, UOF Instructor
Participant 10	Male	0	Martial Arts Gym Owner	N/A

2. *Do you practice any form of marital arts outside of the organization you work for? If yes, for how long? What level?*

Table 3

Participant Martial Arts Demographics

Participant	Martial Arts Type	Time Training	Belt Level
1	BJJ, Korean Jiu Jitsu, Shuriken, Karate, Taekwondo, Hawaiian Campo, Army Combatives, MMA	36 years	Black (BJJ, Combatives, and Japanese Jiu Jitsu), Pro UFC MMA
2	None	0	N/A
3	BJJ	13 Years	Black
4	BJJ	10 Months	White
5	BJJ & Wrestling	3 Years (BJJ) 15 Years (W)	Blue (BJJ)
6	BJJ, Wrestling, Boxing, & Muay Tai	2 Years (BJJ, MT, B), 9 Years (W)	White (BJJ)
7	BJJ & Wrestling	3 Months (BJJ) 4 Years (W)	White (BJJ)
8	BJJ	10 Months	White
9	BJJ	3 Years	Blue
10	BJJ, Taekwondo, Boxing, Muay Tai, MMA, MMA Gym Owner/Instructor	24 Years	Black (BJJ), Pro MMA

Question 3 and 5

3. *How much time during your initial training would you say was spent on combative and hands on training? How much time is allocated to reinforcing those skills upon entering your agency annually?*
5. *Approximately how many times have you been assaulted on the job? Note any times the individual did have a weapon.*

Table 4

Hands-on Training and On-the-Job Assaults

Average and Range Chart	Federal	Local	Range of responses
Time Spent on Combatives in Initial Training	70 hours	38.4 hours	20-70 hours
Annual Time Allocated for Combatives	1 hour	17.4 hours	1-25 hours
# of Times Assaulted on the Job	3 times	11.2 times	0-20 times
# of Times With a Weapon	0 times	10 times	0-20 times

Participant 10 answered this question as it applied to them. His training for hands-on is every day. His altercations would not be on the job but throughout his life.

Participant 10: “There’s definitely been situations in the street where Jiu Jitsu came in handy. I’d say the biggest benefit to knowing Jiu Jitsu though is that I don’t have to use it. I’m confident enough that my ego is not going to be damaged for someone calling me names. Have I had to use Jiu Jitsu in a fight or altercation? Yes, and it’s worked out great every time, but have I more often just used my words because I have Jiu Jitsu in my back pocket? Absolutely.”

Question 4

In terms of training content and training effectiveness, how does your martial arts experience compare to the training you received from the academy or your agency? What would be some similarities? What would be some differences?

The three main themes identified for this question are that law enforcement training is kept simple, some Brazilian Jiu Jitsu principles are present, and that hands on training is not reinforced enough as it needs to be.

Multiple participants stated the content of their training is kept basic and simple in order to remember it. Some participants thought the content was heavily related to Jiu Jitsu while others claimed it does not even compare. Overall, the principles of Jiu Jitsu are increasingly being implemented into the training content and most participants alluded to that general idea. Lastly, an important theme I gathered was that there is not enough reoccurring training of the

techniques taught. This would align with the theme that the content needs to be kept simple as it is not being reinforced enough throughout the year.

Participant Responses

Participant 1: “When I go teach at academies here, I will occasionally take the whole entire academy class and I will ask them to put cuffs on me. If there is a class of 25, by the end of the hour, there are 25 people bruised, bloody, with a variety of handcuffs on them and I’m just walking around. It is an absolute superpower when someone knows how to use martial arts effectively.”

Participant 3: “I think it is sort of similar. I think the difference is Jiu Jitsu has a sport aspect to it. This would be getting someone to the ground, submitting them, and starting over. That’s not really what you’re doing in law enforcement in my opinion. We focus more on getting the fight to the ground and controlling that person safely until backup can arrive.” In Jiu Jitsu, I think most people think anytime someone is coming at them ‘I am just going to play a lot of guard.’ Well, that does not really work well in the streets. In Jiu Jitsu we train to be on the bottom because you might be on the bottom at times. But in our fundamentals classes we push get on top. When working from bottom we want to teach them how to wrestle up, dig an underhook, and things like that to get out of the position.”

Participant 4: “Very basic training but a lot of Jiu Jitsu. They taught a handful of the same takedowns and control holds. We escaped mount. They had us doing shrimping drills and how to tactically get up from the ground. For control holds, they taught us the use of kimuras to get their arms behind their backs to handcuff easier.”

Participant 5: “From my point of view, I don’t think the law enforcement hands on training we got and Jiu Jitsu are very similar. Some of the techniques taught in the past for law enforcement weren’t super realistic with cross training Jiu Jitsu or wrestling with it.”

Participant 6: “There are some similarities, one thing that we train in the department that I work for is a Krav Maga so we do some ground fighting stuff. It’s a little bit more specialized as far as what you can do when wearing a duty belt some of the moves are a little different than what we’d be able to do just in shorts and a shirt.”

Participant 7: “The concepts are similar that we bring to law enforcement training. It is primarily control tactics and staying safe in different positions. We keep the training to very basic maneuvers' that can help an officer on the street when you only get two to four hours a year to train it. That way even our twenty-year veteran who’s never done any martial arts training can grasp those techniques and remember them. We hit the fundamentals hard so they are retained.”

Participant 8: “The academy training did not resemble Jiu Jitsu at all. Once I got to my agency, I knew it was more into Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. The training was closer to Jiu Jitsu

and I would say today it is even more. It is similar with ground control, working from your back, and working into mount. The takedowns are different though I would say. They are similar but a little more aggressive. In Jiu Jitsu, you're not always looking to throw someone on the ground all the time."

Participant 9: "I think that a lot of the overall principles taught at our police department are very closely related to the techniques taught in Jiu Jitsu. Even today during our instructor training, we discussed different hook and sickle sweeps, reach clinch takedowns, arm drags, north south positioning, and kimuras. We are moving away from any type of strikes and moving towards grappling, control, and communication focused tactics. Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is strongly integrated into our department's hands on training and defensive tactics."

Participant 10: "For me specifically, gun retention I have done less. I have done so much with stick and knife Jiu Jitsu training with my instructor. He is probably one of the best in the country with that and has trained CIA, DEA, FBI, all sorts of agents in tactics regarding that. Officers I have trained have said the way Jiu Jitsu compares to their current training is greatly different. I believe it is not even comparable. In my experience and knowledge, the training law enforcement are getting is not nearly enough, not enough qualified instructors for the content necessary, and I think it's definitely lacking. What we do here is giving our athletes everyday experience hands on getting to roll with another person, getting to almost go live in situations. What we do here for training is almost unmatched in the way it is done. I think law enforcement though is trending in the right direction. They are starting to adapt to more Jiu Jitsu based principles in their hands on. We are essentially doing a lot of the same things, just in much greater detail and better training quality."

Can you recall some of your training that sticks out as something that has worked for you? Or what the initial training was like in terms of hands on and combatives?

Participant 2: "The initial training was always trying to keep it simple. The more simple and basic things are the easier they are to remember. Throughout the years, things would change, and more techniques would come out, so it was just like, 'just tell me how to hold their arms.' So one of the biggest things is being a female and I'm just not very big, I'm never going to win in an actual fight, but sometimes just being able to firmly hold onto somebody and grab onto them like you know what you're doing and being able to just move them ever so slightly does show them 'hey I am in charge here.' Just the simple grabbing onto the back of their arm or wrists and being like 'ok we are going this way,' that is used almost daily by most officers. Then, being in patrol, you fight with a lot more uncooperative people. Whether that is people being more passive aggressive during verbal commands or actively resisting. In those instances what we would do most that worked the best was just different techniques to work that arm out to get them handcuffed."

Question 6

How do you feel your martial arts background impacted your response to an assault? Was there ever a time an individual had some sort of weapon you were able to apprehend them without outside force multipliers due to your background?

The main theme among participants is the benefit of having that acclimation of violence with a training background. Participant three explains what is meant by this idea more specifically. Overall, the participants whom this question applied to stated strong benefits of how their martial arts background has impacted their performance in high stress situations.

These benefits include increased levels of confidence, more self-control, and reduction in emotional responses. Participant ten emphasizes the importance of this, ‘the second you get emotional is the second you make mistakes.’ These individuals attach these benefits to their martial arts background. They have been routinely put into hands on, combative, or physical altercations in a controlled setting. This is said to be a direct impact on how they have handled incidences on the job. The acclimation of violence phrase embodies the themes among these responses.

Participant Responses

Participant 1: “In the capacity I am working right now, the cartel members will have a degree of martial arts, they still feel like children, like just petulant children. The disparity between even a police officer or even a graduate from an academy, they still don’t know anything on how to use their body, de-escalation, or escalation of force. It’s an absolute superpower to know.”

Participant 3: “A lot of it is about that acclimation to violence. One day we meet that person that has zero regard for our life and that’s a scary moment. That’s when people ask the question ‘do I know how to handle that?’ When I went to the academy I was like a big guy I lifted weights and thought I might know how to fight. That’s ultimately why I started training Jiu Jitsu because I was like ‘I don’t know how to fight.’ With training, you learn to be comfortable with the violence. It also helps you process through better in those moments because your adrenaline and stress won’t be as high due to having routine acclimation of violence through training Jiu Jitsu. You’ll be able to think through like on a traffic stop if you’re demanding this person to keep their hands out of the car and also

get out of the vehicle, but they aren't listening, if you're emotions are taking over you won't be able to think 'oh wait they have their seatbelt on so they can't move out of the car and keep their hands out of the window.' In Jiu Jitsu that's kind of like someone's in your guard and you're going for an arm bar and keep trying but you're not finishing it, well it's kind of a rule of three, if it still doesn't work you move on and try the next thing. You learn those contingency plans and how to stay calm under pressure and work through those situations."

Participant 5: "It just helped handling the situation in a controlled mindset. I was not too amped up that I can recall. Being able to control somebody and being confident to do so whether they are big or small. Just having confidence during those situations helped a lot. Training for so long they become more instinct and you're able to react quicker and better."

Participant 6: "I think it gives you more confidence to go hands on with people. Your stress level is significantly less when you're going hands on with people. I'd say those are the main differences just due to the frequency of training and confidence you get. As opposed to twice a year hands on training. As for an example, I got called to a report of a guy who was irate, jumping around in traffic with a knife and he also had a marking stick, basically one of those rods used by construction workers. I show up and I talked with this older lady who said that the guy jumped out in front of her car and started kicking at her car and had a knife but when I ended up finding him he was jumped out in front of traffic. What I would be trained to do would be to probably end up telling him to drop the knife and if you have a deadly weapon that's a threat usually you'd have your gun out giving them commands and drop the knife or to get on the ground. In this instance, I looked at it as something was going on with mental health. First thing I did was telling him to drop the knife. He ended up putting the knife away in its back pocket and I'm talking about what's going on. He's telling me that people are following him around with guns and then he used convinced that the elderly lady that he was jumping in front of her car was armed with a gun that she was following him. So it was clearly a mental health related case for sure. I took the knife and stick away from him and sent him on his way after explaining the situation to him. Not two weeks later I read an article of the same situation with another cop and he ended up getting stabbed in the neck. Now that is why you train for worst scenario cause if you deal with that situation multiple times in your career and it just takes the one time someone comes to attack you with a knife and if you don't handle it ready for the worst-case scenarios that's how you end up getting killed."

Participant 7: "Hugely. I think just the background I have in martial arts or wrestling really lets you get comfortable in those positions. It lets you maneuver to a better position. Most fights end up on the ground so it teaches you how to get them to the ground safely and maintain control of them until backup arrives. Every single one of those fights I have been in, they don't last very long and you can just slow them down."

Participant 10: "When people get into any physical altercation, they tend to get into a bit of an emotional state. That's common when people start Jiu Jitsu as well. Our white belts will come in and get pretty worked up right away because their ego is getting checked

and physically getting roughed up a bit. So it's easy for people's ego to get hurt, they might get mad. When you get mad your brain gets flooded with adrenaline and you start to get super frustrated and emotional. Jiu Jitsu teaches you to deal with that. You learn to lose that, by the time you're a blue, purple belt and someone's got their knee on your face you're just like 'well I have dealt with way worse so I'll just get out of it.' Where most people would freak out and start getting emotional. The second you get emotional is when you're going to make mistakes. Jiu Jitsu really works that out of people which is so important in those situations."

Were any of the times you have been assaulted since you started training Jiu Jitsu?

Participant 4: "No."

Participant 8: "No."

So, what did that situation look like or how were you feeling?

Participant 8: "My confidence level was lower, you black out a little bit more not having that confidence. Now that I have been training I have actually been thinking about it. If I just walked up to some guy and he just throws a punch in my face I think I would just close the distance a lot faster and just go hands on way quicker than I used to."

What is the benefit you see now that you have started training, or prospective benefit?

Participant 4: "I think it would be a huge confidence boost for people who are relying too heavily on using tasers. We have other training that we call 'verbal judo' where we learn how to talk to these people to de-escalate. I know for me I was always confident going hands on when I need to because I'm just bigger and stronger but now that I know a little bit more with Jiu Jitsu, I'm even better than I was before. After starting training, it made me realize I'm lucky that I never had to be in any fights where the other person actually knew how to fight. If they did know what they were doing or had a Jiu Jitsu background before I started training, I would have gotten my ass kicked. It was super humbling right away, it's like I don't really know what I'm doing and now I'm getting my ass kicked by an 18-year-old who I am way bigger than. Now just doing it for 10 months and growing from there, there is just a huge difference."

Question 7

Can you describe a time that you used your BJJ or martial arts experience to gain control of an individual or defend yourself without causing harm?

This question provided participants with the ability to tell a story from a hands-on incident they have experienced. The common themes among each story were in the way that each individual was able to have quick and rational decision making, maintain control, and use

muscle memory from their training to respond to the individual they were apprehending. These officers attributed their martial arts training as a significant benefit to the outcome of the situation.

The last response listed in this section, Participant two did not have a background in martial arts. This participant's response to a combative situation was different than the other stories provided. When asked a follow-up question in regard to what was being felt in the moment, the participant responded that they needed to try and think back to their training. During each story, the officers were very detailed about how the situation went down and their response to it. They were technical and referenced specific Jiu Jitsu movements that they knew would be effective to use. The participants with a martial arts background appeared to have an easier time during a combative incident.

Participant Responses

Participant 1: "There were 10 clear instances I can think of with the suspect having a weapon with them trying to use it. And I didn't have to kill them, anyone that knows who I am I don't think there is a question that I would kill somebody if absolutely necessary but I just never had to because I have so many other tools. I don't tase them, I don't pepper spray them, I literally just grabbed them like a pathetic child and put handcuffs on them. That is exclusively due to the training and my background in martial arts."

Participant 5: "I did a traffic stop on a guy. He had some mental issues and I had asked him to step out of the vehicle and he started walking away. I grabbed his wrist, he then turned around and hit me in the face. I did a quick body lock and took him to the ground and got into mount. I was able to keep him down and talk to him while I waited for backup to arrive. I eventually got him to agree to turn around so I could put the handcuffs on. I was pretty amped because someone just hit me but I never blacked out, was able to clearly call out my radio, and make sure everything around me was safe and maintained awareness of those surroundings. I was able to remain much more calm."

Participant 7: "I had a domestic call where we were looking for a suspect who had just assaulted his wife. He had fled the area and when I located him at a bar downtown he fled on foot and so I chased after him. After I caught up with him I told him multiple times to stop and he turned around and elbowed me in the mouth. At that point I was able to sink my hips a little bit and duck underneath and get to his back and I was able to pick him up and take him to the ground. I then was able to radio for backup and maintain control of him until they got there."

Participant 8: “Just a couple weeks ago a guy fled from a stolen car and we began a foot pursuit and ended up having to tackle him because he faced me. I basically did what we are training in the PD when someone faces you and it’s a takedown from a bear hug and we also do that a lot at Jiu Jitsu. I didn’t slam him into the ground hard like the type that will get you into a use of force incident, it was a controlled take down. He was facedown and was trying to grab stuff in his pockets and tried to get up and run away. I just did what is called ‘knee on belly’ in Jiu Jitsu, had his hands pinned to his chest and just stayed there and talked to him. I then got him to roll over and put his hands behind his back easily and got him into handcuffs. And after the fact, I found out the reason he was digging in his pockets was because he had his fake Glock in his pocket I think he was trying to throw. It definitely helped having that control over the situation.”

Participant 9: “One time we responded to a fight at a bar, and it was a trucker from out of town, super big guy about 6’4, 250lbs. The bouncers had him on the ground when we first showed up. About three of us showed up simultaneously. You could probably say that active aggression was kicking in. A couple of officers got kicked while two officers were working to get the arms. Known for my training and experience in Jui Jitsu, you need to control their hips, control their legs and try and begin to compress space. We don’t want to give them any area to move or free themselves. For instance, the other two officers were around his arms, across his legs, then I began to grab his belt loops and began to pull his heels towards his butt to immobilize his hips. So, he couldn’t turn or kick. We teach the hidden arm technique. It’s one of those primary things with the Gracie GST to give them time to get his arms out and handcuffed. So that was one of those principles kicked in right away, that I need to control his hips to begin to take space away. Since we’re on top controlling the situation.”

Can you describe a time where you had to go hands on with a suspect and explain how it went?

Participant 2: “One example was when we were chasing after some people who fled from a car and it turned into a situation to just try and get control of arms and legs however you could and I ended up getting head butted in the head cause I was leaning over the guy. That one sticks out to me the most.”

How did you deal with that? How did you feel that moment and after?

Participant 2: “When you’re doing something like that all you want to do is get the situation under control. You’re worried about what’s going on around you and you’re just trying hard to revert back to your training. You try to figure out the best way to grab onto this person and just get them to stop moving. Anytime you can get control of their upper body or head they will likely move with it and not be able to go anywhere.”

Question 8

What impact do you believe mandatory BJJ training would have on the use of tasers, mace, or firearms with officers?

There are some distinct themes among all participant's perceptions on how Brazilian Jiu Jitsu would impact the use of tasers, mace, and firearms. Multiple participants referred to the addition of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training as 'adding another tool' to the list of the others on an officer's belt. The participants believe there would be an overall decrease in the use of these tools and an increase in officer confidence on when to use these tools.

Participant one said 'the more you train, the more tools you have. It is not the more tools I give you the more tools you have.' That quote summed up a variety of responses that referred to having a background in Jiu Jitsu considered another major tool, comparative to the items on an officer's duty belt. Regardless of martial arts experience, the participants view that having or adding Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for officers would be an added tool and skill for officers.

Participants attribute the prospective decrease in the use of tasers, mace, and firearms to having a significant increase in confidence to go hands on from Jiu Jitsu training. The officers with a martial arts background reported being less likely to use those force multiplying tools during an incident. When going hands on, the goal would be to gain control of a suspect but to mitigate injuries or excessive force. Participants suggest that by having a high level of skill from recurring hands-on training, that would be a safer alternative to use than those tools.

Participant Responses

Participant 1: "The more you train the more tools you have. It is *not* the more tools I give you the more tools you have. If I give an untrained person a taser, pepper spray, and a gun, those are the three tools they have. You give me even something like spaghetti, and I am still far more dangerous than the person with those three tools. The spectrum of use of force is this ever-sliding spectrum. It gets worse, it gets better, it gets worse, it gets better. In the current environment, even if you had the ability to shoot somebody because

they were trying to kill you, a few seconds later you make that decision to do so, you'll end up being hung by a grand jury. You have to have the whereabouts and the mental faculty to be able to make those decisions in real time. The more you train, the more capable you are of in real time, sliding and adjusting to that spectrum. The more that you train, the more tools you have."

Participant 2: "I think it would be beneficial, like I said, just knowing my body and knowing I don't have the force to just fight with someone it's helpful to have those skills in my back pocket. Just so I would be able to be like 'if this person does this, this is what I'm going to do.' Not only because we don't want to hurt people or resort to deadly force if we don't have to. But with those tools we have on our belt, they aren't always reliable or don't always work. So it would be helpful to know that you can kind of help yourself or handle yourself because you would know those go to moves in those situations."

Participant 3: "I think officers would be less likely to use those. To me, pepper spray is more of a last option because it would affect me as well. If I'm in a distance and situation a taser isn't always necessary, I should look at going hands on first. Sometimes the taser doesn't always work as well so going hands on might be a better option to start. I think a lot of officers resort to using it more because they don't have that confidence to go hands on right away. We should feel comfortable going hands on in a lot of situations. There would be less use of firearms. I can see situations where people get scared and don't know what else to do, so they go to their firearms more quickly. Obviously, if they have a gun, you should probably have a gun. But in other circumstances, with Jiu Jitsu training you can think 'well what is the best option here and how much of a threat is there right now?' I think ways Jiu Jitsu has helped me is less about how to fight and more about strategy and dealing with situations in the best way possible."

Participant 4: "Overall decrease the use of all of them."

Participant 5: "I think it would give people confidence in knowing when they need to use them. I am not saying officers don't use them correctly now in the right situations because they do, but I am saying that I feel like Jiu Jitsu is giving people another tool to use instead of resorting to those. It helps keep them from crippling themselves of thinking 'oh I always have to tase them or I can't go hands on I gotta spray them.'"

Participant 6: "I think it would cut down on a lot of the use of forces. A lot of the use of force incidents see are from incidents that are getting out of control where that's their last resort. For example, you see a lot of videos of officers where people are digging around in cars looking for a weapon where maybe that could be addressed before the weapons presented. From a personal standpoint, I've only deployed the Taser once in my six and a half years that I've worked in law enforcement, and it was ineffective. It's something that I don't rely on a whole lot but I keep it in the back of my head that I have it because it's a good tool to have. I've never used pepper spray. I think that those tools are over relied upon in patrol and if they fail people don't really have a backup plan other than them needing help from their partners."

Participant 7: “I think it would decrease. As you get more comfortable with the mechanics of Jiu Jitsu or wrestling, you get more comfortable with going hands on and getting control of people. That’s really what our tools are used for as control devices to mitigate injuries to us or them. But getting more comfortable with the hands on would really mitigate those use of force incidents.”

Participant 8: “I think it would help a ton. So many people are so quick to pull the taser even if a guy is just standing there flexing and just screaming at people, they will just pull out their taser. I mean that works sometimes when they see the red dot on their chest, they get scared and will stop. But a lot of times there are people that are tased that are just pissed off when going hands on would work better. Jiu Jitsu has given me a lot more confidence and knowing that you can handle yourself in that situation makes a difference and you don’t feel like you need to pull out that taser.”

Participant 9: “I think they would see a huge drop in the use of all of those. I think it's would be a huge drop in officer injuries and suspect injuries. An overall decrease in use of force incidents. Increase in overall officer confidence. We're hopefully in the beginning workings of instituting a program similar to the Marietta PD program here for our agency. Hopefully we will be able to get more officers incentivized and paid for classes to go into the gym but, it is still in the beginning planning parts. But in terms of mandatory, if every officer was a purple belt, the world would be a lot better place. So at least a purple belt.”

Participant 10: “I think it would lessen the use of those things. I don’t think you would really need those if you have 2 or more years of Jiu Jitsu under your belt. I wouldn’t say it would completely eliminate the use of them but it would likely decrease it overall. There may be an issue with cops being out of shape, not confident, or getting emotional and scared in situations that they think ‘I might have to just tase this person or possibly shoot them or use some real physical force to get this situation where I want it to be.’ I think with more Jiu Jitsu training that would help so much and change those things.”

Question 9

How do you think agency-wide mandatory BJJ twice weekly training would impact police effectiveness?

Three elements of officer health were examined under this question. This section is broken up by impacts on officer physical health, officer mental health, and injuries to suspects and officers. The core themes among each answer are similar but each individual provides a different perspective on each element.

For officer physical health the participant responses indicate a positive increase in officer health due to the intensity of a workout that Jiu Jitsu is. Multiple participants attach a positive benefit of Jiu Jitsu training to more motivation to stay in shape. Some of the participants reported that Jiu Jitsu is a completely different kind of workout that takes time for all levels of fitness to get in shape for.

The mental health impacts for officers was said to positively increase due to Jiu Jitsu acting as a stress reliever, provide officers with a sense of community, and overall confidence. Physical activity acts as a stress reliever. Jiu Jitsu is said to have a similar effect to relieve stress for the officers who train. Another key point many of the participants discussed was the element of community that a Jiu Jitsu gym has. Officers have reported meeting many friends, training partners, and in turn, receiving an increased level of motivation to push themselves. Lastly, the most common mental health benefit that was addressed was the increase in officer confidence. This theme was apparent throughout the entirety of the interview for most participants. In response to this question specifically, multiple participants discussed that right away when officers start training it may mentally break them down a bit. Although, over time when their skill level increases, their confidence will drastically improve. These mental benefits are likely to be experienced on and off the mats for officers.

The last aspect of health that was assessed was the impact of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu with suspect and officer injuries. Participants all stated there would be a decrease to some degree with officer and suspect injuries. Some believe that there may be more injuries to officers due to an increased frequency of physical activity but will likely flatten out over time. With suspects, it cannot be completely mitigated but will have an impact on reducing the likelihood compared to now.

Participants discussed that with officers training Brazilian Jiu Jitsu they will be in better overall shape. If they are in better shape, that would reduce the likelihood of injury in and out of training. From their personal experience, officers stated they gained increase levels of control over their own bodies and more situational awareness. Participant ten describes a major benefit of Jiu Jitsu as gaining the ability to ‘optimize human movement.’

With suspect injuries, there were two main themes on both ends of the spectrum: injuries will decrease because the officer has great control techniques, and they may occur due to the nature of Jiu Jitsu techniques. A majority of the participants state that Jiu Jitsu training for officers would teach them safe, proper, and controlled techniques to handle a combative individual. This would in turn reduce the likelihood of a use of force incident or suspect injury. A few of the other participants had the perspective that under high stress situations, there may be situations an officer cranks an arm bar or kimura too hard causing injury to that individual.

The majority of responses to the prospective impact that Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers would have on physical health, mental health, and injuries were positive impacts. The perceptions of physical health were that it would increase for officers due to the intensive physical nature of training. Mental health would improve as Jiu Jitsu would act as a stress relief, confidence builder, and give one a sense of community. As for officer and suspect injuries, there is no for sure answer to completely negate those two things in this profession. Jiu Jitsu though, may be a step in the right direction.

Participant Responses

Officer physical health

Participant 1: “I think it would save, I don’t even know how to put a number to it. The lives it would save and that’s the most important thing. But for law enforcement administrators, the thing that they want to hear is the tens if not hundreds of thousands of millions of dollars saved in municipalities and lawsuits. No more having to pay a family a

few million dollars because a criminal got roughed up in a cuffing. It would then become, 'well that was pretty anticlimactic, that guy now has cuffs on him.' There's no incident. It is just, 'there was this thing that happened and now there are cuffs on him.' The jokes of the fat donut eating cop, like I have plenty of cops that train with us, they got six packs. They're into it, they eat clean, they exercise, and they grapple."

Participant 2: "When I was at my federal training, we did it for hours. It was very taxing and you had to be somewhat in shape to really keep going all day. Also it gives you an inside look those dangerous situations in a controlled setting so it allows you to see what this job could really look like on a bad day. So you learn that you want to stay in shape in order to defend yourself and your partners if you need to at some point. It is obviously a great workout and people enjoy it."

Participant 3: "A big thing for officer health is just physical activity. In the academy it's required but after the academy you see a pretty sharp cut off. I was talking to an officer the other day and he said he just doesn't have anything that keeps him working out. I think if you have things you can circle on the calendar to be fit for, it will motivate you to maintain that fitness level. On those Jiu Jitsu days it'll help motivate you to stay in better shape for that and maintain overall health. They may develop a motivation of 'I don't want to go get beat up and not compete well at class so I'm going to workout outside of class or make sure I'm eating healthy throughout the week.'"

Participant 4: "It would be super beneficial as far as the long term. I think right away there would be people beat up a little bit. Jiu Jitsu right away is a completely different kind of workout so I think there would have to be a slow roll out to prevent injuries and allow people to build up their conditioning for Jiu Jitsu."

Participant 5: "I think it would improve a lot of physical health within reason. Everyone has different body types, injuries, and skill levels. It would be a challenge to get people on the same page due to those, but it would help individuals with weight loss, cardio, flexibility, and overall health."

Participant 6: "I think it would be extremely beneficial. I think as far as health wise you have officers that are in better shape, you might also have more officers who are out on injury on occasion, but I think it would be very beneficial to the individual officer and the department."

Participant 7: "By requiring that physical exercise it will improve our officer's overall health."

Participant 8: "Officer health is big. I only started training 10 months ago but used to workout everyday, but no workout compares to a Jiu Jitsu workout. It is the best workout you can do."

Participant 9: "The physical health kind of speaks for itself as you're utilizing a lot more movements, muscles, and joints that people today especially modernized Western lifestyle never utilize. Getting much more aligned with kind of our primordial approach of sitting on the ground or floor, actually rolling around on the ground. I mean, if you're

going to be training part, you're going to have to take care of yourself. Eat real food. Get good sleep and do not drink a bunch of alcohol. Those things will naturally become if you want to train, you have to do those.”

Participant 10: “It is a great workout so having that reoccurring is going to increase your overall physical health, emotional health, and mental health. You’ll start to become more fit, you will look better which will increase your confidence. I think everything would just improve. For weight loss, we’ve seen especially women, coming in and doing kickboxing, muay tai classes, and even Jiu Jitsu and see the benefit there.”

Officer mental health

Participant 2: “I think if you look at the culture of policing today, it’s obvious that it goes through every officers mind that they may have to use lethal force within reason. If you know the regulations and when it is appropriate to use force at every level, adding another tool of non-lethal force would be beneficial. There’s always the question of, ‘will this work?’ Then, ‘what will be the downfall of what happens after I use this tool?’ With Jiu Jitsu being added you could then say, with my skills and tools I have weren’t working, which is why I had to resort to those secondary tools. It gives them some degree of justification to why they needed to use an increase of force. It alleviates some of that mental pressure, not all of it, but helps them feel more sound and sure in their decision making.”

Participant 3: “I think it can only improve mental health. Jiu Jitsu has a community aspect that would be great for officers. Like the study for soldiers coming back from war and having PTSD training Jiu Jitsu. Those people have the connection and community of Jiu Jitsu paired with that previous acclimation of violence in a controlled setting. These individuals can make friends and have a group of people with something in common and to learn together.”

Participant 4: “It would be tough at first because knowing you have to now go and wrestle somebody may make people extremely nervous. I know at the academy we do redman drills where someone is in a big red suit and you have to go beat up on him and I know for some people that is a complete mental defeat. But with Jiu Jitsu they would have to accept they may suck right away but the more they do it and more they train they would get much better and become more confident.”

Participant 5: “Mental health plays a big factor. It relieves stress. Just working out in general it really clears your mind and it helps me out a lot. Having a group that is working out with you it helps motivate you and creates a fun community together.”

Participant 6: “For the mental health aspect I think it’s a great way to work through stress long, through shifts a lot of times you’re working 10 plus hours especially on nights or evenings. You end up missing a lot of opportunity to attend the gym or to focus on your own wellbeing. I think it would help a lot with reduction in stress and just kind of help clear your head. In this field, it’s easy for your work to become your only focus in terms of goals. Then if you don’t get picked for a position or you whatever it may be you

don't feel like you're in much control of the goals that you have for yourself. Whereas the martial arts gym itself has given me so many goals outside of work. It's even like a place where I don't think about work when I'm not working anymore. I think more about the gym and my own personal goals and so it's been really good for my mental health as well as just stress relief and knowing that there's more to life than my job."

Participant 8: "I think that confidence in yourself. The culture in Jiu Jitsu is so great in itself. Everyone at the gym is really cool and there to help you. It's all positive."

Participant 9: "A lot of law enforcement is problem solving. Jiu Jitsu at its' core is essentially reaction to a problem or dilemma. It is naturally putting us in those positions. Also, the stress relief. You look at the impact that Jiu Jitsu had on soldiers with PTSD as a prime example. There is also a team aspect so you can watch people who first come in and feeling a little awkward when we start different drills because they don't want to be in such close quarters with someone. Then three months down the line they're laughing, joking around, and having a great relationship with everyone in the gym with them. Having officers really connect at that community level would be invaluable."

Participant 10: "Jiu Jitsu is great for mental health. It has been shown to significantly reduce PTSD in soldiers from wars. You've got to have an outlet for the stressors you deal with as a cop and going home and sitting on the couch drinking a beer isn't really the best option. I hate to sound cliché, but Jiu Jitsu really is lifestyle and the quality of life you get from it is unmatched."

Injuries, suspect and officer

Participant 2: "I think they would decrease. Any time you are trained in using a technique, you've practiced using that technique and probably know how to use it correctly. I don't know much about Jiu Jitsu but I cannot imagine the goal is to try and hurt someone. I feel it would be to just restrain them and control them without anyone getting hurt. Whereas if you are trying to half-hazardly grab onto someone or fight with someone and there is no trained tactic behind it then that risk for someone to get hurt is there."

Participant 3: "For officers, training Jiu Jitsu more will help teach them about injury prevention and maintenance of their body with physical activity. It also is a lot about control. You learn how to move your body and maintain control over your body. You can see two black belts rolling at a very high level but neither one gets injured because they know how to properly control themselves and the body mechanics of their opponents. If you can control someone else better, it's less likely to have incidence."

Participant 4: "I think right away officers would be super sore, not necessarily injured but really sore. In the long run though officers would be in better shape overall, better mobility, better athleticisms, better breathing skills they never knew they had. For suspects they're probably not going to get hurt as much as they would normally. Unless it's an all out brawl then you may see more of a Jiu Jitsu like injury like a kimura cranked too far but I think officers would be less likely to injure them with the law enforcement

tactics or using their different tools. At that point, to use that high of level with Jiu Jitsu in an assault incident there's going to be a reason for it.”

Participant 5: “It can help, but it does not negate it completely. You are controlling somebody more safely and working through those situations better. But stuff does happen so I can't say there would be no injuries ever.”

Participant 6: “I think as long as it's trained correctly you can really cut back and mitigate those risks of injury. I think that when you have people applying these moves incorrectly or if they're not comfortable or confident with the move and they're doing it under stress, I think that's probably where you're going to see someone get their arm broken. Or unfortunately with some incidents where someone is choked or strangled unconscious and the choke holds that have been made illegal, that is where you find those issues.”

Participant 8: “Just more control on those takedowns, a lot of people get slammed down on the concrete and then get a use of force incident. But just doing moves correctly and more technically, you're not going to hurt yourself or that individual. We had an officer not too long ago trip on a barrier while in a restraint situation and fell over and hurt his shoulder. So, things like that, situational awareness while you're fighting in Jiu Jitsu is huge making sure you know what's around you while maintaining focus on what you're doing.”

Participant 10: “I think it would lessen the injuries because if you're in good shape that would help in its own. You're also learning how to properly move your body and optimize human movement. There is no wasted movement. In Jiu Jitsu there is not really any spazzy or frantic movements that would make you more susceptible for injuries.”

Question 10

What social, financial, or physical limitations would likely arise if this was made universally mandatory?

The main limitations discussed among participants included department funding, time to train, and various misconception about fighting. When instituting any new training program, there is likely going to be an upfront cost associated with it. Adding a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training regimen for law enforcement officers would have an upfront cost for training and equipment. There would also be a time cost element. Participants suggest that officers would need to be incentivized for hours training Jiu Jitsu. This would cost officers either work time or free time to train. That would also be a cost to the department in compensation for officers.

Multiple participants emphasized a point of varied perceptions on what Brazilian Jiu Jitsu really is. There may be a societal pushback due to the public, administrators, or officers not fully understanding what Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is. To overcome this prospective limitation, participants suggest there would need to be proper education and information about what it is and why it is beneficial to officers and the public. Officers would also need to be educated on why it matters for them. A few participants discuss that officers may not train because they do not believe they need to. There is a misconception about fighting and the skill that comes along with it. Overall, ensuring that officers, the public, and administrators fully understand the principles and potential benefits of Jiu Jitsu is a suggested starting place upon review of these responses.

Participant Responses

Participant 1: “I think perception right now is reality. Groups that are against law enforcement being effective in their jobs, they attach incorrect labels to training. Like Brazilian Jiu Jitsu they call it ‘warrior training or combat training.’ And it’s just like psychological warfare, a psychological operation, a campaign to not give police officers tools. So, if they were to bring it to the city council today and say we are going to teach police officers Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, they would just be like ‘oh they’re going to teach them rear naked chokes and teach people how to murder people.’ My response to that is just like ‘what? No, that’s insane.’ It is this constant fight of the ignorant, and I hope they are ignorant, but they actually might be well informed enough to know that this is important training for law enforcement, they just don’t want them to have it.”

Participant 3: “People may have this misconception about fighting. They may think ‘I know how to fight’ or ‘I know what I would do if I got into a fight.’ And I think a little bit of that is our fault because as cops, we fight in numbers. We almost always have a partner or group with us in those situations that may make it seem easier. You may also have officers say ‘well I don’t have time for that, I’ve got family I want to get home to, and have some free time.’ We would also need funding of course. Other than those, I don’t see any negatives or things that would cause issues.”

Participant 4: “You would have a barrier with potential injuries. If people were to get hurt training then the city would have to pay out to help cover those injuries or time off for them. The officers would likely be a 50/50 split. Some would think ‘this is great’ but others would be like ‘absolutely not.’ That would be with anything new trying to be changed in the criminal justice field.”

Participant 5: “Social aspect would probably be that not everyone grew up with a martial arts background so getting people on board or on the same page to do it would be

hard. There is always a financial problem so making sure people are getting paid or some form of compensation for the training would be super important. The moves would need to be more defined on why they are being used and for what purpose. Making sure the techniques are being properly taught and used correctly and in the right situations. Realizing what actually hurts people versus what does not.”

Participant 6: “So, I have friends that are interested in martial arts and Jiu Jitsu who asked me about it a lot and very few have actually taken the opportunity to even give it a try you know. I think the cost behind it is probably what has kept me from joining for such a long time. I’ve been interested in doing mixed martial arts ever since high school and outside of high school I went into boxing because it was less than half the price of what the mix martial arts gym is now. So, I think that’s why you see a lot of cops who lift weights cause the schedules a little bit more flexible with going to a gym and there’s a little bit less of the mental focus aspect of it. You just go in there and go through your routine and go to work. I think that those are going to be the biggest things. As far as the social aspect I think that would actually help. One thing that has really helped me personally is when you work in law enforcement you kind of become secluded from the rest of the community. You know people look at you as a cop. I’ve had people who are like scared to go out and have a beer ‘with me because they are scared to drive home in front of me after having beer. You can really get kind of secluded with that. Whereas all my friends for a few years were the people that I worked with, where now that I train at a gym I meet a lot of other good people in the community who I can have that friendship with and see the world from an outside perspective a little bit better.”

Participant 7: “It’s hard in law enforcement to get super in-depth training in martial arts so the training you receive outside is far more beneficial. This would be due to time, money, and resources for departments. Our training time is limited and sometimes we have staffing issues, so it is extremely hard to schedule consistent training. I think also the different skill levels would possibly be a problem to work through. We may have to slow the class down for some while others are more advanced.”

Participant 9: “The issue can come from getting the officer in the door to train because they may feel like they don’t need to train. We would need to find a way to incentivize the officer to want to train and show up. I believe once they get going, they will get hooked on it and find that it is something they really enjoy. In terms of the department, it comes down to finding the funding. You can look at Marietta PD and they had to spend 26K on classes. Upfront that’s a big cost but you see it later pays for itself. So, getting people in administration to provide that funding, you may need to run a pilot program to be able to show your own data to support the impact it would have. From a recruitment standpoint it would be great to add. Not many programs have programs like that so it would show that the agency not only cares about their officers but has programs in place to improve them emotionally, physically, and for some spiritually with Jiu Jitsu.”

Participant 10: “As a civilian, I think defunding the police is the wrong answer. I think people need to be educated on what Jiu Jitsu would be to support that funding of training. They may think ‘we are making cops more dangerous’ when really, we are just making them more efficient. For cops, there are not a lot that train now. I’m not really sure why.

Amongst school owners, it's a question we all ask of 'why can't we get police officers to stay'. Jiu Jitsu is really hard, in general we have a high turnover, so I am sure that's part of it. I think there is also a false sense of security because you have a pistol, taser, or partner so you don't think you need it."

Question 11

In recent years there has been a public pushback against police officers due to excessive force instances, how do you feel funding and mandating officers to train BJJ at minimum twice weekly would improve public relations?

The main theme among these responses is that perception is everything. The way the public views law enforcement's actions, videos, or personal interactions will dictate that public perception. Participants suggest Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers would optically look better and create a sense of accountability.

Participants discuss how a Jiu Jitsu focused training style would appear better during incidents that turn public. The techniques taught would focus more on control and less on hitting or strikes. Participant nine gives the example of '*we have all seen the videos of an officer just throwing haymakers at someone when fighting with them.*' This outlines what would negatively impact public perception on law enforcement almost immediately. In turn to this, participant eight explains that with the addition of Jiu Jitsu, '*when an officer is calm in a situation, levelheaded, and can apply that force effectively. Resulting in them ending that incident quickly, I think that is going to look a lot better.*'

An increase in officer accountability is an important theme from the responses for this question. Multiple participants explain different perspectives on how Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training would impact accountability for officers. Participant one uses a Jiu Jitsu competition as an example for personal accountability. At the end of a match, he explains that '*there is no scapegoat, you either prepared, you trained, you got in shape to win, or you didn't.*' This could

be identified as an important aspect of officer accountability with use of force incidents. As for public accountability for officers, participant four says that *‘the public would see that we are making changes and being held accountable to train more and improve those skills.’*

Participant Responses

Participant 1: “Perception is really important. When you have Derek Chauvin putting his knee on the back of that guy’s neck, you know, he just didn’t know any better. Don’t get me wrong, it was wrong. But if he had this type of proper training, this insane movement doesn’t exist. Besides neutralizing what could be extremely inflammatory moments, when people train it does things to not only their skills and their tools. It does things to their mind and their body. They become more patient, more empathetic and passionate, their understanding. In a real Jiu Jitsu gym, there are no bullies, there are no assholes. If there are, when they walk in, guys like me seek them out and I just tear their soul out of them because they aren’t allowed in there like that. If they come back, it is slowly eroded and diluted, and it’s eventually burnt out of them. It would be a really hard place to be a racist too. There’s Blacks, Mexicans, Asians, rolling all over each other like brothers. We are all sweating together, breathing the same air. Then what happens on a Jiu Jitsu matt, especially in competition, at the end someone gets their hand raised because they won. Then the other person has to stand there, there is no one else there. There is the person who won and the person who lost. And exclusively the blame is on you if you lose. There is no scapegoat, you either prepared, you trained, you got in shape to win, or you didn’t. That is a very powerful characteristic in today’s society, accountability. The character shaping and mental shaping that happens on the mat, people are just dumbfounded when I say, ‘you don’t have racist assholes on a Jiu Jitsu mat.’”

Participant 2: “I think the importance of Jiu Jitsu or any sort of hands-on tactical training is knowing what your limits are. I also knew when I wasn’t going to win a physical fight, so it turns to be more verbal.”

Participant 3: “I think it would improve public relations a lot. You could show the public that the aspects of Jiu Jitsu would focus on teaching control instead of striking or hitting. Officers would also be in better shape overall which may increase the public’s confidence in officers. I think a community wants a fit police officer.”

Participant 4: “I think accountability would be a big one. The public would see that we are making changes and being held accountable to train more and improve those skills. Then by doing that, they may look at us in a more professional way or have an increase in confidence in us that we know what we are doing. You could show use of force and explain what tactics were being taught in Jiu Jitsu and why it was used.”

Participant 5: “I think you would have to get the public on board with it and understand what the training involves. With our line of work, people may not understand our line of work, so they just create their opinion on what they see through media. I think misinformation is a big reason behind a lot of that stuff. So, showing them when it’s

about would help them see what it is about in this field instead. With Jiu Jitsu these moves have been trained for years, centuries, so they can be used safely and effectively.”

Participant 6: “I don’t know how much the public would really care about what we are training or how often we are training. I think it would really come down to when they witness a use of force type incident, how it appears to them. When an officer is calm in a situation, levelheaded, and can apply that force effectively. Resulting in them ending that incident quickly I think that is going to look a lot better. Officers being safer on the street and being able to end those physical altercations faster I think is the main benefit the public would see. The more levelheaded and less emotional an officer is under stress the more professional they will appear to the public.”

Participant 7: “Jiu Jitsu just looks better. Public perception is everything. Everything is on video so when a suspect is fighting with police it’s a lot of ‘look what that officer did.’ So it would help tremendously by showing that officer is competent and knows what they’re doing on the ground. It is hard to change public perception right now due to the things on video. Our organization focusses on posting the entirety of an incident so individuals can make their own determination if they believe the incident was just or not, not just posting a snippet of what looks best or worst.”

Participant 8: “I think Jiu Jitsu is not well-known in communities but I think it would help officers get out of those use of force incidents that just look bad. We can look at the George Floyd incident, if Chauvin would’ve known that he shouldn’t put his shin on his neck because there’s no point in that and moved it to his upper back, I mean we do that all the time at Jiu Jitsu. We could take away those bad-looking use of forces by properly training officers of the right way to do them. I think We’re actually discussing it today. Program for about six months. Take physical take a survey and take physical tests of the officers involved. Do that after six months we have case study. Much like Marietta study. So we actually working on trying to get to that point where maybe not mandatory but highly incentivized. officers should train twice a week. It would get everyone on the same page from a teamwork standpoint. There is a flow aspect to Jiu Jitsu and if you were in a restraint with someone and your partner jumps in they can observe what you’re doing and assist you in the right way. It just gives everyone a common understanding of the flow of things.”

Participant 9: “We have all seen the videos of an officer just throwing haymakers at someone fighting with them. Versus something more similar with Jiu Jitsu principles like closing distance with someone, shooting to the back, hitting a rear clinch takedown, moving into top control to get them flat on the ground, and then we hand cuff them. That’s a lot different than throwing bombs (punches) with someone. Those strikes are working for incapacitation, trying to knock someone out cold and there’s a lot of other dangers there. Versus Jiu Jitsu and wrestling tactics where you dictate where the fight happens and maintaining control. I think optically, that is great. People may think ‘they’re paying these officers to go to these fight gyms’ but that is not the case. Once they see what it really is, see the confidence of officers, and see the use of force statistics start to come out and improve I think the public would be very much on board.”

Participant 10: “I think in every single way it would improve public relations based on teaching officers better techniques. Those incidents that make the news, you look at the Chauvin case, that was a big mistake. You don’t just do what he did for that long. That is a choke, and I could show it to you right now knowing it would eventually put someone to sleep after about a minute, and after a couple more minutes that’s a loss of oxygen and blood to your brain. So knowing that and the mechanics better that probably never would've happened. But you get officers acting in an emotional and fearful state, mistakes will happen.”

Question 11A

Outside of BJJ training, what is the fix to improve community relations and public perception?

The two major themes discussed among participants is to increase community involvement and transparency to improve community relations and public perception. Throughout this section, participants give specific examples of what community involvement can look like. These forms include department social media interaction, release of information, department tours, outreach programs, and everyday interactions with officers and the public. Participants believe that informing and educating the public about what law enforcement does, why they do certain things, and establishing a strong rapport will help curb the current negative societal pushback against law enforcement.

Participant Responses

Participant 2: “I think the biggest thing is being transparent. Especially with local police departments, everything for the most part is public record and that’s just it. I think sometimes people make comments on things when it is just too early. We are all still human and when something happens there needs to be an investigation. So just being honest about what is going on, doesn’t mean turning over all body cam footage and reports the next morning. I think a lot of police departments have begun doing this when something was done wrong or poorly, or it was just a bad apple out there, is just handled and addressed right away. Transparency I think is the most important.”

Participant 3: “The things we do on social media can help. Showing the public what our officers are doing. Making sure we show the good things our officers are doing instead of focusing on the bad. Having community outreach is super important. Getting out in the community and engaging with the community to work with kids, play sports, coaching, I think all things like that would be great.”

Participant 4: “More of an understanding of how things work, how we are treated. Perception is super unknown in my opinion, people don’t really understand our position. If people came on ride alongs and saw the dark side of humankind, they may be like ‘oh these people are putting up with way more than I realized. They’re not just out to fight people.’ The media only focusses on the negative things which is all people know. Not the good stuff.”

Participant 5: “Getting the public involved. Not completely obviously but teaching them how and why we do things. We can’t tell the public everything due to safety for ourselves and others but if they had a better understanding of what we do day to day it may help a lot. We want to get people to understand where we are coming from. There are bad people in every profession, and I do not understand labeling an entire group off of a few.”

Participant 6: “We’ve changed the way we’ve done things pretty significantly. A lot of what we’re being evaluated on is more from an emotional aspect versus an objective standpoint. There is times where maybe the officer was in the right but what happened looked bad and so they go through a lot of scrutiny for what occurred. There’s a lot of mental and emotional stress and exhaustion that comes from an incident like that. That could potentially be more exhausting than the actual incident itself. With the social aspect, the environment that I grew up in is different than the environment that the people who hate cops grow up in. The contact that you make with people out on the street, it’s important to recognize that it matters. I’m usually pretty laid back with people. I’m not out there looking to arrest everyone for every violation I see or give tickets. You can have professional contact with someone and establish a mutual respect between yourself and the other person and I think that goes a long way especially when you deal with the same people on a repetitive regular basis.”

Participant 7: “It is hard to change public perception right now due to the things on video. Our organization focuses on posting the entirety of an incident so individuals can make their own determination if they believe the incident was just or not, not just posting a snippet of what looks best or worst. Community outreach is also huge.”

Participant 8: “I think exposure to the public. People coming in and seeing how police departments work and why we do things. Getting a better understanding about why we do what we do.”

Participant 9: “Increasing with training. Officers are starting to take more of the outlook of it being a career and craft being something they need to always get better at, not just a job. If you have the ability to seize someone, take them into custody, take away their rights in regard to freedom of movement to detain them, you need to make sure you’re training to the highest level. We need to ensure our officers are fully prepared in order to protect our communities best.”

Participant 10: “I really do just think Jiu Jitsu. It really does help in so many ways. With guys it helps with fixing ego problems. It really knocks it down and would show itself in the community at some point. It may take years or a decade. For females, it would do the

opposite, it would give them the confidence to go hands on. It would show them that they can take on someone twice their size simply because they know how to train, and that individual does not. We had a 280lb 6'3 guy come in to try out Jiu Jitsu and he went with one of our females and she ended up taking his back and getting him on a rear naked choke finish. He came in and said to us 'I don't know if it's the policy for your 130lb females to come beat up on the new big guys, but she just kicked my butt. Sign me up for a membership.' This shows us that, Jiu Jitsu works. The power of it, she was a quarter of this man's size and just throttled him. There is a lot of truth to size doesn't matter so much in fighting and Jiu Jitsu."

DISCUSSION

With the current climate in law enforcement there are significant issues that need to be addressed with possible solutions. The purpose of this study was to assess the views of key informants in the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu and law enforcement field on the potential impact that routine Jiu Jitsu style training for officers would have. The study outlined personal experiences for officers with prior Jiu Jitsu style training. This assessment also discusses the key informant's thoughts on benefits, limitations, and recommendations of the theoretical implementation of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers. This section seeks to summarize findings, discuss the study's limitations, and propose recommendations for future studies.

The participant interviews highlighted the key health benefits that were also discussed in the literature review. Many explain their own personal experiences of how Brazilian Jiu Jitsu has impacted them. Participants who had previous training have experienced an increased level of confidence, better physical health, and lower levels of stress. When participants with previous training described a time they utilized their martial arts background during a hands-on situation, they appear to have no issue controlling the situation safely and effectively. Multiple participants attribute their background in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu being the number one reason they go incidence free during altercations with suspects.

While a majority of participants had similar ideas and perceptions, it is important to note the outlier participant who did not have any prior martial arts experience. Participant 2's responses were different than the other participants in the fact that there appears to be a lack of confidence in their hands on ability. Participant 2 stated multiple times in the interview that she sometimes knew she was just not going to win the fight due to her size. I believe this participant highlights the need for Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers. Participant ten

tells a story about a 130lb female who trains at his gym. She had the ability to submit a man twice her size. Participant ten goes onto explain that in Jiu Jitsu, size does not really matter, as the techniques being taught and utilized can trump size differences. This training appears to be beneficial, especially for those smaller officers.

The participants take various perspectives on how Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training would improve public perceptions of law enforcement and community relations. The most common response was that Brazilian Jiu Jitsu would optically look better during hands on altercations for officers. The public would likely see these instances end quickly, safely, and effectively. Outside of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers, participants suggest that community involvement will help greatly with the current societal issues. By educating the public of what law enforcement officers do and the purpose behind the things they do, it will likely have a positive impact on public perception. Another suggestion is to increase the events of officer and public contact in a positive way. This can be done with ride alongs, in schools, sports, and events with law enforcement interacting with the public. Ultimately, there is no singular solution to fix the current issues in the law enforcement field. There are various steps that can be taken to improve community relations and public perception.

Limitations and Recommendations

There are multiple limitations to this study that should be considered. This study has a small sample size of participants. There are only 10 participants total. Future studies should include a larger sample to properly analyze varying perceptions among diverse groups of officers. This study was also limited to the demographics of participants. There was only one female participant. Future studies should include a relatively even number of males and females. The ages of participants ranged from approximately 25-45. Future studies should include all ages

to properly gauge perceptions of senior officers as well. This study included participants from different geographical areas. Future studies should utilize participants from around the United States to properly gain insight on all aspects of policing around the nation. A law enforcement officer in Chicago is likely to have different perspectives than rural North Dakota officers.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that by mandating Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers will have a positive benefit. These prospective benefits are related to officer health and wellbeing, mitigation of excessive use of force, reduction of taser/mace/firearm use, and improved public perception of law enforcement officers. There were ten interviews conducted of professionals in the law enforcement field and Brazilian Jiu Jitsu field. Each participant gave a unique set of their ideas regarding the benefits, barriers, and recommendations to implement a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu program for law enforcement officers.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is found to be a potential solution to an abundance of problems faced by law enforcement officers. With any new program, it would take time, resources, money, and commitment by officers to implement. The positive impact it could have for officers, administrators, and the public would make the process to implement worth it. With this prospective solution, it would take some time for it to show results. Training any form of martial arts will take a bit of time to learn and become proficient in. Officers themselves may see the physical, mental, and emotional health benefits much sooner than the public sees the changes in officer performance during incidents. Regardless, the perceptions from this study alone, unanimously agree that mandatory Brazilian Jiu Jitsu training for law enforcement officers would benefit all parties.

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