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An Under-researched Field

236,000 full time police employees in England and Wales, of which **37.9%** are police staff (Home Office, 2025)

Police staff are **substantially underrepresented in senior and executive leadership roles** (Flemming and Brown, 2021) and **disproportionately adversely effected by financial constraints** (HMICFRS, 2025).

Police staff are **habitually neglected by policing scholars** when compared to their officer colleagues. Though previous research has identified **resentment of civilian professionals** amongst officers (Loftus, 2008) and the **challenges policing cultures present to effective integration** (Mousseau, Morin and Charbonneau, 2025).

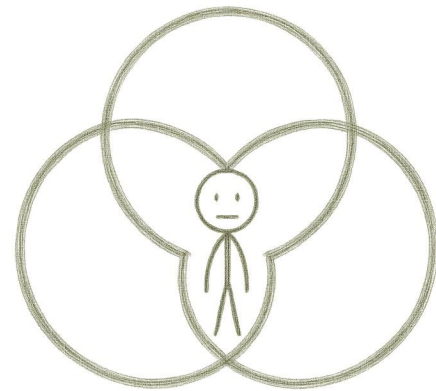
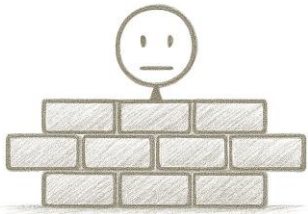
Method



- 32 semi-structured interviews with police staff professionals across 23 forces in the UK via MS Teams between December 2025 and March 2026.
- Participants ranging from first line manager to executive team levels.
- Thematic analysis of resulting transcripts.
- Combination of a priori and inductive coding.

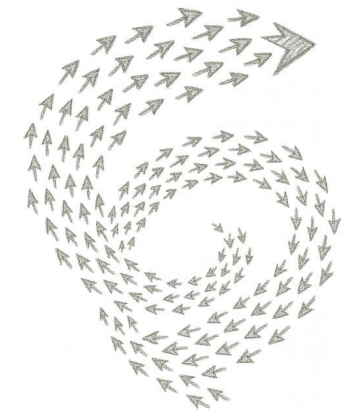
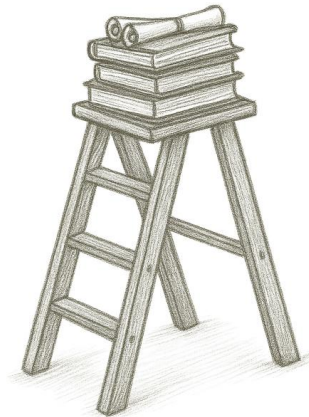
Findings

Unconscious
Microaggressions



Intersectionality

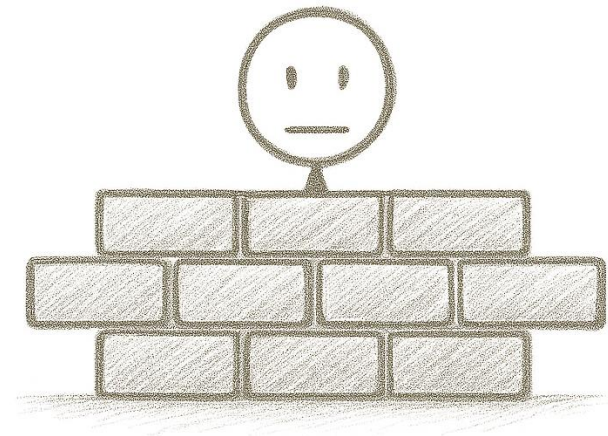
Knowledge
Hierarchy



Public Service
Motivation

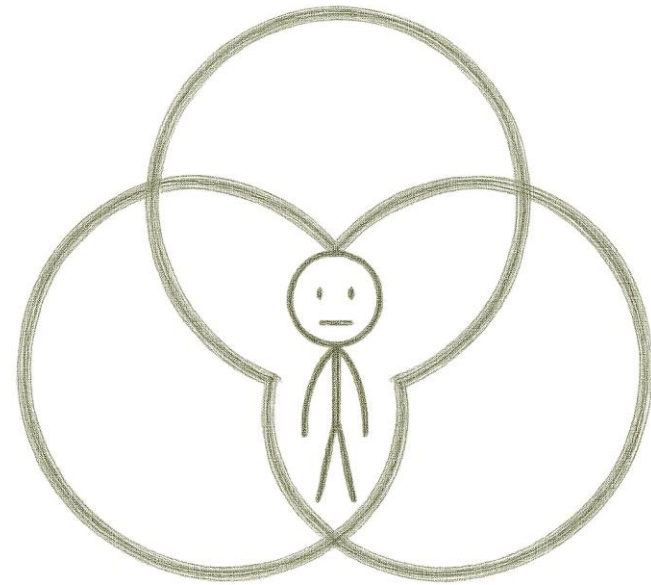
Microaggressions and Microinvalidations

- Participants reported the enduring existence of (often unconscious) practices, policies, language and behaviours which contributed to police staff self-describing as 'second class citizens.'
- Contributing to a sense of organisational injustice and absence of voice.
- And in some cases, a culture of automatic deference.



Intersectionality

- Challenges of voice and organisational injustice were recognised as exacerbated for women, even more so when coupled with other protected characteristics.
- Resulting in disadvantage in the workplace.
- Potentially attributable to elements of organisational and occupational culture(s).



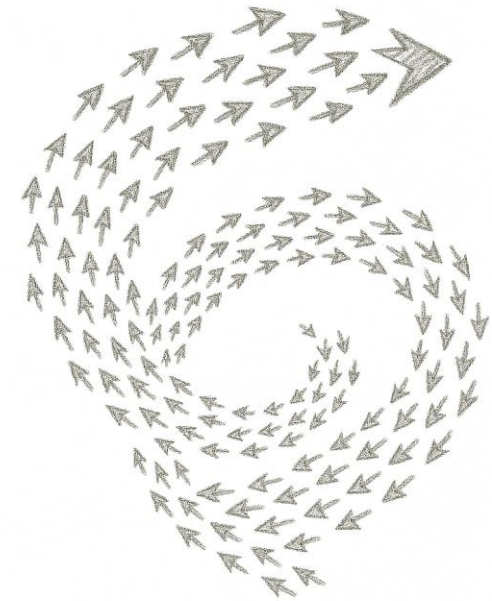
Knowledge Hierarchy

- Confirmed previous research relating to the primacy of operational experience in decision making when compared to other forms of knowledge and expertise.
- Attributed to facets of organisational and occupational culture. But recognition also of the contribution of political and media narratives.
- Potential adverse consequences for autonomous motivation.



Public Service Motivation

- Despite the challenges, participants reported high levels of public service motivation associated with contributing to public safety, justice and community cohesion.
- Including alignment of personal and professional values, and a sense of pride derived from working in policing.



- Writing up findings – journal article and professional commentary.
- Further research to examine root causes and enablers.
- Development and evaluation of interventions.

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Where Next?

