

Resilience in the Face of Disaster: A Post Katrina Analysis

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“Society demands that the police shall function even in unexpected and dynamic situations” (Nylés, 1996).

Research Questions

- What motivated adaptive responses despite the dilemmas and hardships faced during the disaster?
- What factors influenced officers who abandoned their post during the disaster?





- What motivated officers who worked during the disaster?

What motivated you during the disaster?



“I don’t understand how anybody can get to the top of that bridge like I did and see what they saw and turn they back and leave... the people who left they didn’t leave on the first day...what we saw that first day was enough for me not to turn my back.”

What motivated you during the disaster?



“My loyalty to the city, my oath to the department, but most of all I didn’t want to let down my family. I didn’t want to be considered one who left and turned my back on the city or department. I love the city. I like my job...

What motivated you during the disaster?



It was my job. I guess I wanted to help the people who trusted me as a police officer. There were a lot of people who needed help. I tried to help as much people as I could. So, I guess it was knowing that I was helping people that allowed me to continue my work

What factors influenced officers who abandoned their posts?

Concerns about family members



I know I am a police officer and I had a duty to perform but I could not perform that duty because I was thinking about my family

Concerns about personal safety



I left the city due to the fact that “everything was in chaos.” I could not locate my supervisor and I was not given any directives as to the proper course of action to take after the storm. Basically, it was every man for himself.

Feelings of distress



My house was completely submerged in water. I was forced to wait on the roof until rescued by NOPD...I made it to the station where everything was in complete chaos... I was distraught from the incident at my home but they wanted me to patrol the streets. I was not mentally ready to work and needed time to regroup but was told that I did not have the luxury of time.

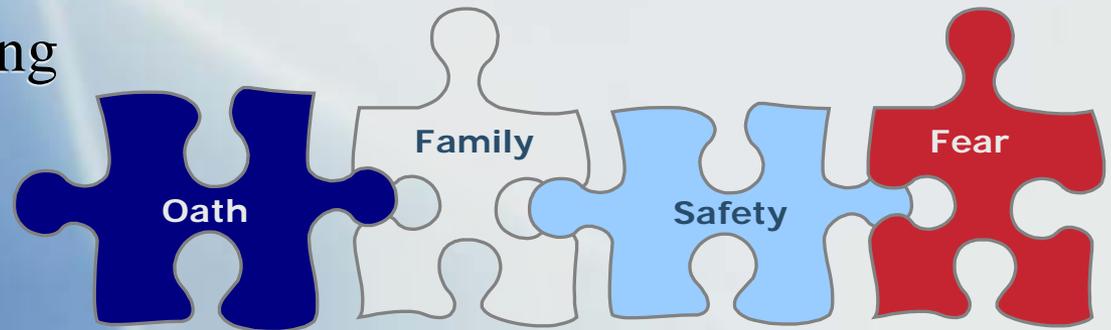
Factors that Influence Behaviors

Positive Influences

- Loyalty & oath of office
- Dedication to their role as a law enforcement officers
- Camaraderie among officers
- Strong mid-level leadership
- Prior military training

Negative Influences

- Concern for loved ones
- Diminished communication capabilities
- Chaos - lack of order



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