Resiliency factors among police officers: Post Hurricane Katrina

Following Hurricane Katrina, police officers in the New Orleans geographic area faced a number of challenges. This cross-sectional study was designed to examine the association between the positive factors of resiliency, satisfaction with life, gratitude, and post-traumatic growth with symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in 84 male and 30 female police officers from the New Orleans area. Resiliency factors were measured using the Connor-Davidson resiliency scale, satisfaction with life scale, the gratitude questionnaire, and the posttraumatic growth inventory. Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder were measured using the Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Checklist-Civilian (PCL-C). Potential associations were measured using linear regression and analysis of variance. Models were adjusted for age, sex, race, and alcohol. Mean PCL-C scores were 29.5±14.5 for females and 27.8±12.1 for males. Adjusted mean levels of PCL-C score significantly decreased as quartiles of resiliency (p<0.001), satisfaction with life (p<0.001), and gratitude (p<0.001) increased. This relationship was of borderline significance for post-traumatic growth (p=0.06). These results indicate that positive factors such as resiliency, satisfaction with life, and gratitude may help to mitigate symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. To further explore these relationships, longitudinal follow-up in a larger population would be of interest.

Biography
John M Violanti, PhD, is a Full Research Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Environmental Health, School of Public Health and Health Professions, University at Buffalo and a member of the University at Buffalo graduate faculty. His research has focused on a number of topics including assessment of psychological and biological indicators of chronic police stress; subclinical cardiovascular and metabolic disease in police; PTSD, shift work and health, and the epidemiology of police suicide.

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