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From "Sad People on Bridges" to "Kidnap and Extortion": Understanding the Nature and Situational Characteristics of Hostage and Crisis Negotiator Deployments

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Abstract

Hostage and crisis negotiation is well established as a police tool, and there is a growing body of literature that provides academic insight into the phenomenon. Academics have developed a corpus of literature to explain the way negotiators operate or how they can resolve incidents successfully. Whilst research in this area has originated from various countries and addressed negotiation from a variety of perspectives, there is limited research that has focused specifically on negotiation from an Anglo-centric perspective. This article presents the findings from a detailed academic examination of negotiator experiences in England, whereby semistructured interviews were conducted with 15 negotiators from nine forces. Analysis using grounded theory revealed 12 deployment categories, situated within a recurring context involving subjects experiencing personal, emotional, or psychological crisis. These categories can be used to enhance our understanding of negotiator deployment in England and are discussed with reference to the implications for negotiator training and practice.

Introduction

Hostage and Crisis Negotiation Research Contextualized

Internationally, the use of hostage and crisis negotiation (HCNn) is well established as an effective police tool, and there is a growing body of literature that provides academic insight into the phenomenon. Academics and researchers have developed a corpus of literature to help document and explain the way hostage and crisis negotiators (HCNs) operate and how they resolve hostage and crisis incidents successfully. Research in this area has originated from various countries and addressed negotiation from a variety of perspectives. There is a fairly substantial body of work, for example, that has focused on

The authors would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the hostage and crisis negotiators who gave up their time to take part in the research.

understanding HCNn practice from a linguistic perspective, whereby the type and style of language utilized by HCNs and subjects have been analyzed in order to identify what works or is effective when trying to resolve hostage or crisis incidents (Giebels & Taylor, 2009, 2010; Rogan, 2011; Rogan & Hammer, 1995; Taylor, 2002a,b; Taylor & Donald, 2003; Taylor & Thomas, 2008).

Work conducted within this realm by English academic Paul Taylor has undoubtedly enhanced the academic understanding of negotiation, particularly with reference to communication styles and linguistics used within HCNn and police interview contexts (Taylor, 2002a,b; Taylor & Donald, 2003; Taylor & Thomas, 2008). Taylor's (2002a) research focused on the interrelationships among communication behaviors in crisis negotiations and presented a cylindrical model based on three dominant levels of negotiator–subject interaction (avoidance, distribution, and integrative), each of which modulated around three thematic styles of communication (identity, instrumental, and relational) and were further influenced by the intensity of the communication. Further exemplars of Taylor's work have focused on (a) examining patterns in communication behavior and whether such patterns can predict negotiation outcome (Taylor, 2002b), (b) explaining the sequential organization of communication behavior during conflict (Taylor & Donald, 2003), and (c) the concept of linguistic style matching and negotiation outcome (Taylor & Thomas, 2008). Taylor's research has provided incredibly detailed statistically informed analyses of crisis negotiation dialogue and enhanced understanding of linguistics as applied to subject–negotiator interactions; however, these findings have been based on a corpus of data taken from United States of America (U.S.A.) police department audiotape recordings of nine real hostage crises. As such, these findings cannot be directly applied to U.K. crisis negotiation interactions.

Another body of work, conducted by Ellen Giebels in the Netherlands, has helped to build a picture of crisis negotiation from a culturally specific perspective (Beune, Giebels & Taylor, 2010; Giebels, 1999; Giebels & Noelanders, 2004; Giebels & Taylor, 2009, 2010; Nieboer-Martini, Dolnik, & Giebels, 2012), and her work on influence tactics in crisis or conflict situations has recently been celebrated for its ground-breaking and practical applications (Oostinga, Rispens, Taylor, & Ufkes, 2018). The majority of the aforementioned work has been completed using data obtained from audiotaped crisis negotiations in Europe or from research conducted with negotiators from European countries. Research conducted by Giebels and Taylor (2009) using transcripts of 25 audiotaped crisis negotiation interactions that took place in the Netherlands or Belgium revealed differences between the interactions displayed by subjects from low-context (LC; i.e., individualist Western societies) and high-context (HC; i.e., collectivistic non-Western societies) cultures. Their findings demonstrated that LC subjects used more persuasive arguments, reciprocated persuasive arguments more quickly in the latter part of the negotiation, and responded to persuasive arguments in a compromising way more immediately than HC subjects. Similar research conducted by Giebels and Taylor (2010) equally identified differences between LC and HC subjects. They found that LC subjects reciprocated rational arguments from a HCN more quickly, whereas HC subjects tended to reciprocate intimidation strategies more quickly. These findings suggest that culture plays a role within HNCn and more specifically, has relevance to the way HCN arguments or use of social influence or strategy are perceived by subjects from different cultural backgrounds. Giebels and Taylor (2010) suggest that these findings can be explained by cultural norms in relation to handling conflict, with intimidation (i.e., confrontation and assertiveness), for example, being perceived as a more appropriate way of handling conflict within low-context cultures (Fu & Yukl, 2000).

Incidentally, research applying similar principles to a police interviewing context (Beune et al., 2010) revealed that the use of different influencing behaviors by police interviewers had an impact on the provision of information by suspects and that this varied across LC and HC cultures. For example, strategies including use of the rational argument and intimidating the individual were more effective at eliciting information from LC suspects and intimidating the context was more effective at eliciting information from HC suspects. Similarly, research that focuses on negotiation generally (i.e., not within a HCNn context) reveals differences in preferred or successful negotiation strategy that are culturally emic and suggest that an awareness of cultural context can be used as a tool to guide negotiator effectiveness (Adair &

Brett, 2005; Adair et al., 2004). Taken collectively, these findings suggest that culture needs to be considered when engaging with subjects in a HCNn context, as certain strategies may have more salience or be more effective when dealing with subjects from different cultures.

Categories of HCN Deployment

Hostage and crisis negotiators can be utilized and are deployed in a variety of different scenarios ranging from responding to suicidal individuals to dealing with high-stakes situations involving kidnap and extortion (Grubb, 2010). Whilst every situation to which a HCN is deployed will differ due to the infinite number of variables involved, it is fairly well established that there are some general types of hostage situation that police typically encounter (Boltz, Dudonis, & Schultz, 1992; McMains & Mullins, 1996). Research conducted in the United States, for example, has helped to build a picture of HCN deployment, and various authors have presented typologies or classification systems that can be used to categorize hostage or crisis event situations; with the caveat that the subtypes are not always entirely mutually exclusive (Miller, 2005). Some classification systems focus on hostage-taking incidents alone, suggesting that hostage-takers fall into one of several categories (i.e., Call, 1996, 2003; Hassel, 1975), depending on their motivations for the hostage-taking event and the situation in which it occurs (see Grubb, 2010), whereas others are more acknowledging of the hostage *and* crisis components involved in HCN deployment. In line with this latter concept, the most rudimentary of these classification systems categorizes an event as either a hostage or nonhostage event (Noesner, 1999); however, there is little evidence to support such a clear distinction (Crighton, 2015) and it is commonsensical to assume that hostage and crisis incidents exist on a more complex spectrum than this.

Call (2003) refers to a classification system that acknowledges slightly more nuance and describes three main crisis incident typologies that incorporate both hostage and crisis situations: (a) the hostage situation, (b) the barricade-victim situation, and (c) the barricade-no victim situation. This latter system benefits from the recognition that not all incidents will involve hostages *per se*, some will involve a "victim," that is, someone who has been prevented from leaving the premises for an expressive rather than instrumental purpose (Call, 2003), for example, and others will involve crisis scenarios where the risk is to the subject themselves as opposed to anyone else. Another method of profiling crisis situations involves classifying "the situation as to whether or not the location of the victim and perpetrator is known and contained (a siege) or whether the location is not known and thus not contained (a non-siege)" (Lanceley, 1999 cited in Call, 2003, p. 73). Based on their research and work with operational HCNs, McMains and Mullins (2014) have adopted a slightly different approach, identifying that HCNs are now being used more widely to effectively intervene in 10 different categories of incident: (a) barricaded subject incidents, (b) high-risk suicide attempts, (c) domestic incidents, (d) prison and jail riots, (e) mental health warrants, (f) high-risk warrants, (g) debriefing in crisis incidents, (h) stalking incidents, (i) violence in the workplace, and (j) school violence.

HCNn Databases or Datasets

The classification systems described above have been exclusively developed in the United States, and as such, have benefitted, in part, from the existence of the Hostage Barricade Database System (HOBAS), which contains information relating to federal, state, and local police HCN deployments across the United States. HOBAS is a centralized repository for national crisis incident data and resolution outcomes and is maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (Lipetsker, 2004). The system "consists of sixty fields documenting hostage and barricade situations. The fields include information on each incident, nature of contact with subject, information about the subject and victim, resolution of the incident (surrender, escape, sniper shot, suicide, etc.), and a narrative report on the incident" (Department of Justice, 2006, p. 2). Access to this type of data has enabled empirically verified categories of police HCN

deployment to be identified and has facilitated the nuanced understanding of hostage and crisis incidents from a US-centric perspective.

Research conducted by Mohandie and Meloy (2010) with HOBAS data, for example, provided a detailed picture of hostage, barricade, and jumper [*sic*] incidents from 1998 to 2006 by drawing on a total of 84 recorded cases. Their research reported on the following variables: (a) incident characteristics (i.e., type of shooting, fatalities, use of alternatives to deadly force, setting and location of incident, and type of crime); (b) subject data (i.e., demographics and subject behavioral information, weapon possession, weapon status, violence against others during the incident, and threats); and (c) outcomes (i.e., whether injury or death occurred to anyone involved in the incident). Specifically, analysis of the dataset revealed that 45 (53.6%) of the cases were classified as "barricade incidents," 38 (45.2%) were classified as "hostage incidents," and one was classified as a "jumper incident" (1.2%) providing insight into the categories or types of incidents being responded to by HCNs in the United States.

Whilst these findings are informative and help to elucidate the deployment nature of US-based HCNs, they need to be considered in line with methodological limitations of the database itself. HOBAS, has, for example, been subject to criticism, particularly in relation to the reliability or validity of its data (Alexander, 2011) and is unlikely to provide a full and exhaustive picture of HCNn in the United States. This is due to the fact that HCNs self-select whether to be involved with HOBAS, both in terms of submitting data regarding deployments at all, and which deployments are submitted, thereby presenting a potentially biased and nonrepresentative picture of HCN deployment (see Lipetsker, 2004 for a full discussion). Despite these caveats, the HOBAS database represents one of the first attempts to record HCN deployment data on a national level, and at the time of writing constitutes one of the few live, centralized databases that can be used to quantitatively understand HCN deployment.

Police forces in the U.K. equally anecdotally recognize the varied nature of HCN deployment and acknowledge the contribution that can be made by HCNs to a variety of different operational scenarios. The Use of Negotiators by Incident Commanders Briefing Paper (2011), for example, states that HCNs are considered to be beneficial within the following incidents: suicide intervention; missing persons; political protest; people in crisis; supporting incident commanders in firearms operations; offences of kidnap and/or extortion; criminal sieges; and terrorist hostage incidents (Association of Chief Police Officers [ACPO] & National Policing Improvement Agency [NPIA], 2011). Similar messages are demonstrated at regional level, for example, the West Mercia Police Hostage and Crisis Negotiator Policy states that "the role of Hostage and Crisis Negotiator is recognised across the country as an invaluable option in the safe resolution of incidents ranging from domestic and criminal sieges, to suicide intervention, kidnap and extortion, product contamination and terrorism" (West Mercia Police, 2009, p. 2). Despite this recognition from an operational perspective, there is no published academic or empirical research that identifies the situational characteristics (or categories) of HCN deployment solely encountered in the U.K.

Research conducted by Alexander (2011), using Scottish data, provides some insight into the characteristics of incidents that HCNs were deployed to within a three-year period (2005–2008); however, he did not specifically identify or name the different categories encountered by HCNs. Similarly, work conducted by Ellen Giebels has enhanced understanding of HCNn from a European perspective, with a particular piece of work identifying categories of HCN deployment, which included the following: barricaded suspects, criminal kidnaps, political kidnaps, criminal high-risk arrest situations, suicide attempts, domestic situations, prison riots, extortion (i.e., blackmail or product contamination), hijack, demonstrations or environmental protest barricade situations, and industrial disputes (Giebels, 1999). The findings, however, were reported in an aggregated format on the basis of 747 incidents recorded across 10 European countries over a 1-year period (1997–1998) and, as such, it is impossible to extract or isolate the UK-specific categories of deployment or their respective proportions. Research conducted by Nieboer-Martini (2011 as cited in Nieboer-Martini et al., 2012) reported on data taken from three of the seven regional negotiation teams in the Netherlands over a 1-year period (2006) and identified the relative occurring frequencies of a variety of different incident types, including barricade (20.3%), suicide

(attempt) (35.3%), kidnapping or hostage (20.3%), extortion (6%), public order (6.8%), and other or combination (11.3%). These findings affirmed the existing trend identified by databases in the United States (i.e., HOBAS; McMains & Mullins, 2006) and research by Giebels (1999) that the majority of incidents to which HCNs are deployed in both the United States and Europe involve barricade situations and suicide attempts (Nieboer-Martini et al., 2012). Additional European research conducted by Nieboer-Martini et al. (2012) focused on the experiences of HCNs from three European countries on overseas deployments and identified the types of incidents that overseas negotiators are typically involved in (i.e., 70 of 72 cases were ransom-driven kidnap cases and 2 of 72 cases were oilrig sieges involving extortion), identifying a stark contrast between domestic and international deployments. Whilst these studies have utilized data or HCNs from European countries, it is sometimes unclear whether this included any HCNs from the U.K. (in the case of Nieboer-Martini et al., 2012) or is difficult to extract UK-specific findings due to the way the data have been amalgamated or reported (in the case of Giebels, 1999).

To complicate matters further, there is no centralized database to record HCN deployments across the entire of the U.K. in a consistent manner. Currently, individual territorial police forces in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland record HCN deployments utilizing different "return forms" and in different formats meaning that there is no way to meaningfully analyze data on a national level or to compare data on a regional or cross-country basis.[1] This individualized reporting format (and lack of associated empirical research), therefore, results in a lack of a definitive understanding regarding the nature and extent of HCN deployment in the U.K. As such, it is unclear exactly what the breadth of coverage is in relation to incident categories or situational characteristics or what type of incident is typically encountered by HCNs in the U.K.

The Current Study

The concept of HCNn is gaining momentum when considering academic focus or attention, and research is helping us to understand this police discipline from a variety of perspectives that can be used to aid or enhance HCN success. A review of the literature reveals that there is a plethora of research that provides insight into HCNn from a US-centric perspective and there is a body of research that focuses on European countries and the role of culture in negotiation. What is evident, however, is the lack of research that considers HCNn from a purely British context or develops theory in relation to HCNn on the basis of British data alone. In particular, research that sheds light on the type and characteristics of incidents that require intervention from HCNs would contribute beneficially to the extant literature base for a number of reasons.

Firstly, research that identifies categories of HCN deployment will start to fill the theoretical gap within the literature in relation to how U.K. HCNs operate and the type of incidents that are encountered by HCNs on a regular basis. An understanding of these principles will expand the narrative in relation to HCNn by identifying aspects that may, in fact, be unique to British culture or may replicate findings from other European or non-European countries. Secondly, the findings from this study will provide an initial exploratory starting point (or baseline), on which further research can build and enable cross-cultural comparisons to be conducted in the future. Thirdly, the findings have relevance to current HCN training and continuing professional development (CPD) practices, as well as operational policing tasks that go hand-in-hand with HCNn. An example of this is the potential application of the findings to the concept of target hardening, that is, developing an understanding of the recurring situational characteristics and locations (i.e., "hot spots") of HCN deployments involving suicidal individuals would enable targeted extra resources to be put in place to try to prevent such incidents in the future.

In a similar vein, research that enables the most frequently occurring incidents and their situational characteristics to be empirically modeled or mapped can be used to enhance HCN efficacy and performance, by directing resources toward understanding key subject behavior and informing training or

[1]Work is currently being completed to implement a national negotiation database that will standardize the recording process for HCNs in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

CPD protocols accordingly. For example, if HCNs are frequently encountering individuals in crisis, who are threatening harm toward themselves (as opposed to others), training can be tailored toward effective evidence-based suicide intervention techniques. To date, this type of evidence-based practice has not been possible in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, due to the absence of a standardized reporting methodology or centralized database and a lack of research that specifically documents HCN deployment categories or characteristics. The aim of the current research, therefore, was to provide an exploratory insight into the nature and situational characteristics of HCN deployment by focusing on one part of the U.K. (England). The findings have relevance to current HCN practices and can be used to inform (a) the implementation of a centralized national negotiation database (currently being developed in the U.K.), and (b) the training and CPD of new or existing HCNs. The specific objective of the research was to identify the categories and characteristics of HCN deployment within England, and the research questions addressed were as follows: "What types of incident do HCNs get deployed to and what are the characteristics of such incidents?" and "What does HCN deployment look like in England?"

Method

Design

A qualitative research design was adopted whereby interview data were analyzed utilizing a constructivist grounded theory approach (as directed by Charmaz, 2006).

Participants

Interviewees consisted of a subsample of participants who took part in an earlier quantitative phase of the research (see Grubb, Brown, & Hall, 2015, 2017). All participants from the 21 U.K. forces involved in the first phase of the research (apart from HCNs from one force who requested to only be involved in the first phase) were offered the opportunity to be interviewed about their role as a HCN. Purposive sampling was used to recruit the HCN sample in order to identify participants that were most relevant for the progress of data collection and development of theory (Morse, 2007). A form of maximum variation sampling was utilized (Patton, 1990) with the intention of catching a wide range of perspectives across the negotiator experience and identifying information-rich cases. This process involved identifying potential participants based on stratifying the data to provide data from a variety of HCNs with different perspectives and experiences (as advocated by Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). The researchers, therefore, identified a sample of participants that represented heterogeneity in relation to type of force (i.e., metropolitan and rural), gender, current role, current rank, and length of experience as a HCN. The interview sample consisted of 15 HCNs with a range of demographic and occupational characteristics, from nine English police forces (please see Table 1). Within the Results section, each interviewee is depicted by an alphanumerical code which represents their interview letter, gender, force number, and length of service in months as a HCN (i.e., A:M:1:156 refers to Interview A; Male HCN; Force Number 1; and 156 Months of Service as a HCN) as a means of providing context to each excerpt presented.

Measures

Demographic Questionnaire

Participants completed a brief demographic questionnaire prior to taking part in the interview. This consisted of 15 questions relating to personal characteristics and occupational history within the police force, including age, gender, ethnicity, force, rank, current position or role, length of service as a police officer, HCN qualification levels or training completed, length of service as a HCN, and number of incidents dealt with as a HCN.

Table 1
Table Depicting the Demographic and Occupational Characteristics of Interviewees

Participant reference	Gender	Age	Force number	Type of force	Uniform or CID	Rank	Length of HCN service (months)	~Number of incidents	HNC	Level of training qualification*
A	Male	45	1	Rural	Uniform	Supt	156	89	Yes	R, N, RC
B	Male	54	2	Rural	Uniform	CI	195	200	Yes	N, RC
C	Female	43	2	Rural	CID	DS	96	100+	No	R, N. RC
D	Male	52	3	Rural	Uniform	I	63	100	No	R, N, RC
E	Male	43	3	Rural	CID	DCI	114	200	Yes	R, N, RC
F	Male	47	4	Met	Uniform	I	111	40–50	No	R, N, RC
G	Male	48	4	Met	Uniform	CI	123	100+	Yes	N, RC
H	Female	41	5	Rural	CID	DS	50	40–50	Yes	N, RC
I	Male	46	5	Rural	Uniform	CI	84	100	Yes	R, N, RC
J	Female	46	6	Rural	Uniform	S	110	50–60	No	R, N, RC
K	Male	44	2	Rural	CID	DI	111	200	Yes	R, N, RC
L	Male	42	7	Rural	CID	DCI	54	15	No	R, N, RC
M	Female	49	8	Rural	CID	DS	24	8	No	R
N	Female	42	8	Rural	Uniform	I	34	20	No	R, RC
O	Female	47	9	Met	CID	DS	36	20+	No	R

Notes. Type of force: Met, Metropolitan. Rank: Supt, Superintendent; DCI, Detective Chief Inspector; CI, Chief Inspector; DI, Detective Inspector; I, Inspector; DS, Detective Sergeant; S, Sergeant. HNC, Hostage Negotiator Coordinator. Training; R, Regional Training; N, National Training; RC, Red Centre Training.
All participants were White British or White European.
*Two interviewees were also trained as Gold Negotiator Advisors.

Semistructured Interview Schedule

Participants took part in a semistructured interview designed to address the aforementioned aims and research questions. The interview schedule was devised on the basis of the extant literature in relation to HCNn and the identified gaps within the literature base. The interview schedule, therefore, focused on the following seven topics:

(1) The recruitment and selection process for HCNs
(2) The training and CPD of HCNs
(3) The operational experiences of HCNs
(4) The process of decision-making throughout the HCNn process
(5) The strategies, styles, and techniques used by HCNs to resolve incidents
(6) The skills required and utilized during the HCNn procedure
(7) The support structures and coping strategies utilized by HCNs following involvement in hostage or crisis situations

In this article, HCN's experiences of operational deployment are the focus, which were examined via questions such as: "Can you describe the first incident that you were involved in as a negotiator?" "Can you describe the most recent incident that you have been involved in?" "What type of incidents are you typically involved in?", and "What would you say is the most common type of incident you deal with?"

Procedure

Gatekeeper permission was granted by each Regional and/or Force Lead Hostage Negotiator Coordinator (HNC) and approval obtained from the Coventry University ethics committee. Participants were contacted via email to arrange a convenient time and venue for the interview, and all interviews were carried

out at the HCN's place of work (i.e., police station), with all interviewees being fully debriefed afterward. The interviews took place over a 10-month period and lasted between 45 and 130 min; with a mean interview length of 87 min (i.e., 1 hr and 27 min) and a total of 1,301 min (i.e., 21.7 hr) of data (please refer to Table 2). The interviews were orthographically (i.e., verbatim) transcribed by an external transcription company (Way With Words) who provided a secure and confidential transcription service. Each transcript consisted of a word-for-word account of all verbal utterances including both words and nonsemantic sounds—such as "erm," "er," "uhuh," "mm," and "mm-hm" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 163) in order to ensure that the data were true to its original nature. Names and other identifying language or discourse were edited out using square brackets and replaced with the terms "anonymous or anonymous place" to protect interviewee identity and maintain anonymity. For the purposes of conciseness, any superfluous narrative was removed and is represented by the presence of ellipses ("...") within quoted excerpts. The transcripts were emailed to each interviewee for transcription accuracy verification and sanitization to remove any information that was deemed to be confidential or sensitive or may compromise the anonymity of the HCN. All of the transcripts were deemed to be accurate representations of the interviews conducted and some minor redactions were made within three of the transcripts to ensure that interviewee anonymity was retained. The transcripts were then printed as hard copies, coded, and analyzed as described below.

Analysis

The interview data were coded by hand in line with a grounded theory constructivist framework. Open coding in the form of line-by-line coding was completed on the entire set of transcripts in chronological order, using highlighters and handwritten comments within the margins of the transcripts to identify relevant concepts. Using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), and comparing the data across the transcripts, the identified concepts were then further refined into broad level tentative categories that provided meaning to the data. Open coding was performed in parallel with memoing

Table 2
Interview Legend Displaying Interview and Transcript Details

Interviewee reference code	Force number	Interviewee gender	Interviewee age	Length of interview (min)	Length of transcript (pages)
A	1	Male	45	100	41
B	2	Male	54	121 (59 + 62)*	72
C	2	Female	43	89	36
D	3	Male	52	45	17
E	3	Male	43	63 (21 + 42)†	22
F	4	Male	47	102	38
G	4	Male	48	130	84
H	5	Female	41	117	113
I	5	Male	46	69	28
J	6	Female	46	83	33
K	2	Male	44	77	37
L	7	Male	42	80	26
M	8	Female	49	52	24
N	8	Female	42	58	47
O	9	Female	47	115	54

Notes. *Interview conducted in two parts on two separate dates due to operational commitments of interviewee.
†Interview conducted in two parts on same date due to interviewee being on call and having to take a call during the interview.

(Flick, 2009; Lempert, 2007) and clustering (Charmaz, 2006; Rico, 1983) techniques to group similar concepts into categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This process resulted in a list of 320 initial concepts and tentative categories that were eventually categorized into five micromodels as a result of focused coding whereby more directed, selective, and conceptual categories were generated (Glaser, 1978). The five micromodels consisted of (a) the nature of HCN deployment model; (b) the HCN journey model; (c) the HCN experience model; (d) the D.I.A.M.O.N.D. model of HCNn; and (e) the self-perceived successful HCN profile model. This article addresses the findings relating to the first micromodel listed above. Please refer to Grubb (2016), Grubb et al. (2018), and Grubb, Brown, Hall, and Bowen (2018) for findings relating to the other micromodels.

Focused coding enabled the 22 initial broad categories or concepts relating to the current micromodel being described to be further refined into two primary, four secondary, and 12 tertiary categories. This was achieved by identifying the most significant and/or frequently occurring concepts and selection of the categories that made the most analytic sense to synopsising the data theoretically (Charmaz, 2006). This part of the coding was deemed to be complete once the cross-comparative process performed across the interview transcripts demonstrated saturation of data (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), and no further concepts or categories were identified. Axial coding was used to identify how the categories related to one another in a hierarchical sense and conceptual maps or diagrams were used to help integrate categories and to produce substantive theory (as suggested by Clarke, 2003, 2005). The combination of open, focused, and axial coding eventually resulted in the generation of a theory that can be used to depict the nature and situational characteristics of HCN deployment in England. Please refer to Figure 1 for the conceptual map of the model developed.

Results

Contextual Scene Setting: HCN "Bread and Butter"

The interview transcripts revealed a core underpinning characteristic that dominated the deployment context, which involved responding to individuals who were in some form of personal, emotional or psychological crisis. As such, HCNs reported that their "bread and butter" involved responding to "crisis," as opposed to "hostage," incidents *per se*. Although the official title in the U.K. is "Hostage and Crisis Negotiators" (A:M:1:156), negotiators have historically been referred to (particularly within the media) as "Hostage Negotiators." The current findings revealed that the day-to-day work of HCNs typically reflected that of the latter term, as the majority of the deployments tended not to meet the criteria for true or genuine "hostage scenarios." According to Noesner's (1999) definition, for example, a hostage situation refers to an incident whereby a subject holds another person or persons for the purpose of forcing the fulfillment of substantive demands upon a third party, usually law enforcement. Domestic siege scenarios that were encountered, for example, typically involved a subject (or individual in crisis) preventing a "victim" from leaving the premises, as opposed to the subject specifically using the victim as a means to fulfill a substantive demand (such as a ransom). Although HCNs were involved with situations that involved hostages, the frequency of this scenario was incredibly low in comparison with the frequency of deployments involving crisis incidents. Many interviewees specified that they had never dealt with a true hostage incident during their time as a HCN (i.e., M:F:8:24). One HCN reported that his force encountered true hostage-taking incidents approximately once a year (L:M:7:54) and two others described having only dealt with this type of situation once in 5 or 10 years of service, respectively (H:F:5:50; G:M:4:123). Hence, there was limited reference to what would be perceived as "true" hostage incidents throughout the transcripts.

The findings revealed that spontaneous deployments (i.e., those which HCNs have no prior knowledge of) most frequently involved responding to individuals who were encountering some form of personal, emotional, or psychological crisis. Deployments tended to involve suicidal individuals or those who were

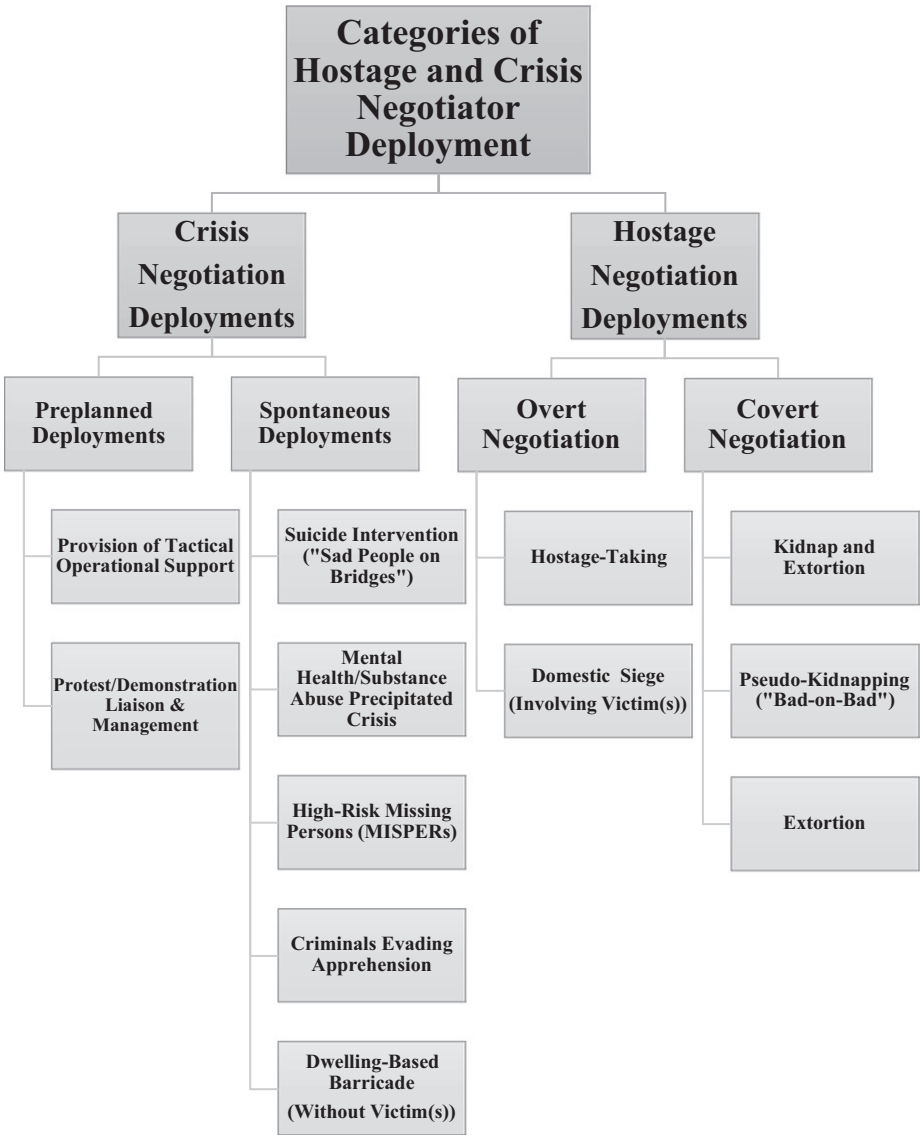

Figure 1. Conceptual map depicting the primary, secondary, and tertiary categories of HCN deployment in England.

attempting to harm themselves in some way. One interviewee, for example, stated that *all* deployments involved "dealing with people in some sort of emotional crisis" (E:M:3:114) and another stated: "Yes, bread and butter, I'd say, would be that kind of desperate person on a roof or a bridge or something" (F:M:4:111). As such, the majority of the HCNs' experiences were contextualized by a backdrop of dealing with subjects who were encountering some form of precipitated crisis.

The Nature of HCN Deployment Model

Despite the fact that HCNs were deployed to a plethora of different incidents (with no two incidents matching entirely in their characteristics) and utilized their skills within a variety of contexts, there were a

number of core categories or scenarios that they consistently encountered. As outlined in Figure 1, these categories were coded into two primary, four secondary, and 12 tertiary categories. Interviewees described two main categories of deployment, in the form of crisis negotiation or hostage negotiation scenarios; a dichotomy that aligns sympathetically with the FBI's categorization of critical events as either hostage or nonhostage situations (Noesner, 1999).

Crisis Negotiation Deployments

Crisis negotiation deployments constituted by far the majority of deployments and could be further subdivided into "Spontaneous deployments" or "Preplanned deployments" as elucidated below.

Spontaneous Deployments. Spontaneous deployments formed a large proportion of the work that HCNs carried out and could be categorized into five subcategories of reactive HCN deployment: "Suicide intervention ('Sad people on bridges')", "Mental health or substance abuse precipitated crisis", "High-risk missing persons (MISPERs)", "Criminals evading apprehension", and "Dwelling-based barricades (without victims)."

Suicide intervention ("Sad people on bridges"). Suicide intervention was the most frequently cited scenario encountered by HCNs. Interviewees described this situation colloquially as "sad people on bridges" (F:M:4:111), referring to "people who are suicidal, on a high rise, or bridges, or tops of buildings" (O:F:9:36). They often got deployed to incidents involving subjects encountering some form of crisis that had precipitated suicidal ideation and were required to perform a suicide intervention: "I got a call basically saying that it was a girl on a bridge, and. . . she would only speak to police women. . . She was going to throw herself off the bridge" (H:F:5:50).

Mental health or substance abuse precipitated crisis. Interviewees also described responding to incidents involving individuals experiencing crises that had either been precipitated (or exacerbated) by mental health and/or substance abuse problems:

> . . .generally crisis intervention, really, people at height. . . some sort of personal. . . situation that. . . in their lives. . . And/or aggravated by mental health and/or drugs. . . seen a fair bit of psychosis, brought about by cannabis. Particularly skunk. . . that's causing people to get things out of proportion, a fair bit (G:M:4:123).

Whilst there is limited published data in relation to the specific involvement of psychoactive substances within HCN deployments, Alexander (2011) indicated that 64% of the deployments dealt with by Scottish HCNs between 2005 and 2008 involved suspected use of alcohol and/or other substances, and 56% of subjects were known to be under the influence at the time of the incident in Mohandie and Meloy's (2010) US-based study; further attesting to the role of alcohol or substance abuse within crisis incidents.

One of the problems encountered with some of these incidents involved the accidental risk of harm to subjects as a result of the intoxication, as opposed to the suicidal intent *per se*. Many scenarios involved subjects who were located at height and, as such, risked injury as a result of falling rather than jumping: "I was worried, because I was thinking, this is my first job, the guy's under the influence of something, and he's going to fall off this crane. . ." (H:F:5:50). These are factors that need to be incorporated into the HCN's risk assessment of the situation to try to prevent accidental (in addition to intentional) injury to the subject.

High-risk missing persons (MISPERs). This incident category involved attempting to engage with MISPERs who were considered to be high risk (in terms of risk of harm to themselves) or particularly vulnerable: ". . .it was a high-risk missing person threatening to kill themselves and *very*. . . you know, depressed. . ." (C:F:2:96). This often involved HCNs trying to contact younger subjects who had run away from home or had potentially placed themselves in a risky situation: "We've got someone today who's. . . a high-risk. . . missing person. . . this 14 year old girl has gone off with a new boyfriend who

they met on Facebook. . .” (B:M:2:195). One interviewee described the most common incident that he had dealt with as “the high-risk suicidal MISPER” (B:M:2:195) further validating the frequency of this deployment category. Other scenarios involved negotiating with individuals who had experienced some form of domestic conflict or crisis situation that had resulted in them “disappearing off with the intent of self-harm” and “effectively *becoming* high-risk missing persons” (I:M:6:84) indicating that the categories are not entirely mutually exclusive and may overlap or become conflated as the hostage or crisis situation evolves over time.

Criminals evading apprehension. Subjects in this category tended to either barricade themselves into a building or premises, or position themselves somewhere where they could cause injury or harm to themselves (i.e., on top of a building, bridge, or cliff edge) as a means of trying to delay or evade their arrest: “The typical incident that we deal with is someone refusing to come out of a premises. . . after having committed some form of criminal offence. . .” (A:M:1:156). The HCN’s role in these types of scenario is to facilitate the subject’s arrest and to encourage the subject to come out of the premises or precarious position without causing injury to themselves or any other party. As such, this category involves HCNs being used as a particular operational tool (normally in conjunction with the use of Authorised Firearms Officers [AFOs]) to arrest a subject. Notably, there is some overlap between the “criminals evading apprehension” category and the “provision of tactical operational support” category, with the main differentiation being that the latter category refers to preplanned HCN deployment in order to execute an outstanding warrant or to conduct a planned raid on a premises and the former refers to a spontaneous crisis scenario that has ensued as a result of the commission of an offence and requires HCNs to help facilitate the arrest of the subject.

Dwelling-based barricade (without victim(s)). This incident category involved HCNs being deployed to an individual who is experiencing some form of personal, emotional, or psychological crisis and has barricaded him or herself into a residential dwelling or premises.

> The one that always sticks in my mind is a guy that was in a flat. . . He’d just smashed up the place but it was covered in blood and his girlfriend managed to leave the flat. . . And he was refusing to come out, and he’s cutting himself and there was. . . fuel all over the place. . . And he was threatening to set light. . . to himself (N:F:8:34).

This category involves risk of potential harm to the barricaded subject and does not involve any victims (i.e., individuals who are prevented from leaving the barricaded premises but are not hostages *per se*), thereby bearing some resemblance to the “barricade-no victim” category discussed by Call (2003). Interviewees described this type of barricade scenario as typically being precipitated by domestic disputes that had escalated into threats of, or, actual violence: “. . .a lady had. . . chased her husband out with a knife, and then was threatening to assault *anyone else* who sort of came in” (J:F:6:110). As discussed above, there is also an acknowledged overlap between the “dwelling-based barricade (without victim(s))” category and the “criminals evading apprehension” category with the main differentiation being that the latter category does not have to involve a barricade situation and may involve subjects adopting other means to evade apprehension (such as placing themselves at positions of height).

Preplanned Deployments. In addition to spontaneous deployments, another secondary category emerged in terms of preplanned or scheduled deployments that involved either supporting firearms operations to try and facilitate the peaceful arrest of a wanted individual with an outstanding warrant or liaising with protest or demonstration organizers to agree terms of engagement and ensure that the event remains a peaceful one. The two tertiary themes relating to this secondary category were entitled as follows: “Provision of tactical operational support” and “Protest or demonstration liaison and management” and are discussed sequentially below.

Provision of tactical operational support. Interviewees described being used within preplanned firearms operations or deployments as a means of additional tactical support (i.e., "we *always* deploy a negotiator as well" (K:M:2:111)) with the intention of trying to avoid harm to the person of interest and any other parties who may be involved. The national firearms manual mandates that HCNs are consulted in firearms operations (Association of Chief Police Officers [ACPO], Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland [ACPOS], & National Policing Improvement Agency [NPIA], 2011), which refer to instances whereby the police have received some form of intelligence that indicates that a person poses a threat and/or possesses a firearm and the police execute a planned raid to remove the threat that this individual poses. The role of the HCN in this deployment is to try and convince the person of interest to vacate the premises without having to use tactical force (such as Taser and/or firearms). Interviewees also described being used in a similar way to support the execution of outstanding warrants in cases where the person of interest may pose a risk to themselves or others when confronted by officers. In both of these scenarios, the role of the HCN is, therefore, to "*facilitate* the arrest" (K:M:2:111) and "the negotiator team will be put in there. . . as part of a tactical option. . . to try and *persuade* the person to. . . look out the window, you're surrounded, come out with your hands held high, type thing" (B:M:2:195).

Protest or demonstration liaison and management. HCNs were increasingly being used within some forces as public order or "protest liaison officers" (N:F:8:34), whereby they were required to liaise with the organizers of protests, marches, or demonstrations as a means of trying to ensure that the event remained peaceful and that rules of engagement were agreed and adhered to by all parties involved. Normally, these events were preplanned and, as such, HCNs communicated with organizers prior to and during the event to establish where the event was going to take place, where they could and could not march and any other logistical issues that may have been pertinent to ensuring the safety of the public. Whilst this is not a perceived typical part of the HCN remit, this role utilizes many of the skills required within HCNn and was seen as more of a preventative or pro-active form of policing to avoid potential escalation of a peaceful protest or march into something that may result in violence or harm to the public.

> If we've got. . . a group we know are going to come and protest in a particular area, and we fear there's going to be an adverse reaction. . . then, increasingly, we're getting negotiators involved in that to try and *facilitate*. . . a better outcome for all parties (D:M:3:63).

Incidentally, not all forces utilized HCNs in this format, and some utilized HCNs more in this remit than others, dependent on the frequency with which they experienced protests, demonstrations, or marches. One force lead HNC described disappointment when his cadre's skills had not been utilized effectively for a recent very large English Defence League (EDL) march:[2] "I was a bit surprised that negotiators weren't even consulted as part of the planning process. . ." (A:M:1:156), and another interviewee had never been deployed to a protest situation but felt that HCNs "*should* be used more in that area. . ." (B:M:2:195). These findings suggest that there may be scope to utilize HCNs more within this type of scenario and perhaps identify a potential training focus for call handlers and individuals involved in the deployment of officers to incidents.

Hostage Negotiation Deployments

These less frequent deployments were further subcategorized into secondary categories of "Overt negotiation" and "Covert negotiation" as a means of depicting the contrasting nature of the scenarios encountered and the style of HCNn required.

[2]The English Defence League (EDL) is a far-right group formed in 2009 that sees itself as a defender of British values. They are known for protesting against Islamic extremism and terrorism (Channel 4 News, 2013).

Overt Negotiation. Overt negotiation refers to a process of HCNn that is completed openly or overtly via visible processes of communication between the subject and the HCN(s). Two tertiary subcategories of overt negotiation emerged from the data, in the form of "Hostage-taking" and "Domestic sieges (involving victim(s))," as discussed below.

Hostage-taking. A few interviewees described incidents that involved individuals who had been taken hostage and were being held against their will: "Well, the specific one that's most memorable would be in [Month, Year], being called out to two police officers. . . who'd been taken hostage in [Anonymised Place] by an armed man" (E:M:3:114).

> . . .it was a fellow who was mentally ill, lived in. . . [Anonymised Place] . . .he had previously been in treatment for Schizophrenia and. . . had failed to maintain his regime and his contact with his physicians, to the point that. . . on a home visit, the CPN said, this guy is now dangerously unstable; we need to get control of him again. . . The psychiatrist decided that he knew better than the risk assessment and picked up one of his nurses and went to the house. . .where he was admitted by the man's wife, shown into the lounge where the man said, excuse me a minute, disappeared and came back with a 9 mm. . . turned on the video camera and pointed the 9 mm at the doctor. . . The CPN managed to. . . run away and raised the alarm. And then there were a series of demands that went in, from him, via his solicitor. . . to. . . the cops. . . and we ended up with a fairly major siege, that ran for 48 hours (G:M:4:123).

This type of deployment was reported by interviewees as being an infrequent occurrence within their typical deployment history, but was described as a deployment category that they were trained and equipped to respond to.

Domestic siege (involving victim(s)). Interviewees more frequently described overt hostage negotiation scenarios that involved "victims" as opposed to "hostages." In this sense, victims refer to individuals who have been prevented from leaving premises by the subject (i.e., there is no direct threat to the victims but they are being prevented from leaving the premises or are too frightened to leave because the person in control does not want them to leave). Infrequently, threats may be made to the safety of the victims but this is not typically perceived as a hostage-taking scenario as the victims are not used as leverage to obtain some form of specific demand. The most commonly described scenario within this category involved:

> . . .domestic, household family-based crises where they end up in some sort of siege. Where they might not be threatening to kill themselves, but they're threatening to do all sorts of things to all sorts of people. Often they don't actually have a hostage but sometimes they do, you know. It'll be partner, girlfriend, wife, children, whoever (B:M:2:195).

Victims typically included the subject's partner and/or children and the event tended to represent the culmination of either a domestic conflict or precipitated crisis event, whereby the presence of other parties was potentially incidental, as opposed to planned: ". . .the majority of times where there's been a hostage/victim there, it's tended to be. . . a domestic siege type of thing where he's also grabbed the kids or grabbed the wife. . ." (K:M:2:111).

Covert Negotiation. Covert negotiation refers to HCNn that is carried out without the hostage-taker(s)' knowledge of police involvement. This type of deployment is typically referred to internally within the police as a "Red Centre" and is frequently utilized within "crime in action" cases that include kidnap, abduction, and product contamination (Essex & Kent Police, 2014).

> There's something called a Red Centre Course which specifically deals around a kidnap or a hostage environment. . . because effectively, in an overt-world, the subject in crisis *knows* that you're there and knows that you're working for the cops. In a kidnap world where there's a threat for life, very often they *can't* know that the police are involved, so there's different techniques in how you deal with them (I:M:6:84).

Covert negotiation is characteristically utilized when hostage-takers have contacted the family of the hostage(s) to obtain a ransom or other instrumental demand. In this scenario, HCNs are required to negotiate using the family member or third party as an intermediary (i.e., a victim communicator). The core principle will be to coach the third party intermediary (TPI) or victim communicator to communicate with the hostage-taker in a manner that does not convey the police's involvement. The data revealed three tertiary subcategories of covert negotiation: "Kidnap and extortion," "Pseudo-kidnapping ('Bad-on-bad')," and "Extortion."

Kidnap and extortion. Interviewees described a number of scenarios that involved a form of kidnap and extortion, whereby an individual had been taken hostage and then used as leverage to obtain a ransom or some form of instrumental demand. These types of incidents are infrequent, with some HCNs having never been deployed within a Red Centre scenario and others having limited experience of kidnap deployments. One interviewee, for example, described having "dealt with two or three kidnappings. . . or *alleged* kidnappings, over the [five year] period" (D:M:3:63). Kidnap and extortion scenarios were more frequently reported by HCNs from Metropolitan forces, a finding that was to be expected when considered in line with the type and frequency of crime experienced within cities as opposed to rural areas. Some interviewees also had experience of negotiating international kidnaps whilst remaining based in the U.K., as demonstrated by the excerpt below:

> It was probably about, my first deployment was not for about four months actually, and it was a kidnap, and it was international. Basically what had happened, we had a family in the north of the country, and demands were coming in from the hostage-takers in Indonesia, and the brother, who we had to negotiate through. Quite often, on those occasions, it turned out to be false previously, but that one was a *genuine* kidnap (L:M:7:54).

Pseudo-kidnapping ("Bad-on-bad"). Interviewees also described having responded to a number of pseudo-kidnappings that constituted "crime in action" situations and often involved what they referred to colloquially as "bad-on-bad" kidnappings. These types of kidnappings tended to involve gang or criminal vendettas, organized crime or drug dealer conflict or disputes: "So it's not one where someone's threatening, or is required to hand over *£1 million* and they've got the bank manager's wife. It's not that type of thing. It's a drug deal for £150 that's gone wrong" (A:M:1:156). Interviewees described this scenario as being somewhat complicated because, although the situation was treated as a true "Red Centre" deployment, HCNs were conscious that the individuals that they were dealing with (i.e., hostages and victim communicators), could potentially be reversed in role (i.e., they could be the kidnappers) in a future situation. As such, they were cognizant not to give away strategy or tactics which could potentially benefit the victim in any way should they become the kidnapper in the future.

> A member of an organized crime group. . . who was of interest to us, in any case, had been snatched from outside his house, by. . . gangsters, bundled into a car, his mobile phone was thrown out of the car, before they sped off and he disappeared. . . it was without a doubt, a criminal vendetta. . . a sum of money had exchanged hands somewhere, that had not gone through the family; it certainly *hadn't* touched the police anywhere. . . more likely to be that your victim, your hostage has been encouraged to do some electronic bank transfer of money whilst he was held. . . and he turned up at about three o'clock in the morning, battered and bruised. . . in the local hospital (G:M:4:123).

HCNs involved in these scenarios had to utilize a variety of skills to advise and support the TPI or victim communicator appropriately to try and retrieve the kidnapped individual, whilst also trying not to reveal police operational or tactical strategy that could potentially be used against them in a future scenario; further attesting to the specialist skills involved in HCNn and the need for HCNs to be mentally agile (please refer to Grubb (2016) and Grubb, Brown, Hall, & Bowen (2018) for a discussion of the successful HCN profile).

Extortion. Extortion is defined as "the practice of obtaining something, especially money, through force or threats" (Extortion n.d.). Interviewees described dealing with situations that involved direct extortion or blackmail of individuals but no associated kidnapping: "...and what we're finding is that we're having *more and more* extortions rather than kidnaps" (K:M:2:111). This particular category of incident was described by three interviewees (I:M:6:84; J:F:6:110; and K:M:2:111) and the scenarios tended to involve product contamination threats or threats to discredit someone either professionally or personally, if money was not paid to the extortionist: "...the guy had received a letter that said... they'd got some compromising photographs of him, which they had, which were going to destroy his family life... and this guy wanted a specific payment of £146,000" (I:M:6:84).

Some of the scenarios reported could, in fact, be categorized as "sextortion" cases with interviewees referring to an increasing number of deployments that involved individuals being blackmailed by somebody threatening to expose sexually compromising material or information. Sextortion refers to a crime whereby "criminals deceive webcam users into unclothing and performing sexual acts. The footage is recorded and then used to blackmail victims for money" (BBC One Crimewatch, n.d.).

> ...we're finding more of those internet related now where people are engaging in sexual activity, it's being filmed on the internet and then... this film's going to be released, it's going to be sent to everyone on your Facebook account (K:M:2:111).

Discussion

The aim of this research was to provide an insight into the nature and situational characteristics of HCN deployment in England and, accordingly, 12 recurring categories of incident were identified. When placed in the context of the extant literature that identifies categories of hostage or crisis incidents, some of the current findings are similar to those identified within the European or American research. Some categories, for example, bear resemblance to previously established categories, that is, the "domestic siege (involving victim(s))" category sympathetically aligns with Call's (2003) "barricade-victim" category, Miller's (2005) description of a domestic crisis that spins out of control and ostensibly to Giebels' (1999) "domestic situations" category. In such cases, the victim becomes a *de facto* hostage who may be used as a bargaining chip or way out for the subject. Similarly, parallels are observed between the "mental health or substance abuse precipitated crisis" category and Miller's (2005) "mentally disordered subject" category, although the English data would suggest that this category relates more to individuals in psychological or psychiatric crisis that pose a threat to themselves, as opposed to this category always involving a hostage or victim *per se*. The "criminals evading apprehension" category also ostensibly resonates with Giebels' (1999) "criminal high-risk arrest situation," although limited detail is provided in relation to the exact situational characteristics of the categories identified by Giebels (1999), so direct comparisons need to be interpreted with care. McMains and Mullins' (2014) "barricaded subject incidents" and "high-risk suicide attempts" typologies also appear to align with the "dwelling-based barricade" and "suicide intervention ('sad people on bridges')" categories to some extent, suggesting further overlap with existing US-based categories of deployment.

Equally pertinent, however, is the fact that these categories do not entirely replicate or map onto the categories that have been identified by previous research, suggesting that there are some nuanced differences between the types of incidents that HCNs deal with in England in comparison with other countries. Ostensibly, at least, these findings add a new theoretical layer to our understanding of HCN deployment, by implying that although "crisis or conflict states" are likely to affect all societies in some permutation, the way crisis or conflict manifests itself may differ in accordance with the laws, doctrine, and societal norms pervading the country in which the individual is living. For example, apart from references to preplanned deployments involving operational tactical support, the use of firearms was discussed minimally within the current dataset; however, research originating from the United States suggests that firearm use

is often a prevalent feature within HCN deployment. Murphy (2001), for example, reported on HOBAS data from 2001 and revealed that 68.4% (n = 1251) of incidents involved some form of firearm and figures reported by Hammer (2007) suggest that firearms are present in 56.0% of cases. Comparative figures taken from Scotland (14.0%; Alexander, 2011) and two regional police forces in England (13.3%; Grubb, 2017) suggest that this figure is much lower within the U.K.

The concept of English HCN deployment focusing on crisis intervention, as opposed to incidents with hostage or victim involvement, is also a key finding, which is supported by Alexander's (2011) Scottish findings whereby only 6.0% of the incidents responded to over a 3-year period involved hostages, and Grubb's (2017) findings, whereby only 6.6% of deployments involved hostages or victims. These findings do, however, contrast heavily with Mohandie and Meloy's (2010) American findings that suggest that 45.2% of the cases they reviewed were classified as "hostage incidents." Although the current research findings cannot be directly compared to those of Alexander (2011), Grubb (2017), and Mohandie and Meloy (2010) due to differences in methodology, they raise the question of whether the day-to-day role of HCNs differs internationally. Differences in firearms laws and policing styles adopted, for example, may influence the *status quo* in relation to the type of incident that HCNs get deployed to. For example, do HCNs in countries where there is a right to bear arms experience more incidents involving hostages or are certain types of deployment category more prevalent in certain countries? These unanswered questions also highlight the need for a more rigorous recording mechanism that can be used to directly identify proportions of HCN deployment categories in the U.K. and enable direct international comparison of deployment figures, thereby enhancing our understanding of HCNn from a culturally specific viewpoint.

Implications and Recommendations

When considering the findings from a theoretical perspective, they help to enrich the academic narrative on HCNn in a number of ways. First, the findings identify the categories of HCN deployment within England, an outcome which has not previously been documented. In line with this, and when considered in the context of the existing literature, the findings provide support for the more nuanced classification systems/categories (such as those presented by Giebels (1999) and McMains and Mullins (2014)) that have been used to categorize hostage or crisis incidents, as opposed to the more rudimentary dichotomous or trichotomous classification systems proposed by other researchers (such as Noesner (1999), Lanceley (1999) and Call (2003)). The 12 categories identified within the current study suggest that the practice of HCNn involves responding to a diverse range of incidents with a broad spectrum of situational characteristics and that the day-to-day work of a HCN in England could vary quite dramatically from one incident to the next.

Second, the current study supports the existing quantitative literature (from the United States, the Netherlands, and Scotland) that highlights the prevalence of incidents involving individuals threatening suicide or self-harm (34.6%; McMains & Mullins, 2006; 35.3%; Nieboer-Martini (2011 as cited in Nieboer-Martini et al., 2012) 59.0%; Alexander, 2011). Although the current findings cannot be compared directly due to the qualitative nature of the study, they highlight the "bread and butter" of HCN deployment in England as being grounded in crisis negotiation and responding to those experiencing personal, emotional, or psychological crises. As such, the findings enhance the academic narrative by confirming the prevalence of suicide or crisis intervention within HCN deployment and conceptualizing the HCN in England as a "confidant" (Grubb, 2016), further highlighting the importance of active listening as a key skill within the HCN repertoire (Call, 2003; Lanceley, 1999; McMains, 2002). The findings also suggest that HCNs act as gatekeepers to suicidal individuals and may be able to provide important information that can contribute to our understanding of suicide and suicide prevention. The insights provided by HCNs who encounter individuals likely to be displaying clear suicidal ideation could perhaps be used by or in conjunction with research conducted by clinicians or suicidologists to develop and implement stronger suicide prevention strategies and intervention techniques.

The current findings also have a variety of practical implications for both the training and CPD of new or existing HCNs, as they provide a unique insight into the nature and characteristics of HCN deployment within England. Whilst the observations are based on the experiences of a specific subsample of HCNs (and, therefore, would benefit from follow up research or quantitative validation), the model can be used as a starting point to inform the training of HCNs and other police staff that may be involved with the deployment of HCNs. For example, training programmes could utilize the deployment categories to educate trainee HCNs on the type of incidents that they are likely to encounter, and call handlers or call-room inspectors could be provided with training in relation to the types of incident that may require HCNs and the most appropriate situations in which to deploy such officers.

The findings indicate that the majority of scenarios to which HCNs are deployed involve "crisis," as opposed to, "hostage" incidents, with HCNs describing their "bread and butter" deployment as involving a person who is in some form of crisis (whether that be personal, emotional, or psychological) and requires suicide or self-harm intervention. HCN training, whilst equipping HCNs to deal with both hostage and crisis scenarios, would perhaps benefit from a greater emphasis on responding to suicidal individuals or those experiencing mental health or substance abuse precipitated crisis, due to the frequency with which these situations appear to be encountered. Building upon the current research findings, future research could be used to analyze incident category type and effective HCN response, in order to produce evidence-based research findings that could be used to train HCNs in terms of responsivity. For example, such findings could be used to enable HCNs to identify and select the most appropriate strategy or technique from their "negotiator toolbox or repertoire" (see Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2018) in relation to the specific situation or category of incident that is being encountered, *ergo* enhancing the likelihood of a peaceful and successful negotiated resolution.

The model also highlights that HCNs are utilized within preplanned deployments involving firearms operations or protest liaison, and there is perhaps scope for HCNs to be utilized to greater effect within certain preplanned scenarios, such as protests, demonstrations, and marches. One interviewee even went so far as to suggest the potential for HCNs to be used as in-force mediators for conflict resolution within the workplace, presenting a further possibility for increased HCN remit and extrapolation of transferable skills. The latter suggestion could be piloted within some forces initially to see whether there is scope for this type of work and whether it is effective. Equally as salient, the model demonstrates the diversity of HCN deployments in England and as such, emphasises the need for HCNs to be able to adapt their styles of negotiation in line with the scenarios encountered, an aspect that should be focused on within new and existing HCN training or CPD. This highlights the fact that whilst HCN training could potentially be guided with an emphasis on crisis negotiation, HCNs need to be equipped to be able to respond to any circumstance involving an infinite number of situational and contextual variables, including those which may, or may not, involve hostages or victims.

The findings equally have implications for HCN training curricula and skill-based enhancement work or CPD whereby certain categories of deployment may require emphasis on certain skills or competencies. On a macro level, deployments can be broadly divided into high-conflict (i.e., barricaded hostage and kidnapping situations) and crisis situations (e.g., barricaded crisis situations and suicidal threats) (Vecchi, 2009a). Whilst these contrasting scenarios can display both substantive and expressive components (i.e., tangible instrumental demands versus emotional or relational aspects), it is the specific subject focus that distinguishes between high-conflict and crisis scenarios (Vecchi, 2009b). For example, within high-conflict scenarios, the focus tends to be on substantive needs, such as exchanging hostages for money, *viz.* these situations are rational and require problem-solving approaches (Mullins, 2002; Slatkin, 2005). On the other side of the coin, crisis situations tend to be irrational and the focus is on expressive or relational needs, *viz*. these situations require crisis intervention approaches (Greenstone & Leviton, 2002; Rogan, Hammer & Van Zandt, 1997; Slatkin, 2005).

Similarly, research conducted by Dolnik (2003, p. 1) differentiated the dynamics involved in barricade versus kidnapping situations and concluded that many of the "components of crisis negotiation that

have been successful in resolving barricade situations are inapplicable to kidnappings"; thereby suggesting that the skills and strategies employed by HCNs need to be matched accordingly to the context of the deployment situation (i.e., aligning with the concept of responsivity in offender rehabilitation). As such, it is prudent to suggest that different skills may be relevant to, and emphasized within, different deployment categories. For example, skills that help to problem-solve a perceived rational set of demands by a hostage-taker will be more salient within hostage negotiation deployments, whereas those that help to enable an individual in crisis to express or ventilate their emotions will be more salient within crisis negotiation deployments. Table 3 helps to elucidate this point by depicting the perceived competencies that have been identified as being important for HCNs to succeed in their role (Grubb, 2016; Grubb et al., 2018) and emphasizing the salience of these competencies to the different categories of HCN deployment identified within the current article.

Limitations and Future Directions

The findings are limited to some extent by the fact that the data represent the experiences and perceived realities of 15 HCNs from nine forces, and therefore, cannot be taken to fully and exhaustively represent the experiences of all HCNs within England. Nevertheless, data collection did continue until saturation

Table 3
Table Depicting HCN Competencies and Salience to Deployment Categories

HCN competencies	Competency facet	Deployment category relevance
1. Skills	a. Listening skills	Salient to all deployment categories
	b. Communication skills	Salient to all deployment categories (and more so in covert negotiation deployments where communication is via a TPI or victim communicator)
	c. Team-working ability	Salient to all deployment categories
	d. Honesty	Salient to all deployment categories apart from covert negotiation deployments (where deceit or deception tactics may be used to prevent knowledge of police involvement being relayed to the subject)
	e. Problem-solving	Of particular relevance to high-conflict or instrumental scenarios such as those included within the hostage negotiation deployment categories
2. Attributes	a. Empathic	Salient to all deployment categories (particularly the spontaneous crisis negotiation categories)
	b. Nonjudgmental	Salient to all deployment categories
	c. Flexible	Salient to all deployment categories
	d. Operational police experience or credibility	Salient to all deployment categories (particularly those involving hostages or victims and protracted incidents)
	e. Patient	Salient to all deployment categories
	f. Resilient	Salient to all deployment categories (particularly those involving hostages or victims and protracted incidents)
	g. Caring or compassionate	Of particular relevance to crisis negotiation situations
	h. Mentally agile	Of particular relevance to covert negotiation situations
	i. Genuine or trustworthy	Salient to all deployment categories (apart from covert negotiation situations, where the HCN often does not have contact with the subject and communication is mediated via a TPI or victim communicator)
	j. Intuitive	Salient to all deployment categories

Note. The competencies listed above were identified as being important for police officers to perform effectively as HCNs by Grubb (2016) and Grubb et al. (2018). Please refer to Grubb et al. (2015), Grubb (2016), Grubb, Brown, & Hall (2017), Grubb et al. (2018) for more information regarding the socio-demographic, personality, and psychological characteristics of HCNs and a synthesized list of competencies that have been empirically linked to or deemed to be relevant to performance in the HCN role.

of the data had been achieved, whereby no new categories or themes emerged from the interviews (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006) and as such, the validity of the findings is enhanced. The semistructured nature of the interview schedule and the utilization of both detailed and probing questions throughout the interview enabled data saturation to be met via the creation of a state of *epoche*, whereby all judgment was suspended and interviewees were given "the stage" to discuss their experiences (and *ergo* their perceived reality). *Epoche* is a process that the researcher engages in to remove or at least become aware of prejudices, viewpoints, or assumptions regarding the phenomenon under investigation (Katz, 1987, p. 36 cited in Patton, 2002, p. 485). In addition to achieving a stance of *epoche* as a means of remaining neutral and unbiased throughout the interview, coding, and analysis phases of the research, interpretative meaning was validated and methodological rigor enhanced by allowing participants to view and comment upon the models developed (as suggested by Shenton, 2004). This enabled an iterative, grounded theoretical process to be established throughout the conduction of the research whereby representation of the interviewees' perceived realities was checked and validated.

Consideration also needs to be paid to the fact that the findings represent the categories of deployment as perceived by HCNs and considered retrospectively via the interview process, as opposed to being directly validated by HCN deployment data *per se*. As such, the findings represent an excellent starting point on which further research can build in terms of empirical validation of the categories identified but must be considered in line with this context. Future research that attempts to triangulate the current findings by comparison with quantitative deployment data and audio (i.e., Dictaphone recordings) or audio-visual (i.e., body-worn camera footage) data that depict live negotiation scenarios will enhance our understanding of the nature and characteristics of HCN deployments in the U.K. exponentially. Further research that is designed to empirically test whether strategies for success differ across the various deployment categories using live negotiation data will equally enable an evidence-based HCNn protocol to be developed that is both responsive to the situational context of the incident and is most likely to promote success.

The current findings provide a unique exploratory insight into HCN deployment within England and, as such, it is difficult to identify whether this model has cross-cultural applicability until further research has been conducted to validate the model within different countries or cultures. Future cross-cultural comparative research would help to establish whether the categories of HCN deployment differ from country to country and if so, why such differences exist. A study designed to explore HCN deployment experiences from an international perspective could utilize a form of synchronous (real time) communication such as videoconferencing or video calling (Salmon, 2012) (either in a multichannel format for the former or an individual format for the latter) to conduct online or virtual e-interviews or focus groups with HCNs from a variety of different countries. Software such as call recorder for Skype and CamStudio could be utilized to record both audio and visual components of an e-interview or focus group or alternative software packages such as call graph Skype recorder or IMCapture for Skype could be used to record audio data alone. E-interviews conducted with HCNs from a variety of countries would provide insight into HNC from a cross-cultural perspective and an audacious extension of this might be to conduct a multiparty virtual or e-focus group utilizing a variety of internationally situated HCNs to establish cross-cultural similarities and differences in HCN deployment. This form of primary Internet-mediated research would enable multiple perspectives to be obtained from a variety of HCNs based internationally in a time-efficient and financially affordable manner by removing the plethora of costs associated with international travel.

Equally, the role of HCN deployment within politically and/or religiously motivated incidents is one which is evolving in line with the increased incidence of terrorist attacks over recent years and whilst there is literature that speaks to or addresses the concept of negotiating with extremists or terrorists (i.e., Faure, 2003, 2015; Strentz, 2012), and politically or religiously motivated hostage-takers (Dolnik, 2003), there is no empirical research that explores the need for or experience of such interventions from an Anglo-centric perspective. Similarly, research that provides a culturally specific understanding of

religiously motivated terrorists that are willing to die for their cause (i.e., suicide bombers) would enhance our understanding of how to successfully negotiate in these types of scenario, whereby negotiation success may be determined by different parameters (such as the negotiation process buying time to implement a tactical assault or intervention or evacuate as many people as possible from the area). This type of research is necessitated if U.K. police forces want to utilize an evidence-based practice approach whereby the likelihood of a successful outcome is enhanced due to a clearer understanding of the characteristics, cultural components, and dynamics of religiously motivated hostage-taking or terrorist incidents.

Conclusion

This study discusses the findings from the first systematic attempt to qualitatively describe the nature and situational characteristics of HCN deployment in England. The findings exemplify the diversity of the incidents to which HCNs are deployed by identifying 12 categories of incident that are consistently encountered. They also serve to dispel some of the myths or preconceptions about HCNn and highlight the inadequacy of the term "hostage negotiator" in light of the identified frequency of deployments to individuals experiencing personal, emotional, or psychological crises. This model provides a contextual backdrop to our understanding of HCN deployment from an Anglo-centric perspective and has a number of practice-based applications. First, the findings can be used to inform HCN training or CPD within English police forces by highlighting the typical scenarios encountered and directing training resources accordingly. Second, this research has identified a number of established categories of HCN deployment that can be used to inform future deployment reporting mechanisms, a consideration that is vital to ensuring that the data recorded is consistent across police forces and provides opportunities for meaningful empirical comparison.

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