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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Research Articles

Research Articles

Law Enforcement Officers' Perspectives on the Use of Procedural Justice: An Exploratory Study

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Abstract

Procedural justice is a nationwide initiative promulgated by former President Barak Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Since then, researchers have conducted studies on implementing training in the four principles of procedural justice. From that research, there was no overabundance of research on law enforcement officers (LEOs) opinions, attitudes, and lived experiences of procedural justice. There is not much known as whether law enforcement is training in and practicing the procedural justice principles. The purpose of the research study was to answer the research question: What are the reasons law enforcement officers are practicing or are not practicing procedural justice in their daily duties in police-citizen encounters? I designed the research study using a qualitative case study to obtain law enforcement officers' opinions, attitudes, and lived experiences in practicing procedural justice. The current research study also explores the social process theories related to training and practicing procedural justice principles in police-citizen contacts. The data analysis consisted of transcribing twelve audio-recorded, face-to-face interviews of California law enforcement officers to extrapolate themes from recurring patterns in the transcriptions related to the training curriculum and department policy. The four central themes were: (a) law enforcement officers are practicing procedural justice, (b) the practice of procedural justice and the use of force/deadly force, (c) socialization, and (d) differentiation between in-person training and online training. The findings from this research could promote further training and use of procedural justice principles in police-community encounters.

Keywords

Procedural justice principles, social process theories, socialization

Introduction

This research aimed to explore California law enforcement officers' perceptions, opinions, and lived experiences using the four principles of procedural justice during police-citizen interactions. Criminal justice professionals define procedural justice as a philosophy promoting improved police-community relations through legitimate policing and trust. The four principles of procedural justice are: (a) treating people with dignity and respect, (b) giving citizens a "voice" during police-citizen encounters, and (c) neutrality and transparency (Lee, 2017; Owens et al., 2018; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler 1990). Unfortunately, alleged police

misconduct during police-citizen encounters caused Americans to form the perception of illegitimacy in law enforcement. This phenomenon spurred intervention by then U. S. President, Barak Obama, to form the Task Force on 21st Century Policing. Under the Task Force on 21st Century Policing, former President Obama, law enforcement officials, other criminal justice professionals, community members, and community stakeholders were able to create six pillars that addressed all the social problems regarding police-community relations (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015).

The purpose of this research was to determine whether law enforcement officers are using the philosophy of procedural justice and its four principles during police-citizen encounters. Practicing procedural justice and its principles during police-citizen encounters is important because procedural justice improves police-community relations. Criminology and criminal justice researchers have found that citizens' perceptions of law enforcement derive from their interaction with law enforcement officers, whether negative or positive (Murphy & Tyler, 2017; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Skogan et al., 2015; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). Community members, stakeholders, and criminal justice professionals' role in improving police-community relations is vital. Research demonstrated that community stakeholders, such as the mayor's office, business owners, non-profit organizations, schools, and community outreach, must partner with local law enforcement to provide a more positive environment (Kimbrough, 2016). Doing so allows community members and stakeholders to become more aware of law enforcement's effort to improve police-community relations.

More training in procedural justice and more research are necessary for procedural justice. From the research on procedural justice to this date, very little research existed on law enforcement officers (LEOs) opinions, attitudes, and lived experiences of procedural justice. Little is known about whether law enforcement is training in and practicing procedural justice principles. This notable gap led to the following research question: *What are the reasons law enforcement officers are practicing or are not practicing procedural justice in their daily duties in police-citizen encounters*? A review of the social process theories, social bond and social learning theories also helped answer the research question. The theme of socialization from the data collected in the current research study also assisted with answering the research question. California law enforcement officers provided insight onto the fact that procedural justice aligns with the law enforcement culture, values, and code of conduct. The assumption was that the research participants would be truthful and that the research participants wanted to tell their stories or lived experiences in practicing procedural justice during police-citizen encounters. The collaboration was based on the notion that procedural justice does improve police-community relations.

Literature Review

The social constructivist philosophy answered the research question and addressed the research topic enabling a real-world evaluation through collaboration (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The scholarly literature review provided an overview of training and research studies on using procedural justice principles while police officers interact with citizens. In contemporary

policing, President Barak Obama worked to form a task force known as the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing to bring together law enforcement officials, government officials, and community members. This movement spurred police reform addressing police-community relations. Information collected in focus groups known as "listening sessions" helped create the six pillars (Kimbrough, 2016; President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015).

Procedural justice is a common topic in contemporary policing, at least for professionals and scholar-practitioners in criminal justice. Procedural justice is defined from the law enforcement lens as when an individual feels they were treated fairly, there was no bias in the decision-making, they were allowed to tell their side of the story, and that individual is more likely to feel that they were treated fairly and that law enforcement officer was a legitimate authority figure (Mazerolle et al., 2012, 2013; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Skogan et al., 2015; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 1990). Prior research demonstrates that procedural justice and its principles improve police-community relations (Mazerolle et al., 2012, 2013; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Skogan et al., 2015; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 1990).

There has been great concern regarding community satisfaction with law enforcement for more than forty (40) years (Gillham & Marx, 2018; Lee, 2017). The social process theories explain how the four principles of procedural justice can improve police behavior since it has already demonstrated improved police-community relations (Pollack & Menard, 2015; Wolfe & Nix, 2016). The historical perspective allows for going back to foundational policing posited by Sir Robert Peel and his law enforcement tenets (Adegbile, 2017; Rosenthal, 2018; Principles of good policing, 2020). Sir Robert Peel's law enforcement tenets established that law enforcement serves the public better with well-planned policies, procedures, and good police-community relations.

The social bond theory explained police misconduct from the social process theoretical viewpoint. Attachment applies to law enforcement officers since the 'loss of respect from peers' is a negative outcome of misconduct (Donner et al., 2016). Involvement, for law enforcement, entails interactions with peers, supervisors, and civilian personnel in occupational duties as well as training in a positive bond. The amount of time law enforcement officers devotes to learning department policies, training, and maintaining their knowledge in their occupational duties is a big part of their involvement (Donner et al., 2016). For law enforcement officers, commitment comprises positive social interactions with citizens and coworkers for a pleasurable association. The officers' investment in their agency and its policies and culture influence their judgment in adhering to appropriate departmental procedures and legal mandates (Donner et al., 2016). Belief for law enforcement officers requires officers to take procedural justice seriously to practice treating citizens according to the four principles of procedural justice illustrated in Figure 1 in Appendix B. In other words, strong social bonds such as attachment, involvement, commitment, and belief promulgate law enforcement culture. These same bonds provide the path to law enforcement officers using the procedural justice principles during police-citizen encounters. Other professions such as the Information Technology profession have researched with social bond theory. Feng et al., 2019 and Safa et

al., 2016 discovered that supervisors impact employee behavior, part of the socialization process.

The second theory of the social process theories is the social learning theory, posited by Albert Bandura in 1977. Bandura (1977) stated that individuals learn behavior through social interactions with others. Researchers studied this same theory (Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Van Craen, 2016) in the law enforcement profession. Research demonstrated that law enforcement officers mirror their superiors regarding how they treat others, especially citizens. Law enforcement officers treat citizens the same way the superiors treat them. Van Craen (2016) stated that if superiors treat officers with dignity and respect and allow them to explain their viewpoint (voice), they will treat the citizen similarly. Bandura (1977); Van Craen (2016); and Chapelle and Piquero (2004) suggest that social learning theory explains how individuals learn through socialization with those that influence them the most. In the case of law enforcement officers, peers, and supervisors influence officers in how they learn to behave in performing their operationalized duties. The superiors set the standard for practicing procedural justice in the training fostering the practice of procedural justice in the field. This phenomenon is known as socialization.

Socialization is the process of human interaction where social learning and bonding transpire. To this effect, behavior learned can be positive or negative. The current case study found a positive influence on the socialization of California law enforcement officers. Factors affecting human behavior, in this case, law enforcement officer behavior, stem from attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief (Hirschi, 1969) in their policing training, values, and policies. From the social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), the socialization of law enforcement officers (peer bonding and peer learning) impacted the practice of procedural justice principles. The current case study demonstrated positive social bonds and social learning fostering the use of procedural justice principles in operational duties of policing. Extensive research on the social processes related to procedural justice is lacking. Therefore, researchers can explore this gap in research to improve the practice of the four principles of procedural justice.

Theoretical Foundations

The social problem of law enforcement officers' inappropriate behavior while interacting with citizens out in the streets prompted the motivation for this research study on procedural justice. The current research study uses social process theories to explain whether California law enforcement officers use the four procedural justice principles. The theoretical foundation of social processes lies in the social control (social bond) theory postulated by Travis Hirschi (1969), and the social learning theory postulated by Albert Bandura in 1977. The social process viewpoint can help law enforcement better understand why officers may be more likely to behave according to the four principles of procedural justice. The California law enforcement officers' practices, and agency policies, and training helped explain whether law enforcement officers are using procedural justice. Both theories first posited the causation of deviant and

criminal behavior. Currently, these same theories help explain the misconduct behavior of police officers (Donner et al., 2016), stemming from other research studies.

There are four elements in social bond theory. Those elements are attachment, involvement, commitment, and belief; each helps explain how socialization impacts law enforcement officers' behavior as well as other professions (Donner et al., 2016; Feng et al., 2019; Hirschi, 1969; Safa et al., 2016; Van Craen, 2016). Social learning theory explains how law enforcement officers learn behavior, such as practicing proper procedures (Van Craen, 2016). The socialization process of human interaction whether the individuals are youths or adults allows for influence whether prosocial or antisocial. Individual behavior is foundational in those four elements of social bond theory (Hirschi, 1969; Donner et al., 2016;) and the learning process explained by social learning theory (Bandura, 1977; Van Craen, 2016) explains police behavior. The influence of parents or supervisors, teachers, and peers impacts human behavior. Socialization is one of the main themes found in the research data in the current research study. This process of forming positive bonds and positive social learning was demonstrated in the data presented. California law enforcement officers and agencies are experiencing positive socialization promoting positive behavior in practicing procedural justice.

Methodology

I used a qualitative case study methodology and design for the current research study and interviewed twelve (12) California law enforcement officers to collect data. The twelve (12) participants are current law enforcement officers from two (2) different agencies. One (1) agency is a small police department employing approximately sixty (60) law enforcement officers while the second agency is much larger, employing over 16,000 employees. The qualitative case study research methodology and design allowed me to understand the thoughts and attitudes of the California law enforcement officers. Understanding the law enforcement officers' thoughts and attitudes allowed me to gain an insight into a substantial collection of experiences and emotions in methods that are challenging in quantitative research studies (Mohajan, 2018; Yang et al., 2017; Yin, 2018). In other words, I used case study research to investigate a real-world phenomenon involving real people. The objective was to gain an insight into those peoples' real-life experiences through storytelling.

I selected California Peace Officers as the population for the study because in 2015, then-California Attorney General, Kamala Harris, recommended legislatures pass Assembly Bill AB 1118. AB 1118 mandated California Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) Training Academies and all California law enforcement agencies implement procedural justice training. The passing of California AB 1118 stemmed from a 90-day review of training based on research in procedural justice. The training was a collaborative effort by Stanford University (SPARQ), the Oakland and Stockton Police Departments, and the California Partnership for Safer Communities (Wallace et al., 2015). The sample in the research of the population for this research was twelve (12) California law enforcement officers; see Table 1 for the sample demographics. I used purposive, expert, and non-probability sampling because California law enforcement officers were best suited to provide the information needed for this research

study. Of the twelve (12) participants, eleven (11) were employed by the larger agency, and one (1) was employed with the smaller agency. I could better understand the twelve (12) California law enforcement officers' experiences related to the research question (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Table 1

Demographics of Each Research Participant from California Law Enforcement Agencies

Research Participant	Age	Race / Ethnicity	Male/ Female	Years of Service	Assignment
P1	38	White/Other	Male	8	Detective Bureau
P2	54	Hispanic/Other	Male	35	Training Bureau
P3	51	African American	Male	14	Intake Supervisor
P4	54	Other	Male	24	Patrol/Watch Officer
P5	41	Hispanic	Male	14	Watch Commander
P6	45	White	Male	23	Advanced Officer Training
P7	55	White	Male	8	Background Unit
P8	50	White	Male	30	Training Bureau
P9	43	Mexican/White	Female	20	Training Bureau
P10	28	Hispanic	Male	6	Patrol
P11	29	White	Male	7.5	Patrol
P12	34	Hispanic	Male	8	Patrol

Findings

I gained insight into the law enforcement officers' experiences and perceptions through remote interviews via an online Cisco WebEx meeting room. I recruited the research participants from two (2) different California law enforcement agencies. Then, I sent emails to various law enforcement officers from both agencies. A total of twelve (12) officers responded who agreed and signed informed consent to participate in the research study. I described the research study and expectations in the voluntary consent form.

I used open-ended questions; and reviewed department policies; and departmental training documents concerning procedural justice training, such as the training curriculum; and observations of training videos used in teaching procedural justice. I audio-recorded the remote interviews as I took notes, and I then transcribed the remote interviews. I coded for themes (Saldana, 2016) in the transcriptions of each participant and achieved triangulation and validity (Moon & Wolf, 2019) in the study from this process. I also reduced researcher bias in the research study by using purposive, expert, and non-probability sampling (Morse, 2015; Wadams & Park, 2018).

While coding for themes from the data collected, I achieved saturation from themes in the data. Saturation became evident in six (6) interviews and was certainly evident in twelve (12) interviews (Casteel & Bridier, 2021; Guest et al., 2006; Sebele-Mpofu, 2020). I checked for

saturation starting at interview one (1) and, moving forward determined that I achieved saturation at interview six (6). I then reversed my analysis and reviewed the interviews from interview twelve (12) moving in reverse determining that I achieved saturation at interview seven (7). After meeting saturation, I was satisfied that those four (4) themes were the true meanings of the California law enforcement officers' lived experiences or stories (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Saldana, 2016). The research achieved saturation when participants provided no more added information, and I completely understood the participants' viewpoints, opinions, and real-life experiences (Constantinou et al., 2017; Hennink et al., 2019). In other words, the themes told me what the law enforcement officers experienced and enabled me to answer the research question.

I discovered four main themes in the research participants' interviews, and the direct quotes from each research participant, which relate to the training and policies and procedures related to procedural justice and its four principles: voice, respect/dignity, neutrality in decision-making, and trust (Skogan et al., 2015). The data demonstrated that the core values of the law enforcement profession relate to the social process theories of social bond theory and social learning theory through socialization. The policies, procedures, and training focused on procedural justice aligned with what the law enforcement officers stated in their interviews. I found that California POST intertwined training curriculum with procedural justice and officers' operational duties involving police-citizen encounters, such as using force, strategic communications, community policing, and decision-making. Table 2 explains the number of research participants that noted each theme.

Table 2

Number of Research Participants that Noted Each Theme

Themes	Number of Participants out of twelve
LEOs Practice Procedural Justice	12 of 12
The Practice of PJ and the Use of Force	12 of 12
Socialization	12 of 12
Training in Procedural Justice	12 of 12

Law Enforcement Officers Practice Procedural Justice

Law enforcement officers affirmed that they and their colleagues practice procedural justice and its four principles in the field in daily police-citizen encounters. Moreover, the research participants agreed that procedural justice is a philosophy or strategy they have been practicing all along in their careers; procedural justice is just a new term. The principles of procedural justice are important because it allows law enforcement officers to interact with community members respectfully by talking less and listening more, fostering legitimate policing.

A research participant commented,

> *It is interesting because we have core values that we created and have been around for over a decade now. I feel like we are ahead of the game in taking this seriously, our core values align with procedural justice tenets.*

One research participant commented,

> *This is something we have always been doing. Procedural justice is a repackaging of community relations.* To further provide evidence that law enforcement officers practice procedural justice; another participant stated, *Procedural Justice is a new term for us in the last three (3) years, and they all have to do with treating others as you would want to be. The procedural justice training has been positive. I have participated in hours of training. It has opened me up to new thought processes and new ways of looking at it.*

Law enforcement officers affirmed that in training and practicing the four principles of procedural justice, law enforcement officers' opportunities for better communication are evident. Communication is important in approaching a scene; dialogue can set the tone to help solve community issues. Procedural justice offers an opportunity for law enforcement officers to slow things down, allowing for a better assessment of the situation at hand and enabling better decision-making especially when the need for social services or other services is apparent. Slowing things down also allows law enforcement officers to listen to others' stories, allowing for better decision-making. A law enforcement officer stated, *"it is good to practice procedural justice because it can impact the outcome of the interaction. Procedural justice can de-escalate the situation. Procedural justice has an impact on the community."*

The training curriculum from CA POST exhibits procedural justice training as well as training for supervisors. Law enforcement officers train in procedural justice when promoted; or transferred to a different assignment or unit. Law enforcement officers affirmed that their principled policing (procedural justice) philosophy is the core of the department's values. The California POST commission implemented training and policies in procedural justice training (principled policing). Law enforcement officers learn how various operational duties align with principled policing.

The research participants all agreed that police academy training involves procedural justice principles. Procedural justice is a good reinforcement of what law enforcement officers should do in the field in their daily police-citizen encounters. Procedural justice aligns with community policing. A law enforcement officer commented, *"It gives officers a roadmap to build better relationships with the community. It builds trust and helps get information in serious criminal investigations even though a witness may not want to be in the report."*

Practice Procedural Justice and Use of Force

Practicing procedural justice can promote officer safety in police-citizen encounters. California law enforcement officers agreed that procedural justice could promote officer safety. One research participant stated, "T*he use of force instructors felt that it was a valuable tool for*

officers to have." The four principles in procedural justice promote officer safety and it promotes legitimacy. They felt that procedural justice applied to training involving the use of force, de-escalation, and overall communications.

California law enforcement officers affirmed that even though they use force, they can still practice procedural justice and its four principles. A research participant commented, *"I would say that procedural justice puts me in a safer position, and if used correctly, it can prevent maybe using force or would ease the encounter and the level of risk can drop when using procedural justice."* Another research participant commented, "*Procedural justice can reduce officer safety issues and the use of force. Although, there are instances procedural justice will not work. It does not work in all scenarios. It is a great tool otherwise."*

There were also concerns that procedural justice may not work because of citizens' state of mind and behaviors. One research participant commented, *"Procedural justice and the four tenets may not always work. Procedural justice is important but there are constraints; the behavior of the suspect or subject dictates that."* Another research participant commented, *"There are situations where subjects/suspects are not in the right mindset. A person with a mental health issue can make it more challenging."*

A research participant responded to a call for service where he encountered a homeless male who has kicked off the train and was in the middle of a mental health crisis. In this case, the law enforcement officer assessed the situation and determined the male displayed agitated behavior only and comprehended what the law enforcement officer was saying. Hence, the homeless male was not a danger to himself. The law enforcement officer used the four principles of procedural justice to defuse the situation. First, the law enforcement officer allowed the homeless male to explain what happened. The law enforcement officer then decided to allow the male back on the train so long as he would return to his city of origin. The male got back on the train peacefully.

The research participants affirmed that procedural justice is valuable, but sometimes using force is necessary. One research participant commented that there are times when the practice of the four principles of procedural justice is immediately presented. However, this may not be the case in every single incident. "*I can react to a subject's behavior by using force before I present the four principles of procedural justice*." Another research participant commented that there are times when the four principles of procedural justice may not work. One of those times might be when someone is under the influence of drugs. The law enforcement officer referenced an incident where a gang member assaulted a train conductor. The gang member was very uncooperative and under the influence of drugs. The gang member did not have the cognizant ability to understand the use of the four principles of procedural justice. The four principles of procedural justice were not effective in this situation.

There is a training video where officers were dealing with an uncooperative subject. The officers exhibited the procedural justice principles but still had to use non-lethal force to subdue the subject. During the procedural justice training, there was a discussion among the

officers on the principles of procedural justice after viewing the video. One California law enforcement officer commented,

> *We use certain checklists as we are dealing with people. There is a time when a threat assessment comes into play. Procedural justice may not work anymore, and you must use force. Afterward, you attempt to converse with them.*

A research participant commented that each situation is unique to others. The individuals the law enforcement officers deal with are not the same and do not all have the same mentality. California law enforcement officers affirmed that procedural justice works only in certain situations; it does not work for every situation. An individual's mentality can be unpredictable as explained by one research participant,

> *I feel like that, dependent upon who you are dealing with, certain people respond differently to the way you are interacting with them. Suspects may not want to trust anyone. You can be respectful to anyone, but still, must be aware that things could go south and any moment. I had a call with a woman who was experiencing trauma. I went to retrieve her ID; she then became very combative quickly. Officers should know that things can go south in a minute.*

One research participant shared a story,

> *I had a gentleman who was under the influence of drugs causing a disturbance at someone's home in their yard. I tried to use the principles of procedural justice and keep him calm and let him tell his side of the story. We ended up having to subdue him by using force. He just did not understand. I did everything I could, asked him if he had someone who could come pick him up and everything. I thought it started to work but he just would not comply. After we subdued him, he became even worse. He was trying to kick out the windows while in the back seat of the police cruiser.*

Socialization

The theme of socialization was apparent in the research participants' responses based on the notion that they, and other law enforcement officers, practice procedural justice because law enforcement culture supports it. The procedural justice principles align with law enforcement culture, values, and code of conduct which is a part of socialization for law enforcement. One research participant stated,

> *The policy at his department on procedural justice is based on their bias-based policing policy. In that policy, the department's mission statement and core values guide them to act legitimately. In partnership with the community, we provide the highest quality of police service with pride, respect, integrity, and professionalism.*

California law enforcement officers concurred that procedural justice aligns with their core values. One research participant commented, *"…our core values align with the procedural justice tenets. Our culture here embraces our core values, which, are the same as the procedural justice tenets."*

A research participant commented,

> *Procedural justice is a roadmap to building better relationships with the community. Using the four tenets of procedural justice is the roadmap; if you take one of them away it is ineffective. It gives officers a roadmap to what they are already doing.*

The law enforcement officers' perception of their department policy, training curriculum, and expectations of them were that law enforcement officers should use procedural justice principles. Another research participant stated,

> *Socialization impacts procedural justice, in a sense, that those who want to follow the crowd but are independent. We have a strong personnel equality standard in our department, which is the guiding force of how we are supposed to respond to others. Continual training deals with diversity, navigating diversity (respecting others' cultures), and dealing with other employees as well.*

One research participant commented,

> *"Our department does so much in-person training involving group discussion and group activities. Procedural justice is a foundational learning module and learned and used throughout an LEO's career starting with the academy."*

I interpreted the findings that social learning and social bond theories apply here because of the culture of the agencies promoting the training in procedural justice and practicing the four principles of procedural justice. One research participant commented,

> *I think just to be safe, be courteous. If a fellow officer is going down the wrong path, remind them to be safe, be courteous. Procedural justice helps build trust, explain our actions, and take the time to talk to people. They just want to vent and there is value in talking with people. It leads to good procedural justice interaction.*

The four bonds, attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief of social bond are clear because the training and policies promote the use of procedural justice. One research participant commented, *"Our department is committed to training in and practicing the four principles of procedural justice as much as we can. We are teaching our LEOs that and we are reinforcing what we have always done."* Social learning applies as well due to the law enforcement officers learning from their supervisors and the agencies promoting the use of procedural justice. A research participant stated,

> *Our training officers in the field are training our new LEOs on principled policing and the four principles of procedural justice. Supervisors and upper management feel that principled policing is the way to go. We contact people for legitimate reasons.*

Supervisors set the example for behavioral expectations from the line officers. If the agency supervisors do not 'buy in' to the principles of procedural justice, then the subordinate officers will not. A research participant commented,

> *We promote the practice of procedural justice and its four tenets because we are responsible for the younger LEOs and those on the shift. If you have a sergeant who does not emulate the principles of procedural justice very well it will reflect in the way, he*

supervises. Young men and women may not understand; the supervisors help set the tone. If the supervisors do not "buy in" to the principles of procedural justice, then their officers will not.

One research participant commented, *"With more procedural justice training, officers can be more confident in interacting with citizens because they are more skilled and knowledgeable. Procedural justice principles are the core values of the department; it is foundational."*

As the supervisors promote principled policing and the training bureaus train the law enforcement officers in procedural justice, the law enforcement officers learn and accept the strong bond of practicing the principles of procedural justice to enhance community relations. One research participant commented, "T*he policy at the department on procedural justice is in their bias-based policing policy. In that policy, the department's mission statement and core values guide the LEOs in acting legitimately."*

Training in Procedural Justice

I differentiated between the in-person and online procedural justice training, discovering that the initial principled policing training was in-person and was mandated and required eight hours. The initial in-person training comprises five (5) basic modules, each with an introduction and conclusion module. A research participant stated,

The in-person training was effective and engaging. The training was versatile; it comprised lectures with PowerPoint, videos, and group activities. Topics included procedural justice principles, implicit bias, racial profiling, and de-escalation, including when dealing with specific types of individuals (e.g., homeless, mental health issues, and even domestic violence).

Module 0 is the welcome and introduction, Module 1 consists of the interactive nature of procedural justice, legitimacy, and policing goals, Module 2 comprises expectations and legitimacy, Module 3 addresses procedural justice, and Module 4 consists of a historical and generational overview of the effects of policing, Module 5 is about implicit bias, and Module 6 concludes the training day with a test (California POST, 2016).

You must have the right instructor. There are preconceived notions that this training can diminish the idea of officer safety. I promote procedural justice, but officer safety is important. You can still practice procedural justice and be safe. Recruits are sponges. Mental illness is prevalent, and young LEOs experience this type of environment. The training is 32 hours and will expand to 40 hours. It is not just an abstract concept. Community relations make an impact. It is an easier sell to our recruits. The recruits are the foundation for how the department will shape them. Each officer may be better than other officers. Procedural justice can reinforce someone's career.

The modules are all organized in the same format where law enforcement officers participate in group discussions, watch videos, and participate in group activities. For example,

one research participant commented, *"The training was in-person with group activities, videos, and discussions on videos."*

This training structure allows law enforcement officers to interact with other law enforcement officers and their supervisors. One research participant commented, *"Our department does so much in-person training involving group discussion and group activities. Procedural justice is a foundational learning module and learned and used throughout an LEO's career starting with the academy."*

Here social learning occurs, and social bonds strengthen or expand because of new relations. One research participant commented,

> *Instructors at the academy spoke about how the job is easier to do when you talk to people, are neutral, and respect people. The 'train the trainer' training focuses on developing the relationship with the community. Reinforcement with issues. Constitutional policing – procedural justice reinforces what we are supposed to do as police officers. I joke with my peers, 'When did we not practice constitutional policing.' Our training is in person.*

The principled policing training fulfills the requirement of the procedural justice training mandate imposed by then-California Attorney General, Kamala Harris, and California Legislation. One research participant commented,

> A research participant stated, *"The police academy presented procedural justice training in the concept of community policing. It was ever-present throughout the academy and training. It was five to six days of in-person training. Topics within the procedural justice training were principles of procedural justice, implicit bias, racial profiling, and de-escalation, including dealing with specific types of individuals (e.g., homeless, mental health issues, and even domestic violence). The training taught officers to slow down, explain the interaction procedures, and build rapport.*

The online training is primarily refresher training for law enforcement officers. California law enforcement officers complete the online training on the California POST e-learning portal created for law enforcement officers. Implementing procedural justice principles in various other law enforcement operational duties (e.g., use of force, strategic communications, community policing) is apparent in the online training. One research participant commented, *"Procedural justice is peppered throughout the department training, and it is taken seriously."*

Each training discusses how procedural justice principles align with performing these law enforcement operational duties. The online training is convenient, and an evaluation of the officers is based on scenarios and concepts related to operational duties and procedural justice.

Discussion

The research study answered the research question and supported the theoretical framework. California law enforcement officers practice the four principles of procedural justice in their day-to-day operational duties while interacting with community members. California law enforcement agencies and California POST Commission provide the resources for training law enforcement officers. California law enforcement agency's supervisors support practicing the four principles of procedural justice. The support from supervisors in implementing the procedural justice training stems from a 90-day review of procedural justice training based on research (Wallace et al., 2015) with a collaborative effort by Stanford University (SPARQ), the Oakland and Stockton Police Departments, and the California Partnership for Safer Communities. In the research study sixteen California law enforcement agencies' police leaders attended the training; the larger agency in the current study participated in that training. From that training, those leaders agreed that procedural justice principles would be beneficial to their agency. Some recommendations were to develop trainings so police leaders can shift their culture toward procedural justice (Wallace et al., 2015). Those law enforcement leaders rated the procedural justice training as 'very good' or 'excellent' (Wallace et al., 2015).

From the research interviews of the participants, review of each agency's training curricula and policies, and review of the California POST training curricula California law enforcement is committed to training in and practicing the four principles of procedural justice. There is evidence of a solid positive prosocial or positive socialization in California agencies fostering and promoting the use of the four principles of procedural justice. The research findings encourage further training and using procedural justice principles in police-community encounters. As in other professions, training in law enforcement helps organizations form strong social bonds instilling social learning. Supervisors assist with socialization by setting the example for the junior law enforcement officers. Law enforcement officers generally imitate their supervisors whether it be good or immoral behavior (Chapelle & Piquero, 2004; Trinkner et al., 2016 Wolfe et al., 2018; Van Craen, 2016;).

The themes extrapolated from the research data provide evidence that the theoretical framework: social bond theory and social learning theory explain law enforcement behavior or socialization in practicing procedural justice principles. Those law enforcement officers with more years and experience on the force stated that procedural justice principles were nothing new for them to learn. The procedural justice principles were just a new term or set of principles that law enforcement was already practicing because of the core values instilled in the law enforcement profession. Those law enforcement officers with fewer years of experience felt they learned about procedural justice in the police academy, which related to the core values of the law enforcement profession.

Relation of Literature to the Findings

Prior research on procedural justice and police legitimacy found that training and practice of procedural justice were not being practiced effectively (Novich & Hunt, 2018; Owens

et al., 2018; Wolfe & Nix, 2016). Thus, community stakeholders and members did not perceive law enforcement as a legitimate authority figure. Novich and Hunt (2018) added that the public does not trust the police, especially when the police behavior is prejudiced or biased; or hostile. Developing and encouraging trust from the public by law enforcement is crucial for crime prevention and crime control efficacy (Kimbrough, 2017; Novich & Hunt, 2018). Therefore, more research on procedural justice is significant because of the challenges law enforcement agencies and officers face in modern-day policing in America.

I found that the findings in the data analysis support the theoretical framework of social bond theory and social learning theory. For law enforcement officers this is a positive experience where they learn appropriate behavior and form strong prosocial bonds through the process of attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief in law enforcement culture. Supervisors set the example through their behavior and training. In this case, CA POST Commission set the standard in promoting the training of procedural justice principles. Subordinate officers normally replicate supervisors' moral or immoral behaviors (Trinkner et al., 2016; Van Craen, 2016; Wolfe & Nix, 2016). Social bond (Hirschi, 1969) and social learning (Bandura, 1977) theories explain social processes related to prosocial and antisocial socialization. See Appendix A. Table 3 as a guide. Hence, the research findings are consistent with previous research. Through a review of the training curricula from the California POST Commission, the policies and training curricula from the two California law enforcement agencies, and finally, through the participant interviews the social process theories (social bond and social learning) appear to be one-way researchers can explain law enforcement officers' behavior related to whether they practice or do not practice procedural justice. Expanded research studies are necessary to improve policy and training policies for law enforcement agencies. The current research study can be a catalyst for further studies on the principles of procedural justice and police-community relations from the theoretical viewpoint of the social processes.

Implications

Implications of the study focus on the need for community members and stakeholders to better understand that law enforcement is working to improve police-community relations through training in and practicing procedural justice. Other implications include procedural justice duties and policies in law enforcement. Further research on procedural justice is necessary because law enforcement faces challenges in contemporary policing in America, evident from those instances of inappropriate behavior by LEOs (St. Louis et al., 2019; Wolfe & Nix, 2016; Wood et al., 2020). Other research has demonstrated that police-community relations improved through the practice of procedural justice principles (Lee, 2017; Owens et al., 2018; Rosenbaum & Lawrence, 2017; Skogan et al., 2015; St. Louis et al., 2019).

Limitations

Limitations of the research study included the population sample, a non-probability purposive expert sample, comprising a small portion of the entire population of law

enforcement officers. Hence, I could not achieve the whole picture of all law enforcement officers' attitudes, perceptions, and lived experiences in practicing procedural justice. Other limitations to attaining a clear picture of law enforcement officers' attitudes, perceptions, and lived experiences were related to the lack of more females' input on procedural justice and the lack of more input from African Americans as well as other races.

Another limitation stemmed from the global pandemic, the COVID-19 virus; restrictions imposed because of the pandemic required remote research activities (Caldero et al., 2021). Therefore, I could not conduct in-person observations of the research participants during police-citizen encounters. Adding observations of research participants in the field can enhance the implications of research studies.

One more limitation was that four of the twelve participants currently do not interact with citizens because of their assignment to the training bureau with the law enforcement academy. However, they train officers in the four principles of procedural justice. The study did not address whether law enforcement officers properly implemented the four principles of procedural justice during police-citizen encounters. The research was also limited in providing a full account of social bond theory and social learning theory related to law enforcement's use of procedural justice. The research on social process theories can be expanded to other agencies for a more accurate portrait of police officer behavior related to procedural justice.

Recommendations

Recommendations for future research include a longitudinal experimental study to further explain the socialization of law enforcement officers related to training and operational duties using the four principles of procedural justice. Using prior research in collaboration with the current study regarding procedural justice, social bond theory, and social learning theory would continue to advance knowledge in ensuring appropriate behavior using the four principles of procedural justice. Therefore, conducting research focusing on social bond theory and social learning theory explaining police behavior concerning the procedural justice principles is recommended. Further research comprises a treatment group and a non-treatment group and utilizes a pre-measure and post-measure of the problem (Lim & Koper, 2017; Santos & Santos, 2015; Ward et al., 2007). The recommendation is for evidence-based research for evidence-based policing.

Conclusion

The current research study findings are consistent with what law enforcement in contemporary America strives to accomplish regarding police-community relations. California POST and its agencies are trying to improve police-community relations. Training curricula, training policies, and operational policies that reflect that effort. The research provides the interpretation that law enforcement officers practice procedural justice principles in their daily police-citizen encounters. California law enforcement officers train in the four principles of procedural justice. Supervisors and training officers mentor police officers toward practicing

procedural justice principles to improve police-community relations. The researcher envisions that the current research study could promulgate further interest from community members and stakeholders, scholar-practitioners, and agency researchers, and encourage the revision of departmental policy regarding procedural justice and principled policing. Other researchers can further the research by reviewing the findings in the current research study and the secondary data found in the literature review.

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Appendix A

Table 3: Theme, Definition and Supporting Commentary

Theme	Definition	Supporting Commentary
Practice Procedural Justice	Words and/or phrases that suggested they practice PJ in the daily operations.	"This is something we have always been doing." "Procedural justice is a repackaging of community relations."
Practice PJ and Use of Force	Words and/or phrases that suggested the practice of PJ sometimes does not work which results in the use of force.	"Procedural justice and the four tenets may not always work. Procedural justice is important but there are constraints; the behavior of the suspect or subject dictates that."
Socialization	Words and/or phrases that suggested supervisors promote and the training bureaus train the LEOs, the LEOs learn and accept the strong bond of practicing the principles of procedural justice to enhance community relations.	"The policy at the department on procedural justice is engrained in their bias-based policing policy. In that policy the department's mission statement and core values guide the LEOs in acting legitimately."
Training in Procedural Justice	Words and/or phrases that suggested there are various other law enforcement operational duties (e.g., use of force, traffic stops, investigations) where procedural justice is implemented.	"Procedural justice is peppered throughout the department training, and it is taken seriously."

Appendix B

Social Bond Theory and Procedural Justice

The Impact of School Resource Officers on Student Perceptions of School Safety, Police Presence, and Police Effectiveness: Results from Two High Schools in Northeast Ohio

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact that dedicated school resource officers (SROs), as opposed to part-time or rotating police officers, have on student perceptions of school safety, police presence, and police effectiveness. This study uses a survey research design composed of a convenience sample of seniors (N=59) from two high schools in northeast Ohio—one with SROs and one without. Using a chi-square analysis, the perceptions of students from the high school with an SRO are compared to those of students from a high school without an SRO. As expected, the survey results indicate that the students at the school with a dedicated SRO reported a safer environment and greater likelihood to report potentially disruptive problems to police officers than those students from the school without SROs. The results also show that students from the school with SROs were more likely to have received a presentation and to have rated presentations more effective from the police as compared to those students from the school without SROs. Contrary to our expectations, there were no differences in comparing the willingness of students to approach police officers on various issues by SRO status of the school. Overall, the benefits evident from positive student feedback in terms of school safety, police presence, and police effectiveness in the school with SROs versus the school without SROs suggest incentive for schools without SROs to consider their use.

Keywords

School resource officer, community policing, school violence

This study examines student perceptions of safety and the effectiveness of School Resource Officers (SROs). It is the duty of the SRO to create and maintain a safe and secure learning environment which is crucial for student success. Many school districts have implemented a SRO program, and other schools desire to implement such a program but experience difficulty doing so. SRO programs are at times questioned regarding their necessity and therefore require justification (Fisher et al., 2022; Rosiak, 2014). Because placing police officers in schools is a timely topic and additional information is needed to help inform others' decision-making, it is worthy of study as will be made clear throughout the literature review.

Literature Review

The decades since the Columbine school shooting have experienced an increase in police officers assigned to schools (Duxbury & Bennell, 2020). The driving force behind this trend has been an increase in violence in schools coupled with a growth in federal funding these kinds of programs. While there is no centralized monitoring of SRO numbers in the United States, the most recent estimates (from 2017-18) indicate that the use of school security people is widespread: Eighty-four percent of high schools and 80% of middle schools now have at least one security person present on campus at least one day a week (National Center of Education Statistics, 2020).

SRO programs are anchored in community-oriented policing (COP). According to the United States Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services (2009), COP encourages police departments to be proactive, rather than reactive. COP is comprised of three key components—community partnerships, organizational transformation, and problem-solving. Community partnerships consist of an alliance between the community and their police department in identifying community problems and concerns in order for the police to proactively address those identified issues. Organizational transformation demands that the police department and community are aligned with and have bought into the concept of COP. Finally, problem-solving entails the stakeholders (police and community) finding solutions to identified problems.

SROs can be described within the broader context of COP in terms of three functions—law-enforcement officer, educator, and counselor (adapted from Raymond, 2010). SROs are first and foremost police officers. When there is an alleged violation of criminal law, they have a duty to investigate and file criminal charges if warranted. Although police officers were initially assigned to schools in response to violence, their role has evolved to include other appropriate capacities. Educational outcomes appear tied to freedom from violence, and so an effective SRO may be able indirectly to improve the learning environment (Duxbury & Bennell, 2020). In addition, SROs can bring to the school setting knowledge of legal matters where few in the building have expertise, such as laws pertaining to juveniles, drugs, alcohol, and juvenile law. The role of a counselor is tied to ways in which SROs assist in several capacities, which might include mediating conflicts with administrators, guidance counselors, or teachers. Additionally, an SRO may be called upon to assist when a juvenile is caught experimenting with drugs, alcohol, or any type of harmful behavior when criminal charges are not filed.

Research on SRO Effectiveness

Although placing police officers in school on a part- or full-time basis is a relatively new phenomenon relative to other forms of law enforcement, the expanded use of SROs was a major policing initiative in the Obama administration, so it would seem logical to conclude that there would be substantiative efforts to assess the effectiveness of this government spending (Duxbury & Bennell, 2020). Surprisingly, this is not the case. The amount of research on the effectiveness of SROs has been fairly limited and looks primarily at the law enforcement function of the SRO (Jackson, 2002; O'Murphy, 2013) and safety in general (Pentek & Eisenberg, 2018; Theriot & Orme, 2016). Some research looks at the public's perception of SROs (Myrstol, 2011). The focus of this study is where there is less research and as a result explores students' perceptions of the effectiveness of SROs as educators and counselors as well as perceptions of school safety and police presence.

SRO as Law Enforcement Officer

Efforts to determine the effectiveness of SROs in their law enforcement role has examined both objective and perceptual measures. Objective measures have looked at the effect of the SRO presence on school disciplinary data (e.g., suspensions and expulsions) and arrests. Sullivan and Hausman (2017) separated schools into two categories, schools with and without SROs and found no statistically significant difference in reported crimes. However, the authors expressed that this result could be viewed as a positive result of placing an SRO in a school, largely due to the fact that criminal acts are often underreported and placing a trained police officer in a school would likely result in an increase in reported criminal acts. Contrarily, Crosse et al. (2022) found that SROs increased criminal reporting, which could be interpreted as a measure of SRO effectiveness in improving school safety. Context may be a factor with SROs being more effective law-enforcement officers in situations where severe violence is most likely to occur, i.e., urban institutions, large schools, places with gang activity, and in response to bullying and racial tensions (Crosse et al., 2022; Fisher et al., 2022; Johnson, 1999; Jennings et al., 2011; Maskaly et al., 2011; Pentek & Eisenberg, 2018).

Perceptions of SRO performance also vary. Clipper (2011) found that SROs taking a community-policing approach yielded increased perceptions of safety in the student population. Contrariwise, Tillyer et al. (2011) and Bracy (2011) presented findings raising questions regarding the perceived effectiveness of SROs. However, a more nuanced conclusion may be in order because of the possibility that perceptions of the SRO personally might be a mediating factor (Finn & McDevitt, 2005; Mystrol, 2011; Theroit & Orme, 2016). In related research, Gianakis and Davis (1998) surveyed COP programs in Florida and found that all departments surveyed implemented some type of COP program. Importantly, they noted that the focus seems to be on changing officers rather than organizations, which included changing officer attitudes and behaviors of officers to more be more approachable and collect more information from the public.

The implications here are clear: If the SRO personally is viewed positively, then perceptions of SRO effectiveness are more likely to be viewed positively. Students, in particular, are the primary community that an SRO serves. Therefore, their perceptions are crucial in determining the effectiveness of SRO programs. For this reason, SROs should try to be positive role models and develop good relationships with the juveniles that they protect. Conducting research and administering surveys is an excellent method in determining whether SROs are achieving their goals.

Roberts (2019) analyzed a COP program used by the Los Angeles Police Department. The program was called the Community Police Unification Program (CPU) and was a program used to address officer complaints. Prior to the program, the only option a dissatisfied citizen had at their disposal was to file a complaint, which usually resulted in being unfounded. The program used a volunteer mediator to resolve the issue between the officer and the citizen involved. Roberts found that a critical component was to pair participants with similar personalities. Once completed, this contributed to greater success of the program. A strong parallel may be drawn with regards to the pairing of personalities of the CPU to SROs. It may be critical to have an officer assigned as an SRO to a school with the correct personality. If an officer is not approachable, the population they serve will have a poor perception of the officer and likely extend this perception to the law enforcement community.

SRO as Educator and Counselor

School resource officers can create and maintain a safe and secure learning environment. When an SRO accomplishes the goal of improving school safety, the school environment is one that is conducive to efficient and effective learning. Johnson (1999) discussed the importance of students feeling safe and secure while at school. According to Johnson, school violence "affects the physical, emotional, and social well-being of students… [and] also prevents school administrators and teachers from accomplishing the primary goal of education" (Johnson, 1999, p. 173). In spite of the importance of this possible contribution of the SRO, the educator and counselor functions remain unexplored in the research literature.

Surveying students about their perceptions and their feelings of safety should shed light on program effectiveness and the potential need for modification. This study uses a comparison of two schools to explore student perceptions about the three functions of the SRO by comparing from a school with a full-time SRO to a school without one. The propositions are that students in the school with the SRO have a more favorable perception of the safety of their environment and more positive interactions with law enforcement than the school without the SRO.

Methods

This study was conducted among seniors in two schools in northeast Ohio. The schools were selected using a nonrandom, purposive sampling technique. They are similar in size and socioeconomic composition. Students who were seniors were chosen to respond to the paper

surveys because they had the most cumulative interaction with SROs. A signed parental permission form was required from all minors to take part in the survey which was designed to collect data regarding the three dimensions of an SRO – law-enforcement officer, law-related educator, and law-related counselor.

The school districts that participated were selected purposively in order to get a contrast between schools with and without an SRO. While 24 superintendents were contacted and seven of them granted consent to participate, principals at only two districts followed through with participation. Both participating schools were located in predominantly White communities with less than 10,000 residents and crime rates below the state average. One school was located in an affluent suburb, and the other was located in a small town in a rural area. The suburban school had a full-time, dedicated police officer assigned to the district as a SRO. At the rural school, police officers assigned to the patrol division who would visit the building on a daily basis; however, were not dedicated SROs and did not attempt to fulfill the functions of the SRO.

The study consisted of an 18-question paper survey (see Appendix) that was administered on site (at schools) by third parties (professors and a graduate student of Youngstown State University). Responses collected were anonymous and voluntary. The surveys collected demographic data including student age, gender, race, and when they began attending their current school. The survey then collected data including to whom students would report various crimes, school rule violations, and how safe they felt at school. Finally, the survey collected data exploring student opinions of how effective police officers at their schools are at achieving the three primary roles of a school resource officer (law-enforcement officer, law-related educator, and law-related counselor).

In order for students to participate, senior students were required to have their parent / guardian sign and return a consent form. Additionally, students were required to sign and return an assent form. Only those students who had both the parent consent and student assent form were permitted to take the survey. All aforementioned documents (Appendixes) were inspected and approved by the Institutional Review Board at Youngstown State University. The school without an SRO had a response rate of 29% (24 out of 84 students) while the school with an SRO had a response rate of 16% (35 out of 221 students). In spite of the small sample, results with a Cramer's V of at least .46 had a statistical power exceeding .8 using a G*Power analysis of the underlying chi-square statistic, large enough to allow this exploratory analysis to discuss the practical significance of strong and moderately strong relationships (Allgemeine Psychologie und Arbeitpsychologie, n.d.; Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007).

After all data were collected the responses were coded and compiled using Excel. The statistical analysis was conducted using the freeware PSPP (*GNU Operating System,* 2019), which mimics Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results may be used in future analysis and research. As previously mentioned, the results (student perceptions) from the school district with a dedicated SRO were compared to those who did not have a dedicated SRO.

Results

Most of the survey highlights what is often regarded as the most important function of the SRO, which is an onsite law-enforcement officer. When asked about safety, it is evident that the presence of a dedicated SRO creates a sense of a safe and secure learning environment (Table 2). Eighty percent of students in the school with a dedicated SRO stated that they felt very safe or somewhat safe, moderately higher than the 34% at the other school (X^2=13.25, p<.01, V=.47). The visibility of the police may be a factor influencing this: 60% of students at the school with a dedicated SRO said the police were very visible compared to only 21% at the other school (X^2=12.38, p<.01, V=.46).

Looking at specific offenses, students are more likely to contact an SRO in the event of a crime on campus, but are less likely to report non-criminal activities related to social media and bullying (Table 3). Students who have a dedicated SRO are far more likely to report this to a police officer drug and alcohol offenses than students who do not have a dedicated SRO at their school (X^2=16.84, p<.01, V=.54). Students at the school with an SRO responded they would report this information in the following order: teacher (30%), no one (27%), police (24%), principal (15%), other (3%), guidance counselor (0%), and family member (0%). Students at the school without a dedicated SRO responded they would report this information in the following order: no one (33%), principal (21%), family member (17%), guidance counselor (13%), teacher (8%), police (4%), and other (8%). In addition, students at the school with an SRO also indicated that they were more likely to report a weapon on campus to the police (X^2=8.1, p<.05, V=.39), though the statistical power of this finding falls below .80 and so the substantive significance of the finding could be affected by the small sample size. There was no statistically significant difference between schools regarding student responses related to the reporting of social media issues and bullying.

The effectiveness of the traditional law-enforcement is one area needing improvement (Table 4). The results of how effective students felt the police are at keeping their school safe resulted in small but not significant differences between schools (X^2=5.35, p=.07, V=.30). There were no differences between schools related to perceptions of preventing and solving crimes. A small portion of the survey deals with the expanded functions of the SRO with regard to education and counseling (Table 5). The first of a two-part question asked if a police officer has ever conducted an education presentation at their school. There was a large different in the receiving of an educational presentation from a police officers from students at the school with a dedicated SRO than the school without an SRO (X^2=17.19, p<.001, V=.54).

The second of the two-part question sought to evaluate the effectiveness of the educational presentation. Although students at the school with an SRO were more likely to think that the presentation was effective, the difference between schools was not statistically significant (X^2=4.54, p=.10, V=.33). There was also no difference between schools on the willingness to approach a police officer with a problem.

Discussion

The data collected in this study indicates that school resource officers accomplish the goal of creating a safe and secure environment. Students at the school with the dedicated SRO generally reported a safer environment than the school without the dedicated SRO, and at the school with the SRO, the SROs scored higher than principal when students were asked about to whom they would report issues that could disruption the learning environment. Furthermore, a dedicated school resource officer can contribute to positive student perceptions of police officers. Whether by a small or large margin, students in the school district with a dedicated SRO reported increased perceptions of safety and of the police with every question.

The results on the educator and counselor roles are more ambiguous. Students at the school with the dedicated SRO were more likely to have seen a presentation from a police officer (educator function), but they were no more likely to approach a police officer with a problem than students at the school without a dedicated officer (counselor function).

Limitations

There are three major limitations to this study. While the study finds differences between schools, the sample was problematic, and so the results should be viewed as exploratory. The use of only two schools (rather than the original seven) limited the generalizability of the findings. Although the research literature indicates that context may be important to understanding SRO effectiveness, neither school came from high-crime urban or minority areas, where perceptions of police officers generally are thought to be different. Furthermore, the low number of responses was unfortunate, and future research should certainly focus on a larger pool of respondents. Reminders might increase response rate: The school district without an SRO sent out several reminders prior to the administration of the survey, and that district yielded a higher percentage of student responses. Offering a small incentive to participate (candy, pencil, etc.) might have increased response rates.

The study did not focus on the personality of the SRO and SRO interactions with students, a point raised in studying perceptions of SROs. Springer (1994, p. 9) argued that "'it is difficult for officers to keep their guard up'… and 'project a friendly, non-threatening demeanor.'" These arguments underscore the importance of the personal interactions of the individual SRO; therefore, the SRO should be particularly "friendly." Outside of the general interest in the question, personality could raise a concern about the validity of this study in that the principal author was the police officer assigned to the school with an SRO. The principal author was proactive in mitigating this factor. It was made clear to the administration and to teachers that they should not overtly inform students that their SRO was the one conducting the research, and a safeguard was put in place by having others manage the distribution of the survey.

Finally, the survey only probed the positive functions of the SRO and was not constructed to explore potential problems and deficiencies of SRO programs. One of the largest

concerns is whether SRO activities could be regarded as over-policing or a violation of student rights and thus promote the school-to-prison pipeline (Counts, Randall, Ryan, & Katsiyannis, 2018; Theriot & Cuellar, 2016; Wolf, K. C., 2018). In addition, it appears more could be done to help SRO programs be successful. There are four recommendations from experts to facilitate successful SRO programs: policies, memorandums of understanding, training, and evaluation for SROs. No state legally requires the use of all four recommendations.

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Table 1

Frequency Distributions of Student Demographic Statistics by School

	School with SRO		School w/o SRO		
	#	%	#	%	X2, p-value, V
Total	35	100%	24	100%	
Age					
17 years	4	11%	7	29%	X^2=3.14, p=.21
18 years	30	86%	16	67%	V=.23
19 years	1	3%	1	4%	
Gender					
Male	16	46%	13	54%	X^2=0.41, p=.52
Female	19	54%	11	45%	V=.08
Race					
White/Caucasian	31	89%	22	96%	X^2=0.88, p=.35
Non-white	4	11%	1	1%	V=.12

Note: Non-white respondents self-identified as Black, Asian Indian, Hispanic, and Other.

Table 2

School Safety and Police Presence

	School with SRO		School w/o SRO		
	#	%	#	%	X2, p-value / V
How safe do you feel at your school?					
Very safe	17	49%	4	17%	X^2=13.25, p<.01
Somewhat safe	11	31%	4	17%	V=.47
Not safe	7	20%	16	66%	
How visible are the police at your school?					
Very visible	21	60%	5	21%	X^2=12.38, p<.01
Somewhat visible	9	26%	6	25%	V=.46
Less visible	5	14%	13	54%	
How effective are the police at keeping your school safe?					
Very effective	18	51%	5	22%	X^2=5.35 p=.07
Somewhat effective	11	31%	13	57%	
Not effective	6	17%	15	22%	

Table 3

Frequency Distributions on Reporting of Potential Crime Offenses

	School with SRO		School w/o SRO		
	#	%	#	%	X2, p-value
If you observed drugs or tobacco on campus, to whom would you report this information?					
Principal	5	15%	5	21%	X^2=16.84, p<.01
Teacher	10	30%	2	8%	V=.54
Guidance Counselor	0	0%	3	13%	
Police	8	24%	1	4%	
Family Member	0	0%	4	17%	
Other	1	3%	1	4%	
No One	9	27%	8	33%	
If you observed a weapon on campus, to whom would you report this information?					
Principal	4	13%	8	38%	X^2=8.1, p<.05
Teacher	6	19%	6	29%	V=.39
Police	21	66%	6	29%	
Other	1	3%	1	5%	
If you experienced an issue with social media, to whom would you report this information?					
Principal	3	9%	3	13%	X^2=5.27, p=.51
Teacher	4	12%	1	4%	V=.31
Guidance Counselor	5	15%	6	25%	
Police	5	15%	1	4%	
Family Member	4	12%	6	25%	
Other	3	9%	1	4%	
No One	9	27%	6	25%	
If you experienced an issue with bullying, to whom would you report this information?					
Principal	8	24%	5	23%	X^2=1.37, p=.97
Teacher	6	18%	5	23%	V=.16
Guidance Counselor	4	12%	3	14%	
Police	1	3%	0	0%	
Family Member	6	18%	5	23%	
Other	3	9%	3	5%	
No One	5	15%	1	14%	

Table 4

Crime Prevention and Solving Crime

	School with SRO		School w/o SRO		
	#	%	#	%	X2, p-value
How effective are the police at keeping your school safe?					
Very effective	18	51%	5	22%	X^2=5.35 p=.07
Somewhat effective	11	31%	13	57%	V=.30
Not effective	6	17%	15	22%	
At your school, how effective are the police in preventing crimes in or around that school's campuses?					
Very effective	15	44%	7	29%	X^2=1.69, p=.43
Somewhat effective	14	41%	11	46%	
Not effective	5	15%	6	25%	
At your school, how effective are the police in solving crimes that occur in or around the school's campuses?					
Very effective	12	35%	7	29%	X^2=0.61, p=.74
Somewhat effective	15	44%	10	42%	
Less effective	7	21%	7	21%	

Table 5

Education and Counseling Functions

	School with SRO		School w/o SRO		
	#	%	#	%	X2, p-value
While at school, has a police officer conducted an educational presentation?					
Yes	32	49%	10	17%	X^2=17.19, p<.001
No	3	31%	14	17%	
If the officer conducted an educational presentation, how effective was the presentation?					
Very effective	6	60%	1	21%	X^2=4.54, p=.10
Somewhat effective	17	26%	2	25%	V=.33
Not effective	9	14%	6	54%	
How comfortable do you feel approaching any police officer with a problem?					
Very comfortable	11	31%	6	25%	X^2=0.44, p=.80
Somewhat comfortable	8	23%	5	21%	V=.09
Not comfortable	16	46%	13	54%	

Appendix
Student Survey

1. How old are you? _____
2. What is your gender?
   A. Male B. Female
3. With which race do you identify yourself?
   A. White / Caucasian B. Black C. Asian Indian D. Hispanic E. Other
4. In what grade did you begin attending this school? _____
5. If you observed drugs or tobacco on campus, to whom would you report this information?
   A. Principal B. Teacher C. Guidance Counselor D. Police E. Family member
   F. No one G. Other
6. If you observed a weapon on campus, to whom would you report this information?
   A. Principal B. Teacher C. Guidance Counselor D. Police E. Family member
   F. No one G. Other
7. If you experienced an issue with social media, to whom would you report this information?
   A. Principal B. Teacher C. Guidance Counselor D. Police E. Family member
   F No one G. Other
8. If you experienced an issue with bullying, to whom would you report this information?
   A. Principal B. Teacher C. Guidance Counselor D. Police E. Family member
   F. No one G. Other
9. Have you ever approached a police officer at your school with a problem?
   A. Yes B. No
10. If yes for question 9, how helpful was the officer?
    A. Very unhelpful B. Somewhat unhelpful C. Indifferent D. Somewhat helpful
    E. Very helpful
11. While at school, has a police officer conducted an educational presentation?
    A. Yes B. No
12. If yes to question 11, how effective was the educational presentation?
    A. Very ineffective B. Somewhat Ineffective C. Indifferent D. Somewhat Effective
    E. Very Effective
13. How safe do you feel at your school?
    A. Very unsafe b. Somewhat unsafe c. Neutral D. Somewhat safe E. Very safe
14. How effective are the police at keeping your school safe?
    A. Very ineffective B. Somewhat ineffective C. No effect D. Somewhat effective
    E. Very effective
15. How visible are the police at your school?
    A. Not visible B. Usually not visible C. Visible occasionally D. Somewhat visible
    E. Very visible
16. How comfortable do you feel approaching any police officer with a problem?
    A. Very uncomfortable B. Somewhat uncomfortable C. Indifferent
    D. Somewhat comfortable E. Very comfortable
17. At your school, how effective are the police in preventing crimes in or around the school's campuses?

A. Very ineffective B. Somewhat ineffective C. No effect D. Somewhat effective
E. Very effective

18. At your school, how effective are the police in solving crimes that occur in or around the school's campuses?
A. Very ineffective B. Somewhat ineffective C. No effect D. Somewhat effective
E. Very Effective

The Understanding and Practice of Community Policing

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Abstract

Division between the police and the communities they serve is growing at an alarming rate. Cities throughout this country are calling to defund the police, and police officers are cast as villains even when their actions are warranted. The Community Policing philosophy was developed in an effort to bridge the gap between these two entities and create an atmosphere of mutual trust, but the philosophy has had little impact. This exploratory study was designed to find relationships between an officers' rank and their level of agreement toward this philosophy. Additionally, this study looked for relationships regarding the organizational size and the level of agreement with both the practice and concepts of Community Policing. Last, this study looked for relationships involving the officer's level of agreement with Community Policing and their engagement in Community Policing activities. For this study, 234 certified Kentucky law enforcement officers were provided with a 22-question survey. The results of this study provided statistical evidence that three of the four objectives merit further examination. Evidence suggests that a relationship exists between an officer's rank and their agreement with Community Policing practices. In fact, 30.8 percent indicated that making arrests are the best way to solve problems. While this study is not suggesting enforcement of criminal codes is not necessary, making an arrest is not always the best or preferred option. Additionally, 25.6 percent indicated they wanted to be left alone to do their job, but as the officer's rank increased, this belief decreased. Leaders of organizations understand the positive impact this philosophy can have on their community, but this understanding must be filtered down to the line officers. Police officers perform heroically on a daily basis, but law enforcement and the community must come together to bridge this gap.

Keywords

Community policing, crime fighter, 21st century policing, preventive patrols

The Understanding and Practice of Community Policing

The year 2020 will forever be remembered as the year of division within the United States. Not only was this country faced with one of the worse pandemics, but the United States also witnessed months of civil unrest due to officer-involved shootings and a sharp increase in violence across the country. Protestors are chanting that they want justice, but we have yet to understand what justice looks like. We hear political leaders and protestors talk about defunding the police, but we have heard little in regard to an actionable plan to accomplish this. Political leaders are cutting police budgets, but plans have not been introduced to understand how that will impact services to their communities. Leaders are not stepping forward in an effort to mitigate violence or confusion; they are simply adding more fuel to a fire

that is already raging. Police officers throughout this country take an oath to protect and serve, but that oath does not include the needless sacrifice of their lives. Police officers conducting good police work are coming under scrutiny simply for doing the job they were hired to do. Rather than having a discussion over these issues, we are seeing violence increase more and more with each passing day. Violence has been the main theme for many large metropolitans. While the end-of-year report has not been completed, the first half of 2020 saw a 15 percent increase in homicides (FBI, 2019). According to the Washington Post, data collected through the first nine months of 2020 show 57 police departments reported a 36.7 percent increase in homicides (Barrett, 2020). New York City alone saw a homicide increase of 40 percent, and their shootings almost doubled (Barrett, 2020). In Settle Washington, protesters occupied six blocks, renaming it *The Capital Hill Autonomous Zone,* and refused to allow authorities to enter the area. Business owners were forced to watch as their lives work went up in flames, and the local law enforcement was powerless to stop it. Law enforcement has become the scapegoat for all that is wrong with society. Communities and police officers must work together in an effort to come back to the center. As a country, we must do better, and we must find a way to come together. In order to accomplish this, we must first understand how we arrived at a place of dysfunction.

Civil unrest is not unique to 2020; we have seen periods of civil unrest throughout this country's history. As far back as the 17th Century, we saw how different views could lead to conflict in both the *Jamestown Massacre* and *Boston Tea Party*. As we move into more modern times, the 1960's and 1970's, Los Angeles saw some of the worse riots this country has ever experienced (Felker-Kantor, 2018). Those riots, as with most episodes of civil unrest, resulted from a breakdown between the government and the communities they serve (Felker-Kantor, 2018). Government and police are interchangeable because the police are the most visible arm of the government. As we see violence or negative views toward the police, police are merely an extension of the government itself. Building partnerships between the community and its police department is synonymous with building partnerships between the government and the people who elected them. The lack of partnerships between the police and the community result in distrust, division, and an overall feeling of despair for both the police and the community (Felker-Kantor, 2018). This feeling of despair is equally frustrating to their elected leaders. When trust is eliminated between two groups, information shared between the two entities goes away. Without information sharing, police are crippled with regard to solving crimes. When crime goes unsolved, these actors are left on the streets to commit more crimes and the vicious cycle continues. Additionally, as more people are victimized, the legitimacy of their police department is diminished, which further alienates the police from the community they serve. To suggest that greater trust between the police department and the community would solve these issues is shortsighted; however, building trust is a great start in building stronger bonds and fostering an atmosphere that will encourage greater relationships leading to more effective policing strategies. One method to begin this healing process is the Community Policing philosophy.

Community policing is a philosophy that brings the community and police together in an effort to deploy problem-solving techniques to proactively address the conditions behind a

particular problem (Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014). The major piece of this philosophy will always be partnerships and problem-solving. When we view police as crime fighters, we envision someone going into combat. When you think of the beat officer, you think of a fixture within a neighborhood. This fixture is not always responding to or dealing with a crisis, but they are present, developing relationships with various stakeholders in that neighborhood (Terris, 1967). When you think about this beat cop, you think of someone who acts as the day or night watchman, ready to maintain control but, more importantly, willing to lend a hand when someone is in need. They are there to provide a unique service to the neighborhood they have been charged with patrolling. These services translate to partnerships aimed at problem-solving with the community rather than for the community (Kedida, 2020). One goal of this research is to establish that smaller police departments deploy a more service-minded approach than larger metropolitan cities. Smaller police departments have more familiarity with the community they serve simply because of their size. When we have officers who are permanently assigned to an area, they take greater ownership of that area (Kane, 2000). Smaller towns or jurisdictions naturally have officers permanently assigned simply because they have a smaller geographical area to cover. That particular officer has less opportunity to move to other parts of the city simply because all employed officers patrol the entire city. This will enable them to become more proactive when dealing with their assigned area. Officers may not realize their community policing practices, and this research should help to identify these practices.

Community policing can be viewed as soft policing, and one challenge to this philosophy is implementation. Community policing is viewed as social work for some police officers (Meares, 2002). Police are highly trained to use firearms, make arrests and investigate crime, but the amount of training on building partnerships is negligible. Most see these activities as outside the scope of their responsibility, and the implementation of this philosophy will be a challenge for any leader (Meares, 2002). Last and one of the more important hypotheses will be that higher-ranking officers understand the philosophy of Community Policing better than lower-ranking officers. This is consistent with police training, given that very little is taught in the form of partnerships or service. The training police receive is geared toward law enforcement rather than service of the law. This piece is extremely important to policy decisions regarding the implementation of community policing techniques. In order for something to be implemented, all stakeholders should have a clear understanding of the objective. When we understand what we are doing, the act of deployment is more efficient, and those involved are better equipped to help the initiative succeed.

The ideal scope of this research would involve data collection from identified areas to gain an understanding of how this philosophy is understood and deployed; however, this research is limited by the restrictions this country is faced with due to COVID-19. These restrictions prevent researchers from personal contact, and all data collection will be from an electronically created survey. Follow-up research should be conducted in the form of focus groups to clarify answers and feelings toward particular questions. Additionally, focus groups could be used to identify law enforcement organizations that deploy a service-minded approach and their effectiveness in solving crime or dealing with police use of force incidents.

The goal of this survey instrument is to establish a good starting point for future research. If research can identify greater community policing in smaller agencies, focus groups could then determine what impact those initiatives have on dealing with crime and disputed use of force incidents. Additionally, if higher-ranking officers have a better understanding of the community policing philosophy, focus groups could determine why they have a better understanding and how could this information or understanding be pushed down within the agency. Last, if officers are already deploying community policing initiatives, focus groups could be used to help identify those initiatives in an effort to duplicate their contribution across the department. This study is confined to the state of Kentucky. This research will be limited to certified officers in an effort to understand the impact, understanding, and views toward community policing shared by Kentucky law enforcement. This exploratory research has four primary objectives:

1. RQ1: What is the relationship between the rank of the officer and the level of agreement with Community Policing practices?
2. RQ2: What is the relationship between the officer's level of agreement with the community policing philosophy and the officer engaging in community practice concepts?
3. RQ3: What is the relationship between the size of the department and the frequency of community policing activities?
4. RQ4: What is the relationship between the size of the department and the level of agreement with community practice concepts?

Literature Review

The History of Community Policing

Policing and, more specifically, policing philosophies tend to swing from one side to the other throughout history (Blakely, 2008). Blakely compared it to an imaginary pendulum going from the service-minded approach to what he phrased as a crime fighter. Crime fighter is a frequently used phrase related to the FBI's push to become a more professional police force, a philosophical view of unilaterally battling crime. One must ask if current community policing movements and innovative police procedures are simply a reboot from historical practices.

To fully understand community policing, one must examine the history of jurisprudence in this country. As the United States came to life, the colonists were concerned about an authoritarian government, and they strived to develop a jurisprudent system that represented the citizen's beliefs (Blakely, 2008). This required heavy involvement from the citizens to maintain order. The colonists believed that as long as the citizens were responsible for the identification, enforcement, and sentencing, their system would always represent the values and beliefs of the citizens. Early law enforcement took the form of both communal and informal, and they were referred to as the watch or night watchman (Potter, 2013). These watchmen, mostly volunteers, were charged with warning of impending dangers; however, those who volunteered were often simply trying to avoid military service or serving as a form of punishment. While Blakely highlights the volunteer model as proof of the community accepting responsibility for crime control, Potter describes these people as simply volunteering to avoid

other unpleasant duties. Potter explains that these men were often drunk or would sleep through their assigned shifts. Although this method of enforcement had obvious deficits, it does represent the community's early attempts at accepting responsibility for maintaining order within the colonies.

Community Policing and The Police Officer

As Community Policing grows across the nation, it is important to examine the officer's thoughts about this new philosophy. Some may argue that it does not matter how the officers feel about the philosophy as long as the commanders understand the importance of community involvement. However, it should be noted that evidence supports that programs or initiatives achieve greater success if you have a team committed to a particular project (Meares, 2002). Policing is unique in that police often work autonomously within their mobile office. If community policing is to be successful, it is important to understand the officer's perspective on the philosophy. More specifically, the question must be examined, are police officers motivated to implement such a philosophy? If they are working autonomously, they are less likely to engage in any activity they do not believe in.

To answer the question of how police officers felt about the philosophy, Tracey Meares (2002) conducted research within the Chicago Police Department. For her research, Meares focused on the highest crime rate district within Chicago. At the time of Meares' research, the district had just concluded a prayer vigil facilitated by the district commander. The district commander believed this prayer vigil would become a vehicle to open communication between the police and the community. For this study, Meares surveyed all officers assigned to the Eleventh District. She discovered that 54.6 percent of those surveyed believed the initiative was good for both the department and the community. Additionally, many indicated activities like the prayer vigil made them feel better about their job. However, officers who indicated they thought the initiative was good for the community and it made them feel better about their job also indicated they thought officers who were interested in this sort of activity should conduct this while off-duty. Meares' research suggests that police officers' thoughts on community policing may not align with the political movement that was taking place in the late 90s concerning Community Policing.

Beginning in 1993, President Clinton began formulating a six-year comprehensive plan for fighting crime. The following year, he signed the 1994 Crime Act, which provided 200 million dollars in Community Policing grants (U.S. Department of Justice, 1999). Over the next six years, the Clinton Administration would provide 8.8 billion dollars aimed at putting more officers on the streets of America. The goal of these grants was to enhance Community Policing through partnerships; however, the majority of the language within the grants revolved around fighting crime. In 1994, President Clinton also established the office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to facilitate the grant and expand community policing programs. In addition to more police officers, this program was also designed to hire more prosecutors to implement community prosecution. Both of these steps were critical to the start of Community Policing, and if the implementation of this program had been better, the results could have been long-

lasting. Law enforcement leaders saw the grant as a way to hire more officers, but obtaining those funds did not necessarily equate to a commitment to Community Policing. Clinton's law enforcement strategy involved two phases. The first phase, Community Policing, had four different objectives: police becoming familiar with their communities, using those relationships to target criminal behavior, reducing fear within the community, and enlisting the communities' help in fighting crime. The second stage involved the 21st Century Policing Initiative, which included funding for technology, communications, and the hiring of additional prosecutors. While the objectives sounded good, they lacked clarity and were not, therefore, measurable. For example, the technology objective was fairly straightforward, but little guidance was given on how to build and use partnerships within the community.

Meares (2002) used her findings on officers' feelings toward the prayer vigil to support her finding that police officers' thoughts on community policing may not align with the political movement. She found that officers believed participating in the prayer vigil went against President Clinton's goal behind the community policing grants. If officers were being hired to participate in these activities, why would the officers believe this was not something they were being asked to do as part of their job? As highlighted by Meares, if these objectives were being achieved, the officers participating in the prayer vigil should understand this was the direction of their agency. Their lack of understanding leads one to believe organizational objectives were not lining up with the community policing initiative as President Clinton outlined. It may also mean that the objectives and understanding of the Community Policing initiative were not being sufficiently pushed down within the police department. While some contradiction is present within this study, the U.S. Department of Justice praises a 25-year low in crime rates with a 20 percent drop in violent crimes (U.S. Department of Justice, 1999). Research is lacking to support the contributions of this program to the drop in violent crimes. Other contributing factors undoubtedly played a role in reducing these numbers. When one considers the Community Policing philosophy, some of these numbers should have increased. With more partnerships and less fear, more reporting should have taken place, which would have increased the numbers.

As previously mentioned, President Clinton's law enforcement strategy was critical in the birthing of Community Policing, but the implementation of this program was less than stellar. For some, the idea behind Community Policing is nothing more than false assumptions (Moore, 1992). But when you look at the overall objectives behind President Clinton's initiative, all the necessary pieces are there. For the philosophy to work, it will take wraparound services to ensure the problems are adequately dealt with. Law enforcement may have the means to arrest someone, but they need help to both identify those involved and prosecute them once they are arrested. Moore emphasized that while the professional model of community policing has not achieved the predicted results, community policing, being loosely defined, allows local jurisdictions to craft solutions to local problems. Moore's point supports the belief that effective police intervention will vary from city to city. A method that sees success in one jurisdiction may not have the same success in another. It is encouraging that some of the programs developed through community policing have proven to be successful in other communities. Community policing has evolved into generalized methods of policing. One will

not find a blueprint to successfully implement community policing because success will largely depend on the community. The important piece to all of this is the creation of partnerships and allowing those partnerships to craft solutions to problems facing the local jurisdiction.

Examining the Core Principles of Community Policing Historically

Lyons (1999) argues that Community Policing has various meanings to different people. The lack of a clear definition and the variety of meanings individuals ascribe to a philosophy is problematic in practical and theoretical applications. In order to develop core principles, Lyons developed and administered a survey across multiple countries. The results of this survey revealed four core principles: community-based crime prevention, reorientation of patrol, increased police accountability, and decentralization of command. The major problem with these principles was the lack of empirical data. These principles were more of a policy decision rather than a philosophy which resulted in poor execution. Community Policing is seen by many as foot patrols within neighborhoods, but that was rarely a major component in 1999. Others viewed this strategy as an attempt to combine crime fighting with a service approach, and some even see this as allowing the community to police themselves. Lyons goes so far as to argue that community policing is more of an aspiration rather than an implementation due to political pressure or the idea of what police should be doing.

Core principles such as problem-solving have always been at the center of Community Policing. The problem with this notion is not the term problem-solving but what the term problem-solving means to various people. Lyon (1999) argues that for some political leaders, this is interpreted as the police defining the problems and the solutions without community involvement. The community involvement is completely abandoned, which further alienates the police from the community. One example Lyons identifies is fear of crime. In theory, if you eliminate fear of crime, citizens are more likely to report issues or have a perceived feeling of safety. Police deploy preventive patrols and rapid response, but by doing this, they have eliminated the availability of those officers to the citizens who need them most. You have removed the neighborhood officer in favor of the more efficient motor officer, with the idea that they are creating a safer atmosphere. However, by doing this, the police department has damaged the social capital gained by the neighborhood officer. Over time the communities that need the most resources are unable to partner with anyone simply because they do not have any resources to provide.

Preventive patrols have been championed by law enforcement executives for years. O.W. Wilson, retired Chicago Police Chief, explained that preventive patrols were the only police service aimed at eliminating misconduct, and he explained it was the leading police service available (Kelling et al., 1974). Contrasting arguments have been made that rapid response units still have sufficient time to participate in preventive patrol measures (Olson & Wright, 1975). To examine the effectiveness of preventive patrols, The Police Foundation sponsored a study in 1974 called *The Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment*. For this study, the experiment focused on 15 different police beats within Kansas City over a period of 12 months. They acknowledged the population density could not match other major cities such as

New York City, but the Uniform Crime Reporting data for crimes such as homicide, burglaries, and assaults closely matched those of other large metropolitan areas. The 15 different police beats were then randomly divided into three groups, each consisting of five police beats. The first group was labeled as reactive policing, meaning they would not conduct any type of random patrol or proactive enforcement. This group would only respond to calls for assistance from citizens. The second group was labeled as the control group, with one car assigned to conduct the normal preventive patrol routine. The last group was labeled as the proactive group meaning they would assign additional manpower equal to two or three times the amount of patrol cars normally in that area. Once the groups were defined, the study developed several hypotheses. The hypothesis addressed in this study included:

1. Crime would not vary by the different types of patrol. This would be established through victim surveys and uniform crime reporting.
2. Citizen perception of police services would not vary by the different patrol patterns.
3. Citizens' fear and behavior would not vary by the different patrol patterns.
4. Police response time and citizen satisfaction with response time would not vary by the different patrol patterns.
5. Traffic accidents would increase within the reactive patrol group (Kelling et al., 1974).

This study affirmed that the identified hypotheses were correct in that response time, criminal activity and citizen satisfaction were not impacted by the various patrol patterns (Kelling et al., 1974). This nullifies some of the perceived benefits of preventive patrol, but as the research indicates, it does not suggest removing police from a particular area to be beneficial. *The Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment* study is one of the leading studies concerning the preventive patrol theory as it relates to crime prevention; however, some questions are left unanswered within the study. For example, the only group that was given special instructions was the reactive group. They were instructed to only respond to calls for service and to otherwise remain unseen. The idea was to take their presence away from the area completely other than to respond to calls for assistance. Those instructions were clear, but the instructions for the proactive group were to patrol as they normally would. Their definition of normal patrol may be to simply drive around without conducting any type of proactive police work. Inspecting cars, pedestrians, and suspicious activity are functions that may lead to crime prevention. Police officers have the ability to investigate various activities in an effort to locate nefarious activities. Additionally, as highlighted in previous research, Olson and Wright (1975) outlined mathematical formulas to optimize the preventive patrol measures indicating measures of success with their implementation formula. As mentioned previously, rapid response units still have time available to perform preventive patrol. According to data collected, rapid response units typically spent approximately 60 percent of their time responding to calls for service (Olson & Wright, 1975). The remaining 40 percent were available for preventive patrol measures. The activities within the proactive group needed to be more clearly defined. Last, both studies failed to consider that the crime they may have prevented is simply relocating to another geographical area. If police are simply moving the criminal activity to another jurisdiction, is this considered a success? That is a question that can only be answered by independent jurisdictions.

Present Day Community Oriented Policing

The Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services (COPS) was created with the passage of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 to assist law enforcement agencies in enhancing public safety through the implementation of community policing strategies. The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office is charged with facilitating grants, research, and literature pertaining to Community Policing. In 2014, the COPS office published a report in an effort to clearly define Community Policing. According to COPS, the definition of Community Policing is:

> "A philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder and fear of crime" (Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014, p. 1).

Although this definition is vague, the report published by COPS goes into great detail, outlining the philosophy and defining the various terms within.

According to COPS, Community Policing has three different components: Community Partnerships, Organizational Transformation, and Problems Solving (Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014). The report breaks each of these components into smaller explanations to help the reader understand the overall objective of this philosophy. The COPS office was not necessarily changing the philosophy, but they were attempting to clearly define what should be expected within Community Policing. Most people can easily understand the term problem solving and partnerships, but one area that may present some challenges would be organizational transformation. This essential component is the biggest difference between older versions and the model that the COPS office was trying to publish.

Organizational transformation is broken into four smaller elements: Agency Management, Organizational Structure, Personnel, and Information Systems (Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014). One of the problems from earlier implementations of Community Policing was the idea that these initiatives could or should be handled by a select few officers within the organization. The COPS Office is detailing an entire philosophical shift from traditional policing to more community-oriented policing. Leadership must ensure the culture of their agency supports community involvement, and the organizational values should be heavily influenced by the community's needs. Organizational values provide a map for all personnel to follow within their decision-making process. Policies will only guide officers to a particular point, and eventually, all officers are forced to make a decision that is not always covered within the policy manual. Generally, officers make decisions in line with the culture or values of the organization. Even if a decision turns out poorly, if the decision was based on the guided value system, they should be able to defend their position. This allows decision-making from the front-line officers, and it enables them to take measured risks in order to problem solve. The COPS officer details the philosophy and provides a blueprint for organizations to implement this philosophy. Additionally, it provides a tool to assist in the problem-solving process.

The COPS office highlights the Crime Triangle in an effort to address immediate concerns with crime. The Crime Triangle illustrates the three requirements for a crime to occur. In order for a crime to occur, you need an opportunity, victim, and offender (Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014). If one of the tenants is removed, you eliminate the ability for crime to occur. This is obviously simplifying the problem, but in most criminal situations, the crime could have easily been avoided if precautions were taken. For example, most cities have an issue with vehicle break-ins. One way to mitigate this issue is for citizens to ensure their vehicles are secure and their valuables are out of sight. Taking these actions may not necessarily stop break-ins from happening, but they will significantly reduce the odds that vehicles will be broken into. Many police departments develop public service announcements (PSA) to address these issues. PSAs are another form of community policing, and these can easily be produced through partnerships within the community. As mentioned above, the COPS office publishes literature to enable organizations to understand the various tenants of Community Policing and to help implement the philosophy within their organizations.

In 2014, following the publication by the COPS office, President Obama signed executive order 13684, forming what is now known as *The Task Force on 21st Century Policing* (Ramsey & Robinson, 2015). This task force was created as a direct result of the unrest and division between communities and their police departments. Commissioner Charles Ramsey (Ret.) from the Philadelphia Police Department and Professor Laurie Robinson from George Mason University Co-Chaired a task force charged with developing a strategy to overcome this division. The task force was charged with developing a best practice blueprint for law enforcement moving forward in an effort to improve relationships. Legislation, policies, and training have been geared toward these initiatives. In order to develop this blueprint, the task force conducted seven public listening sessions and received testimony and guidance from various leaders across the country. The initiative focused on six different pillars: Building Trust and Legitimacy, Policy and Oversight, Technology and Social Media, Community Policing and Crime Reduction, Training and Education, and Officer Wellness and Safety. As one reviews the list of pillars, the correlation between these pillars and the Community Policing philosophy is astounding. The three different tenants described by the COPS office correlate with all but the last pillar. Both of these publications clearly define the latest version of Community Policing. The philosophy did not change, but the definition or clarity of the philosophy takes root within these two publications.

Community Policing in Practical Application

As can be seen in this review of literature, community policing has enjoyed a long history within policing. One of the constant concepts within this philosophy has been the neighborhood officer or beat officer. In 2000, Robert Kane saw the need to empirically test whether or not the beat officer had a positive impact on the neighborhood. According to Kane, theories suggest the beat officer would become vested within the neighborhood and, through this ownership, take more proactive steps toward policing the neighborhood (Kane, 2000). To test his theory, Kane utilized a quasi-experimental design with five different housing facilities in partnership with the Philadelphia Housing Authority Police Department. Kane sought to

measure the beat officer's field activity by examining the officer's proactive investigative activity. Kane theorized that the officer's activity would positively correlate with the officer assuming greater responsibility for the neighborhood or beat.

For this study, Kane obtained five treatment sites to deploy the beat officer while also maintaining four control sites without a beat officer. According to the census data collected, the majority of households within these defined public housing developments were African American and led by single mothers (Kane, 2000). As Kane highlights, critics of this study could argue that public housing developments would have different results than in the general population setting. Kane's argument revolved around the point that public housing officers will possess greater familiarity with the residents simply because it is a self-contained area. Kane failed to consider that public housing settings could resemble a smaller city. Public housing may not represent the same conditions found in a large metropolitan area, but these conditions mirror small-town America. Kane assigned officers to walk beats during business hours and to conduct motor patrol after hours. Kane did not measure anything other than self-initiated activity. As Kane highlights, enforcement is not a key feature of Community Policing, but he believes this was a great way to measure the responsibility taken by the beat officer.

Kane's study revealed an increase in self-initiated activity beginning in week two. Kane did acknowledge that other community policing initiatives were started during week four, but the level of self-initiated activity remained constant. Kane believes the study was able to reflect that other programs did not cloud his assessment of the beat officer. Kane also explains that even after the other initiatives were introduced, the control group's activity did not increase. This further proves that the beat assignment was able to prove that officers who are permanently assigned to areas have taken greater responsibility for that particular neighborhood. Kane did use the term permanently loosely, acknowledging his use of this term reflected weeks rather than years, as may be implied by the word permanently. While this study did determine an increase in police activity, it did not assess the quality of the activity. Measuring citizen satisfaction with these services would be an important piece of this study that Kane failed to obtain.

Citizen satisfaction and crime reduction are key features of community policing. The next study focuses on how citizens perceive community policing and the impact these initiatives have on their satisfaction. In 1996, Kuotsai Tom Liou and Eugene Savage published a study they conducted in West Palm Beach, Florida. For this study, two surveys were drafted and completed by citizens within three different neighborhoods. The first survey was sent out prior to the implementation of any type of Community Policing program. The second survey was mailed to those who completed the first, but after Community Policing programs had been implemented for six months. Nine different research variables were measured for this study: three demographic variables and six perception variables (Liou & Savage, 1996). The demographic variables measured were the respondent's age, race, and the community they lived in. The perception variables measured were crime, police work, neighborhood improvement, and police-community relations.

Results from this survey revealed a 32 percent increase that citizens perceived crime was reducing (Liou & Savage, 1996). Liou and Savage did not include actual crime data, which would have been a great detail to add. Perception is not always reality, and if crime data showed crime had actually decreased, these results would be stronger. In addition to crime reduction, the data revealed a 31 percent increase in the citizen's belief that police work was improving. These positive findings were shared among the various demographics measured, and they were found to be statistically significant. One missing piece within this study was a description of the Community Policing activity. Researchers failed to describe what the officers were doing and how those activities influenced the surveys. For policymakers, information on the particular programs implemented would have proven useful.

Another study supporting the findings of Liou and Savage (1996) is a study conducted in 2019 attempting to answer the question of whether positive, non-enforcement interactions with police officers influence attitudes toward police officers (Peyton et al., 2019). For this study, they obtained a total of 2,013 participants who agreed to be part of the survey. They randomly divided the group into a test group of 1,007 and a control group of 1,006. Both groups were surveyed to obtain baseline readings, and they agreed to two follow-up surveys after the treatment was administered. The follow-up surveys took place three days after the treatment and then again 21 days later. The treatment used for this study involved contact with a uniformed officer at their residence. Officers were trained in the appropriate measures to take during this intervention. At the conclusion of this study, they discovered that a single positive contact with a uniform officer significantly improved the participant's attitude toward police and their willingness to cooperate. Their study also revealed an increase in the public's support for a ten percent budget increase to hire additional officers. The results of this study were greater for minority participants meaning their feelings and cooperation with police improved more than non-minority participants. This study further demonstrates the validity behind community policing and the impact these initiatives can have on the public's view of policing.

Methodology

Research Design

This exploratory study will utilize a quantitative survey to gain a better understanding of community policing. This author recognizes that exploratory studies do not provide conclusive results; however, the information gained from rank-and-file officers will add to the body of knowledge on community policing. A non-probability convenience sampling method was utilized. Convenience sampling was chosen because the researcher had access to databases that included the email addresses of officers serving across Kentucky. The electronic delivery of the survey allowed this researcher to include respondents from a wide geographic area from all ranks within the police departments. The 22 survey items were designed around specific Community Policing activities such as forming partnerships, foot patrols, compassion, transparency, and direct questions related to the respondent's feelings toward the philosophy.

Demographic questions related to the respondent's age, rank of assignment, years of service, and size of the agency of employment were included in the survey. One question that was omitted was the respondent's education level. A question regarding the respondent's education level would allow consideration to be given toward higher education and the impact that may have on the respondent's views toward community policing. This was omitted, as were other questions, in an effort to reduce the time it would take to complete the survey. Demographic survey questions were selected to examine identified variables that this researcher hypothesized may contribute to perceptions of Community Policing. Although a plethora of assumptions could be raised concerning intervening demographic variables, this researcher focused on the following:

1. As one ages and matures, they are more likely to develop better partnerships within the community.
2. The length of time an officer is deployed as a line officer may lead to less compassion due to the long periods of exposure.
3. Perceptions of Community Policing may vary across ranks and assignments. The overall mission of a detective will be different from a patrol officer.
4. Higher-ranking officers may have a better understanding of Community Policing.

Target Population

The target population for this study is certified law enforcement officers within the State of Kentucky. Certified law enforcement was defined as any officer within the State of Kentucky who is currently serving as a police officer and possesses a certification from the Peace Officer's Professional Standards (POPS) or POPS certified. The respondent's certification was not verified, but the survey link was only sent through law enforcement channels. The Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police was instrumental in sending out the link to all Chiefs within the Commonwealth. Additionally, the link was sent to the Department of Criminal Justice Training, and they disseminated the survey to serving executives around the State.

Procedures and Limitations

To complete this study, a 22-item survey was developed through Survey Monkey utilizing a Likert Scale. The Likert Scale is a commonly used response method to measure the respondent's level of agreement or disagreement with a specific statement. For this study, the response of neutral was removed from the scale to force respondents to either agree or disagree with the statement. The availability of neutral as a response would render the response to the item invalid. The respondent still has the option to skip the item; however, asking the respondent to either agree or disagree enhances the response rate of the respondent.

Once the survey was developed, it was disseminated to law enforcement agencies throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The survey was open and available for three weeks. In addition to personal contacts, two different organizations were utilized to facilitate the dissemination: the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police (KACP) and the Department of Criminal Justice Training (DOCJT). The link was sent with a brief introduction to include an

electronic consent. Surveys were completed anonymously, and the results were maintained within the Survey Monkey software. Items within the survey make it impossible to determine the respondent's identity or the organization they are employed by. This was an important piece to this study since the survey was electronically sent. Officers may have been apprehensive to complete the survey honestly if they believed revealing their identity could adversely affect them within their agency.

Research projects typically have some form of limitations, and it is important to discuss the limitations of this study. This study is exploratory and thus serves as a great starting point for additional research. Ideally, the surveys would be followed by focus groups within specific agencies. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic plaguing our nation, the ability to meet with people is severely limited. Obtaining approval through the Institutional Review Board to conduct research in person and receiving access to staff from organizational leaders is extremely challenging. The IRB and organizational leaders have a duty to protect their staff, and the risk associated with in-person contact is too high at this time. However, the results of this study should provide a foundation for additional data collection.

Another limitation of this research is the lack of trust between research in general and the survey respondents. Law enforcement officers are naturally skeptical of people and their motives. One of the best ways to overcome this obstacle is through personal contact. Personal contact can easily be achieved through focus groups; however, as previously mentioned, personal contact is not available due to COVID-19 restrictions. The ability to explain the purpose of this study is unavailable.

Research Questions

This study includes four primary research questions:

1. What is the relationship between the rank of the officer and the level of agreement with Community Policing practices?
2. What is the relationship between the officer's level of agreement with the community policing philosophy and the officer engaging in community practice concepts?
3. What is the relationship between the size of the department and the frequency of community policing activities?
4. What is the relationship between the size of the department and the level of agreement with community practice concepts?

Data Analysis

Data collected through this process was strictly confidential, and all respondents acknowledged consent through the use of an online consent waiver. Data collected through the survey prevents those with access from identifying any of the respondents. All demographic and descriptive questions were collected through Survey Monkey and transferred to SPSS to enable further examination of the data. One data set was modified to enable better analysis. Item 22 regarding the organizational size was reduced from eight eligible responses to three.

The size remained constant; however, the eligible answers were changed into larger groups defined as small, medium, and large. The responses were not modified, but the group they were in was reduced to enhance the ability to analyze the data. Small is defined as organizations with one to 30 officers, medium with 31 to 50, and large with 51 or more officers. Once the data was transferred, a simple frequency test was conducted to allow this study to explain the responses to each item.

The analysis through SPSS included correlations between various items in an effort to further identify both positive and negative relationships. The point of this test was to determine the strength or statistical significance between variables and the direction of that relationship: positive or negative. Discovering the correlation between variables will allow this study to examine the magnitude of those relationships. Additionally, chi-square examinations were used to determine the association between variables and whether this association supported the research hypothesis. Through these correlations, this study will be able to determine the linkage between an officer's rank and their understanding or agreement with the Community Policing Philosophy.

Ethical Considerations

Throughout this process, no identifying information was collected from respondents. Each respondent provided consent through an online consent decree, and the only contact between the researcher and the respondent was through a survey link. Each respondent was provided with the information of the researcher, but the researcher did not collect identifying information about the respondent. In addition to the consent, each respondent was provided with their right to withdraw from the research and was provided the contact information for the researcher. Data collection for this study was completed within the parameters set by Campbellsville University Institutional Review Board Research guidelines.

Data Collection and Analysis

Introduction

This study is an exploratory study aimed at discovering the obstacles between the idea of community policing and the implementation of this philosophy. To complete this study, a 22-item survey was created in an effort to identify correlating patterns between the idea of community policing and actionable steps toward this philosophy. With the help of the Kentucky Association of Chiefs of Police and the Department of Criminal Justice Training, a survey link was sent to various police chiefs in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The study resulted in 234 completed surveys from across the Commonwealth. The number of police officers who received this link, but failed to respond, was not captured in this study. Over the next several pages, this chapter will discuss the data collected and conclusions drawn through that information.

Description of Sample (Participants)

The only participants in this study were certified peace officers within the Commonwealth of Kentucky. The certification of each respondent was not verified; however, the link providing access to the survey was only sent through law enforcement channels of communication. Additionally, the survey was drafted with an introduction advising certification as a Kentucky Peace Officer was required to complete the survey (Appendix 3). Items contained within the survey apply directly to the functions of a police officer and the various assignments within policing. To further understand the demographics within this study, it is important to discuss the various assignments and ages of those who completed the survey.

As mentioned above, the survey resulted in 234 respondents, and their mean age was 44.92 years old. The youngest person who completed the survey was 24 years old, and the oldest was 69 years old. Almost half of those who responded serve in some form of command role with the agency assigned. Respondents assigned to patrol made up the next highest response group at 26.5 percent. These assignment variations are important because they allow the study to correlate the significance of feelings toward community policing from the perspective of their assigned role within the police department. Commanders typically set the organizational direction, but the patrol officers are responsible for carrying out that vision. Of those who responded, 49 percent indicated they had more than 21 years of law enforcement experience, and only 6.8 percent had five years or less. Ideally, this number would be evenly distributed across the five different options; however, 26.1 percent indicated they had 6-15 years of experience. While these numbers are not evenly distributed, the survey resulted in a significant number of respondents in each category. In addition to the number of years each respondent had been policing, the survey also captured the size of the organization they are employed by. The survey allowed for a narrower assignment, but for this study, those numbers were combined into three groups: small, medium, and large. The respondents in both the small (89) and large (90) police departments are almost identical, and the number of respondents representing the medium (55) departments is significant. One piece of information missing from this study was the respondent's education level. The respondent's education level may have contributed to this study, but that was only realized after the survey was live. Any action to include that after the survey was sent would have jeopardized the validity of the survey instrument. While that information may have proved beneficial, it should not impact this study but may fail to consider an important factor in someone's belief in a particular philosophy.

Presentation of the Data

The survey consisted of 22 items, four of which were demographics such as age, current assignment, years of policing experience, and organizational size. The remaining 18 items related to the respondent's feelings toward the Community Policing philosophy and various actions they may take during the course of their duties. The items contained a mix of answers. Thirteen of the 18 items contained the Likert Scale, and the other five items provided a more specific answer. The Likert Scale items provided the following options: Strongly Agree, Agree,

Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The option of neutral or the ability to provide a middle answer was not made available to the respondent, but they had the option to skip the item. The remaining items provided a mix of options available for the respondent to choose from. For a more detailed view of the survey and the answers respondents had to choose from, please refer to appendix 3.

Survey Results

Once the survey was completed, the items were divided into four groups. Respondents were not provided with grouped items as they completed the survey. The items, except for the last group, were mixed together. The last group contained the demographics explained at the beginning of this chapter. All other groups were mixed together. The first group consists of five items outlining the respondent's overall feelings about the Community Policing philosophy. The second group narrows the items to specific pieces within the philosophy, such as creating partnerships. The third group measures the respondent's feelings toward specific actions, such as conducting foot patrols. The vision of this study was to ask questions that represented the general idea of this philosophy, particular pieces within the philosophy and specific actions which represent the Community Policing philosophy. This will enable further analysis or correlations between the various pieces. It should also allow this study to measure the understanding of the philosophy between the various ranks and assignments.

Group one contains five items regarding the general view of Community Policing. The following items represent group one:

1. Do you believe your department possesses a Community Policing philosophy?
2. Community Policing is a great philosophy within Policing.
3. Which of the following statements most represents your view of Community Policing?
4. Community Policing does not work on the street, it is better suited for PIO/SRO and leadership.
5. Community Policing is great for the classroom but it does not apply to real world policing.

Group one enables this study to determine the different opinions or feelings toward this philosophy across the various ages, ranks, and assignments involved. The frequencies within all five items are almost identical. Positive feelings toward the philosophy average approximately 90 percent, while negative views of this philosophy make up the other ten percent.

Group two represents a closer view of the respondent's feelings toward particular pieces within the philosophy. The following items represent group two:

1. Do you believe mitigating crime is a job for? (answer specific options were available)
2. Whose job is it to create partnerships within the police department?
3. Making arrests are the best way to solve problems.
4. Partnerships with community leaders is extremely important to my mission
5. Transparency is critical to trust between the community and police department.

Similar to group one, group two also had similar frequencies across all items, with the exception of one. The study revealed that 96.2 percent of respondents believed both the police and

community were responsible for mitigating crime, 92.7 percent believed all officers were responsible for creating partnerships, 96.1 percent believed partnerships were important to the mission, and 97 percent believed transparency is critical to trust between the police and community. The single item that received a mixed response was whether or not making arrests is the best way to solve crime. Those results indicated that 30.8 percent believed making an arrest was the best way to solve crime.

Group three takes a look at specific actions taken by officers that are considered Community Policing. The following is a list of items for group three:

1. I treat people with respect.
2. I am fair to everyone I come into contact with.
3. I show compassion to even those I arrest.
4. I conduct foot patrols.
5. Within the past year, I have worked with a complainant in an effort to solve their problem rather than simply take a report.
6. I enjoy getting out of my car and talking to people in an unofficial capacity.
7. Contacts I have made through work greatly assist me with my duties.
8. I just want to be left alone to do my job.

Group three revealed greater variance than the first two groups. Items related to treating people with respect, fairness to all and showing compassion received either 100 percent agreement or 99 percent agreement. The item inquiring about the officer's initiative to go beyond taking a report indicated 94 percent of respondents have attempted to solve the problem rather than simply taking a report. Similarly, over 95 percent of respondents indicated they enjoy getting out of their vehicle and talking with people. Additionally, over 95 percent indicated they acknowledged that contacts they have made assist them with their duties. The variance within this group comes from two different items: the response to their frequency of foot patrols, and I just want to be left alone to do my job. Over half, 58.5 percent, of respondents were removed from the item related to foot patrols due to their rank or assignment. Out of the remaining 41 percent, 8.5 percent indicated they only conduct foot patrols if they are told to conduct them. As indicated throughout this study, foot patrols have been considered a critical piece of community policing. When we consider 26.5 percent of respondents indicated they are assigned to patrol, the 8.5 percent who indicated they only conduct foot patrols if they are told makes up approximately half of those respondents. The last item within this group involves the respondent's desire to be left alone to do their job. Of those surveyed, 25.6 percent indicated they simply want to be left alone to do their job. The majority of respondents, 74.4 percent, disagreed with this statement; however, when we consider the percentage of patrol involved with this survey, that is an important factor to examine.

Results of Analysis

The frequencies contained within various items indicate that the majority of respondents view Community Policing as a positive, effective philosophy. While it is important to consider the frequency numbers, the ability to correlate items that have such a high

percentage of one particular answer runs the risk of including type I errors within the analysis. To safeguard against rejecting the null hypothesis incorrectly, several items were excluded from further analysis. The following is a list of items omitted for further evaluation:

1. Q5, Partnerships with community leaders is extremely important to my mission
2. Q6, I treat people with respect
3. Q7, I am fair to everyone I come into contact with
4. Q8, I show compassion to even those I arrest
5. Q9, Transparency is critical to trust between the community and police department
6. Q12, I conduct foot patrols
7. Q14, I enjoy getting out of my car and talking to people in an unofficial capacity
8. Q15, Contacts I have made through work greatly assist me with my duties

Another item that presented problems for additional analysis related to the frequency of foot patrols. Over half, 58.5 percent, indicated the item did not apply due to their rank or assignment. While the frequency numbers contained within the remaining 41.5 percent provided great insight into this question, the ability to further analyze this question presented dangers of incorrectly rejecting or accepting the null hypothesis.

Correlations

The primary purpose of the correlation study was to determine the strength or statistical significance between variables and the direction of that relationship: positive or negative. For the first research question, this study attempted to determine whether or not a relationship existed between an officer's rank and their level of agreement with Community Policing practices. To answer this question, a statistical analysis was conducted on the correlations between the rank of the officer and whether or not they believed making arrests was the best way to solve problems. The correlation between these two variables revealed a negligible, positive Pearson Correlation at .173. While the correlation was negligible, it did reveal a statistical significance as p=.008. The correlation was positive, meaning that as the officer's rank increased, so did their disagreement that making arrests was the best way to solve problems. Additionally, this study examined the officer's rank compared to their level of agreement regarding the variable they wanted to be left alone to do their job. This exam indicates a correlation between these two variables revealing a moderate, positive Pearson Correlation. The relationship was statistically significant as p=.000. The direction of this relationship is positive, meaning as the rank goes up, so does the disagreement that they want to be left alone to do their job. The magnitude of the association is moderate at .304. These variables support the research hypothesis that as officer's rank increases, their level of agreement with Community Policing practices also increases.

The second research question attempted to determine if a relationship existed between the officer's level of agreement in community policing and their engagement in community policing practices. To examine this question, a statistical analysis was conducted to examine the correlation between an independent variable and two dependent variables. The independent variable measured was whether or not the respondent believed community policing was a great philosophy. This variable was then compared to whether or not the respondent had

worked with a complainant within the past year and their level of agreement with the statement that they just wanted to be left alone to do their job (see Table 6). The first two variables, belief in the philosophy and working with a complainant, revealed a statistically significant relationship as *p*=.001. The direction of this relationship is positive, meaning as the level of agreement that community policing is a great philosophy goes up, the respondent's acknowledgment that they have worked with a complainant also goes up. The magnitude of the positive Pearson Correlation is weak at .209. The second two variables, belief in the philosophy and desire to be left alone, have a statistically significant relationship as *p*=.000. The direction of this relationship is negative, meaning as one variable increases, the other decreases. As the agreement that community policing is a great philosophy increased, the level of agreement that the respondent wanted to be left alone to do their job decreased. The magnitude of the negative Pearson Correlation is moderate at -.407. Once again, these variables support that a relationship exists between the level of agreement with the philosophy and the willingness to practice community policing principles.

The third objective of this research was to determine if a relationship existed between organizational size and community policing activities. Three variables were examined to determine if a relationship existed. The dependent variable related to the organizational size, and the two independent variables were the same as in question two. One related to working with the complainant, while the other related to being left alone to do their job. These variables did not produce a significant correlation. Faced with these results, this researcher attempted to discover other correlations with previously mentioned variables that included risks of sampling errors, but none of the applicable variables revealed any type of correlation with the organizational size.

The fourth objective was to determine if a relationship existed between the size of the organization and the level of agreement with Community Policing Concepts. The range of variables used within the analysis of this objective was greater than the previous three. The independent variable for this analysis was the organizational size. The dependent variables included six different variables:

1. Do you believe mitigating crime is the job for
2. Whose job is it to create partnerships within the police department
3. Making arrests are the best way to solve problems
4. Community Policing is a great philosophy
5. Community Policing does not work on the street, it is better suited for PIO/SRO
6. Community Policing is great for the classroom but it does not apply to real world policing

The only variables that presented with any type of statistical significance would be the correlation between the organization size and the belief that Community Policing is a great philosophy. The size of the police department and the belief that Community Policing is a great philosophy has a statistically significant relationship as *p*=.002. The direction of this relationship is positive, meaning that as the size of the organization increases, the belief in the Community Policing philosophy decreases. The numerical coding for these variables both increase together, but the numerical increase for the statement Community Policing is a great philosophy within

policing indicates a higher frequency of disagreement. The magnitude of the positive Pearson Correlation is weak at .206. These variables support that a relationship exists between the organizational size and the belief in the Community Policing philosophy.

Summary

The primary goal of this study was to explore possible obstacles to the understanding, implementation, and practice of community policing. Three of the four objectives identified within this study were statistically linked, which may guide future research and policy development. The relationship between an officer's rank and their level of agreement with community policing practices indicates that lower-ranking officers have less desire to participate in these types of activities. Additionally, a relationship exists between belief in the philosophy and the willingness or desire to participate in commonly known practices of community policing. Lower-ranking officers are charged with carrying out the vision of their leaders, but if they do not share the same vision, they are less likely to successfully fulfill that mission.

While this study was unable to statistically link the organizational size to an increase or decrease in community policing activities, it was able to successfully link the size of the organization to the level of agreement within the community policing philosophy. Conclusions may be drawn from the second research objective indicating relationships between belief in the philosophy and the willingness to participate in commonly known practices. The conclusion from the second objective could correlate to the third, indicating that if a person does not believe in the program, they are less likely to participate in the activities surrounding a particular program. Even though this study failed to connect the organizational size to that hypothesis, conclusions can be drawn, which may warrant additional research.

Summary of Results

This exploratory study examined a survey completed by 234 certified Kentucky law enforcement officers. The results of this study provided statistical evidence that three of the four objectives merit further examination. Evidence suggests that a relationship exists between an officer's rank and their agreement with Community Policing practices. In fact, only 30.8 percent of respondents indicated that making arrests is the best way to solve problems within the community. While this study is not suggesting enforcement of criminal codes is not necessary, making an arrest is not always the best or preferred option. Additionally, 25.6 percent of respondents indicated they want to be left alone to do their job, but as the officer's rank increased, this belief decreased. Leaders of organizations are aware of the positive impact this philosophy can have on their community, but this understanding must be pushed down to the line officers. As mentioned above, officers perform heroically on a daily basis, but law enforcement and the community must come together to bridge this gap.

Next, this study showed a relationship between an officer's level of agreement with community policing and their willingness to participate in community policing practices. Similar

to an officer's rank, data showed that as the officer's belief in community policing increased, their desire to be left alone decreased. Additionally, as their belief in the philosophy increased, their desire to work with a complainant to solve their problem also increased. This evidence indicates that with a better understanding of this philosophy, officers are more likely to work with their community partners in solving problems rather than simply making an arrest or taking a report. Last, a mere 8.5 percent indicated they only conduct foot patrols if they are told to, or they are assigned to a special detail. When you first consider the 8.5 percent, it appears to be a small percentage; however, 58.8 percent of respondents indicated the question did not apply due to their rank or assignment. While the 8.5 percent is a small number, it becomes much larger when you consider that only 41.5 percent have the option of conducting foot patrols.

The third objective of this exploratory research was to find if a relationship existed between the organization's size and its practice of community policing activities. This research failed to find any correlating patterns that would support this hypothesis. Additional research would be needed to explore this hypothesis further. Most of the actionable community policing practice items received a 90 percent or greater response in favor of that particular activity. Because of the high percentage, the correlation exams did not yield a statistically significant calculation. Additionally, the chi-square exam revealed possible sampling errors within the item.

As this study examined the final hypothesis, the study revealed a statistical significance between the relationship of the organizational size and the officer's agreement with the Community Policing philosophy. While the correlation was a weak correlation, the correlation did possess a statistical significance indicating that as the organizational size increased, the belief in the Community Policing philosophy decreased.

While this study shows a lack of understanding or approval in community policing, it does not provide any insight as to why officers may have indicated they lack confidence in this philosophy. This study did find statistical evidence that this philosophy is not supported by line officers, and it also provided evidence that line officers overwhelmingly responded favorably to items such as treating people with respect, 100 percent, and agree that they show compassion to even those they arrest, 99.1 percent.

Limitations

The sample group for this study was small and contained to the State of Kentucky. The statistical analysis would have been stronger if the sample group was larger. It may have provided greater insight or provided this study with stronger correlations. Additionally, this study had a high response rate from command-level officers, but only 26 percent indicated they were assigned as a patrol officer. A greater response rate is needed from line officers to gain a better understanding of their views toward community policing.

Another limitation of this study was the trust between the researcher and respondents. As a law enforcement professional, this researcher can attest that trust is often guarded, and police officers are naturally skeptical of academic studies. Conducting focus groups with law enforcement would provide an opportunity for the officers to get to know their researchers. They have the ability to ask questions and gain a level of understanding which may break through possible barriers between the researcher and the officer. Additionally, it would have allowed for follow-up questions to ensure the study was obtaining an accurate picture of the respondent's answer to a particular item.

Recommendations

This study has revealed a relationship between line officers and the unfavorable belief in community policing. Community policing is not viewed favorably by the officers charged with carrying out the vision of their leader. It is imperative that further examination is completed to gain a better understanding as to why this philosophy is viewed unfavorably. For example, as shown in this study, a large percentage of officers believe making an arrest is the best way to solve a problem. While Community Policing does not remove the enforcement element of policing, it is not the preferred method to reduce crime and create a sense of security. Arrests are often a necessary element in solving problems, but they are often a short-term fix. Greater problem-solving will always be necessary to enhance public safety. Understanding why this philosophy is viewed unfavorably may enable actionable steps toward improving those views. As indicated throughout this study, community policing may not be the answer to society's problems, but it is a good place to start.

Leaders of organizations may use this study to validate concerns regarding this philosophy. This researcher would encourage law enforcement leaders to understand the people who carry out their mission. It is easy to develop a mission statement and even attach values to the organization, but they must ensure those values are shared by the organization as a whole. As leaders look within their ranks, developing focus groups to enable a better understanding of why some officers may have negative views toward this philosophy while others do not would enable them to develop the necessary steps to ensure their organization is operating within the community mindset. As this study has indicated, fighting crime is an essential element of law enforcement, but it must be accomplished with the community rather than unilaterally.

Last, this study focused on law enforcement but additional research involving community members would be beneficial. In order for partnerships to develop, community members must be willing to partner with their police departments. Communities benefit from forming these partnerships, but it is important for law enforcement to understand the expectations of their community and their willingness to step forward.

Conclusion

Policing in the United States is one of the most challenging jobs available. Split-second decisions may be analyzed for years, and if that decision involves taking the life of another, the consequences of that decision will be life-altering. Community policing was not designed to eliminate the need to use force, nor will it prevent a critical incident from happening; however, community policing fosters an atmosphere of mutual trust and partnerships. Through these partnerships, a city will be better equipped to deal with those critical incidents as they occur, and community leaders will have the ability to obtain unbiased information. Communities throughout this country continue to talk about defunding the police, but if someone needs assistance, regardless of budgetary restraints, the police will always answer that call. Rather than continue talks about defunding and painting police as society's problem, steps need to be taken to build partnerships with our police. Through these partnerships, community members can take an active role in ensuring their communities are safe for generations to come. It is important for community leaders to take active steps in understanding the philosophy of community policing and partner with law enforcement to solve their cities' problems. As this study has indicated, hesitation exists toward this philosophy, and leadership must take active steps to eliminate this hesitation. That can only be accomplished by identifying the issues that are preventing these partnerships from forming.

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