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Institutionalizing place-based policing: the adoption of a Case of Place approach

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Abstract

Purpose – Research shows that crime and disorder tend to concentrate in small, geographic locations and that place-based and problem-solving policing strategies can impact crime and disorder without displacing it to neighboring areas. However, implementation of problem-solving is a challenge. Loosely defined locations, shallow problem analysis, and distractions to problem-solving are cited implementation shortcomings. These shortcomings may be overcome by using the Case of Place approach, a case management strategy focused on documenting and analyzing place-based dynamics and characteristics to inform and direct policing strategies. The paper aims to discuss these issues.

Design/methodology/approach – The current study describes the adoption of the Case of Place approach in an urban police agency's operations and performance management system. The authors utilize implementation theory to explore and explain the adoption of this new place-based strategy.

Findings – Key findings reveal important structural and cultural challenges to implementation. Structural challenges included modifying supervision structures, creating new positions, decentralizing analytical functions, and redirecting resources to problem-solving. Cultural challenges observed included emphasizing problem-solving as an organizational priority, integrating crime analysts into neighborhood precincts, and centering performance management processes around problem-solving.

Originality/value – The authors explore how implementation dynamics impact the adoption of new policies and practices, and offer a number of propositions for the use of the Case of Place approach within a place-based strategy portfolio.

Keywords Problem-oriented policing, Implementation, Place-based policing, Case of Place

Paper type Research paper

Place-based policing

Place-based policing acknowledges that crime concentrates within small geographic areas (see Braga *et al.*, 2012; Shaw and McKay, 1942) and encourages focused police intervention at specific locations, often referred to as hot spots (Braga and Bond, 2008; Weisburd *et al.*, 2017). Hot spots are smaller areas, such as buildings or small street segments, with key attributes that may facilitate the occurrence of crime (Lum and Koper, 2017). Research shows that place-based policing strategies can prevent crime without displacing it to neighboring areas (e.g. Weisburd and Majimundar, 2017; Braga and Bond, 2008; Braga *et al.*, 2012; Lum *et al.*, 2011; Sherman and Eck, 2002; Weisburd, Telep, and Braga, 2010). Moreover, there is the potential that these strategies may foster a diffusion of crime control benefits into surrounding areas (Weisburd and Majimundar, 2017).

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Overall, the effects of focused police strategies in crime hot spots are accepted as robust, with many interventions producing crime reductions in targeted areas (see Braga *et al.*, 2012; Braga and Bond, 2008; Weisburd and Majimundar, 2017). In a recent systematic review of hot spots policing programs, researchers found that they can produce improvements in crime control (see Braga *et al.*, 2012). Since this review, several studies evaluating hot spots policing programs have also supported their effectiveness in crime control (e.g. Telep *et al.*, 2014; Bichler *et al.*, 2013). Many of these studies are compiled in the Evidence-Based Policing Matrix[1], one of the most robust repositories of evidence-based policing practices (Lum *et al.*, 2011; Lum and Koper, 2017). This matrix includes a section on "Micro-Places," providing easy access to relevant research on places.

Problem-oriented policing

One particularly grounded place-based policing approach is problem-oriented policing, a proactive model of policing where police identify and target underlying problems that spur crime and disorder (Weisburd, Telep, Hinkle, and Eck, 2010; Goldstein, 1979). Problem-oriented policing acknowledges that police must work with community stakeholders to address issues beyond crime, such as social and physical disorder (Goldstein, 1979; Weisburd, Telep, Hinkle, and Eck, 2010). This approach can be useful in addressing concentrated crime areas as it affords officers an opportunity to identify underlying crime and disorder conditions at chronic hot spot locations. In turn, officers tailor strategies toward the specified problem and places of interest (Lum and Koper, 2017). Problem-solving within a broader place-based policing strategy, but in specific micro-places, may address current policing challenges by emphasizing a proactive approach to address social and physical disorder issues, facilitating the reduction of criminogenic factors within the environment in which crime typically occurs (e.g. Lum *et al.*, 2012; Weisburd and Eck, 2004; Lum and Koper, 2017).

Implementation challenges

There are several challenges to implementing problem-solving and place-based policing strategies, including weak problem analysis, over-policing high crime or hot spot areas, limited non-police based responses, and resultant concerns over the creation of poor relations between the police and the community (Braga and Bond, 2008; Rosenbaum, 2006; Lum *et al.*, 2012; Weisburd and Majimundar, 2017). Additionally, some police practitioners believe that hot spots policing will displace crime into other areas (Weisburd and Braga, 2006; Lum and Koper, 2017; Weisburd *et al.*, 2017). While some studies have demonstrated that a diffusion of crime control benefits may occur in other areas (e.g. Weisburd *et al.*, 2006), questions remain about how crime (and crime prevention) spreads (see Lum and Koper, 2017; Rosenbaum, 2006).

Police departments also remain disconnected from science (Weisburd and Neyroud, 2014). Although many studies demonstrate effectiveness, the translation of research into practice remains a challenge, and has garnered less funding and interest (Lum *et al.*, 2012). Fundamental differences exist between researchers and practitioners, as these two groups often have different goals and expectations, some of which include different ways of thinking about policing and measures of effectiveness (Lum *et al.*, 2012; Willis and Mastrofski, 2011).

To alleviate the issues in this translation of evidence within policing, agencies can embrace practical and empirically grounded methodologies for collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data on problem locations (Weisburd, 2008), yet such guides remain limited. Weisburd and Neyroud (2014) present one example of how this shift into "science-based policing" may look. They propose that police departments must work to shift the attitudes and approaches of the police department toward being grounded in science, with leaders

viewing science as essential to agency efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy of staff members and police agencies. Fundamental organizational changes such as the adoption of new problem-solving methodologies may facilitate an environment that is more receptive to research (Lum *et al.*, 2012).

The Case of Place approach

The Case of Place approach is a relatively new approach supporting the "systematic investigation and tracking of hot spots to develop problem-solving interventions tailored to specific places" (Koper *et al.*, 2015, p. 242). The Case of Place approach offers a methodology for investigating and integrating problem-solving into police operations. Specifically, the approach directs police to investigate, document, and analyze the history and physical and social dynamics of problem locations, victim views, suspects and offenders, and police actions and interventions at these locations. By creating a "case file," police conduct a more in-depth assessment, improving the potential for long-term success of crime reduction (Lum and Koper, 2017; Braga *et al.*, 2011). Through this comprehensive "case management" approach, police departments collaborate with the community to analyze issues at hot spots, identify causes, and respond with an emphasis on prevention and enforcement (Lum and Koper, 2017). Thus, this approach offers one potential fix for many of the implementation challenges of problem-solving.

Several ideas situate the Case of Place approach within the current problem-solving and place-based strategy portfolio. First, as proposed, police should devote the same resources to investigating a problem place as they would to investigating a criminal incident. Second, accessing existing organizational and cultural structures of investigations, such as the widely recognized and adopted case management practice, within a place-based strategy can address the challenges of research translation through the use of a practical process for problem-solving. Lastly, the Case of Place approach includes templates to capture evidence-based factors in crime and policing practice (Lum and Koper, 2017), providing a practical mechanism for institutionalizing evidence-based practices.

Theoretical framework

"Implementation research concerns the development of systematic knowledge regarding what emerges, or is induced, as actors deal with a policy problem" (O'Toole, 2000, p. 266). Implementation science directs our attention to the actors and actions that follow policy goal setting, as well as the interactions between these various elements. The evidence regarding crime reduction strategies has exploded in the past several decades (National Research Council, 2004), and while reviews make strong recommendations to pay attention to the implementation of evidence-based practice (Braga, 2017), our knowledge regarding how these policies are implemented, and what implementation factors support or impede effectiveness, is limited. Practitioners need to know that a strategy works, but also the implementation elements needed to produce desired outcomes (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). Thus, there is great need in capturing the challenges of implementing evidence-based crime policy, including place-based strategies, to design an implementation process that supports success.

Implementation science can assist in the understanding of how policies are transferred and implemented from one setting to another (O'Toole, 2000), which may help address the concerns of police regarding transference of lessons (Rosenbaum, 2006). Moreover, researchers and practitioners want to adopt policy that shows promise for achieving outcomes, but there is a need to know what happens between goal setting and outcomes measurement, particularly if effectiveness is not achieved. They want to know why (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). Is there fault in theory or implementation?

The current study

This study examined the adoption of the Case of Place approach by a mid-sized, urban police agency. The city is dense (under 15 square miles), with an ethnically and economically diverse population of 105,000 residents. Crime is concentrated in a small number of locations, mostly around the city's core. The agency employs 235 officers and 100 civilian staff. While the agency has long embraced community and problem-oriented policing, the economic recession of 2008 resulted in a reduction of sworn personnel and proactive policing. Crime problems are a persistent challenge in this city. In 2013, the city reported a total of 10,246 NIBRS crimes, which included 8,388 Group A (i.e. crimes such as homicide, assaults, robberies) and 1,858 Group B crimes (i.e. loitering, vagrancy). These totals reflected an increase (3 percent) from 2012.

In 2013, a new police superintendent was appointed and immediately revived the agency's proactive policing efforts[2]. Having previously utilized place-based and offender-based strategies, the superintendent sought out research evidence (Ratcliffe *et al.*, 2011; Taylor *et al.*, 2011; Uchida *et al.*, 2012) on effective place-based crime strategies to facilitate promising crime control results.

What resulted from this review and a larger visioning process was a department reorganization, including the redesign of patrol areas, adoption of new operational structures and practices, and decentralization of crime analysts to support communication with patrol. Officers were selected to serve as District Response Officer's (DRO) to work with patrol, investigators, and analysts to problem-solve in identified places of concern, using a new Case of Place approach. Lastly, the agency's Compstat was redesigned to integrate Case of Place and problem-solving efforts into their performance management system. This paper examines how the Case of Place approach was implemented as part of this larger reorganization.

Design, methods and analysis

This study sought to uncover and understand the experiences of adopting a new practice (i.e. Case of Place approach) created to solve several current challenges facing local police agencies[3]. Utilizing a multi-method research approach, this study relies heavily on qualitative data, capturing great "detail, context and nuance" of implementation (Patton, 2015, p. 257).

The 24-month intervention period afforded an extensive data collection process, providing rich insights into the observed and reported experiences of those in the implementing environment. Researchers served as participant-observers throughout the process, supporting ongoing observation, formal and informal interaction and data collection, direct participation, and reflection (Denzin, 1978; Van Maanen, 2011).

The study sought to answer three research questions:

RQ1. How and why was the Case of Place approach adopted by the police agency?

RQ2. What challenges arose in the adoption of the Case of Place approach?

RQ3. What does the future hold for the Case of Place approach?

Data sources

This study's data came from multiple sources, consisting of agency documents such as grants, progress reports, and an official action plan ($n = 10$); process notes from meetings with agency staff ($n = 19$); focus groups with DROs ($n = 30$ officers); interviews with commanders and crime analysts ($n = 5$); Case of Place files ($n = 81$); and Compstat observation and presentations ($n = 17$). For meetings and focus groups, the number of participants was documented, as was the nature of their role in the agency.

Analytical approach

We utilized best practices for qualitative data collection and analysis (Patton, 2015). Our study followed the grounded theory approach (Glaser and Strauss, 1999). Analysis began during fieldwork where we examined and discussed our observations in monthly research meetings. Multiple researchers took and compared notes from meetings and observations. We utilized a similar review and analysis process for focus group and interviews. Through this method, we allowed emergent ideas and themes to arise out of the data, rather than looking for predetermined concepts (Gibbs, 2007; Patton, 2015). Our coding was conducted by hand. This overlap of data collection and analysis allowed us to capture the expressed ideas and meanings of actors during our ongoing interactions with them, enhancing the quality of the data and the analysis (Patton, 2015; Van Maanen, 2011).

As we recognized emerging themes, we consulted the literature to understand and confirm our observations (Patton, 2015). Given the extensive data collected and our ongoing collection and analysis, our ability to triangulate the data across multiple data sources helped to further validate our observations (Patton, 2015).

Results and discussion

The following sections report the study's results, integrating what was learned with existing knowledge regarding implementing policy. We utilize the rich description of this agency's experience to highlight key implementation challenges. We also introduce the benefits of adoption, as described by organizational actors. We conclude with insights about the potential for Case of Place to fill noted gaps in problem-solving and place-based strategies:

RQ1. How and why was the Case of Place approach adopted by the police agency?

The Case of Place approach was introduced to inform a department reorganization. As an agency with a long history of utilizing problem-solving and hot spots policing, leadership wanted to reinvigorate community policing and problem-solving, two operational efforts that were reduced during the 2007-2009 recession. Agency leadership also wanted to strengthen communication and coordination between patrol officers, commanders, and crime analysts, thereby increasing the use of data and information across the agency. Informed by several research studies (Koper *et al.,* 2011; Ratcliffe *et al.*, 2011; Uchida *et al.*, 2012), a departmental reorganization was drafted to facilitate the following goals:

- institutionalize problem-solving techniques and community policing;
- increase and improve supervision within the agency; and
- reduce property crime.

Several approaches were adopted as part of the reorganization: an additional commander was added to the organizational structure, allowing for increased supervision; crime analysts were decentralized, relocating to neighborhood precincts under the supervision of an investigative unit commander[4]; DRO positions were created to increase and enhance problem-solving and community policing; the Case of Place approach was adopted for use in problem locations; and Compstat was redesigned to integrate problem-solving into the performance management discussion.

The Case of Place approach was piloted in the Summer of 2015, prior to full implementation across the agency. A tailored definition of Case of Place was determined through early discussions, characterizing Cases of Place "as a chronic problem location or a place with an emerging problem that could be resolved prior to becoming a problem for the larger community." A Case of Place could be initiated by an officer, a commander, persistent reports by a community member or stakeholder, or an analyst, as was originally conceived

(Lum and Koper, 2017). Similar to traditional investigative situations, analysts opened a case file to manage the information collection process and police response.

At the culmination of the intervention period, the agency utilized the Case of Place approach in 81 cases, with problems such as gang activity, drug activity or neighborhood issues. Interventions included working with landlords, collaborating with city services, or working with social service agencies to supplement police efforts. The types of locations addressed were in known hot spot areas or areas with emerging issues that commanders wanted to tackle early. Case of Place data were collected directly from DRO's, supervisors, or others who may be working on the Case of Place. Data were captured through formal reporting and informal observations, communications, and investigation. Officers reported activities to crime analysts in their precincts, who compiled the information into a standard template for each Case of Place.

The data templates for the Case of Place were largely based on the Case of Places Form/Checklist proposed by Lum and Koper (2017, 2015[5]. This template included sections gathering information on crime history at the place (both within the past 30 days and 5 years), known and existing information about the place (such as city records or complaints), place-based suspects (including people and environmental), victims or place-based targets of crime (such as property), and governmental and nongovernmental guardians. The case file contents followed the scanning, analysis, response, and assessment model of SARA (Spelman and Eck, 1987).

Beyond understanding the challenges and problems of the Case of Place, the agency wanted to systematically capture what DRO's and others were doing as interventions to address the problem locations. To measure the implementation of the intervention, researchers worked with analysts to create officer activity "buckets." These buckets categorized evidence-based policing activities identified in existing literature on evidence-based practices, quantifying officer efforts at each Case of Place location. Overall, nine types of activities were categorized: community policing, patrol, situational crime prevention, disorder maintenance, focused deterrence, traffic enforcement, collaborating for prevention, crime prevention through environmental design, and field interviews (National Research Council, 2004). Additionally, officers could cite other strategies not included in these predetermined buckets.

Crime analysts compiled the data throughout the duration of a Case of Place until that case was resolved and closed. Analysts, along with district commanders, presented updates on each Case of Place and interventions at Compstat meetings. Agency leadership and Compstat attendees then discussed the implementation of evidence-based practices at each Case of Place and played an active role in decision-making for future activities at these locations.

During and after piloting Case of Place processes, several adjustments were made. Crime analysts worked closely with DRO's and commanders to refine the Case of Place documentation system, and then integrate it into the agency's internal website, allowing officers and supervisors across the agency to view Case of Place files. As discussed in the next section, Case of Place administrative data, such as number of shifts worked and number of officers pulled for reassignment, were added to the Case of Place summary presented at Compstat. This refinement allowed for more enhanced conversations at Compstat regarding performance and productivity. See Table I for a summary of changes before and after reorganization:

RQ2. What challenges arose in the adoption of the Case of Place approach?

Implementation science has gained traction in the past several decades as a valuable knowledge-base for understanding how research translates into practice, and what happens between goal setting and assessment (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984; O'Toole, 2000).

Function/effort	Prior to re-organization	Post-reorganization
Crime analysis and intelligence unit (CAIU)	Centralized Limited interaction with patrol and street supervisors resulted in limited data exchange across agency Analysts have a passive role in Compstat	Decentralized analysts into precincts Daily communication and information exchange between analysts, officers, and street supervisors Analysts are active in Compstat discussions
Problem-solving	Sporadic Primarily by patrol commanders Shallow assessment and response Reactive	Systematic problem-solving by DRO's and patrol commanders Integrated into crime analysis Quantified and integrated into Compstat
Compstat	Focus on traditional Uniform Crime Report (UCR) crime and repeat calls Sporadic discussion of problem-solving Anecdotal data on problems and interventions	Case of Place-based Quantified and systematic integration Case of Place administrative data integrated

Table I.
Functional and structural adjustments of agency re-organization

This scientific endeavor is valuable to modern policing, as the evidence on what works has increased, but studies of how these practices are implemented are limited (Lum *et al.*, 2012). This study uncovered two challenging, yet critical dimensions of implementation.

Structural challenges

The architecture of the organization is its structure (Bolman and Deal, 2008; Roberg *et al.*, 2012), including formal roles, responsibilities, relationships and coordination, rules, policies, procedures, and hierarchies that allow an organization to operate. Research on organizational structure and group management (see March and Simon, 1958; Taylor, 1911; Thompson, 1967) has shed light on the importance of organizational structure relative to performance. Indeed, "structure is a blueprint for officially sanctioned expectations and changes among internal players" (Bolman and Deal, 2008, p. 50). Traditional policing structures reflect hierarchical organizational charts, facilitating command and control approaches to management and personnel deployment (Roberg *et al.*, 2012), where supervision and accountability are delineated. Recent efforts under the community policing era have prompted some agencies to adopt a more decentralized approach, increasing decision-making amongst frontline supervisors, fostering creativity in crime reduction and prevention (Cordner, 2014). Several important structural changes were introduced to ground the Case of Place approach, including the decentralization of the Crime Analysis and Intelligence Unit, creation of a DRO group, new data management systems, and revised Compstat.

Previously, the CAIU was a centralized unit, under the administrative section of the agency. The unit was transferred to the investigative section, aiming to broaden their scope and reach, and to facilitate collaboration across patrol and investigations relative to data, intelligence, and problem-solving. This required a reorientation for CAIU staff to work within the investigative section, and for investigation commanders now supervising a unit primarily focused on crime and disorder on the street. There were modified supervision structures, and new relationships, and responsibilities introduced.

Physically relocating the CAIU into neighborhood precincts was a challenge. Outfitting precincts to accommodate new staff and technologies took longer than expected (six months) and garnered major financial resources. Planning and design issues, vendor communications, and staffing interruptions plagued the move.

Creating the new DRO position situated the Case of Place approach within a formal structure. This required the articulation of new roles and responsibilities, cross-functional

relationships, and job expectations. This change required discussions with labor union representatives to ensure that member needs and protections remained. Once the process of establishing the new officer roles was completed, the 24 positions had to be posted and interested candidates had to apply.

Implementation of the DRO work as desired was challenging, due in part to issues of staffing. Despite commitment to the approach, DRO's were regularly "pulled" from their assignments to fill vacant positions in patrol. For example, a DRO was assigned to Sector A on a shift and have plans to address a Case of Place, but was pulled to fill an empty patrol car. DRO's felt this and noted "it is hard to remain accountable when you are constantly being pulled." Mid-way through implementation, DRO's began documenting the number of planned shifts vs pulled shifts, which were presented at Compstat. Reallocating officers to support patrol activities resulted in less time for problem-solving. Thus, problem-solving as intended remained a challenge for officers (Braga and Weisburd, 2006).

Furthermore, union agreements allow officers to "bid" assignments once per year. Given the frequent "pulling," DRO's were quickly "bidding out" of this assignment. This frequent turnover was an impediment to consistency (Lum and Koper, 2017) for the DRO and Case of Place work. This aligns with existing research that staffing shortages and deployment are a significant challenge to problem-solving (Lum and Koper, 2017).

An additional structural challenge to the Case of Place approach was creating and utilizing a documentation system for the work. Using a modified Case of Place template (Lum and Koper, 2017; Koper *et al.*, 2015), analysts worked with commanders and officers to refine the Case of Place file. The new system included shift-based DRO reports regarding case (i.e. location) data, relevant incident and/or arrest data, and police intervention efforts.

Finally, these new data were then integrated into Compstat, addressing previous shortcomings regarding Compstat's focus on problem-solving (Bond and Braga, 2015). Revising Compstat to integrate the Case of Place approach aimed to capture what the police superintendent referred to as "weaknesses in the structures that are supposed to support problem-solving and community policing." The revision of Compstat situated Case of Place at the center of the discussion. This revision took over five months and included a review of Compstat best practices, as well as several versions of the new Compstat presented and reviewed by agency leadership. The revision also called for analysts to be more active participants and facilitators of Compstat.

Cultural challenges

The adoption and implementation of a new organizational practice is influenced by and can influence organizational culture. Culture manifests in the norms, values, rules, goals, beliefs, habits, and shared meanings of the members and is influenced by the different views, priorities, and hierarchies that make up the social order of the institution (Bolman and Deal, 2008; Schein, 2010; Van Maanen and Barley, 1982). Several cultural disruptions occurred during the Case of Place implementation. These challenges interact with the structural challenges, as they may arise from the change in structure (Schein, 2010). The most prominent cultural challenges included emphasizing the organizational priority of DRO's, conflicting patrol and problem-solving priorities, decentralization of the CAIU, and shifting Compstat's emphasis toward problem-solving.

The integration of community and problem-oriented policing into agencies has taken many forms, including the creation of specialized units (Taylor *et al.*, 2011; Lum and Koper, 2017), though some believe that these efforts should be integrated throughout the agency (Lum and Koper, 2017). However, implementation requires time and human resources, two indicators of the value placed on organizational functions and priorities (Schein, 2010). To emphasize this priority, and provide the resources needed, organizational leaders created a specialized group (i.e. DRO's) to work across organizational boundaries in

problem-solving, a reinvigorated organizational goal (Langworthy, 1986). Leadership believed that crime and disorder problems needed persistent and prolonged intervention through focused attention (Taylor *et al.*, 2011; Ratcliffe *et al.*, 2011). DRO's would have flexibility in scheduling, access to internal and external resources, and operational strategies best suited for identified problems, much like detective work (Uchida *et al.*, 2012; Taylor *et al.*, 2011).

This shift to a specialized unit challenged preconceived understandings of officers and supervisors. While many DRO's embraced the time and resources to problem-solve, there remained cultural conflicts about the work and its value. For instance, one DRO stated, "Case of Place is different than other approaches because you have more time." Yet another DRO expressed frustration about staffing challenges and interaction with patrol, "we feel like we are being singled out for something that patrol should be doing."

These new ideas and practices represented a change in use of organizational resources, introduced new expectations regarding officer activities, and reinforced an integrated approach where actors across departments were asked to play a role in and support the Case of Place approach. But not all actors saw it that way. One commander expressed concerns about the lack of involvement of frontline supervisors in the process, "we need a mechanism to keep everyone aware and included, so that they feel part of the team." Working across functional silos to implement new and integrative practices called for new ways of thinking and acting, challenging current mental models, or understandings, of how things work (Schein, 2010).

As this new approach unfolded, additional cultural conflicts were observed between prioritizing problem-solving and responding to emergency calls for service. Personnel deployment can be a difficult task when demands are high and resources constrained (Frank *et al.*, 1997; Braga and Weisburd, 2006) and when an absence of shared assumptions exists about implementation of new work (Schein, 2010). In this case, DRO's were structurally under the supervision of district commanders who were accountable for preventing or resolving problems in specific geographic locations. Shift commanders, however, staffed shifts to respond to emergency calls for service and accountable for responding to calls under a temporal model.

In practice, this task of communicating and coordinating DRO problem-solving across shifts was problematic, as shift commanders needed personnel to cover patrol and regularly pulled DRO's to fill gaps, resulting in reduced time for problem-solving. One manager articulated this conflict clearly, "there are two sides to the house that have to come together, and they are not doing that right now." To exacerbate the problem, no other specialty positions (e.g. investigations, gang unit) were pulled to cover gaps. Because shift commanders had discretion over which positions to pull, their decisions were perceived as influenced by their priorities, values, and beliefs (Schein, 2010). While this challenge may originate in a structural deficit, it was perceived to be a value conflict between shift and district commanders. Were DRO's less valued than other specialty unit members? Indeed, leader action and decisions create and sustain culture within the larger organization and the sub-cultures (Crank, 2004; Manning, 1977; Schein, 2010).

While this structural disconnect created challenges for trying to honor problem-solving and temporal priorities, it is potentially compounded by longstanding cultural conflicts between patrol and specialized units (Braga and Weisburd, 2006). This conflicting sense of priorities may stem from the belief that each actor must guard against infringement on their task and responsibility (Roberg *et al.*, 2012). One commander recognized this challenge, stating "there is still a disconnect between the shift and district commander and who bears the burden; as well as how to ensure accountability for any given issue." These observed behaviors influence perceptions of how things should work, as noted by one DRO, "in this place, there are two different shifts, two different administrations, and two different sets of rules." In this case,

these illustrations represent what Schein (2010) says about cultural incongruence – or "what ought to be vs what is" (p. 24).

The decentralization of civilian crime analysts into patrol precincts also pressed cultural norms. Officers and frontline supervisors were previously disconnected from analysts, as noted by one officer, "we never really had any interaction before," and analysts' work and products were primarily directed toward organizational leaders (Willis *et al.*, 2007). Their work was understood and operationalized as preparing various crime reports and Compstat data and presentations. Analysts mostly worked with commanders and for agency leaders, rarely building relationships with officers and frontline supervisors. This new approach required direct engagement with DRO's, and their field presence connected them with patrol. The co-location of the two different groups facilitated communications and relationships. The ambiguity regarding analysts' role in the agency began to dissipate as analysts worked with officers. These two organizational sub-cultures, with their own set of understandings about each other, began to integrate (Schein, 2010). This reflects ideals of agency leadership at the start. When referring to the benefits of placing analysts in precincts, the superintendent avowed, "the magic happens over a cup of coffee, when the captain, lieutenant and analysts are just in the same location."

Decentralizing analysts has proven to be one of the most beneficial aspect of the department's reorganization. Hands down, officers, supervisors, and analysts report that the communication and information sharing has increased, going from non-existent to, in some cases, daily. They have immediate access to each other, seeing each other regularly to converse about data and intervention, fostering new habits of communication and interaction. Prior assumptions that allowed functional silos to exist were broken down, creating new norms for how individuals within the organization were to interact (Bolman and Deal, 2008; Schein, 2010).

Lastly, the revamped Compstat was conceived to shift language and behaviors to prioritize problem-solving, along with creating a systematic way to measure and review crime. The use of "buckets" to capture and measure problem-solving directed commander and officer actions. Understandably, organizational culture is a hard to change, but one method is to reframe the way people behave and how they focus their communications (Schein, 2010). This agency did so by placing the Case of Place at the center of Compstat:

RQ3. What does the future hold for the Case of Place approach?

Our observations highlight the challenges of adopting and implementing a new tool to support place-based strategies and we learned of several benefits to this new approach. In this study, leaders sought to facilitate evidence-based, place-based practices via the Case of Place approach (Taylor *et al.*, 2011; Ratcliffe *et al.*, 2011; Uchida *et al.*, 2012). Not only did they look to DRO's to implement proven practices, but leaders insisted on documenting and integrating problem-solving into their performance management system. In turn, the agency can measure which strategies are employed to address which types of problems, and with what effect (Willis *et al.*, 2010).

The Case of Place approach is a tool with great potential for systematic problem-solving and performance management, and it can address the shortcomings of place-based strategies. Leading up to each Compstat, analysts work with supervisors and others to capture and track problems of interest. Preliminary data show that 81 Cases of Place were created to address issues such as drug activity, gang activity, disorderly tenants, and high call volume locations, to name a few. In total, 50 percent of those had been resolved or closed as of the early stages of post-intervention analysis[6]. Resolution means that the DRO's have eliminated or reduced the original problem through their efforts.

Analysts have offered several praises for the decentralization, saying that it "increases communication, data sharing, problem-solving, and accessibility to patrol and supervisory staff. It enables 'face-time'." Analysts were previously aware of the scanning and analysis aspects of

the problem-solving process, but never the response or assessment. This new approach closes that loop and systematizes the problem-solving process. With a systematic tool and process, this study revealed how Case of Place can address problem-solving and performance management shortcomings in modern police agencies. By focusing problem-solving, enhancing the relationship between analysts and officers, and reimagining an agency's performance management system, the agency in this study began to shift the institution toward organizational priorities (Schein, 2010). Notably, the approach requires additional implementation and testing to rigorously assess its contributions to desired outcomes.

Of course, there are challenges to adopting any new approach. We identified and described the structural and cultural challenges of adopting the Case of Place approach. These challenges are not exclusive to police agencies, nor are they limited to adopting this type of policing approach. Yet, structure and culture are two principal components of an organization, and thus must be cared for in introducing organizational change (Bolman and Deal, 2008; Schein, 2010), much like the study of and lessons from implementation of new policy and practice is also critical to the introduction of new ideas (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). Our use of implementation science allowed us to dig deeper into the adoption of evidence-based practice to understand the nuances and experiences of the implementation process (O'Toole, 2000).

These results inform how police practitioners can approach the adoption of new and evidence-based practices (Lum and Koper, 2017). Beyond seeking out available research to inform the selection of strategy, practitioners should methodically plan out how a new strategy will be adopted, implemented, and monitored (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984; O'Toole, 2000; Schein, 2010). This is an important lesson, noted by one of the agency managers who expressed concern about what should have made implementation easier, "we need to have monthly meetings with key agency folks to move forward and monitor how implementation is going." Officers who served as DRO's made similar suggestions, where they could provide feedback to commanders and leadership on the successes and challenges of implementation. This may be a useful administrative action that can help address the structural and cultural implementation challenges observed in this study.

Studying the implementation of the Case of Place approach allowed us to examine and describe the people, roles, functions, actions, and perceptions of individuals involved in the implementation process (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1984). Indeed, it is this level of detail that helps us to link the sequence of events and the interactions of individuals and actions in the process. While our study sheds light on implementation of the Case of Place approach in one urban police organization, we view this study as a prompt for future study of policy and practice implementation. Lastly, more research is needed to assess whether similar challenges arise in the implementation of the Case of Place approach.

Conclusion

The current study sought to capture the details and nuances of one police agency's adoption and implementation of a new approach to enhance place-based strategies. There is growing evidence on the effectiveness of certain place-based strategies in high crime and disorder locations. Many police agencies are building a portfolio of strategies that they can employ in their communities. Yet, there remain challenges to effective policing, often rooted in the implementation of these evidence-based practices.

The Case of Place approach is a promising approach that facilitates systematic problem-solving in places of concern. The study examined how one agency sought to prioritize and institutionalize problem-solving within the agency's performance management system. This study revealed significant structural and cultural challenges to implementation, but not insurmountable issues. In truth, the available research on what works in high crime areas is less valuable without the knowledge-base centered on how an agency and its representatives go about adopting and implementing policy and practice change.

Notes

1. See http://cebcp.org/evidence-based-policing/the-matrix/ for access to the Evidence-Based Policing Matrix.
2. Many of these efforts were scaled back during the 2007-2009 recession when financial and human resources were significantly diminished.
3. The study will be completed in February 2018 with outcome analyses coming after the formal completion.
4. The logic behind this structural move was to broaden the reach of the analysts beyond patrol to also include investigations, enhancing communication and coordination across the entire agency.
5. See http://cebcp.org/evidence-based-policing/the-matrix/matrix-demonstration-project/case-of-places/
6. As noted, an outcome evaluation is underway to assess changes in crime in specific areas treated via the Case of Place.

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