

Walsh University

**Mentoring's Impact on Police Relations, Academic Success, and Recidivism:
An Empirical Analysis of the Men of Tomorrow Program**

A Thesis by

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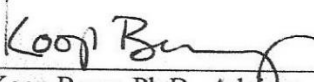
Government and Foreign Affairs, International Relations, and History


Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for a


Bachelor of Arts Degree with University Honors

April 2020

Accepted by the Honors Program


Koop Berry, Ph.D., Advisor 4-10-2020
Date


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Date

Introduction

Canton, Ohio was once a thriving center of industry and economic growth. Recently, it was named the twentieth worst city in the country to live in (Akron Beacon Journal, 2017). Cited among the reasons for this ranking is the city's poverty rate: 32 percent, nearly twice the national average. As is often seen in the United States, minority communities are most affected by Canton's economic struggle; 41 percent of minorities live in poverty ("Poverty in Canton, Ohio," 2017). Also factored in is the high violent crime rate. With the second-highest rate of violent crime in Ohio, the streets of Canton can be a very dangerous place ("Canton, Ohio: Crime Rates," 2019).

Many non-profit organizations in Canton are working every day to alleviate these issues at the local level. One of these non-profits is the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program. This mentoring program was started in 2015 by Pastor Jamar Fleming in Canton, Ohio. Pastor Fleming recruits disadvantaged teenage boys to partake in this mentoring program. Pastor Fleming uses a variety of mentoring techniques to positively impact his mentees' lives, such as one-on-one mentoring sessions, group mentoring sessions and outings, and college visits. The mentoring particularly focus on three aspects of the youth's lives: their relationship with the police in their community, their academic achievements, and their criminal probation rate. Since the majority of mentees are of minority ethnicity, they often have a negative perception of the police in their community (Newport, 2016). This can have negative consequences for the youth in the future if the issues within their relationship with the police are not worked through. These mentors also encourage academic achievement and a clean criminal record as methods of escaping the cycle of poverty that is prevalent throughout Canton. By focusing on these three

issues, the Men of Tomorrow program believes that their organization is having a positive impact in the lives of their mentees.

However, being a non-profit, the Men of Tomorrow program needs to receive funding in the form of a grant in order to keep its program running. While many non-profits have been started in Canton using grant money, many have also been discontinued because they were unable to obtain grant renewals for the years after the initial grant is received. This is because many grants ask for empirical evidence that the non-profit is making a significant impact in their community and many non-profit leaders lack the knowledge on how to conduct a quantitative study that demonstrates their impact to be significant. The Men of Tomorrow program has encountered the same problem: in order to continue operating, the program needs to renew its grant by empirically proving that its mentoring is having a positive impact on the lives of its children. In order to accomplish this, the founder of the Men of Tomorrow program, Pastor Jamar Fleming, reached out to Walsh University for help regarding the research method of a quantitative study of this magnitude. The author and advisors of this paper agreed to help direct their research study.

In order to gather the information needed for the grant renewal, this study will conduct a quantitative investigation into the impact of the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program in several areas of their mentees' lives, reflecting the areas of focus for the mentoring. This study will use the variables of the mentees' police perception within the youth community, Grade Point Average (GPA), school attendance, and criminal probation rate to test the effectiveness of the Men of Tomorrow's mentoring. These variables will be tested at the beginning of the mentoring program and again after a year in order to calculate the change over time for both the mentee group and a control group that did not go through the Men of Tomorrow mentoring process.

Roots of the Problem

Before analyzing the impact that mentoring may have on the relationship between youth and the police, this study assesses from where the often negative relationship emerged, particularly concerning youth of minority ethnicities. In previous research conducted on this subject, scholars have theorized that the poor relationship between police and minority youth comes from the view that police are failing to ensure procedural justice. Procedural justice is defined as whether or not people are treated fairly and respectfully throughout any process that involves a police encounter (Gau & Brunson, p. 256, 2010). Maintaining procedural justice is important for ensuring compliance with the citizen during the police encounter and in maintaining a positive relationship with the community as a whole (Terrill, Paoline, & Gau, 2016, p. 60). However, police often fall short of convincing minority communities that procedural justice is being maintained. This is demonstrated through their significantly lower level of trust in the police than their white counterparts (Thompson, Kahn, McMahon, & O'Neil, p. 191, 2016).

Minority populations claim that police have not maintained procedural justice through their excessive use of police brutality against minorities and their unfair targeting of minorities. Jarring statistics also point towards failures of procedural justice for minority communities. For example, unarmed minority men are killed at seven times the rate as unarmed white men (Jones, p. 873, 2017), and black drivers are two and a half times more likely to be pulled over for pretext stops than white drivers (Forman, p. 213, 2017). Youth within minority communities have noticed these discrepancies in procedural justice. A study by Gau and Brunson found that negative feelings towards the police came from minority youths' perception of "unfair, aggressive targeting by police" (p. 272, 2010). A study by Nordberg et. al found that the minority

youths overwhelmingly believe police use an inappropriate amount of force when dealing with them and that they were specifically targeted by the police because of their race (p. 145, 2016). This was particularly true for the young black male demographic. When minorities notice this unfair treatment by police, they will develop negative feelings towards them.

The negative relationship between police and minority youth is not just a problem for minority youth, but the police as well. A study by Murphy, Hinds, & Fleming found that people's personal views on the police affect their level of cooperation with criminal investigations (p. 136, 2008). This means that those who believe that the police act in accordance with procedural justice are more likely to assist the police in crime control measures. However, communities that do not believe that the police use procedural justice when dealing with them, notably the African-American community, will be less likely to cooperate with the police in investigations. Individuals who have negative views of the police are also less likely to follow the law, since the institution that enforces it has no credibility (Terrill, Paoline, & Gau, p. 60, 2016). This means that the negative relationship between minority communities and the police increases crime while making it more difficult to carry out investigations. Therefore, amending the negative relationship between their mentees and the police should also decrease the number of Men of Tomorrow mentees on probation, since a positive relationship with police is theorized to make youth more likely to follow the law.

In addition to having negative relationships with their local police, minority youth living in the inner-city face a myriad of obstacles that stand between them and academic success. The roots of the education gap between the white and black communities can be traced back to slavery, when illiteracy among slaves was very high (Bertocchi, 2012, p. 582). After slavery ended, freed slaves lived in poverty and had limited access to formal schooling due to both

poverty and segregation. During this time, the educational gap between whites and non-whites grew, and though strides have been made to close this gap, it still remains. Today, schools located in impoverished areas receive less funding than other schools, since educational funding is based off of property taxes (Blanchett, 2006, p. 24). Since minority communities' poverty rate is about twice as high as the white poverty rate (Fontenot, Semega, & Kollar, 2017, p. 2), it means that minority students are receiving less funding for their education than their white peers, who tend to live in more wealthy neighborhoods and therefore attend schools with more academic funds. Poverty serves as its own obstacle towards academic success; effects of poverty, such as food insecurity, lack of supervision, and high family stress, are factors that negatively impact the academic success of impoverished students (Ferguson, Bovaird, & Mueller, 2007, p. 702). For minority youth from the inner-city, these factors occur at high rates.

In addition, racial bias within the school system also hinders minority students' academic success. For example, subjective judgments within schools often disproportionately target minority students. Black students are 1.13 times more likely to be labeled with a learning disability and 2.41 times more likely to be labeled as mentally challenged because school evaluators can subjectively refer students to the mental evaluation process (Blanchett, 2006, p. 24). In addition, black students are 14 percent more likely and Hispanic students are three percent more likely to receive out-of-school suspension, with no evidence supporting that these minority students are more likely to misbehave at school (Schott Foundation, 2011). This subjective form of punishment means that minority students are missing more time in the classroom, severely hurting their grades and decreasing their chances of academic success.

In addition, minority students often suffer from the negative stereotypes that American society has given them. Steele and Aronson (1995) theorize that minority youth face a

“stereotype threat,” meaning that when others stereotype minority youth with negative characteristics, it has a negative impact on their academic success (p. 797). The impact of stereotype threat on academic success may come from suffering additional anxiety in classroom situations. No student wants to appear unintelligent by answering a question incorrectly or asking a question that they fear may be obvious to their classmates. For minority youth, the possibility of confirming a negative stereotype with an incorrect answer makes them stay silent, and with less class participation and fear of asking questions, their grades suffer. This is also evidenced by a study that found that African-American males’ perception on their teacher’s expectations of them had a significant impact on their own personal educational goals (Moore, Henfield, & Owens, 2010, p. 917). Students tend to perform to the level that it expected of them; when this level is low due to racial stereotypes, the students will perform lower.

As a result of these issues, black male students are about three grade levels behind their white peers (McGee, 2013, p. 449). Therefore, one of the goals of the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program is to increase students’ academic performances, as evidenced by their GPA and school attendance. This study hypothesizes that the Men of Tomorrow program will accomplish this goal by raising indicators of academic success in their mentees over the course of a year of mentoring.

Mentoring As a Solution

Mentoring and Academic Success

Mentoring programs have been proposed by scholars as one possible solution to minority youth’s lower levels of academic success. This hypothesis is corroborated by Grossman and Tierney (1998), who conducted a study on the Big Brother/Big Sister mentoring programs across the country, including San Antonio, Columbus, Houston, Minneapolis, Philadelphia, and

Wichita. This study interviewed 1,138 youth before their participation in the Big Brother/Big Sister mentoring programs and conducted a follow-up interview after their 17 month period in the program. When compared to a control group of the same size who were wait-listed for the mentoring program, this study found that mentoring led to better grades, better school attendance, and more optimistic opinions about schooling in general (p. 403).

A similar study conducted by Chan et al. in 2013 produced similar results. This research design involved a test group of 526 high school students from across the country who participated in the Big Brother/Big Sister mentoring program. The mentees used a Youth-Centered Relationship scale and a Youth-Centered Emotional Engagement scale both before their mentoring and after a year of mentoring to grade their relationship with a variety of subjects. This study found that mentoring significantly increased the mentees' attitudes towards school and their relationships with their teachers (p. 129).

Within the numerous studies involving the effectiveness of mentoring programs, the trend emerges of the positive correlation between mentoring and academic success. Eby et al (2008) conducted an analysis of 15,131 articles from 1985-2006 regarding the effectiveness of mentoring programs. This study found that mentoring was positively correlated with performance, attitudes towards school, and motivation across these thousands of studies. Similarly, Matz (2014) conducted an in-depth literature review of 63 studies on the effectiveness of mentoring from 1990 to 2013. This literature review found an overall positive significance between mentoring programs and positive educational outcomes. This body of literature supports the idea that when adult role models in at-risk youth's lives encourage their academic pursuits and instill its importance into their lives, they will start achieving higher academic standards.

This supports the idea that the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program will also lead to better GPAs and attendance rates.

However, other studies contest the idea that mentoring contributes to academic success. Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, and McMaken (2011) conducted a study on the Big Brother/Big Sister mentoring programs involving 1,139 mentees in 10 cities across the country. This study found that while mentees had a more positive view of their personal academic abilities, there was no resulting increase in classroom effort. Therefore, while mentee participants experienced immediate academic improvements, these improvements were not sustained into the next school year (p. 347). This means that the positive effects of mentoring may not produce long-term academic success.

Scholars who agree with this school of thought theorize that the benefits for mentoring are contained within the environment in which the mentoring takes place (Britner et al, 2006, p. 758). For example, in-school mentoring increases academic success, but has no impact on community-based initiatives such as decreasing crime; while community-based mentoring may help with these initiatives, the benefits are not also seen in the classroom. If this theory were true, Pastor Fleming's mentoring would positively impact police-community relations and decrease the rate of parole, but have no impact on academic success.

Mentoring and Recidivism

This study also hypothesizes that the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program will result in a lower probation rate among their mentees. This hypothesis is supported by previous literature that concluded that mentoring programs decrease the level of recidivism in youth. A 2013 study by James, Stams, Asscher, De Roo, and de Laan affirmed that mentoring programs substantially reduce recidivism, particularly in older and high risk youth (p. 263). This study 127 participants

in the Netherlands found that juveniles who received mentoring while in detention were significantly less likely to reoffend than juveniles who did not receive mentoring while in detention.

This study aligns with the body of literature on the subject. DuBois et. al conducted a meta-analysis of 73 independent reports on mentoring programs from 1999 to 2010. This analysis found that mentoring led to decreased rates of recidivism among participants by a significant degree, along with increased achievement in school (2011, p. 70). This theory supports the idea that teens who are on parole when they enter mentoring programs should have a higher chance of staying out of trouble with the law because of their mentoring experience, decreasing their likelihood of still being on parole the following year. Since the participants in the Men of Tomorrow program are high school youth who live in an area of high poverty and violence rates, the previous literature conducted on this topic supports the hypothesis that probation rates will decrease for mentees in the Men of Tomorrow program.

Not all research agrees that mentoring can lower recidivism rates. Another study that collected information from the Washington State Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration found that there was no significant difference in recidivism between youth who received mentoring while on parole and those who did not (Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky, 2014, p. 414). If this study is true, the Men of Tomorrow mentoring group would not experience a decreased rate after a year of mentoring.

Mentoring and Police Relations

Michael Arter (2017) explains that “police as mentors is the next logical step in the community policing continuum and can function as an effective and efficient method of instilling legitimacy to police officers, departments, and the law enforcement profession” (p. 85). Arter

agrees with this theory, stating that when minority youth are given an environment to interact with police officers in a positive manner, the fear and anger that they associate with the police will decrease. Anderson, Sabatelli, and Trachenberg empirically demonstrated this in a 2007 study which found that children showed significant improvement in the level of empathy they had towards the police after they were a part of a local police mentoring program (p. 23).

Because of this greater level of empathy, the police-minority youth relationship in this community improved.

One goal that mentoring would accomplish is that it would humanize the police for the minority youth involved in the program. This is precisely the goal behind "Operation: Take Back" in Canton, Ohio, in which the local police attempt to connect with the Latino residents of the city who have expressed that they are afraid of and distrust the police ("Lessons from Ferguson, Canton," 2014). Operation: Take Back's mission is to humanize the police for minority communities by facilitating a healthy dialogue between the two groups. If people are able to have a productive dialogue with the police, their fear and mistrust of the police will decrease, allowing for a more positive relationship.

Not only do mentoring programs serve to humanize the police to the minority community, but these programs would also serve to humanize the minority community to the police. Often, police offices hold implicit biases against minority populations (Fridell, 2015). Implicit bias is defined as a subconscious association with a stereotype based simply on one's appearance (Fridell & Lim, 2016, p. 36). This means that even though police are not consciously racist, they still suffer from the racial stereotypes that are prevalent in American society. Though all of America has some level of implicit bias, these biases can turn deadly when they are present in police. The effects of implicit bias were put into stark terms in the "Shoot, Don't Shoot"

studies, which put a figure before police officers and questioned if they would fire their weapon or not if they were put before this suspect. These studies found that police were more likely to shoot an unarmed black suspect than an unarmed white suspect, which was attributed to their subconscious bias that black men are more dangerous than white men (Fridell, 2015). Implicit biases are also at fault for racial targeting; if police believe that minorities are more likely to commit crime, then they are more likely to stop and search minorities. This shows that implicit biases are having a direct impact on the sources of conflict between police and minority communities.

The crux of the problem is that when a police officer sees a member of a minority ethnicity, their most prevalent initial reaction is their implicit bias. This occurs because they do not have enough association with actual minorities to counteract this initial negative reaction. For example, many police officers today live outside of the city in which they work, usually in the suburbs. While suburbs usually have a lower minority population, cities have a higher minority population. This means that police officers encounter minorities at a much higher rate while on the job than they encounter in real life, and they may not have many positive encounters with minorities. Therefore, a solution would be to facilitate more contact between police officers and minorities. Mentoring programs that facilitate positive interactions between police and minority youth would accomplish this goal. Police would come to associate minorities with the mentees instead of negative stereotypes, which would work to counteract their implicit bias.

This reciprocal relationship is vital to developing trust between both parties. Van Craen (2016) stresses the importance of trust in creating a positive relationship between communities and the police (p. 9). Establishing mentoring programs that create a positive environment for interactions with police would lead to higher levels of citizens' trust, and therefore higher levels

of perceived procedural justice. This environment also leads to a higher level of police trust regarding minority communities. Higher levels of trust make police more “inclined to listen to citizens’ views and treat them with respect when they have positive expectations about citizens’ words and actions” (Van Craen, 2017, p. 10). Therefore, mentoring programs would be mutually beneficial.

The Men of Tomorrow Techniques

In addition to the literature that supports the idea that mentoring in general increases academic success and decreases recidivism, the specific mentoring techniques that Pastor Fleming uses have been proven successful by previous literature. These techniques, including cultural competency, spirituality, and facilitating positive interactions with local police, have been found to create a more positive mentor/mentee relationship. Creating a positive mentoring relationship increases the likelihood that positive benefits will occur from the mentoring process.

As discussed above, minority youth face obstacles towards their academic success and their relationship with the police that are not easily understood by people who have not also experienced these obstacles. Having a level of cultural competency is an important aspect of developing a positive and trusting relationship with a mentee. Youth who believed their mentors understand their unique situations as minority youth ranked their relationship with their mentors as being of higher quality than those who did not feel their mentors were culturally competent (Sanchez et al, 2014, p. 147). Spencer (2007) conducted a study on failed relationships within mentoring programs by interviewing 31 participants who ended their Big Brother/Big Sister mentoring relationship prematurely. Spencer found that one of the primary reasons why mentor/mentee relationships deteriorate is because the mentors are unable to bridge cultural

differences (p. 339). Therefore, it is unsurprising that youth are most likely to connect and see benefits from mentoring when their mentor is of their same race (Sanchez, Esparza, & Colon, 2008, p. 476). Since Pastor Fleming is an African-American man, he is most likely to connect with the African-American youth within his mentoring program. Pastor Fleming knows the unique difficulties they face and can better relate to his mentees about their problems.

Another technique that Pastor Fleming uses to create positive relationships with his youth is his connection to the church. A study conducted by Erickson & Phillips (2012) suggests that this helps the Men of Tomorrow program achieve their goal of higher academic performance among their mentees. This study used data from 8,379 participants in 80 mentoring programs across the country; some mentoring programs were religious, while others were secular. Erickson & Phillips found that religious mentoring programs have produced a more significant positive effect on academic outcomes when compared to non-religious programs (p. 568).

This has been attributed to the fact that higher levels of religious activity are associated with better self-regulatory skills and wellbeing, while alleviating stress and decreasing the likelihood of substance abuse (Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2008, p. 160). These traits are vital to achieving academic success. Strong religious conviction is also associated with being a preventative measure against gang activity, crime, and drug use (Byfield, 2007, p. 195). Therefore, by working to include spirituality in the lives of his mentees, Pastor Fleming is increasing his mentees' likelihood of academic success while decreasing the likelihood that his mentees will end up in the criminal justice system.

Religion is a particularly important component of minority cultures, especially for African-Americans (Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2008, p. 160). Because of this, religion plays an important role in the mentor's cultural competency of their mentees. In order to fully relate to

their mentees, mentors must be able to bring a spiritual dimension to their mentoring. By incorporating spirituality into his mentoring, Pastor Fleming is increasing his cultural competency with his mentees and helping to instill positive attributes that aid in academic success.

Because of his cultural competency and integration of spirituality, the study theorizes that Pastor Fleming will be able to form meaningful connections with his mentees. Having successful connections with mentees is a key aspect in determining whether the mentoring program will bring about its desired results. Ragins, Cotton, and Miller (2000) established that mentor programs produce changes in mentees' attitudes only when the mentors have a successful connection with their mentees (p. 1177). Larose et al. (2010) confirmed that building strong mentor relationships brings out the most significant benefits for mentees (p. 137). Since one of the goals of this mentoring program is to change the mentees' attitudes towards the police in their community, the presence of this successful relationship will be instrumental in bringing about this goal.

This study is unique from the existing body of research on this topic in several ways. First, it conducts a case study on inner-city Canton; not only has this specific city never been used in this type of study, but none of the previous literature included a case study from any similar inner-city area. Second, it focuses not only on the impact that mentoring has on children's achievements through their Grade Point Average and school attendance rates, but it also includes the unique variable of the children's opinion on the police in their community. This makes it an interdisciplinary study; not only does it study the impact of mentoring on education, but it also connects this to racial and criminal justice issues.

Based on the current body of research on the subject, this study hypothesizes that the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program will be successful in creating a more positive relationship with the police for their mentees, increasing mentees' academic success, and decreasing mentee's probation rate. In order to test the body of research, this study creates a research design to empirically analyze each of these assertions.

Research Method

The objective of this study is to conduct a program evaluation regarding the effectiveness of a youth mentoring program. This program's goals are to 1) increase positive feelings about the relationship between the community and the police department of Canton, 2) increase the participants' school attendance, 3) increase the participants' GPA, and 4) decrease the parole rate among participants. Each of these goals will be empirically measured in order to determine whether or not these goals are being met in comparison to a control group of students who are not receiving mentoring. The literature predicts the following hypotheses:

1. After a year of mentoring, the mentees will express a more positive relationship with the police in their community.
2. Race will be significantly linked to police perception; white participants will have a more positive view of police than non-white participants.
3. After a year of mentoring, the mentees will have increased rates of school attendance.
4. After a year of mentoring, the mentees' Grade Point Average will have increased.
5. After a year of mentoring, the probation rate among the mentees will have decreased.

This research is significant because it will quantitatively measure the effectiveness of specifically the Men of Tomorrow program and the effectiveness of similar mentoring programs at large; if the hypothesis is supporting, this study can be used to obtain resources for this program and others like it because its methods have been empirically shown to be impactful.

The basic research design of this study is multiple factor designs. Within the first wave, the sample size is 18 within the Men of Tomorrow program and the control group consists of 449. For the main hypotheses and analysis, the independent variable will be the mentoring program, as represented by the wave number; Wave 1 was conducted at the beginning of the mentoring program, before any mentoring took place, while Wave 2 was conducted after a year of mentoring. The dependent variables will be the results of the police-community relations survey, which produces ten different variables regarding various aspects of the participants' relationship with police. Grade Point Average, attendance, and probation will also serve as dependent variables when measuring the effect of mentoring on the youth's academic growth and recidivism rate. For the police-youth relations survey, the results of the test group are compared to the control group; this ensures that any changes in police-community relations within the test group can be attributed to the effects of mentoring, instead of outside factors, such as a general shift in perspective within the community.

The subjects of this study are males between the ages of 13-19 in Stark County. The Men of Tomorrow program identifies and recruits individuals to be in their program, which forms the group that will be studied. This control group consists of male McKinley High School students who agreed to participate in the police relationship survey. This group is the same age and from the same geographic area as the mentoring; therefore, the results of their survey can be used as a control.

This study is conducted in two waves. The first wave was conducted in November 2018 and the second wave was conducted in November 2019 to show a year's growth. All of the information provided by the Men of Tomorrow mentoring group is secondary, de-identified data; the mentoring program is in charge of conducting the survey, and this study will be in charge of

data analysis. School attendance, grades, and probation status are also gathered by the mentoring program through records that it obtained parental consent to receive and pass along to this study. The control group information regarding the police-community relationship with 13-19 year old in Stark County is measured by distributing the survey to a group of McKinley high school students. This survey was completely anonymous, with no names or numbers attached to it. Permission was obtained from both the principal of McKinley High School and its Board of Education to conduct this survey with the students.

The police-community relationship survey (See Appendix A) was created using questions that asked the participants their stance on a variety of topics involving police. Part One asks if they strongly agreed, agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, or don't know their stance on the following phrases: 1) I have a lot of respect for my city police; 2) On the whole, my city's police officers are honest; 3) I feel proud of my city police; 4) I am very supportive of my city's police; and 5) the police in my city treat people fairly. Part Two asks participants to assess the overall job of their city's police, whether they were doing a very good job, a good job, a fair job, a poor job, a very poor job, or if they did not know. Part Three asks participants to apply their opinions of the police in their community to real life situations. Part Three asks 1) you have a complaint against someone causing problems on your block; 2) you have an emergency situation; 3) you see suspicious activity on your block; 4) if you had important information, would you cooperate in a police investigation.

Results

Wave 1 of the Men of Tomorrow program had 18 participants. Two new mentees joined the mentoring program within a month of the survey and were included in Wave 2. Wave 1 of the control group, made up of male students at McKinley High School, consisted of 449

participants and Wave 2 consisted of 122 students. The overall average age of participants was about 15 and a half years old. Forty six point one percent of participants were white, 45.3 percent of participants were black, 5.4 percent were Hispanic, and 3.0 percent identified as other. The Men of Tomorrow group characteristics were relatively similar: the average age of respondents was about a year younger, at 14.3 years old. The Men of Tomorrow mentoring group also consisted of a higher minority population than the overall sample, with 13.2 percent of participants being white, 68.4 percent being black, 2.6 percent being Hispanic, and 2.6 percent identifying as other. Comparatively, in the control group, the average age was 15.7 years old, with 48.3 percent being white, 43.9 percent being black, 5.4 percent being Hispanic, and 2.3 percent identifying as other. A breakdown of the sample characteristics is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics by Group

	Number of Participants	Mean Age	Race (in percentages)
Overall	609	15.63	White: 46.1%
			Black: 45.3%
			Hispanic: 5.4%
			Other: 3.0%
Men of Tomorrow Test Group	38	14.26	White: 13.2%
			Black: 68.4%
			Hispanic: 2.6%
			Other: 2.6%
McKinley High School Control Group	571	15.73	White: 48.3%
			Black: 43.9%
			Hispanic: 5.4%
			Other: 2.3%

The police-community relationship survey consisted of ten questions that were used to determine the participants' relationship with police. Each of the questions served as a dependent variable within this study to determine the change in attitude towards police across Wave 1 and Wave 2. Each variable was on a 5 point scale, with 1 being the most favorable relationship with

police, 5 being the least favorable relationship with police, and 3 being the “don’t know/neutral” option. Tables 2, 3, and 4 provide descriptive characteristics within the complete sample, the Men of Tomorrow test group, and the McKinley High School control group.

Table 2. Overall Sample Descriptives

	Complete Wave 1			Complete Wave 2		
	Mean	Std. Dev	n	Mean	Std. Dev	n
Respect	2.544	1.183	467	3.000	1.623	142
Honest	2.895	1.074	467	3.838	1.074	142
Proud	2.925	1.144	467	2.925	1.445	141
Supportive	2.769	1.141	467	3.489	1.615	142
Fair	3.028	1.132	467	3.747	1.564	142
Complaint	3.421	1.374	466	3.439	1.713	141
Emergency	2.849	1.545	465	2.171	1.459	140
Suspicious	3.326	1.399	466	3.439	1.690	139
Cooperate	2.563	1.434	467	2.858	1.751	141
Overall	2.889	1.093	377	2.895	1.116	114

Table 3. Men of Tomorrow Descriptives

	Men of Tomorrow Wave 1			Men of Tomorrow Wave 2		
	Mean	Std. Dev	n	Mean	Std. Dev	n
Respect	3.556	1.338	18	2.750	1.070	20
Honest	4.222	1.060	18	2.750	.967	20
Proud	4.056	1.162	18	3.150	1.089	20
Supportive	3.778	1.166	18	3.350	1.182	20
Fair	3.889	1.231	18	2.950	.944	20
Complaint	3.944	1.350	18	2.150	1.424	20

Emergency	2.556	1.423	18	1.800	1.196	20
Suspicious	3.500	1.465	18	2.350	1.531	20
Cooperate	3.333	1.283	18	2.300	1.559	20

Table 4. McKinley High School Control Descriptives

	Control Wave 1			Control Wave 2		
	Mean	Std. Dev	n	Mean	Std. Dev	n
Respect	2.503	1.159	467	3.041	1.708	122
Honest	2.842	1.041	467	4.016	1.548	122
Proud	2.880	1.121	467	3.546	1.683	121
Supportive	2.728	1.123	467	3.492	1.702	122
Fair	2.993	1.115	467	2.878	1.609	122
Complaint	3.340	1.372	466	3.653	1.667	121
Emergency	2.861	1.550	465	2.233	1.494	120
Suspicious	3.319	1.398	466	2.622	1.652	119
Cooperate	2.532	1.431	467	2.950	1.769	121
Overall	2.856	.817	377	2.916	1.136	95

Some initial trends of data are evident from these descriptives. First, looking at the Men of Tomorrow sample, each of the ten dependent variables moved in a positive direction between Wave 1 and Wave 2. This means that after a year of mentoring, the mean answer to each question on the police-community survey moved in favor of a more positive relationship with police. The opposite trend is evident within the control group. For seven of the ten dependent

variables, excluding Fair, Emergency, and Suspicious, the mean answer moved in the negative direction between Wave 1 and Wave 2.

In order to determine whether these trends are statistically significant, this study utilizes the Levene's Test of Equality of Variance. Five separate t-tests were conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the waves and groups. First, a t-test on all 609 data entries was conducted to determine if a statistically significant change occurred between Wave 1 and Wave 2 for the full sample. The results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Overall Sample Mentoring Impact t-test

	t	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Respect	-3.658	.000***	-.456
Honest	-8.204	.000***	-.943
Proud	-4.628	.000***	-.564
Supportive	-5.761	.000***	-.703
Fair	-6.021	.000***	-.719
Complaint	-.136	.892	-.019
Emergency	4.610	.000***	.678
Suspicious	-.793	.428	-.113
Cooperate	-2.030	.043*	-.295
Overall	-.052	.958	-.006

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

†Equal variance is assumed for all dependent variables

Using a 2-tailed significance approach within this t-test, seven of the 10 dependent variables are significant. With the exception of Complaint, Suspicious, and Overall, the rest of the dependent variables changed significantly between Wave 1 and Wave 2. As evident by the fact that nine of the ten t-values are negative, the shift in opinion was a negative one. This means that over the course of a year, the overall sample experienced a significant decline in their relationship with police in their community.

How did the Men of Tomorrow mentoring group fair when compared to the entire sample? To answer this question, a t-test was conducted on only the Men of Tomorrow mentees to determine if a statistically significant change occurred between Wave 1 and Wave 2 of the test group. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Men of Tomorrow Sample Mentoring Impact t-test

	t	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Respect	2.059	.047	.806
Honest	4.478	.000***	1.472
Proud	2.479	.018*	.906
Supportive	1.121	.270	.428
Fair	2.653	.012*	.939
Complaint	3.975	.000***	1.794
Emergency	1.777	.084	.756
Suspicious	2.359	.024*	1.150
Cooperate	2.215	.033*	1.033
Overall	2.692	.011*	.877

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

†Equal variance is assumed for all dependent variables.

In order for a variable to be significant within a test group of 40, the t-value must be greater than 2.042. This is the case for eight of the 10 variables: Respect, Honest, Proud, Fair, Complaint, Suspicious, Information, and Overall. Only two variables, Supportive and Emergency, were insignificant. This means for eight of the 10 variables, the mentees' perception of the police was positively correlated with their mentoring; after a year in the Men of Tomorrow program, mentees had a more positive perception of the police in their community. This finding supports hypothesis 1 of this study.

This finding is put into stark contrast when compared to the overall sample, which experienced a significant decline in police perception between Wave 1 and Wave 2. This significant decline must be attributed to the control group. A t-test on only the control group confirms this finding.

Table 7. Control Sample Mentoring Impact t-test

	t	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Respect	-4.065	.000***	-.538
Honest	-9.852	.000***	-1.176
Proud	-5.153	.000***	-.666
Supportive	-5.896	.000***	-.764
Fair	-7.000	.000***	-.884
Complaint	-1.718	.086	-.253
Emergency	3.971	.000***	.628

Suspicious	-2.018	.044	-.303
Cooperate	-2.705	.007**	-.418
Overall	-.052	.959	-.006

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

†Equal variance is assumed for all dependent variables.

Within the control group, the shift towards a more negative perception of police is evident between Wave 1 and Wave 2. Seven of the ten dependent variables significantly declined between the waves. This result makes the positive shift in the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program even more significant. While males of the same age in the same geographic area experienced a decline in their relationship with police over the year that this study was conducted, the Men of Tomorrow mentees experienced an increase in the quality of their relationship with police. This demonstrates that the positive change within the mentoring program can be attributed to the mentoring process, instead of other societal factors that both the test and control group experienced between waves.

Outside of the effectiveness of the mentoring program, the results of this study also provides insight into another interesting factor that impact youth's relationship with police. Based on the body of literature on the topic, this study theorized in hypothesis 2 that participants who are an ethnic minority would have a more negative relationship with police than participants who were white. First, a descriptive of the overall sample with regard to race is provided in Table 8.

Table 8. Overall Sample Race Descriptives

	Race	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Respect	White	2.361	1.276	280

	Non-white	2.893	1.296	327
Honest	White	2.864	1.237	280
	Non-White	3.318	1.245	327
Proud	White	2.828	1.281	280
	Non-White	3.239	1.262	327
Supportive	White	2.629	1.269	280
	Non-White	3.180	1.280	327
Fair	White	3.021	1.281	280
	Non-White	3.333	1.261	327
Complaint	White	3.164	1.455	280
	Non-White	3.640	1.426	327
Emergency	White	2.546	1.500	280
	Non-White	2.817	1.582	327
Suspicious	White	3.154	1.457	280
	Non-White	3.512	1.463	327
Cooperate	White	2.268	1.408	280
	Non-White	2.929	1.535	327
Overall	White	2.716	1.035	280
	Non-White	3.043	1.131	327

Of the 607 total number of respondents in the overall sample, 280 were white and 327 identified as non-white (including black, Hispanic, and other). This descriptives table lends support to hypothesis 2: across all ten variables, non-white respondents reported a more negative

relationship with police in their community than white respondents. A t-test on the overall sample when the independent variable is race was conducted in order to determine the statistical significance of race within the overall sample.

Table 9. Overall Sample Race Impact t-test

	t-value	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Respect	-5.080	.000***	-.532
Honest	-4.491	.000***	-.454
Proud	-3.961	.000***	-.411
Supportive	-5.315	.000***	-.552
Fair	-3.015	.003**	-.312
Complaint	-4.053	.000***	-.476
Emergency	-2.148	.032*	-.271
Suspicious	-3.004	.003**	-.359
Cooperate	-5.496	.000***	-.662
Overall	-3.344	.001***	-.327

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

†Equal variance is assumed for all dependent variables.

The results of the t-test with race as the independent variable support hypothesis 2. Of the 10 independent variables, all were significantly linked to race. This means that when compared

to white respondents, non-white respondents demonstrated a significantly worse relationship with the police in their community. The same t-test is repeated with only the Men of Tomorrow sample to determine if race is significantly linked to the responses of the mentoring group. The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Men of Tomorrow Race Impact t-test

	t-value	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Respect	-1.016	.316	-.612
Honest	-.859	.396	-.515
Proud	-1.163	.252	-.667
Supportive	-.307	.761	-.176
Fair	-.393	.697	-.224
Complaint	-2.140	.039*	-1.612
Emergency	-.278	.783	-.182
Suspicious	-1.366	.181	-1.030
Cooperate	-1.265	.214	-.909
Overall	-.410	.685	-2.07

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

†Equal variance is assumed for all dependent variables.

Interestingly, the gap between races seems to close within the Men of Tomorrow mentoring group. Only one dependent variable was significantly related to race: the respondent's likelihood to contact the police if they have a complaint against someone causing problems on

their block. Though non-white respondents answered more negatively towards police for all variables, this difference is not substantial enough to be statistically significant for nine of the ten dependent variables. This could be attributed to several factors. First, the Men of Tomorrow mentoring group is a smaller sample than the overall dataset; it's possible that the same opinion gap between races would appear if the sample was larger. However, it is important to note that the small sample size was taken into account when determining statistical significance, and that when the wave served as the independent variable, seven of the ten variables were significant. Another possible explanation is that Pastor Fleming was able to appeal to the racial minorities in his mentoring program in such a way that the racial opinion gap closed.

Next, this study analyzes Hypothesis 3, that after a year of mentoring, the mentees will have increased rates of school attendance, and Hypothesis 4, that after a year of mentoring, the mentee's Grade Point Average will have increased. Information from the mentees' schools was obtainable for 12 of the 18 mentees in Wave 1 and all 20 mentees in Wave 2. Descriptive statistics within the test group sample are provided in Table 11.

Table 11. Men of Tomorrow Academic Success Descriptives

	Wave 1			Wave 2		
	Mean	Standard Deviation	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
School Absences	47.333	25.681	12	26.350	16.076	20
GPA	1.158	.89388	12	2.110	.703	20

Once again, some initial trends of data are evident from these descriptives. The mean number of school absences fell by over 20 days between Wave 1 and Wave 2. In addition, the mean GPA rose by almost a full point. In order to determine whether these positive academic

trends were significantly tied to the mentoring program, this study utilizes a t-test, shown in Table 12.

Table 12. Men of Tomorrow Academic Success t-test

	t	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
School Absences	-2.854	.008**	-20.983
GPA	3.349	.002**	.952

*p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001 †Equal variance is assumed for all dependent variables.

In order for a variable to be significant within a test group of 40, the t-value must be greater than 2.042. This is the case for both variables. Between Wave 1 and Wave 2, the mean number of absences fell 20.983 days; this increase in school attendance is significantly linked to the Men of Tomorrow's mentoring program in Wave 2. Between Wave 1 and Wave 2, the mean GPA for the group increased .952 points. This is also significantly linked to the mentoring program, to an even greater degree than school attendance rate. This suggests that because of their year-long participation in the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program, participants saw increased levels of academic success, as reflected by higher rates of school attendance and increased GPAs.

Finally, in order to test hypothesis 5, that after a year of mentoring, the probation rate among the mentees will have decreased, the same process must be repeated for the probation rate of the test group. Table 13 provides descriptives for probation status within the Men of Tomorrow test group for both Wave 1 and Wave 2.

Table 13. Men of Tomorrow Probation Status Descriptives

	Wave 1		Wave 2	
	Number of Mentees in Sample	Number of Mentees on Probation	Number of Mentees in Sample	Number of Mentees on Probation
Probation Status	12	11	20	11

Wave 1 descriptives provide a shocking fact: of the 12 mentees whose information could be collected during Wave 1, 11 were on probation, making the probation rate within the group a staggering 91.67 percent. However, during the second wave, only 11 of the 20 mentees were on probation, producing a probation rate of 55 percent. The t-test results shown in Table 14 reveals the significance of the mentoring program in this change.

Table 14. Men of Tomorrow Probation Status t-test

	t	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Probation Status	2.271	.031*	.367

*p < .05

**p < .01

***p < .001

†Equal variance is assumed for all dependent variables.

Similar to the academic success variables, t-value of the probation status within the mentoring program is also significantly linked to the presence of the mentoring program. The probation rate of the mentees dropped about 37 percent after they experienced a year of mentoring. This confirms Hypothesis 5; after a year of mentoring, the probation rate among mentees decreased.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1, which theorized that the mentees would express a more positive relationship with the police in their community after they experienced a year of mentoring, is supported. Eight of the ten variables within the police-community relations survey experienced a statistically significant increase between Wave 1 and Wave 2. This contrasts with the control group, who did not experience the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program over the course of the

year. In the control group, attitudes towards police significantly declined during this same timeframe. Therefore, hypothesis 1 can safely be accepted.

Hypothesis 2 theorized that non-white participants would express a more negative relationship with police than their white peers. Within the overall dataset, each of the ten variables was significantly linked to race, with non-white respondents answering more negatively than white respondents. This hypothesis can be accepted with a caveat: within the Men of Tomorrow sample, the same racial opinion gap did not exist. Though a racial gap exists between youth in Canton as a whole, it does not exist within the Men of Tomorrow mentoring group.

Hypothesis 3 and 4 theorized that a year of mentoring would increase the levels of academic success for its participants. These hypotheses were confirmed by a significant decrease in school absences and a significant increase in the mentees' GPA. Finally, Hypothesis 5 postulated that mentoring would lead to a decreased probation rate within the mentoring group. This hypothesis was supported by a 37 percent decrease in probation rate between Wave 1 and Wave 2.

Moving forward, these results have significant implications. First, mentoring programs should be implemented in order to further improve the relationship between police and youth in disadvantaged communities. It is evident from the decline in police relationship noted in the overall sample that youth in Canton do not have a good relationship with the police in their community. In order to amend this problem, more initiatives like the Men of Tomorrow program should be implemented in the community. These initiatives should specifically work with non-white youth, since this demographic demonstrated a significantly worse relationship with police

than white youth. Mentoring programs would also serve to increase the academic success of youth in Canton and decrease the juvenile crime rate.

For the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program, this study identified two variables in which mentees did not experience a statistically significant positive impact over the course of a year of mentoring: mentees did not report a significant positive increase in their supportiveness of police or their likelihood of contacting the police in case of an emergency. For Pastor Fleming, this identifies two aspects within youth's relationships with police that need additional work. The Pastor could implement mentoring techniques that specifically target these topics in order to further the positive impact of his mentoring group on his mentees' relationships with police.

Several studies have concluded that mentoring at-risk youth leads to better relationships with police. This study adds to this body of literature by affirming that mentoring positively impacts mentees' relationship with police after a year of mentoring. This affirms the previous research of Anderson, Sabatelli, Trachenberg and Arter. The control group experienced the opposite effect; a year after the initial survey, high school males in the same geographic area reported worse relationships with the police. This makes the positive effect of the mentoring even more profound.

The racial opinion gap within the overall sample of this study also confirms the body of literature on this topic. Thompson, Kahn, McMahon, and O'Neil theorized that racial minorities have a significantly lower level of trust in police when compared to their white counterparts; this theory is directly supported by the "honest" independent variable, which asked respondents if they believed the police in their community were honest. The t-test that uses race as the independent variable produced a t-value of -4.491 with the mean difference between white and

non-white respondents being $-.454$. This confirms Thompson, Kahn, McMahon, and O'Neil's theory. Nordberg et al. also theorized that racial minorities feel that police treat them differently than they do their white counterparts. This theory was directly tested using the "fair" variable, which asked respondents if they believe police in their community treat people fairly. With a -3.015 t-value and a $-.312$ mean difference between races, this study also confirms Nordberg et al.'s theory.

Along with the data regarding the impact of the mentoring program, the link between race and relationship with police was significant. On average, participants who reported themselves as black, Hispanic, or other answered more negatively towards police on a five point scale. It is clear that police race relations remains a problem in Canton, Ohio. Though initiatives like Operation: Take Back have attempted to bridge this relationship gap in recent years, these initiatives are not having their desired effect. This is evident from negative trend in answers between Wave 1 and Wave 2. Though the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program has significantly impacted their mentees' attitudes towards police, the group is relatively small, with only 20 participants by the end of this study. This small size doubtlessly increases the quality of the mentoring because each mentee receives more time and focus; however, based on the results of this study, this group is simply too small for its impact to be seen at the community level. This should not detract from the accomplishment of the Men of Tomorrow program in regards to race relations. Every little step is a step in the right direction.

This study found a significant link between mentoring and academic success, as measured by school attendance and GPA. This affirms the studies of Grossman and Tierney (1998) and Chan et al (2013), whose empirical analyses of hundreds of children in mentoring programs across the country found more positive attitudes of mentees towards school. This also

affirms the studies of Eby et al. (2008) and Matz (2014), whose analyses of mentoring literature across over 20 year time periods confirmed that mentoring leads to better school performance and more positive attitudes towards school. The findings of Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, and McMaken (2011), whose study found no increase in classroom effects, was not supported. However, their finding that any initial improvements in academic success was not sustained into the next school year was neither supported nor rejected by this study. Since this study occurred over the span of a year, the long-term effects of mentoring were not measured.

Hypothesis 5, which theorized that mentoring would decrease the probation rate within the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program, was also significantly supported. This supports the work of James, Stams, Asscher, De Roo, and de Laan (2013) and DuBois (2011), who found that mentoring prevents recidivism, especially in older and at-risk youth. This finding does not support some of the literature on the subject, such as Abrams, Mizel, Nguyen, & Shlonsky (2014), whose program analysis of youth on parole found that mentoring did not decrease the likelihood of recidivism.

Though this study affirms portions of the current literature on the topic and contributes to the growing body of literature, this study has some limitations. First, the sample size for the Men of Tomorrow mentoring group was relatively small, with only 20 participants in the wave 2. This could limit the strength of the results. For the variables of school attendance, GPA, and probation rate, this sample size is even smaller, with only 12 participants. However, the test group is not made up of a sample of the Men of Tomorrow group, but rather the entire population; the twenty participants in the test group constituted the entirety of the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program, not simply a sample. Even when information was only available for 12 of the participants, this still reflected 66.67 percent of the population. Because the purpose of this study

was to analyze the effectiveness of the Men of Tomorrow program, this study had to move forward with a relatively small number of test subjects. In addition, the small number of subjects was accounted for in the statistical analysis. Because of the smaller size, in order to be statistically significant, each t-test had to produce a t-value of greater than 2.042. This is a higher burden than studies consisting of more participants. Therefore, even when accounting for the small sample size, the results were still significant.

Another limitation of this study is that each aspect of the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program is not accounted for individually. This study conducted a holistic analysis by measuring the effect of mentoring over the course of a year. However, it did not measure which aspect of the mentoring program the mentees found most impactful. For example, Pastor Fleming encouraged religious devotion in his mentees. He also provided a positive male role model for his mentees to look up to. Which of these factors had a stronger impact on the mentees? The results of this study cannot answer this question. A possible line of future research would be to conduct a survey within the mentoring program regarding what aspects of the mentoring program each participant found most impactful. This would enhance the applicability of this study for other mentoring programs by specifically identifying the methods that were most successful. This study can only recommend that mentoring programs follow the same holistic approach to achieve similar results.

This study leads to other intriguing lines of future research. First, this study identified two specific aspects of the mentees' relationship with the police that did not achieve a statistically significant increase after a year of mentoring: the mentees did not report that they were significantly more supportive of their community police, and in cases of emergency, the mentees did not report that they would be significantly more likely to contact the police in a case of

emergency. These areas have been identified to Pastor Fleming as needing additional focus; therefore, the Pastor can adapt his mentoring program to better cater to these specific variables. The same survey could be conducted another year into the future to determine if the changes that the Pastor made led to a significant effect.

In addition, Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, and McMaken theorized that though mentoring produces immediate effects, these effects disappear in the long term. In order to test this theory, an identical third wave could be conducted on both the test group and control group. This additional wave would increase the timeframe of the study, giving its results more significance. This third wave would test whether the effects of mentoring increase or decrease with another year of mentoring, in either support or opposition to the theories of Herrera, Grossman, Kauh, and McMaken.

In conclusion, this study indicates that the Men of Tomorrow mentoring program significantly increased mentees' relationships with police in their community. This confirms the general consensus within the body of literature on this subject. However, this study also found that within the Canton community as a whole, high school male's relationship with police deteriorated over the timeframe of this study. The Men of Tomorrow mentoring program is not able to reach every teenage boy within the Canton community; the police force and the community at large must find a method to replicate the Men of Tomorrow effect on the community as a whole.

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Appendix A

1. Please circle the number in each row that corresponds with your opinion on each phrase.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1a. I have a lot of respect for my city police.	1	2	3	4	5
1b. On the whole, my city's police officers are honest.	1	2	3	4	5
1c. I feel proud of my city police.	1	2	3	4	5
1d. I am very supportive of my city's police.	1	2	3	4	5
1e. The police in my city treat people fairly.	1	2	3	4	5

2. Overall, do you think the police in your city are doing...

- A very good job..... 1
- A good job..... 2
- A fair job..... 3
- A poor job..... 4
- A very poor job..... 5
- Don't know..... 0

3. How likely is it that you would call the police if each of the following situations happened tomorrow?

	Very Likely	Likely	Don't Know	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
3a. You have a complaint against someone causing problems on your block.	1	2	3	4	5
3b. You have an emergency situation?	1	2	3	4	5
3c. You see suspicious activity on your block?	1	2	3	4	5
3d. If you had important information, would you cooperate in a police investigation?	1	2	3	4	5