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Law Enforcement Methods to Improve Relationships Within the Illinois Communities

James F. Reilly
Walden University

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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James Reilly

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Review Committee

Dr. Tony Gaskew, Committee Chairperson,
Criminal Justice Faculty

Dr. Melanye Smith, Committee Member
Criminal Justice Faculty

Dr. Howard Henderson, University Reviewer,
Criminal Justice Faculty

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2019

Abstract

Law Enforcement Methods to Improve Relationships Within the Illinois Communities

by

James Reilly

MS, Aurora University, 2015

BS, DePaul University, 2007

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Criminal Justice

Walden University

August 2019

Abstract

The Will County community supports community policing efforts and wants their law enforcement agencies to be transparent, service-orientated, and committed to their diverse neighborhoods. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore current policing methods and tactics to improve community relationships within Will County, Illinois. Six different focus group studies were completed where 33 participants completed questionnaires and follow-up, in-depth interviews were conducted to gather data on personal police experiences and perceptions. The questionnaire responses were separated into three categories including Likert-scale response questions, dichotomous (yes and no answers), and ranking police tactics by levels of importance. Nine statistically data driven tables were generated into percentage totals that created comparisons of police methods, police tactics, and issues. The main policing tactics that Will County residents expected from their policing agencies were rapid response for service and police professionalism (appearance, conduct, communication skills). The participants expected that police agencies solve major crimes (high-profile murders, assaults, robberies). The lowest ranked police tactics discovered in all 4 subcategories surveyed were aggressive enforcement efforts (even for minor offenses) and traffic enforcement. The participants demonstrated support for community policing efforts that requires law enforcement agencies to work with their neighborhoods. The results of this study can be used to create a policing culture that incorporates traditional policing efforts and combines these efforts with the newer community policing methods that are positively impacting the Will County communities.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to an incredible “Gift from God,” my son Braden.

To Braden: I have had the pleasure in my life of experiencing love, family, success, failures, along with world travel, and advanced education. Nothing has come close to the joy and pride I have in being your father. You are an incredible young man, and I treasure every moment we share. I ask that you live each day to the fullest and appreciate that life’s journey will bring you ups and downs. Both are to be experienced, whereas you cannot have one without the other. Braden, always find time for forgiveness in yourself and those around you, but never give into self-doubt. Your dreams and goals are always within reach if you continue to believe, and may this lifelong goal of mine, to complete a PhD, be that reminder.

Also, I need to recognize my family and friends who have supported me throughout this path of advanced education. Your continued support along with my faith in God, made the once thought impossible, possible.

In closing, Dad, I miss you, and I strive every day to be the type of father to Braden that you were to me.

Acknowledgements

Thank you, God, for your blessings and in giving me the strength to stay focused and dedicated to completing this study. It is my hope that this research will improve the lives of other individuals within my community. May law enforcement continue to build on a culture of compassion and understanding, in that all individuals, regardless of race, color, or creed, want to live in communities of freedom and respect. All Americans, and beyond, should be able to raise their families in neighborhoods free of fear and intimidation, and as law enforcement officers it is our “Oath of Office” to help make that happen.

This research study would not have been possible, without the continued support and guidance of Dr. Tony Gaskew, my committee chair, along with Dr. Melayne Smith, my methodologist and committee member. Also, I respect the oversight from Howard Henderson, my university research reviewer, and support from Sarah Matthey, my form and style reviewer.

On a personal level, thank you Dr. Dave Gordon and Dr. Bonnie Covelli, who supported me throughout this research with editing, continued direction, and counseling. I would also like to acknowledge the passing of George L. Kelling, (1935-2019), the founder of “The Broken Windows Theory.” Professor Kelling inspired generations of law enforcement officers and police administrators to accept their personal responsibilities in making communities a safer place to live, work, and raise families.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Policing agents nationwide are struggling to improve community relationships and stay current with modern policing efforts and tactics (Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015). Police administrators in Will County, Illinois have introduced varying forms of community policing strategies with limited success (Antinori, 2014). Critics argue that aggressive administrations and zero tolerance enforcement efforts lead to negative impacts on the communities and trust between law enforcement and the neighborhoods they are sworn to protect (Lurigio, Greenleaf, & Flexon, 2009; Said, 2015).

Earlier social disorganization theories such as Kelling and Wilson's (1982) broken windows theory have identified how less privileged communities suffer from urban decay and diminished quality of life issues. Social disorganization breakdowns are identified in communities that have higher criminal behaviors; however, researchers disagree on which methods law enforcement administrators should introduce to address these concerns (Said, 2015). Many of the social control-based theories, such as the broken windows theory, are critiqued as being too aggressive against minor criminal offenses (Jenkins, 2015). The core values of many social control methods are zero tolerance policing for minor criminal offenses. The resulting arrests and written citations that occur negatively impact the community they are intended to protect (Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015).

The underlying social-economic conditions of a neighborhood or community will impact the role of law enforcement or public administrators. These administrators may have good intentions, but they are sometimes not equipped to influence or change cultural perspective (Rice & Mathews, 2012). An example would be the command of Bratton (2015), New York City from 1994-1996, who argued that zero tolerance policing was effective. However, this type of policing needed underlying principles to be more effective (Bratton, 2015). Then supported by computer-generated statistical data and crime analysis techniques, Bratton deployed law enforcement resources to the areas with the highest crime rate. Bratton held weekly meetings and exchanged strategies that lowered unwanted criminal behaviors and encouraged the area commanders to look at quality of life issues. Bratton allowed for the collection of data on previous crimes or potential criminal targets by (a) using statistical data, (b) encouraging area commanders to look for innovative solutions to criminal behaviors, (c) supporting non- aggressive arrest techniques, and (d) using newer implemented post arrest or encounter interviews by officers. Area commanders began to realize that by using police encounters with local citizens and by collecting useful criminal intelligence, law enforcement officials could begin collecting and investigating higher-level crimes of murder, robbery, and assaults, thereby lowering crime rates within the communities (Johnson, Golub, & McCabe, 2010). Bratton introduced policies that mandated police officers to conduct post arrest interviews and street-level encounter

interviews. These interviews aided in the collection of criminal intelligence regarding higher-level crimes that possibly affected the neighborhood (Bratton, 2015).

Johnson et al. (2010) described the importance of law enforcement addressing quality of life issues. If policing agents do not address these issues, it may encourage the deterioration of the public's ability to exist in a neighborhood free from criminal activities or social concerns (Johnson et al., 2010). Bayley, Davis, and Davis (2015) explained that any public policy or agenda that concentrates on individual tactics, such as aggressive arrests techniques or zero tolerance policing, is not understanding the broader underlying social concerns. Broader-based community policing efforts have been accepted by some communities since the early 1990s; these policing efforts encourage community participation but also take time to identify issues both criminal and civil while looking for solutions to address these concerns (Said, 2015).

In early 1992, the Joliet, Illinois Police Department introduced a newer concept for law enforcement known as community-orientated policing (Joliet Police Department, 1992). This problem-based policing method was based on the broken windows theory. It suggested that minor community disorder issues, such as inoperable street lighting, loitering, and gang graffiti, if left unattended, can lead to more serious criminal behaviors in any community (Joliet Police Department, 1992). Specific zone assignments by patrol officers who became directly accountable for any activities within their areas were also expanded into the new policing method (Joliet Police Department, 1992). In Joliet Police Department's (1992) concept, the priority for

policing was based on addressing community concerns, rather than the strict zero tolerance enforcement efforts.

Within a short period of time, these community-orientated policing efforts were successful and helped to build community trust and accountability, while reducing unwanted criminal behaviors (Joliet Police Department, 1992). Community leaders were supportive, and city council members were quick to approve additional resources to then Chief David Gerdes who expanded the unit to seven high-crime patrol areas with two assigned patrol sergeants and 16 full-time officers (Joliet Police Department, 1992). Critics have argued that the long-lasting positive impact and durability of the community policing methods have faded. Some suggested this was because of budget restraints (Antinori, 2014), and others suggested it was because it was based on aggressive social control methods (Said, 2015). Bass (2001) suggested that community-orientated policing strategies have struggled over time for more than one reason. Environmental issues and officer discretion play a role in how policing methods are enforced and perceived by community members (Bass, 2001). However, the successful policies and oversight by some law enforcement administrators have been documented (Antinori, 2014; Jenkins, 2015). Community policing methods raise awareness of underlying social issues such as rehabilitation for drug addicts, constructing fewer high-density low-income housing units, and improving opportunities for less advantaged individuals (Bass, 2001; Said, 2015).

This study's findings are directed toward public administrators, policing agencies, or any governmental body that can implement or reduce community-orientated policing policies that have positively impacted or negatively impacted the communities they serve. By examining and researching which current community-orientated policing policies or policing procedures are working, I encourage policymakers to adapt and move forward into a new policing culture.

Community members' and law enforcement administrators' (including patrol enforcement) perceptions do not always coincide (Sims, Hooper, & Peterson, 2002). Through this research, I examined which traditional policing methods and community-orientated policing methods can be combined into a new policing theory that might require additional specialized patrol units. I researched if a new policing culture can combine the best attributes of traditional policing methods into community-orientated policing strategies and create a new policing culture that currently does not exist.

Background

Communities such as Joliet, Illinois are more likely to participate and cooperate with law enforcement efforts if accountability within the police agency can be identified (Johnson et al., 2010; Reisig & Giacomazzi, 1998; Said, 2015). This accountability can originate from having officers assigned to defined communities and geographical locations, which allows the officers to interact and form connections with the individual households and businesses they serve and protect (Reisig & Giacomazzi, 1998).

Once issues of concern are identified within these communities, a community policing officer has the authority and responsibility to take corrective measures, thereby reducing the problems and calls for service, with methods and resources that generally fall outside the scope of policing (Said, 2015). The expectations placed on these types of community policing methods and community-based officers are different from traditional law enforcement efforts that are expected to respond to calls for service (Jenkins, 2015). For example, a traditional policing method might be smaller assigned foot patrols that can include walk and talk patrol methods with community members and businesses; these are sometimes perceived as effective and can include small neighborhood meetings (Jenkins, 2015).

Community-based policing issues began surfacing after the economic recession in 2008 when municipal budgets were reduced or depleted and specialized policing units were a luxury expense and not considered a useful crime reduction tool (Antinori, 2014). However, researchers have discussed the shortcomings in reverting to policing communities and neighborhoods as reactive instead of proactive (Jenkins, 2015). Wehrman and DeAngelis (2011) suggested that community members felt the police were taking the roles of social workers and concentrating less on crime.

Said (2015) recognized that community policing efforts are a two-way interaction, and support is needed from community members. Jenkins (2015) and Said discovered that aggressive policing, arrests, and issues such as stop and frisk often left community members feeling harassed or intimidated by police, thereby reducing

community cooperation. Social control theories, such as the broken windows theory, do encourage policing agencies to identify quality of life issues, or community hotspots, and address the underlying problems rather than constant calls for service without remediation (Jenkins, 2015). Jenkins discovered that quality of life issues were rated fourth in importance by law enforcement personnel when trying to improve community relationships, behind topics such as crime mapping, community meetings, and police officers assigned to limited geographical locations. Bayley et al. (2015) suggested that not only should quality of life issues be addressed, but also additional social support issues such as a community watch and crime prevention programs could be introduced.

These early policing theories also gave birth to community policing and problem-solving policing methods that show signs of success but also can undermine police administration's authority (Lee, 2014). Lee (2014) described that these newer community-based policing methods might fail to recognize community diversity and rely on geographical lines that can reduce police officers to problem solvers and not crime fighters. Communities and police administrators still support policing procedures such as foot patrol or vehicle patrol that originate from traditional policing methods and cannot be replaced but possibly improved (Bayley et al., 2015; Jenkins, 2015).

Through community feedback from focus groups, I explored how police relationships, culture, and perceptions can become more transparent and accepted by the communities in Will County, Illinois. Currently, the racial demographics for Will County, Illinois are 63% White, 18% Hispanic, 12% Black with 1% American Indian,

and 6% Asian with a population of 689,500 people covering 836 square miles (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). These demographics are similar to the national averages: 61% White, 16% Hispanic, 13% Black with 1% American Indian, and 6% Asian (U.S. Census Bureau, 2016). I examined the positive attributes of community policing (see Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015), along with how law enforcement addressing quality of life issues (see Johnson et al., 2010), can be successfully combined with traditional policing methods into a new policing culture and not as a separate division.

Although community policing efforts and policing through addressing quality of life issues is criticized (Said, 2015; U.S. Department of Justice, 2014), some tactics are positive, both within communities and policing agencies (Bayley et al., 2015; Jenkins, 2015). Through researching the underlying policing and community concerns and quantifying the positive or negative attributes of community policing, a new policing theory may emerge.

Statement of the Problem

U.S. law enforcement has struggled to discover modern policing methods to improve relationships with the racially and culturally diverse communities they serve (Lurigio et al., 2009; Rice & Mathews, 2012). Issues such as racism, sexuality, and economic status have physically and emotionally segregated U.S. communities into neighborhoods where cultural differences often clash (Bayley et al., 2015; Said, 2015). Bass (2001) and Huggins (2012) explained that these segregations by physical space

and racial barriers have impacted generations of individuals' advantages, opportunities, and the policing culture in which these areas are governed.

Joliet, Illinois police administrators are exploring new policing methods, such as community-based policing (Joliet Police Department, 2017). Administrators hope to identify, adapt, and create policing policies that can improve relationships, reduce criminal behaviors, and improve perceptions both by the communities they serve and the police officers serving these communities (Jenkins, 2015; Rice & Mathews, 2012). Thibault, Lynch, and McBride (2011) termed traditional policing methods as respond, regulate, restrain, recover, repress, and reinforce. Other traditional methods might include visible patrol vehicles and foot patrol supported with officers responding to calls for service, the occasional self-initiated activity of traffic stops, and other suspicious persons or business checks (Thibault et al., 2011). These types of methods have sometimes been termed as reactionary (Thibault et al. 2011). Jenkins (2015) explained that traditional policing methods are law enforcement administrators attempting to control criminal behaviors without the support or interaction from the communities while not addressing the underlying social economic issues.

Police perceptions of community priorities do not always match with what communities feel are essential issues in their relationship (Reisig & Giacomazzi, 1998). In this study, I identified policing tactics important to the Will County, Illinois community members and determined which tactics are perceived as positive or improving police relationships and identified which tactics are negative (see Jenkins,

2015; Said, 2015). Police administrators and community members are reluctant to discard these traditional policing methods because they have been socially accepted and allow the different police agencies discretion to adopt policing procedures based on department size, budgets, and calls for service (Jenkins, 2015; Thibault et al., 2011). I also explored how community policing methods can be introduced and support traditional policing methods so that community members trust and support police activities and enforcement without the aggressive detrimental arrests that can occur (see Bayley et al., 2015; Said, 2015).

There is a need for traditional policing methods that allow flexibility and security for law enforcement administrators (Thibault et al., 2011). However, community policing has seen limited success in opening communication between law enforcement and the communities they serve (Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015).

Policing is not defined by predetermined zones, and police administrators should allow lower rank and file personnel the authority to make positive changes within their assigned patrol areas while ensuring all members of the department have the necessary resources available to create and implement these changes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore modern policing methods to improve relationships with the racially and culturally diverse communities they serve. Individually, policing methods and tactics were examined within the Will County, Illinois communities to discover how they are affecting current policing policies. By

incorporating qualitative research methods, such as focus group studies, I examined existing community policing methods that are impacting community perceptions of policing to better understand how they need to be expanded or improved.

By conducting focus group studies from six different communities within the Will County, Illinois area, I collected in-depth feedback on personal experiences and how community members and leaders perceived the effectiveness of current policing methods. Through the collection of these focus group surveys and with the use of follow-up in-person questions, governing agencies can adapt current policies and police tactics to become more effective.

Research Questions

RQ 1: What policing methods can be improved to promote better relationships and understandings between the communities that are served by law enforcement?

RQ 2: What processes are necessary to transform the traditional law enforcement culture into one that is more transparent, service-orientated, and committed to diverse communities?

Theoretical Framework

The social disorganization theoretical study conducted by Shaw and McKay (1942) described a typical structure or lack thereof as the underlying cause of criminal behaviors. Shaw and McKay's social disorganization theory was relevant for this study because it includes the importance of community relationships, families, neighbors, and respect for peers including law enforcement efforts as a necessary element to a healthy,

sustainable neighborhood. However, this framework is dated and relies on the broken windows theory as its basis. In addition, the theory suffers from a stigma about the negative impact on the communities being served (Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015). Because of the negativity of the zero-tolerance concept for minor criminal offenses, this dated theory serves as a basis for understanding but was not used as the sole framework.

The theoretical framework that was used for the research was Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's (1990) community policing theory. This theory is pertinent because it was introduced about the same time as the introduction of community policing efforts in Will County, Illinois. Also, Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux suggested that community policing efforts need to work with the communities they serve and look for problem-solving techniques to address quality of life issues that may encourage criminal behaviors. Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's theory is relevant to modern policing efforts because it empowers lower rank officers and supervisors with authority to make changes within the communities they serve. From an administrator point of view, allowing patrol officers the authority to identify, change, and correct criminal behaviors or quality of life issues within their assigned areas is a positive attribute. This authority also encourages these officers to take more ownership of their community and look for alternative, more positive, and nonaggressive arrest tactics (Jenkins, 2015). New methods of problem-solving techniques can be created when community members, leaders, and police administrators work in a proactive and collaborative manner.

Not all policing tactical methods are perceived as positive, such as rural foot patrols or aggressive arrests for minor violations. However, some tactics that fall under the umbrella of community policing do have positive qualities in prior research, such as community meetings, public awareness of criminal activities, and accountability of police administrators (Bayley et al., 2015; Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015). By collecting data from focus group surveys and follow-up interviews, I organized the relevant data to determine which policing policies or procedures by law enforcement officers could be improved upon to increase the trust and relationships within the law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve.

Archival data and relevant historical research were also collected and used to better understand the introduction of community policing efforts within the Will County, Illinois communities and how these efforts have been successful or not successful and why.

Nature of the Study

In this qualitative research study, I used an interpretive phenomenological analysis. I collected written survey questions that are based on the Likert (1932) scale from six quota-sampling focus groups, researching prior police contacts and police relationships in Will County, Illinois. By applying a qualitative research method and the interpretive phenomenological approach, I was able to focus on individuals' perceptions and personal experiences to better understand current law enforcement relationships.

By selecting several different communities with different cultural backgrounds that represent different ethnic backgrounds, I collected 33 written and verbal data surveys on the perceptual reality of various demographic groups based on race, education, income, and prior police contacts. I used archival data, specifically newspaper articles, community bulletins, and in-person interviews with community leaders and activists to better understand historical law enforcement related issues and concerns. This study population consisted of 33 completed survey responses, chosen by random selection process and from a broad spectrum of the targeted population. Individual communities were identified to represent the current demographics of Will County, Illinois as described by the U.S. Census Bureau (2016). The U.S. Census Bureau defined Will County, Illinois population as 63% White, 18% Hispanic, 12% Black with 1% American Indian, and 6% Asian with a population of 689,500 people covering 836 square miles.

I used qualitative analysis and personal perceptions to explore what policing policies are perceived as positive or negative and how these contacts can be improved based upon demographics (see Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015). By identifying which policing issues are essential and prioritizing these issues, it may be useful for law enforcement administrators to address policing policies and not just enforcement efforts based on a community's demographic and cultural composition (Rice & Mathews, 2012). Lurigio et al. (2009) suggested that issues such as prior police contacts can be positive if handled respectfully. However, if too many police contacts occur, the victims

may become reluctant to work with police because they feel burdensome (Lurigio et al., 2009).

Demographic data were statistically compared for variances using the percentages analysis. The deviations in statistical data was based on prior police contacts, arrests, communities, and age (see Jenkins, 2015). Follow-up key informant interviews were conducted looking for similarities in the qualitative data so that gaps in research can be explored and future studies can be identified.

Definitions

The following are operational definitions used within this study.

Broken windows theory: Community members identify public disorder and reduced quality of life issues within their communities. If left unattended and allowed to flourish, these issues of urban decay will lead to increased criminal behaviors. Community members become unattached, and deviant behaviors become the acceptable norm leading to separation of communal bonds and increased social abnormalities (Kelling & Wilson, 1982).

Collective efficacy: “Neighborhoods with higher levels of collective efficacy also take better care of the public space, whereas those with lower collective efficacy tend to have more litter on the streets and sidewalks, unkempt vegetation, and dilapidated housing. Such physical incivilities are visible, recognizable elements that one might use to estimate a neighborhood’s safety, as well as its overall strength as a community” (O’Brien, Norton, Cohen, & Wilson, 2012, p. 215-216).

Community policing: A crime fighting strategy evolved from traditional policing methods that involves citizen participation in the solving of criminal as well as quality of life issues (Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2013). Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues, such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime (U.S. Department of Justice, 2014).

Hot spots: “Based on the observation that a small number of places are responsible for a large percentage of crime, hot spots policing advocates the simple idea that to best reduce the overall amount of crime, police should focus interventions and resources on these criminogenic locations” (Weisburd & Braga, 2006, p.225).

“Typically, hot spots policing involves the use of traditional police responses such as directed patrols, proactive arrests, increased police visibility (through foot patrols, mounted patrols, Segways, and bicycle patrols) and stop and frisk, and does occasionally incorporate a broader range of comprehensive responses” (Scheider, Chapman, & Shapiro, 2009, p. 711).

Intelligence-led policing (ILP): “Intelligence-Led Policing is a management and resource allocation approach to law enforcement using data collection and intelligence analysis to set specific priorities for all manner of crimes, including those associated with terrorism. ILP is a collaborative approach based on improved intelligence operations and community-oriented policing and problems solving, which the field of

law enforcement has considered beneficial for many years” (Office of Homeland Security, 2002, p. 19).

Local adaptation: “Rests on the assumption that communities with different elements or contexts will have different definitions of physical disorder. This is not to say that people with different backgrounds will disagree on all elements of maintenance” (O’Brien et al., 2012, p. 217).

Perception of crime: “Perceptions of disorder differ among residents in the same community, rooted in individual differences and neighborhood social processes of which the person is a part. These differences suggest that the process through which an individual observes and classifies crime problems is not as straightforward as commonly thought” (Latkin, German, Hua, & Curry, 2009, p. 126).

Quality of life policing: “Quality of life policing addresses the numerous everyday problems frequently brought to the attention of the police by the community. Serious crime is generally rare, even in high crime areas. Often, the public at large is more concerned with disorder and incivility. At community meetings, the overwhelming share of complaints often deal with noise, public drinking and urinating, graffiti, prostitution, drugs sales and use” (Johnson et al., 2010, p. 4).

Zero tolerance: Police tactics that aggressively address minor infractions to reduce higher level crimes. Critics argue these police tactics are counterproductive and often results in negative interactions between community members and law enforcement (Johnson et al., 2010).

Assumptions

Assumptions made for this study were that the Will County, Illinois community members who participate would have different perceptions of the types of policing policies and procedures that create positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Additional assumptions included

- During the collection of written surveys and follow-up interviews, the participants were open and honest in their responses, and it was my responsibility to create an interview environment of integrity and trust while collecting any relevant data.
- That all police reports collected, newspaper articles published, and archival data studied were true and accurate to the facts as presented.
- That the reports generated by policing agencies, U.S. Census Bureau, and other governmental agencies were true and accurate without bias.
- That individuals participating in the focus group surveys and follow-up interview questions were honest, forthright, and without fear of reprisal for being truthful during the collection of research data.

Scope and Delimitations

During this qualitative study, I collected focus group survey responses from six different communities within the Will County, Illinois area. A total of 33 completed written surveys were collected and follow-up interviews were conducted to examine areas that need further research. Information was collected such as prior police contacts,

the content of previous contacts, and the conclusion of those contacts, specifically if they were positive, negative or neutral. Archival data or statistical data collection methods were necessary to collect and were disseminated into groups, charts, or graphs. The data collected in this research included community policing efforts, environmental issues, and intelligence-led policing so it was necessary to obtain local newspaper articles, previous research studies, and statistical data that were available through local police agencies. Excluded from participating in this study were law enforcement officers, elected officials, or persons who reside outside the county of Will.

Limitations

The limitations associated with this study are that only a small group of Will County, Illinois residents completed the written surveys and participated in the focus group studies. This small group of participants were limited to their interactions with law enforcement and may not adequately represent the broad, different demographics which make-up the Will County, Illinois communities.

Other limitations included

- Due to time and budget constraints, I was not be able to fully collect interview data from elected officials, business owners, or retired law enforcement officials.
- Police agencies budget constraints and economic conditions were not compared in contrast to the success or failures of community policing.

- During interview and focus group studies, the younger, teen generation may not be well represented.
- As a scholar-practitioner, I was also a full-time law enforcement officer within the Will County, Illinois community. I was not be uniformed or identified as law enforcement during research efforts. However, biases may be present and hinder truthfulness and an open dialogue with individual participants.
- To reduce limitations in recording accurate responses or interpretations, all focus group studies were recorded in audio format for transcribing at a later date.

This research is expected to be generalizable to other communities throughout the country. However, it is understood that different county, state, and local government and police agents may not have the same crime issues or race relationships that currently exist in Will County, Illinois. Additional research projects would need to be conducted in many areas throughout the country so that the gaps in research from this study could be addressed.

Significance

This study is significant because it filled the gap in research between existing community policing efforts (see Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015) and older more traditional methods policing policies (see Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1991). Both policing

methods are widely used and accepted in the law enforcement community (Bayley et al., 2015; Scheider et al., 2009). However, there appears to be a void or gap between these methods and how they are used and their success rate in improving community relationships. Also, the results of this study provide insight into how current policing methods and philosophies can be advanced into policing policies, which can improve race relationships and neighborhood, community policing perceptions. Critics often cite the aggressive nature of policing tactics associated with community policing and the broken windows theory method of policing that negatively impacts communities (Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015). These aggressive tactics can reduce the acceptance of policing efforts in lower-income communities (Braga & Brunson, 2015).

There is some concern that current policing initiatives are often supported by police administrators through statistical data or arrest records and that these policing programs may suffer because they need this statistical support to continue funding (Antinori, 2014). It is possible to identify ways that the positive aspects or tactics of community policing, traditional policing, and problem-solving policing can be identified and separated into a new policing culture and not a separate, statistically driven policing unit. It is possible these new policing policies and procedures could be introduced early in a law enforcement officer's career, such as the police academy and field training. It is possible to create a culture of policing that incorporates the successful tactics of community policing such as crime mapping but reduces the adverse side effects of aggressive arrest for minor offenses. It is possible to fill the gap in

existing research through examining effective policing methods from the Will County, Illinois area. This research identified answers to the above questions, identifying ways law enforcement agencies can improve community relationships.

Summary

In Chapter 1, I explored various methods that law enforcement agencies may use to improve community relationships. Subsections included the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of study, research questions, theoretical framework, nature of study, and significance.

In Chapter 2, I will review literature on issues such as community policing, intelligence led-policing, and how environments play a role in policing policies and procedures. In Chapter 3, I will discuss this study's methodology, including focus group surveys, follow-up interviews, archival data collection, and data collection and analysis strategies. The resulting data and collection of statistical analysis will be in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Literature Review

The purpose of this study was to better understand what methods are needed to improve the relationships between the Will County, Illinois law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve. I explored and compared current community perceptions about law enforcements' policies and procedures against different neighborhood demographics. I discovered and offered explanations as to why individual communities may have more trust and confidence with their policing agencies and provided methods that may help improve these relationships, specifically in the Will County, Illinois area.

It is possible that race, racism, and discrimination may play a role. However, research literature and focus group studies need to be examined. In this study, I discovered what issues influence these areas such as social, economic status, quality of life issues, or perceptions toward and by law enforcement based on prior contacts and how often connections are made (see Jenkins, 2015; Lurigio et al., 2009). Also, community policing literature was researched to determine what areas of policing efforts were having a positive effect on neighborhoods and how community policing may be expanded or improved upon by law enforcement to enhance the quality of life issues and reduce criminal behaviors (see Jenkins, 2015).

Origins of Policing

First, the origins of policing were examined to better understand how policing has arrived in today's culture. Since the early U.S. days of colonization, police agencies were created to be the social control arm to the slave population (Durr, 2015). Durr (2015) explained that early institutionalized policing agencies, which were often pilfered with Ku Klux Klan members and slave owner supporters, policed the Black slave populations with little accountability for their methods or aggressive behaviors. Slave patrols, working under the auspice of controlling renegade slaves, stopping revolts, and returning fugitive slaves to their owners, made a smooth transition from slave patrols to policing agencies in the mid-1850s (Durr, 2015).

Durr's (2015) noted that as police agencies and administrations were assembled in the pre-Civil War era, they collectively defined their powers over citizens and slaves by implementing English rule such as (a) limited police authority: the powers of the police are established by law; (b) local control: local governments bear the responsibility for providing police service; and (c) fragmented law enforcement authority: several agencies within a defined area share the responsibility for providing police services.

In 1650, the English Rule of Law of policing powers were intended to implement the rule of law fairly; however, as these newer policing agencies were being formed, the slave patrols and racial radicals influenced the new policing agencies (Johnson, 2016). These newly formed police administrations manipulated the local rule of law and fragmented policing authority to their advantage (Johnson, 2016). Because these police

agencies originated under the biases of racial inequality, Black or poor White migrant communities were policed with little oversight (Johnson, 2016).

This pre-Civil War societal segregation allowed wealthy White settlers more advantages to succeed from higher employment, educational advancement, and the power to dominate the political arena (Johnson, 2016). This societal power afforded them the ability to rule over the lower class without conscience (Johnson, 2016). This early ability of the elite to govern without accountability, while writing and introducing the housing rules, zoning laws, local ordinances, and criminal laws, permitted the members to control how the United States (U.S.) was formed. These societal biases, which included racial, financial barriers, and other inequalities, still exist to this day (Durr, 2015).

Policing in the U.S. has evolved throughout history. Early days of policing were often based on political clout, coercion, and the ability to intimidate the community members into following societal guidelines. Stewart (2007) explained that during the Reform Era from 1930-1970, technology started to separate the beat officers from daily contacts with the communities they served. Automobiles, radios, and dispatch centers allowed law enforcement officers to cover larger areas and respond more efficiently to calls for service (Stewart, 2007). This separation from daily contact with community members reduced intimate interactions and officer accountability, and it allowed police administrators to implement written policies and procedures to help guide officers (Stewart, 2007).

Law enforcement's early years were influenced by Vollmer who is commonly known as the father of modern law enforcement (Vollmer, 1928). Vollmer is credited with creating military ranking within law enforcement, originating police record keeping, and organized criminal investigations that were supported by college-educated investigators and criminal sciences (Vollmer, 1920). Vollmer understood the need for law enforcement training by recruits that included weapons training and marksmanship (Wilson, 1953). Vollmer had an awareness of human relationships and interactions that supported new, creative perceptions on how to advance law enforcement efforts (Wilson, 1953).

Vollmer (1928) explained the importance of law enforcement attempting to understand the causes or underlying reasons for criminal behaviors. Vollmer (1923) suggested that early in childhood, individuals are impacted by their upbringing and the surrounding environment. Vollmer (1923) discussed that often, criminal behaviors originate in children, and these behaviors are rooted in their early environmental surroundings. Vollmer (1923) challenged that a person could influence a child as young as 4-years-old with environmental issues that could alter the life course for the rest of the child's life. For these early understandings, Vollmer (1923) often worked with school administrators and child psychiatrists to better understand the criminal behaviors in early adolescents.

Throughout the Reform Era, written policing policies and procedures were introduced as well as educational requirements and training standards that raised the

minimum necessities officers needed before they could be hired or introduced to working with the community (Stewart, 2007). These higher standards and requirements separated and influenced the hiring practices of law enforcement agencies, unintentionally allowing more White officers to be hired and minorities to be overlooked based on prior histories, lack of education requirements, and prejudice (Williams & Murphy, 1990). Many of the new Reform Era policing efforts were based on Vollmer's earlier writings and research (Williams & Murphy, 1990).

Williams and Murphy (1990) discussed the civil servant entrance exams and explained how simple reading and math requirements favored more educated Whites and often left Blacks and Latinos out of the hiring process. In New York, the 1968 police entrance exams had a 65% failure rate for Blacks and a 31% failure rate for Whites (Williams & Murphy, 1990). Although many refer to the 1930-1970s as the Reform Era for policing, it still left a lot of areas in law enforcement unequal for minority groups, not only in policing policies but also in the civil servant hiring processes (Stewart, 2007; Williams & Murphy, 1990).

With criminal behaviors increasing and police administrators realizing they were not connected to the communities they serve, the Community Policing Era began in the early 1980s (Stewart, 2007). Police administrators suggested that communities needed to interact with law enforcement and provide input and feedback on what issues were important to a community member's or leader's perspective. This new direction also allowed police officers to interact and help build trust by addressing neighborhood

concerns from minor criminal behaviors to the quality of life issues. When law enforcement could show compassion and care for neighborhood issues, confidence and interpersonal interactions often followed.

Community-Oriented Policing

Moving to current times, Stewart (2007) explained that the introduction of community policing supported the ability to involve community members and leaders while identifying community problems that could be addressed by law enforcement officials or other government agencies to improve public environments. Later, in 1994, and after community policing efforts were underway, the U.S. Department of Justice formed the Office of Community Orientated Policing Services (2013). This Office described community policing as

Community policing focuses on crime and social disorder through the delivery of public services that includes aspects of traditional law enforcement, as well as prevention, problem solving, community engagement, and partnerships. The community policing model balances reactive responses to calls for service with proactive problem solving centered on the causes of crime and disorder.

Community policing requires police and citizens to join together as partners in the course of both identifying and adequately addressing these issues.

(Stewart, 2007, p. 3-4)

Supporting early efforts of community policing was based on the understanding that identifying community problems allowed officers to solve underlying issues that

led to additional calls for service. Goldstein (1979) described policing as a problem-solving organization that was continually looking for solutions to resolve community issues and societal difficulties. Goldstein introduced a 12-area plan that could help police agencies identify community concerns while looking for solutions:

1. Focus on problems of interest to the public.
2. Zero in on effectiveness as the primary concern.
3. Be proactive.
4. Be committed to systematic inquiry as a first step in solving substantive problems.
5. Encourage the use of rigorous methods in making inquiries.
6. Make full use of the data in police files and the experience of police personnel.
7. Group like incidents together so that they can be addressed as a common problem.
8. Avoid using overly broad labels in grouping incidents so separate problems can be identified.
9. Encourage a broad and uninhibited search for solutions.
10. Acknowledge the limits of the criminal justice system as a response to problems.
11. Identify multiple interests in any one problem and weigh them when analyzing the value of different responses.
12. Be committed to taking some risks in responding to problems.

(Goldstein, 1979)

Goldstein's 12-area plan played into the emerging community-orientated policing efforts. Goldstein and Susmilch (1982) coauthored a four-volume series on policing

issues, identifying social problems and methods police administrators could use to confront and find solutions to community concerns.

One of the earliest known research projects written about community policing efforts was conducted to discover its introduction of and acceptability by officers and the effectiveness of implementation of community policing (Eck & Spelman, 1987). This was completed by the Newport News, Virginia Police Department (Eck & Spelman, 1987). Eck and Spelman (1987) examined the effectiveness of proactive police measures, which looked deeper into calls for service to identify problems within the communities. By allowing law enforcement to be proactive instead of reactive, problem-solving methods were introduced to policing methods that have formed into the community policing efforts known today.

The Newport News Police study was relevant to the new community policing theory and was designed to answer two questions:

1. Can police agencies get their members to routinely identify, analyze, and solve problems without adding personnel or forming special units?
2. Are these problem-solving efforts effective? Using the understanding that problems can be solved in one of five ways:
 - a) eliminating the problem
 - b) reducing the number of incidents, it creates
 - c) reducing the seriousness of the problem or incident
 - d) designing alternate methods for better handling the incident

e) remove the problem from police consideration. (Eck & Spelman, 1987, p. 6)

By reducing the underlying cause, police administrators were hoping to reduce calls for service, known as incident driven policing, introducing proactive police tactics to resolve criminal behaviors before they occurred (Eck & Spelman, 1987).

The new community-based, problem-solving techniques required administrators to give community officers more discretion and the ability to address neighborhood concerns without constant oversight or approval from supervision. Problem-solving policing opened broad-based policing theories, empowering the community officers, permitting them to feel in control of the neighborhoods they served, and encouraging a spectrum of solutions when addressing neighborhood concerns.

Community policing has been described in many ways. A commonly quoted definition is "an organizational strategy that leaves setting priorities and the means of achieving them largely to residents and the police who serve their neighborhoods... (It) is a process rather than a product" (Skogan, 2006, p. 1). This definition has slightly changed from the early introduction of community policing of the 1990s where Skogan (1990) described such policing as broadly focused and community-based. This type of policing used problem-solving principles that serves to open channels of communication between communities and their policing organizations. Although the earlier definition seems more limited, it may be the result of law enforcement realizing

that effective policing measures need to remain flexible over time and place while being both reactive and proactive in policing issues.

The expanded definition by Skogan (2006) represents the forward movement and ideological thinking by police administrators hoping to educate the public on underlying social and economic conditions that plague minority communities. Setting policing priorities within the communities encourages input from community members that allows interactions between law enforcement and their communities. Opening these channels is more transparent and affords better communication, and it unlocks the door for explanations regarding obstacles on both sides and working towards better confidences.

Some researchers have explored the community policing strategies and the negative or positive aspects they bring to the communities they are trying to protect (Jenkins, 2015; Wehrman & DeAngelis, 2011). Jenkins (2015) examined how law enforcement officers and community members perceived tactics used by law enforcement to support community policing efforts. Perception or the ability to understand opinion should be recognized to change or improve law enforcements' interactions with different races, cultures, or communities. The three races interviewed, Black, Hispanic and White, all agreed that police officers increasing arrests and citations was the least favored tactic (Jenkins, 2015). Crime mapping ranked essential and scored highest: 81% by Black participants and 71% collectively (Jenkins, 2015). Ranked highest by Latino and White officers was the need for community meetings to

identify problems and solutions that also ranked second when averaged by all three races (Jenkins, 2015). The exchange of information with other agencies or governmental bodies ranked fifth overall (Jenkins, 2015), which supports the need for law enforcement and community leaders to look elsewhere for solutions and not rely on their limited resources. The need for open, honest communication and the ability to include other agencies has become the background for improving community relationships. Jenkin (2015) pinpointed three main findings: (a) The law enforcement officers who completed the written surveys support the problem-solving aspects of community policing but also feel the need to keep some traditional policing methods; (b) There is reluctance on the part of detectives and investigators in acceptance of community policing efforts; and (c) The officers' race, ethnicity, education, rank, and assignments showed differences in the tenets of community policing (Jenkins, 2015). Most officers, regardless of race, agreed with the need for officers' discretion and the low priority of making additional arrests to support the effectiveness of the community policing efforts (Jenkins, 2015).

Environmental Issues in Community Policing

Bass (2001) and Kelling and Wilson (1982) explained how environmental space and criminal behaviors are related throughout U.S. history. Since U.S. early days, minorities, and specifically Black individuals, have been isolated or segregated from privileged parts of society that are more likely to have social and economic privileges available within their communities (Bass, 2001). Because of this racial containment, the

less advantaged individuals and more impoverished people in our society are more prone to increased criminal behaviors and criminal activities which allows them to be discriminated against and this has increased racism and inequality of opportunities (Wehrman & DeAngelis, 2011).

Early community policing conceptions, such as provided by Kelling and Wilson (1982) and Huq, Tyler, and Schulhofer (2011), looked past the arresting powers of police and wanted to understand what issues were leading to higher arrests in more impoverished less advantaged communities. Incarceration of offenders does not solve the societal long-range problems (Alexander, 2012). However, some critics argue that little has changed.

Critics could argue that the early classification methods introduced by Vollmer (1920) influenced the methods law enforcement agencies used to classify criminal behaviors and significantly segregated minority communities. The following is a description from Vollmer (1923):

Criminal acts may originate in broken homes, mental abnormalities, early developmental issues, and alcohol/narcotics use and abuse. The early classification traits were more common in lower income, less advantaged communities and individuals. This, in turn, directly categorizes minority groups as dysfunctional or less educated. Furthermore, criminal behaviors through classification and categorization have shown that criminal behaviors and acts are

more common in defined geographical areas, most commonly, the poorer neighborhoods. (Vollmer, 1923)

These racial barriers by geographical designs in less advantaged communities have allowed criminal behaviors to flourish which leads to increased police activities (Jenkins, 2015). Due to increased police patrol enforcement in more impoverished communities, the incarceration rate of minorities, especially minority male individuals, have been negatively impacted (Bass, 2001; U.S. Crime Report, 2016). Critics often cited the collateral damage caused to minority communities by the increased criminal prosecutions of drug laws or three strikes laws as adversely impacted the very communities they are intended to protect (Mauer, 2002).

Research conducted by Bayley et al. (2015) determined that these aggressive law enforcement efforts are often interpreted as racially biased policing. However, many members living in high crime areas are non-criminal individuals who often rely on a higher police presence to live, work, and play safely within their communities.

Alexander (2012) also explained how community policing efforts started to work closely with housing agencies such as Housing of Urban Development (HUD) to evict persons who were convicted or even arrested for narcotics trafficking. These aggressive evictions policies affected mainly poor Black individuals living in lower income housing units, often removing families that may or may not have been directly involved with the criminal activities (Alexander, 2012).

Intelligence-led Policing

As law enforcement agencies continually looked for the best methods of policing, some began to look towards intelligence-led policing. This data-driven policing method was supported by pinpointing areas with high criminal activities and then saturating the area with enforcement efforts to reduce crime. Administrators in law enforcement sometimes used intelligence-based policing efforts that were pinpointed to criminal behaviors through the collection of statistical data. By using gathered criminal statistical information, and through crime-mapping, law enforcement officers can address criminal behaviors by assigning additional resources to higher crime rate areas (Bratton, 2015). However, this statistical data usually placed law enforcement efforts in large populations of the minority communities (Bayley et al., 2015).

Police administrators relied on the use of intelligence-led data to reduce unwanted criminal activities, so assigning more officers to these high crime areas will result in the effective reduction of criminal behaviors in the areas with the highest statistical crime rate (Bratton, 2015). These enforcement efforts mean more arrests and these additional arrests are statistically male, minority offenders (U.S. Crime Report, 2016).

As Alexander (2012) points out in the book *The new Jim Crow: mass incarceration in the age of colorblindness*, the get tough on crime stance introduced by President Bill Clinton in 1994, was devastating to the young, male, Black individuals in society. Clinton introduced the three strikes law that did more to

incarcerate young, male, Black youths than any other president in our country's history (Alexander, 2012). Under Clinton's presidency, aid in the form of family support was drastically cut while budget increases in building new prisons and enforcement efforts more than doubled (Alexander, 2012). This use of intelligence-led policing efforts resulted in the construction of prisons to replace the housing units for lower class citizens (Alexander, 2012).

Braga and Brunson (2015) described how good police administrators relied on statistical data to deploy police officers where most criminal behaviors were being committed and occurring. These police efforts often needed to be justified by police administrators to the public to support the get tough on crime rhetoric, or zero tolerance policing methods (Braga & Brunson, 2015). Couple these aggressive policing methods with the war on drugs, and it appears that law enforcement officers mainly arrest minorities, especially in minority communities (Johnson, 2016).

Statistical data would support the theory that crime in the U.S. is "a Black problem" and most law enforcement officers are discriminating (Braga & Brunson, 2015). Braga and Brunson's (2015) research suggested that the hard-working, law-abiding citizens living in these high-crime areas deserve to live in a community free from crime, but also free from harassment by law enforcement. Blacks are exposed to more criminal behaviors since most crimes occur in Black communities; however, that does not mean they are any more tolerant or accepting of these criminal behaviors that are negatively impacting their family life (Bayley et al., 2015).

Based on statistical data, any police administrators could identify their communities' hot spots or high-crime areas rather quickly (Bratton, 2015). This process can easily be accomplished by identifying the problem areas based on criminal behaviors, space, and policing efforts. However, it is time to dig deeper and look for alternate answers other than arrests to improve these policing relationships. As Bayley et al., (2015) explained, many police officers feel that criminal behaviors in minority communities are like cancer and little can be done to stop the spread, and they realize that arrests are only a temporary solution to the problem and do little to cure the underlying issues. Bayley et al. (2015) further explained that police administrators must speak about these criminal behaviors in the less advantaged communities. Bayley et al. (2015) explained at the Harvard Executive Session that there is a need for a *strategic voice* or a call to action by those in the criminal justice professions. They explain this position in three main points:

1. Recognize that race endures as an issue in America, not just because people are prejudiced but also because they fail to support structural changes that equalize opportunity. Law enforcement should not be viewed as a morality play between good guys and bad guys. It is about circumstances that put people on different life courses. Police, Black communities and even street gangs are, as David Kennedy (2011 as cited in Bayley et al., 2015) have said: 'all of them, in their own ways strong and aspirational and resilient. They are, all of them, dealing as best they can with a world they did not make. They are all doing

profoundly destructive things without understanding what they do. There is, on all sides, malice, craziness, and evil, but not much, it turns out, not much at all. There is, on all sides, a deep reservoir of core human decency.’

2. Focus crime prevention programs on communities and neighborhoods, not just on individuals. Improve physical environments, fix the famous *broken windows*, and develop the capacity of communities to organize for the advancement of common interests, whether using their resources or mobilizing broader public and private help.

3. Mobilize and coordinate all government services bearing on public safety rather than assigning responsibility exclusively to the police. If criminality is rooted in social conditions, especially chronic deprivations, then more than police action is required to prevent it. Effective crime prevention requires that all the resources of government- welfare, education, health, sanitation, recreation, public transport - be focused where criminality is concentrated. It requires a whole-of-government planning and implementation. (Bayley et al., 2015, pp 3-4)

In the Harvard Executive Session, Bayley et al. (2015) further warned the police professionals that a *strategic voice* can be troublesome and cautioned that these policies can put the administrator into the political arena. Many of the proposed issues require interactions and cooperation from resources outside the policing agency (Bayley et al.,

2015). These additional resources need funding from state and municipal budgets that are already under scrutiny (Antinori, 2014).

Community Policing in Action

With this broader understanding of police issues, then arose the need to apply a much more comprehensive, broader scope of solutions, other than arrest, book, and release. For the first time, the Newport News research cited earlier showed that law enforcement officials would need to call upon many levels of government and allow them to operate inside the closed circle of police (Eck & Spelman, 1987). These outside agencies, such as street department, social support programs, housing department, all need to be cooperative and included in finding social support solutions. Although police continued to provide support, they often needed to take the backseat and allow other government agencies to take charge. This was a position motivated law enforcement officials tended to resist. In the case of the Newport News project, Eck and Spelman (1987) pointed out that the implementation of the community policing philosophy occurred during a period of change within the department. This timing may have helped or hurt the community policing efforts, but administrators needed to understand that outside influences can affect the success of introducing any new policing theories.

In 1991, the Joliet Police Department, Will County, Illinois introduced community policing efforts, later to be known as the Neighborhood-Orientated Policing Team (NOPT), into their mid-sized gang infiltrated community. A federal grant was secured, and the newly formed unit began with one sergeant and four uniformed officers

who were assigned to a defined area which was heavily plagued with gang activities and open-air drug transactions (Joliet Police Department, 2017).

The NOPT unit was viewed as successful within the first year of being introduced and quickly grew to two supervisors and 16 uniformed officers assigned to seven different communities within the Joliet area (Joliet Police Department, 1992). Credit for the introduction of the community policing efforts in Joliet originated with Chief Dennis Nowicki, a retired commander from the Chicago Police Department. Chief Nowicki was hired as chief of Joliet Police Department in 1989 and stayed with the community until 1992. Chief Nowicki was a strong supporter of community policing and was a member of the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), which was actively supporting problem-based policing.

In an interview with Joliet Police Department Deputy Chief David Gerdes, he explained support for community policing from Joliet council members and community leaders were initially cautious due to years of prior failed policies and frustrations (Reilly, 2015). However, Chief Gerdes explained that once trust and rapport with community members and leaders was gained through neighborhood meetings and face to face contacts, the momentum was quick and lasting (Reilly, 2015).

To build community trust and transparency, these officers knocked door to door to introduce themselves and attended community functions. Meetings were organized with community leaders, and goals were written to reduce gang activities, address quality of life issues, and add additional resources that could improve upon the living

conditions of these neighborhood residents (Joliet Police Department, 2017). Currently, 25 plus years after the NOPT was formed, efforts have seen mixed reviews from neighborhood leaders and community members, and restricted community budget constraints have plagued the on-going efforts to expand or improve these initiatives (Antinori, 2014).

Like William Bratton's tenure with several police agencies, starting with the Chief of the New York Transit Police in the early 1990's, Chief Gerdes's commitment to community policing and problem-solving policing has seen mixed reviews. More recently, Bratton (2015) published *Broken windows and quality-of-life policing in New York City*. In this publication, Bratton (2105) was quick to describe that crime rates fell 35.9% in his transit system under his broken windows theory style of command, compared to only 17.9% from the city streets above. Bratton (2015) also suggested his success with the community policing efforts continued when he took control of New York City's Police Department from 1994-1996 as commissioner. Bratton (2015) suggested he again reduced crime rates by nearly 60% by initiating CompStat, a statistical data software program to track criminal behaviors, and by holding precinct commander's responsible for their assigned areas and the criminal behaviors that occurred. However, critics have argued that the timing and outside social-economic conditions also played a role in these reductions in crime (Bratton, 2015).

With the economic recession in the late 2000's, many police agencies struggled with continuing community policing efforts because of the financial burden the

additional resources caused. In an article written by Parlow (2012), he explained how the recession has impacted social disorder behaviors and the drop of community policing efforts. Minor offenses are now being handled via internet reporting systems, phone-in reporting, or victims responding to local stations to make reports (Parlow, 2012). This reduction in police responses for minor offenses is the opposite of the basis for broken windows policing and over time, it would be a good research project to understand better if criminal behaviors will rise because of less face-to-face responses by police agencies.

One of the largest community policing efforts in America is occurring in Chicago, Illinois. Known as the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), researchers such as Lombardo & Donner (2018) have conducted an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of these efforts. CAPS has seen positive results, especially when the neighborhoods have built trust with their law enforcement officers and looked for creative methods to address criminal behaviors (Lombardo & Donner, 2018). Lombardo and Donner (2018) refer to this new strategy as informal social control, in that it reflects Sir Robert Peel's principle: the police are the community and the community are the police. By implementing this strategy, trust and confidence by community members is gained and citizens are able to report criminal behaviors within a timely manner (Lombardo & Donner, 2018). In addition, the need for community members to cooperate and testify as witnesses becomes essential for community policing efforts to take hold.

In research conducted by Bowers and Hirsch (1987), they discovered that Boston had introduced community policing efforts that were lackluster in combatting criminal behaviors. Further research would be needed due to this being early in the community policing efforts, and how accepted these efforts were within the department could significantly reduce the successes. In contrast, research conducted by Jenkins (2015) showed considerable support by law enforcement officers for community policing efforts. In Boston, the proactive policing efforts within the community policing efforts were recorded, and they discovered considerable achievements in lowering criminal behaviors over time (Bowers & Hirsch, 1987).

Scott (2002) suggested that for long-term community policing to work, there needs to be organizational change within the policing agency, and problem-solving techniques need to be introduced as policies and community members need to be responsible for ownership for community issues and be involved while looking for solutions. All of these changes need a professional, well-run, organized police agency that has the leadership abilities to create, implement, and oversee the community efforts for the long-term. Policing organizations and administration need to remain flexible while introducing any new policies theories such as community policing, intelligence-led policing, or problem-solving policing (Scott, 2002). These newer policing methods all work toward informal social control over neighborhoods and communities by increasing policing presence through building community trust (Lombardo & Donner, 2018).

Building trust within individuals and communities has become instrumental in building new policing relationships to gain informal and formal social control (Lombardo & Donner, 2018). Modern day social movements such as *Black Lives Matter* have risen in popularity since being formed after George Zimmerman was acquitted of the shooting death of Trayvon Martin in 2013 and the deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri and Eric Garner in New York City, New York at the hands of law enforcement in 2014 (Johnson, 2016). Polls completed after these deaths show that distrust with law enforcement has varied greatly by racial perspectives (Johnson, 2016). A Gallup poll conducted demonstrated that Blacks showed little confidence in police interactions just 37% compared to 59% by Whites (Johnson, 2016).

After the shooting of Michael Brown, the racial divide was wider with 80% of Blacks stating the shooting was a racial issue with only 37% of Whites feeling it was a racial issue (Johnson, 2016). When it came to holding police officers accountable for their actions, 71% of Blacks lacked confidence while only 27% of Whites lacked confidence in police holding officers accountable for their actions (Johnson, 2016). These results show that Blacks perceive law enforcement officers as lacking accountability and have little confidence that law enforcement will treat them fairly and equally when encounters occur (Johnson, 2016).

Future researchers may be looking for ways to combine the community building efforts of community policing and continually monitoring the successes by evaluating data-driven crime statistics to reduce crime and neighborhood fears. Community policing

has been widely accepted into the U.S. policing efforts and has seen too many positive results to be dismantled at this stage. However, there needs to be constant improvements in the areas of concern, such as aggressive arrests specific to geographical areas, which relates to more enforcement details in lower income, minority communities.

Literature Search Strategy

The research literature was collected from electronic databases including Sage Journals, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. The study was supported with archival data obtained from the Joliet Police Department policies and procedures manual and local newspaper publications. The key words used to conduct the research included: community policing, neighborhood orientated policing, Joliet Police Department, Will County Sheriff's Police, quality of life issues, police and community perceptions, crime, policing cultures, statistical crime information, police budgets, police policies and procedures, and Will County, Illinois demographics.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical lens that I used to conduct this research study is based on Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's (1990) policing theory that encourages law enforcement to identify and carefully address community concerns.

Earlier policing theories such as Kelling and Wilson's (1982) broken windows theory suggested a physical broken window that was left unattended in a community led to another window being broken. When these smaller issues, such as a single broken window, were left unaddressed over time, community members thought no one cared,

then these minor quality of life issues grew larger within the neighborhood leading to more serious criminal behaviors.

Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's (1990) theoretical framework identified that communities needed to interact with local policing agencies to improve relationships. Because community-based policing efforts encourage community involvement, it is necessary that community members cooperate and support policing efforts to be successful (Lee, 2014). The bonds can be strained when law enforcement agencies enforce the criminal aspects of the broken windows theory, which can include arresting community members for minor violations such as public drunkenness, loitering, or liquor violations (Jenkins, 2015). These minor arrests or zero tolerance arrests for criminal behaviors are often seen as negative police contacts with community members, and these arrests can be counterproductive, causing community members to rebel against community policing efforts (Said, 2015).

Complaints and negative attitudes or perceptions toward police officers increase when offenders are arrested, or other enforcement actions are taken. In the research conducted by Regoeczi and Kent (2014), they recorded the results of 312 motor vehicle stops with the Cuyahoga County Police Department. Although the conclusion suggested racial disparities were the underlying issue, it was discovered that minority drivers were suspended or restricted from driving more often than White offenders that led to additional arrest situations (Regoeczi & Kent, 2014). Similar in effect to the broken windows theory, it was discovered that over policing or aggressive policing techniques,

especially for minor offenses, seems to be counter-productive in the long run when trying to build community relationships (Regoeczi & Kent, 2014).

Said (2015) also recognized that targeting of specific groups for law enforcement efforts, such as the Muslim populations, post 9/11, resulted in negative policing contacts. Minority communities have often argued that racial profiling, and the aggressive enforcement actions that result, have negatively impacted their communities (Bayley et al., 2015; Regoeczi & Kent, 2014; Said, 2015).

In Lundman and Kaufman's (2003) research, they suggested that law enforcement efforts are more biased to the African-American populations, mainly when it involved traffic stops and searches. African American's and other minority groups felt harassed or targeted by aggressive policing methods, which can lead to arrest situations and have even fashioned phrases such as *Driving While Black* (Lundman and Kaufman, 2003). Regoeczi and Kent (2014) determined that underlying social-economic issues such as suspended or revoked driver's licenses resulted in arrests by police officers. These license suspensions were often the result of unpaid fines or insurance violations that are firmly related to the income inequalities that often exist (Regoeczi & Kent, 2014).

Offenders in lower social economic classes may be more likely to have restrictions on their driving privileges which result in enforcement actions being taken by law enforcement officers, whereas more privileged offenders may be given warnings or citations that do not result in arrests (Huggins, 2012).

Because of these adverse police perceptions, the resulting encounters, even when based on legitimate probable cause stops, may be interpreted as being racially biased (Huggins, 2012). Less concerning, based on Huggins (2012) research, is White offenders perceived Black police officers as acting correctly 89% of the time as compared to Black offenders perceived White police officers as responding correctly only 81.7% of the time. Interestingly, Black offenders perceived Black police officers as acting correctly 84.3% during traffic stop encounters (Huggins, 2012). It should be noted that during this study of 6,301 traffic encounters, written citations were issued 89% of the time, 82% of the time against Black offenders and 91% of the time against White offenders (Huggins, 2012). Racial perception can vary from the perspective of the offender, and on the part of the law enforcement officer, and both perspectives need transparency and the ability to understand better why these preconceptions exist before contact occurs.

Studies by Huggins (2012) and Regoeczi and Kent (2014) suggested that offenders may interpret police officer harassment and racial biases even when no harassment has occurred. These studies also indicated that minority communities and individual members may not report police impropriety during encounters if they feel their voices will not be heard or taken seriously (Huggins, 2012; Regoeczi & Kent, 2014). Huggins (2012) explained this is especially true when deviation from routine traffic stops occurs such as body or vehicle searches or incidents leading to an arrest of the offenders for criminal offenses. Huggins (2012) and Regoeczi and Kent (2014)

research confirmed racial biases might exist in law enforcement and minority communities, especially when aggressive police efforts are in effect. Can the alleged traffic infractions and the resulting traffic stop and citation be the underlying cause of the adverse police encounter?

Lurigio et al. (2009) examined both African American and Latino Chicago area high school students who completed written surveys offering insights into police relationships based on race and cultural backgrounds. Several issues were explored such as negative police contacts, lack of trust in law enforcement, social disorganization, along with cultural and social values combined with a commitment to their schooling (Lurigio et al., 2009). In Lurigio et al.'s (2009) study, 18 public high schools were administered written surveys, and 943 were completed at a 94% completion rate (Lurigio et al., 2009). Students were subjected to a Likert (1932) scale system using a five-point rating from *strongly agree to disagree strongly* (Lurigio et al., 2009). Variables of interest included negative police contacts and social economic conditions that altered the youth's perception of law enforcement in their early years (Lurigio et al., 2009). Researchers revealed that too many police contacts by youths often led to negative perceptions of police officers (Lurigio et al., 2009).

Quality of life issues or community disorder conditions such as graffiti, drugs, and alcohol abuse can lead to police mistrusts and perception of fear of law enforcement officers because of their increased encounters (Huggins, 2012; Lurigio et al., 2009). Often, these mistrusts discouraged the minority youths from contacting police officers

even during times of potential criminal behaviors within their neighborhood or during times of need (Lurigio et al., 2009). Along with the increased youth to law enforcement contacts came an increased likelihood that one of these encounters could be perceived as negative by the youth resulting in the perception that the police did not care about their opinion, did not care about their neighborhood, or did not care about helping them with future criminal activities (Lurigio et al., 2009).

In Skogan's (2006) research, he noted that Chicago youths, especially minority male youths from more deprived communities, reported that 70% had been stopped by law enforcement officers compared to only 20% of male youths citywide who had prior police contacts. Due to the increased contacts between police officers and male minority youths, research suggested that levels of mistrust and harassment allegation flourish among minority male youths (Lurigio et al., 2009; Said, 2015). Interestingly, the research discovered within these surveys that youths explained when officer's "displayed levels of fairness when exercising their duties" the levels of trust and understanding between the youths and the officers increased (Lurigio et al., 2009). However, because youths are responsible for high percentages of criminal activities (U.S. Crime Report, 2016), it is understandable that they would be most likely to have additional police encounters, and these encounters may lead to arrest or citations by authorities, further resulting in negative opinions of law enforcement (Skogan, 2006).

In the study completed by Sims, Hooper, and Peterson (2002), it was discovered that in the town of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, repeated police contacts do not always

lead to negative responses about policing by citizens. The content and results of this study showed that if the police contacts were professional and not aggressive, then enforcement actions by police officers were still favored by their community members (Sims et al., 2002). This study also touched on the beliefs that sometimes minority communities may look unfavorable on police efforts, because they feel reliant or even possess a "begrudging reliance" on law enforcement that can be perceived in a negative undertone (Sims et al., 2002). With the assessment or review of police contacts, it may be useful to understand this begrudging reliance and look for ways to change the perception of community members. This reflection could help law enforcement offer solutions to the community and community leaders which may help build more community confidence and educate them on methods that could positively impact their responses to community issues.

Policing methods need to remain flexible, and the changing landscape of law enforcement faces many challenges from racism, terrorism, biases, lack of funding, increased and more intelligent criminal activities. The research conducted by Jenkins (2015) realized that law enforcement officers and community members accepted and supported the implications and results that were documented with the introduction of community policing as an extended division of patrol.

With the struggling economy and reduced financial budgets of many U.S. communities, community policing efforts are stagnating, and their ability to remain vigilant during a time when criminal activities are on the rise is in jeopardy (Antinori,

2014; Parlow, 2012). Rice and Mathews (2012) understood how cultural constructs could influence communities and their relationships with law enforcement. They explain how issues such as money, education, values, authority attitudes, and one's perception can alter the possibilities of successful communications and interactions between community members and law enforcement (Rice & Matthews, 2012). Cultures can vary within communities, and demographic issues such as gender, age, and educational levels need to be understood and respected when interacting with community members.

The vastly different cultural backgrounds may render these groups to be reluctant to look towards law enforcement for assistance because of prior encounters from their home countries. It becomes important for law enforcement officers to educate themselves and appreciate recently transplanted ethnic groups within the U.S. that might fear the police and hesitate to cooperate or trust police officer encounters (Bayley et al., 2015; Rice & Mathews, 2012). Rice and Mathews (2012) termed these understandings as cultural competence or the raising of self-awareness. It is easy to understand why as an authority figure or law enforcement agency that it is important to enter these cultural arenas with openness and the willingness to remain flexible about cultural differences.

Policing efforts need to better understand what methods can help improve community relationships. Research does not support that communities prefer to be policed by their own cultural community members but individuals young and old do

expect to be treated fairly and with respect, to appreciate policing involvement (Bayley et al., 2015; Jenkins, 2015; Lurigio et al., 2009).

The concerns with earlier policing theories such as the broken windows theory, problem-solving policing, and community orientated policing is that these all rely heavily on community involvement and trust with the law enforcement agencies implementing these strategies (Jenkins, 2016; Said, 2015). Is it possible for these theories to be intertwined with traditional policing methods (foot patrols, assigned areas, uniformed presence) and then incorporated into a new policing philosophy or culture that addresses not only community issues but also how law enforcement interacts and is held accountable to their communities? Initially, as these policing theories or concepts were introduced, they were separate entities to traditional patrol methods (Jenkins, 2015; Joliet Police, 1992). This separation caused internal strife amongst patrol divisions and created challenges for police administrators (Joliet Police Department, 1992). The newer community policing methods allowed assigned patrol officers flexibility of shift assignments, more modern equipment, and reduced accountability for routine call assignments (Joliet Police Department, 1992).

The theoretical lens chosen, based on Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's (1990) policing theory, helps address the potential to combine policing efforts and addresses the need to identify and carefully review community concerns and relationships.

Summary and Conclusion

To improve community relationships between law enforcement and communities within Will County, Illinois I have examined the introduction of community policing efforts within the Joliet Police Department and other police agencies. Although these policing efforts have critics, the relationship and communication between community members and police agencies have improved. (Antinori, 2014). However, there is a need for a deeper understanding of what police tactics introduced by community policing have been successful. I examined how the introduction of intelligence-led policing often targets high crime areas, and this results in over-policing of minority communities (Alexander, 2012). Alternate policing methods need to be examined once law enforcement officials target high crime areas, to discover other ways that can be introduced to address criminal behaviors, other than arrests. I further examined environmental issues, such as housing units managed by HUD which do not maintain a minimum level of policing or maintenance which can encourage criminal behaviors.

Community policing has seen successes and failures throughout the country. Cities like Joliet, Illinois introduced community policing in the early 1990's, and they have seen overall crime rates decrease, community relationships improve, and community leaders have supported and pressured city leaders to continually fund on-going efforts (Antinori, 2014). William Bratton (2015) introduced community policing efforts into New York City while supporting the theories that addressed policing

problems and quality of life issues within communities served to reduce criminal behaviors by over 39%. Jenkins (2015) researched community policing efforts in two Midwest police agencies and discovered that the officers and community members supported many tactics used to improve police-community relationships. However, the research discussed some tactics that were less accepted such as the high number of arrests or aggressive traffic enforcement (Bratton, 2015).

Research conducted by several scholars (Huq et al., 2011; Said, 2015; Kelling & Wilson, 1982) pointed to specific issues with community policing efforts which can negatively impact community relationships such as aggressive arrest enforcement, stop and frisk, and negative perceptions based on the fear of criminal behaviors. Police administrators should be aware that aggressive arrest tactics can adversely affect community relationships with the communities they tend to protect. Also, researchers have repeatedly made accusations that the stop and frisk techniques are overly biased and based on race within certain neighborhoods (Said, 2015). Some administrators will argue that these “stop and frisk” techniques are effective and reduce criminal behaviors such as narcotics sales and weapons offenses, so even though they can be perceived as racially biased, they are necessary to prevent criminal behaviors effectively (Bratton, 2015). The fear of criminal behaviors within certain neighborhoods exists. Individuals living in these defined high crime areas feel scared and uncertain and are usually in lower income areas of high-density housing. However, these fears and negative overtones need to be understood and addressed directly with cooperation and

communications from the community members who live in these areas (Bratton, 2015; Said, 2015).

The gap in research that I explored is how law enforcement can improve community relationships using community policing efforts, intelligence led-policing, and environmental design issues.

As suggested by Jenkins (2015) and Said (2015), further studies are needed to understand community member perceptions and further research is needed to look for alternate policing methods to reduce criminal behaviors. It may be necessary to examine further if community policing efforts can be implemented and accepted into a new policing culture and philosophy and not just a detached separate unit to the traditional patrol functions.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

In this qualitative study, I used an interpretive phenomenological analysis that collected written survey questions based on the Likert (1932) scale from several quota sampling focus groups, researching prior police contacts, and police relationships in Will County, Illinois. Through a written questionnaire and follow-up focus group interview questions, I examined the effectiveness of community policing efforts throughout Will County, Illinois and explored what current policing methods have shown a positive or negative influence in areas such as crime reduction, improving police and community relationships, and addressing quality of life issues.

Focus group studies were audio recorded for further analysis and coding after the results were collected. Archival data, including newspaper articles, written police policies, and in-person interviews with community leaders and law enforcement personnel were included in this research. An application for approval for this study was submitted to the institutional review board (IRB) with oversight from Walden University.

Research Design

In this study, I focused on collecting data relevant to the current relationship that exists between the communities of Will County, Illinois and the governing police agencies. Research questions gathered from the focus group interviews and open-ended survey questionnaires were audio recorded and transcribed so that coding could determine similarities from the collected data. By researching collected data and looking

for coding patterns, I researched similarities, differences, frequencies, sequences, correspondence, and causations that exist (see Saldana, 2015). Because the semi structured research questionnaires are both topical and cultural, individual values and normal societal behaviors, along with factual evidence and testimonies, were collected and examined for similarities and differences.

I selected random sample focus group participants from area churches, community centers, and educational platforms throughout the Will County, Illinois communities using input from community leaders. By selecting different communities with different cultural upbringings that represent different ethnic backgrounds, the collection of written and verbal data allowed feedback on the perceptual reality of various demographic groups based on race, education, income, age, and prior police contacts. I also examined archival data, specifically newspaper articles, community bulletins, and in-person interviews with neighborhood leaders and community activists to better understand historical law enforcement issues that were relevant.

By using the interpretive phenomenological approach to this study, I had a better understanding of personal experiences and perceptions by individuals who live in the Will County, Illinois area and how these perceptions have shaped their relationships with local law enforcement officers and administrations. In-person focus group interviews and written surveys were the primary data collection method in which I researched the following questions:

RQ 1: What policing methods can be improved to promote better relationships and understandings between the communities that are served by law enforcement?

RQ 2: What processes are necessary to transform the traditional law enforcement culture into one that is more transparent, service-orientated, and committed to diverse communities?

Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) described the value of conducting in-person, qualitative interviews in an environment closely related to the research. This allows the researcher a better understanding of the experiences and attitudes of the samplings (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Teddlie and Tashakkori, (2009) also suggested the focus groups have the following characteristics:

1. Five to 10 participants
2. The group composition should be homogeneous.
3. Procedures should include a group interview conducted by a moderator who is often accompanied by an assistant.
4. Group session usually lasts no more than 2 hours
5. Sessions involve a focused discussion of a topic of interest

Because the data collected were qualitative, I followed-up with open-ended questions looking to explore insight into possible solutions to the concerns raised by the written surveys. This study population consisted of 33 completed surveyed responses, selected by the random selection process and from a broad spectrum of the area's diverse population.

Individual communities were identified to represent the current demographics of Will County, Illinois as described by the U.S. Census Bureau (2016). The U.S. Census Bureau (2016) defined Will County, Illinois population as 63% White, 18% Hispanic, 12% Black with 1% American Indian, and 6% Asian with a population of 689,500 people covering 836 square miles.

I explored what policing tactics were perceived as positive or negative and how these contacts can be improved based on demographics (see Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015). By identifying what policing issues are essential and prioritizing these issues, it may be useful for law enforcement administrators to address policing policies and not only (aggressive) enforcement efforts based on a community's ethnic and cultural composition (Rice & Mathews, 2012).

Lurigio et al. (2009) suggested that issues such as prior police contacts can be positive if handled respectfully; however, if too many police contacts occur, the victims may become reluctant to work with police because they feel burdensome. If law enforcement officers are conscious of this type of reluctance, it may be possible to openly address these concerns and reassure the public of their commitment to reduce criminal behaviors through policies or procedures.

Demographic data were statistically compared with the independent variances introduced in the literature review. Policies such as community-orientated policing, environmental issues, and intelligence-led policing were compared using statistical

analysis that was based on prior police contacts, arrests, communities, and age of participants (see Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015).

Role of the Researcher

Jenkins (2015) suggested that there is a gap in understanding between law enforcement and community members surrounding certain police tactics such as rapid response, patrol techniques, community policing efforts, and broken windows policing. As the researcher, my goal was to immerse myself into the community to explore the current approval of community members towards their policing agencies. I also identified policing theories that have positively or negatively impacted the community, I used open-ended, follow-up interviews to define methods, themes, or patterns currently being used by police agencies in Will County, Illinois. Through the collection of written survey interviews; follow-up open-ended questions; and the collection of archival data, I examined issues such as previous law enforcement encounters and how these encounters can be improved (see Wehrman & DeAngelis, 2011). Lurigio et al. (2009) claimed that the youth surveyed explained how numerous law enforcement encounters tended to create negative impressions and how law enforcement officers often reacted negatively towards the repeated calls for service. Through this qualitative study, diagrams and charts created showed where police administrators may need to make improvements by race, ethnic groups, or neighborhood (see Jenkins, 2015; Rice & Mathews, 2012).

Further focus group interviews may help explore which quality of life issues, policing methods, and tactics can be enhanced to create a more favorable environment of trust and transparency. Follow-up key informant interviews were conducted looking for similarities in the qualitative data so that the gaps in research can be explored and future studies can be identified.

As a full-time law enforcement officer working the Will County, Illinois area, it was essential for me to understand how my personal and professional experiences may impact or bring bias to this study. Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained that the conceptual framework of any qualitative study will be constructed and influenced by the researcher's prior experiences, knowledge of research topic, biases, assumptions, and internal perspectives about his or her world. This internal framework allowed me as the researcher to bring personal experiences and knowledge to this research such as

- What areas of the Will County, Illinois community are underserved or overserved by law enforcement?
- What communities are suffering from higher crime rates or lack of community support?
- What communities are more culturally diverse than other communities?
- What communities have a higher percentage of arrests or police activities than other communities?
- What areas or communities have quality of life issues and are less advantaged than other communities?

- What communities are currently served by community policing efforts and what areas are not?

However, it was also vital for me as the researcher to set aside any assumptions:

As a researcher, I...suspend or hold in abeyance any presuppositions, biases, assumptions, theories or previous experiences to see and describe the phenomenon. Bracketing, as in a mathematical equation, suspends specific components by placing them outside the brackets, which then facilitates a focusing in on the phenomenon within the brackets. (Gearing, 2004, p. 1430-1431)

Methodology

An interpretive, phenomenology study is conducted as a research method and a philosophy by examining the individual's perceptions and shared personal life experiences (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained that the purpose of a phenomenology study is "to identify phenomena through how they are perceived by the actors in a situation" (p. 24). This method worked well for this project; scholars have explained how perceptions of individuals often play a role in how they react to themselves and those around them.

In this study, the perceptions were of the community members and individual leaders, while the role of the actors were the insights recorded about law enforcement's role within the communities they serve. By conducting a qualitative study and immersing myself as the researcher into the Will County, Illinois communities, I

examined and documented interviews and the archival data. I collected the perceptions and personal experiences of individuals about their satisfaction and understanding regarding the role of local law enforcement.

Ravitch and Carl (2016) explained that the research material or raw data collected does not speak for itself, and it is important for the researcher to analyze and interpret the data without interjecting his or her own background, beliefs, or prejudices. Therefore, as the researcher, I prepared, collected, and analyzed the raw data while being cognizant of my own potential bias. Through the collection of these written questionnaires, I looked for themes or commonalities and correlations based on demographics such as race, age, gender, or economic status.

Follow-up questions and interviews allowed me to dig deeper into personal events or recollections regarding community involvement and interactions with local law enforcement. Once common themes or encounters were recorded, responsive interviewing was conducted to understand the incidents or personal experiences that played a role in the positive or negative police encounters (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Participant Selection Logic

Individuals who participated in this study were advised that participation was voluntary and honesty and integrity in their verbal and written responses were a crucial element to the success of this research. Individuals were selected to participate whom were Will County, Illinois residents and a minimum of 18 years of age. In addition, the

individuals must have had no current or pending lawsuits filed or pending against any local, state, or federal agency.

The research represented diverse neighborhoods within the targeted study region to ensure that the participants were not biased and that they represented different communities and cultures. I interviewed individuals who had prior police experiences or encounters but were without prejudices such as (a) previous lawsuits from themselves or a family member against law enforcement, (b) family members who are currently incarcerated, or (c) family members or themselves presently involved in active law enforcement roles other than law enforcement officers (see Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Individual participants were able to read, write, and comprehend the English language; willing to be audio recorded; and gave permission to have the data sets collected and information tallied for possible future publication. I also secured e-mail addresses from some participants for further contact or follow-up questions if applicable, which can minimize time requirements for further studies or the collection of additional data.

My sampling population was purposeful in that the participants lived in a defined area or community and had a prior law enforcement contact within Will County, Illinois within the last 5 years. Also, the individuals surveyed had interactions so that their experiences were recorded through the written survey responses and follow-up interview questions (see Ravitch & Carl, 2016). The sampling constraints may create a limited pool of individuals; however, the constraints do provide the best opportunity to research the targeted population.

Six different focus group studies were completed at public locations throughout the Will County, Illinois community. At each site location, I collected data from focus group participants who fairly represented the ethnic and cultural background for each neighborhood. As a researcher, my goal was to collect data from six focus group survey sites that represented one predominantly Black community, one predominantly Hispanic community, and one predominantly White community and the remaining three locations to represent predominantly mixed-communities while collecting data that fairly represented the ethnic and racial makeup of the Will County, Illinois communities.

Guidelines, as set forth by Walden University's (2010) IRB, were adhered to as outlined in the Standard Application for Research Ethics Review. As required by Walden University and the IRB, the consent forms, participation agreements, and necessary documentation was completed and approved by me before any research data were collected.

All data collected and tallied were kept on a personal computer with a password-protected sign-on screen and downloaded onto a separate external hard-drive for safekeeping for a minimum of five years from the date of collection. Individual participants were selected through community centers, libraries, and approved site locations where audio equipment was used. Safe, secure locations were selected so that the environment and place that data were collected was free from stresses and outside influences that could have altered the data collection process (see Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Instrumentation

This qualitative, phenomenological study consisted of in-person written survey questionnaires, using Likert (1932) scale responses along with follow-up interview questions that were audio recorded at the time of collection. Transcription and summarization of collected data allowed for coding discovering themes, pervasive similarities, and common denominators within the responses (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). By identifying the common themes within the recorded data, differences were determined based on demographics within the sample groups to help summarize the data into categories of similarities.

Demographic data were statistically compared for variances by using the collected information and calculating total percentages. These variances in statistical data existed because of prior police contacts, arrests, community perceptions, race, gender, and age (see Jenkins, 2015). Follow-up key informant interviews were conducted looking for similarities in the qualitative data so that gaps in the research can be discovered and future studies can be identified.

Interview data and focused follow-up interviews were conducted inquiring about the research questions related to the methods that law enforcement can use to improve relationships within the Will County, Illinois communities. In the follow-up questions, I examined what methods were positively or negatively impacting these relationships and looked for suggestions to improve these encounters.

Written surveys, in-person interviews and follow-up focused questions were the primary collection data method for this research. These interview questions were comparable to the following:

1. As a Will County, Illinois citizen, has your prior law enforcement contact(s) been positive, or negative, or neutral?
2. What element(s) of the contact made it positive, negative, or neutral?
3. Was the law enforcement contact closed in a positive, negative or neutral encounter?
4. Was the law enforcement officer professional in his/her demeanor?
5. If so, please explain, if not please explain.
6. Have community policing efforts in the Will County, Illinois community been positive, negative, or neutral in your community?
7. Is there quality of life issues in your community not being addressed by law enforcement?

By completing some of the initial questions using the Likert (1932) scale, and then using follow-up open-ended questions and responses, I completed a detailed journal on current law enforcement trends in Will County, Illinois.

During these focus group studies, I created an open, honest atmosphere to build trust and a supportive environment to collect the relevant data. This open environment allowed a relationship of trust to be established between myself and those who participated in the study (see Creswell, 2009).

Data Analysis Plan

Once the written surveys were collected, transcribed, and approved by the individual participants, analytic data triangulation and theory triangulation was used to process the received surveys and follow-up questions. By using analytic triangulation, emerging theories or similar perceptions were recorded for coding and chart origination (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

By collecting the data and organizing into sub-categories such as race, gender, age, and income the research data was then arranged into descriptive statistical data, such as charts that shaped emerging patterns by prior police contacts and the underlying issues of those contacts.

Through data triangulation, and more specifically perspective triangulation, the research was analyzed into systematic perspectives which allowed themes to be formed for regression analysis by comparing independent key variables such as the effects of community policing, environmental issues, and intelligence led-policing (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). It was discovered that variances in statistical data existed based on prior police contacts, arrests, communities, race, and age (Jenkins, 2015).

Issues of Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe that trustworthy, qualitative research must be completed credibly. The trustworthiness of data collected, and the resulting research can be determined by:

- Credibility (truth value): confidence in the truth of findings

- Transferability (applicability): showing that the results have applicability in other contexts
- Dependability (consistency): showing that the findings are consistent and could be replaced
- Confirmability (neutrality): a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the respondents and not researcher bias, motivation or interest. (Lincoln & Gruba, 1985, p. 290)

As the researcher, it was my responsibility to collect data from individuals in an honest, open format and comfortable environment that allowed the individual to reflect, manage, and organize their memories or perceptions so that the collected data was relevant and applicable to the research. The written survey and open-ended follow-up questions needed to be appropriate and written so that they adequately received and recorded the perceptions and reality of prior encounters with law enforcement personnel and the individuals that participated in this research (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

By collecting written survey questionnaires in six different communal settings, it was my theory that the received data fairly represented the diverse cultural backgrounds of varying ethnic groups such as White, Black, and Hispanic along with mixed demographic settings. These findings were then transferable to other similar settings within the Will County, Illinois community that brought additional trustworthiness to this research. The consistency or dependability of research relied on the theory that the research is duplicable in a similar setting. However, some argue that

a second research study, even if identical in findings, is still a second research study and duplication of results are not possible due to time, space, and environmental issues (Lincoln & Gruba, 1985). By conducting the written survey with individuals from six different communal settings, it is understood that this research fairly represented the Will County, Illinois communities and could be duplicated in similar environments.

To ensure the conformability of this research, I relied on data-driven results, which reduced internal biases or pre-conceived ideology in influencing the data-driven results that were collected and coded for common themes of perceptions (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Credibility

To increase the reliability of this research, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) suggest that researchers ensure the following elements are present in the interactions.

- Prolonged engagement: the researcher must appreciate the research and have a thorough understanding of the topics they are researching. Issues of culture, lack of or incomplete data collection or misconceptions by participants may alter the findings of the collected data.
- Persistent observations: the researcher must know the cultural settings or common background to understand the data collection process and possible inherent biases.
- Use of triangulation techniques: by comparing the data collected such as survey results, follow-up interviews and archival data then comparing by groups such

as age, race, income then researching how these findings are similar or different through analytical angles.

- Member checks: to validate the researcher's findings they confirm and share theories or perceptions with members of the community. By allowing feedback and establishing member's perceptions, the credibility of research is increased. (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 213)

It is also suggested that the participants have the opportunity to review the completed written transcripts and follow-up interview questions to confirm, add, or delete perceptions that may have been misinterpreted by the researcher before final coding is begun (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

Transferability

Lincoln and Guba (1995) explain it “is the responsibility of the inquirer to provide a sufficient base to permit a person contemplating application in another receiving setting to make the needed comparisons of similarity" (p. 359-360). This research could be shared with other communities or research platforms allowing further research to be completed. The completed research used written policies, charts, and coding which may apply to other communities to help improve their community's relationships with law enforcement.

Dependability

Dependability can be increased by using overlapping research techniques such as written surveys and in-person interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1995). By detailing the

process in which this research was completed, it allowed for future researchers to build upon the base that this research started. A written journal or daily log (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009) helped with recording and details of the study as it progressed, thereby increasing the dependability and transferability of this research and methodology.

Conformability

This research study conformed and followed similar qualitative studies completed by other scholars. By collecting the written survey responses from focus groups studies and recording the perceptions and realities of the individuals participating in the focus groups, these personal experiences were recorded accurately. These written, recorded, and transcribed responses were approved and analyzed by the participating individuals before coding or theme categories were marked, reducing the personal biases of the researcher that could have interfered with the dependability of this study.

Ethical Procedures

This research collected 33 written surveys and follow-up open ended-questions from six different focus group studies throughout the Will County, Illinois community. This received data was recorded via audio recordings and then transcribed and made available to the individual participants for final approval before coding was begin.

Consent forms and proper research ethics were approved and followed per the recommendations of the IRB before the collection of any research data. Written journals and memos were created during the process so that I can record data

collection methods and any areas of concern that may need to be corrected before additional focus groups are formed and survey questions were completed (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Focus group environments were clean, safe, and allowed topical interviews to be completed in a friendly and supportive tone (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Individuals who were selected to participate must have been Will County, Illinois residents who are a minimum of 18 years of age. In addition, the individuals had no current or pending lawsuits filed against any local, state or federal agency.

The focus group studies showed respect for those participants completing surveys and answering the open-ended questions while protecting the confidentiality of any personal information disclosed by the participants. There were assurances that no harm was committed, or pressure applied to any individuals participating in this research study, and participants were free to stop or discontinue the study at any time without fear of retribution (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

All data collected, analyzed, or recorded was kept in a safe environment and electronic information collected will be stored for a minimum of five years from the date of collection on a password protected laptop or backup hard drive for safekeeping.

Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology of this study, including participants, selection process, written surveys, and data collection methods for focus group studies. Archival data was collected and used to support any relevant data that needs further

clarification during the study. Additional issues of data analysis, trustworthiness, credibility, and transferability have been described within this chapter. Ethical concerns have been explored and addressed, and data analysis and findings will be researched and described in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

In this qualitative research, I conducted an in-depth analysis of what methods law enforcement can use to improve relationships within the Will County, Illinois communities. In total 33 individuals in six different focus group settings throughout the Will County, Illinois area voluntarily completed written surveys. In the written surveys, I collected data such as demographics, police contact information, community concerns, and safety and used a Likert (1932) scale rating system used to quantify the results. Also included in the completed written surveys were several variables that prioritized police services such as response time, visible squad patrol, and traffic enforcement by using the Likert (1932) scale system to quantify the constructs.

Setting

Data were collected from individuals who voluntarily attended and completed a structured written survey during six different focus group sessions from January 16-29, 2019. Random, follow-up in-depth interviews were conducted to gather data on personal police experiences that were both positive and negative recollections of prior police contacts or community issues. The six locations selected were spaced throughout various Will County, Illinois communities, which resulted in the collection of data from diverse racial groups, genders, and income brackets. All focus group studies were conducted in open public forums such as libraries and public meeting spaces. The research collection method was approved by Walden IRB on January 2, 2019 (#01-02-18-0633488).

Demographics

Participants were selected from individuals who were a minimum of 18 years of age; resided in Will County, Illinois; and had no pending criminal or civil litigations against any local governmental agencies. Of the 33 completed written surveys, 17 were completed by male individuals, and 16 were female. Two individuals were 18-24 years of age, eight were 25-34, four were 35-44, five were 45-54, eight were 55-64, five were 65-74, and one was 75 or older. 17 individuals were White, 13 Black or African-American, one Asian/Pacific Islander, and two were Hispanic. Personal income was broken into the following brackets, three were \$14,999 or less, two were \$15,000 to \$29,999, four were \$30,000 to \$44,999, seven were \$45,000 to \$59,999, seven were \$60,000 to \$74,999, seven were \$75,000 to \$99,999, and three were \$100,000 or above.

All participants lived in Will County, Illinois (one recently relocated outside Will County; however, the survey was used) of which four lived in Will County for one to three years, six lived in Will County for five to 10 years, and 23 were Will County residents for over 10 years. Twenty participants were married, six were divorced, one was separated, and six were single and never married. Ten individuals did not have children, and 23 had children.

Data Collection

Six focus group studies were advertised on Facebook, and four were posted at libraries within the Will County, Illinois area. Follow-up phone calls were made to several individuals who had expressed interest in the study or had questions concerning

the study's intent. Over the course of a two-week period, from January 16-29, 2019, six focus group studies were presented, and 33 completed surveys were collected. This study was conducted in the middle of January, in the Chicago area, and extreme cold and snowy weather may have played a role in the slightly smaller than expected sample.

All focus group studies were audio recorded and transcribed and offered to any participants who completed a study. The written survey had 25 questions concerning demographics, police interactions, and community safety concerns, and the last question prioritized police related services such a traffic enforcement, community involvement, and police transparency and accountability using the Likert (1932) scale from does not matter to important in ranking.

When the surveys were completed, follow-up, police-related questions were posed to participants regarding previous law enforcement interactions and community policing efforts, in an open-ended feedback format. As the researcher, I offered a private setting or a one-on-one session with any participant who felt uncomfortable sharing personal police-related experiences. Hand-written notes were completed to document time, location, number of participants, and any questions or answers that needed to be expanded or asked during the focus group sessions.

Data Analysis

The completed 33 written surveys results, which were collected from six different focus group studies throughout Will County, Illinois, were separated into four subcategories including race, gender, income (median), and age. Then the questionnaire

responses were separated into three categories including Likert (1932) scale response questions, dichotomous (yes and no responses), and police tactics.

Within the three categories, including the Likert (1932) scale responses, nine questions collected responses from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The composed responses were computed into total percentages collectively, then by subcategories of income (over or under median income), gender (male or female), race (White or minority), and age (over or under 55 years of age). The dichotomous responses of yes/no questions included nine written answers that were also separated into four subcategories of race (White or minority), age (over or under 55 years of age), income (over or under the median income), and gender (male or female).

The police tactics questions included 16 questions that resulted in one of five responses ranging from *very important* to *does not matter or least important*. These 16 police tactic responses were also separated into subcategories of race (White or minority), gender (male or female), income (over or under median income levels), and age (over or under 55 years of age). The median income levels were collected from the Data USA website from the 2015 estimates (Data USA, 2015).

The data collected from 33 written responses were reduced to percentages for easier comparison when looking for similarities or substantial variances. By using triangulation of the data collected, which compared Likert (1932) scale ratings and dichotomous responses to groups of responses such as age versus race, emerging theories were discovered. Included in the written survey responses were systematic perspective

responses that were analyzed for further reliability. Likert (1932) scale responses in the question responses were also reiterated in the police tactic responses in an effort to triangulate response for similarities that further support the research. Specific questions such as police professionalism, community policing efforts, and broken windows theory were asked more than once in different formats to solidify individual responses (see Kelling & Wilson, 1982).

Analysis of variances or (ANOVA) testing was not completed. This end data analysis of the means would not bring statistical discoveries beyond what was determined through percentage valuations. Follow-up key informant interviews were offered, and responses were collected from individual open-ended questions such as “have you had prior police contacts that you would like to share and were these contacts positive or negative and why?” Transcriptions were analyzed for areas of future research.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the importance of qualitative research being conducted in a credible, truth finding setting. The six focus group studies were completed in public settings that were comfortable environments, allowing the participants to recall personal experiences and memories and providing confidence to this study. During the collection of written surveys, there were occasions where participants asked questions concerning clarification of the written questionnaire and openly exchanged personal

recollections. As the researcher, I followed suggestions from Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) by

- Understanding the topics discussed
- Showing appreciation for participants' involvement and various cultural backgrounds, assuring them that no misconceptions of data collected occurred
- Triangulating data for comparison through analysis of survey results, follow-up questions, and archival data by race, income, and gender
- Allowing participants to provide feedback, helping them to recall memories and establish perceptions, which reliability increased the credibility of the research.

Also, participants were able to review transcripts, provide immediate feedback for clarification, and given time to elaborate or clarify any written or verbally data collected.

Transferability

The research platform or base of written surveys and open-ended questions were tailored to the general police population and the currently accepted practices of law-enforcement in communities nationwide. Future research could fill in the gaps in research that are outlined in Chapter 5 by duplicating this study within different communities, geographical locations, or various policing agencies looking for similarities or variances grounded on the resulting study. By conducting further research in this area and using the graphs and tables in this study, comparisons could be conducted, and variances could be discovered.

Dependability

This research was conducted by following the guidelines suggested in Chapter 3. As suggested by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), a written journal was completed including notes detailing the study's location, progress, and participants. The research was collected by employing written surveys and in-person interviews, which allowed over-lapping techniques to further the dependability of the data.

Conformability

This research was conducted using techniques found in similar qualitative studies completed by fellow research scholars. Personal experiences and perceptions shared by participants were accurately recorded, transcribed, and made available for review. After data were collected, they were categorized into themes and coded for similarities and differences. No biases, either personal or otherwise, adversely affected the collection methods, collected data, or analysis process upon completion.

Results

The written surveys, which were completed by the 33 individuals who attended the focus group studies, included a final section, which asked participants to rank police methods by using the Likert (1932) scale (*very important, important, somewhat important, not important, and doesn't matter*). These 16 policing methods included popular procedures such as community meetings, visible patrol, aggressive enforcement actions, and police officers addressing quality of life issues. By categorizing the results into four subcategories of: race (White or minority), age (54 and under or 55 and older),

median income (\$74,999 and under or \$75,000 and over), and gender (male or female), several collective patterns became present to help answer Research Question #1. It was important to this research to understand that qualitative studies need to be collected in environments that allow participants to feel safe in their responses.

As described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) in staying true to qualitative research, the police methods questioned had to be relevant and commonly recognized procedures that could not only be generalized to larger audiences but also understood and cause personal reflections from the participants completing the surveys. Also, the emic accounts and rhetoric used both while completing the written surveys and follow-up key questions had to be relevant and easily understood by the participants.

RQ 1: What policing methods can be improved to promote better relationships and understandings between the communities that are served by law enforcement?

Table 1 outlines the results of police methods by race. There were 17 individuals who described their race as White (W), and 16 individuals who described their race as minority (M). The percentages were rounded. The W=5.9% for each value and M=6.3% out of 100% total value.

Table 1

Likert (1932) Scale for Police Methods by Race

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Doesn't Matter
Community meetings with police	W=4 (24%) M=12 (75%)	W=9 (52%) M=3 (19%)	W=4 (24%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Officers assigned to neighborhoods	W=6 (35%) M=13 (82%)	W=8 (47%) M=1 (6%)	W=3 (18%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Walk and talk with community members	W=7 (41%) M=13 (82%)	W=6 (35%) M=2 (12%)	W=4 (24%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses)	W=0 (0%) M=4 (24%)	W=4 (24%) M=0 (0%)	W=9 (52%) M=6 (38%)	W=4 (24%) M=5 (31%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)*
Visible Squad Patrol	W=4 (24%) M=10 (63%)	W=11 (64%) M=4 (24%)	W=2 (12%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Rapid response for service	W=12 (70%) M=13 (82%)	W=5 (30%) M=2 (12%)	W=0 (0%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Traffic enforcement	W=1 (6%) M=7 (44%)	W=7 (41%) M=0 (0%)	W=5 (29%) M=5 (31%)	W=3 (18%) M=3 (18%)	W=1 (6%) M=0 (0%)*
Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community	W=1 (6%) M=9 (58%)	W=4 (24%) M=2 (12%)	W=4 (24%) M=4 (24%)	W=7 (40%) M=1 (6%)	W=1 (6%) M=0 (0%)
Police officers address quality of life issues (street lighting, vagrancy, open alcohol, abandoned vehicles)	W=2 (12%) M=9 (58%)	W=8 (47%) M=3 (18%)	W=6 (35%) M=3 (18%)	W=1 (6%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police solve major crimes (high-profile murders, assaults, robberies)	W=14 (82%) M=14 (88%)	W=1 (6%) M=2 (12%)	W=2 (12%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police Professionalism (appearance, conduct, communication skills)	W=12 (70%) M=13 (82%)	W=4 (24%) M=3 (18%)	W=1 (6%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
When making citizen contact, Police officers should explain reason for contact (if safe) and offer helpful suggestions to address issue.	W=10 (59%) M=13 (82%)	W=6 (35%) M=2 (12%)	W=1 (6%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police officer's transparency and accountability	W=13 (76%) M=15 (94%)	W=3 (18%) M=1 (6%)	W=1 (6%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors	W=10 (59%) M=12 (76%)	W=6 (35%) M=3 (18%)	W=1 (6%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police need to "get tough on crime" and remain tough	W=3 (18%) M=10 (64%)	W=10 (58%) M=4 (24%)	W=3 (18%) M=1 (6%)	W=1 (6%) M=1 (6%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration (such as drug courts, home monitoring)	W=5 (29%) M=12 (76%)	W=7 (42%) M=4 (24%)	W=5 (29%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	W=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)

Note. *Missing Data/Vote(s)

As a qualitative research analyst, I used the experiences of individuals to research the above raw data into comparison groups by organizing the data into similarities and

differences based on the race and percentage results. I did this while asking myself, what policing methods are positively working in Will County, Illinois and what methods are potentially negatively impacting the communities?

Areas of concern or policing methods that were equally important based on race included (over 90% find policing method either *important* or *very important*):

1. Rapid response for service W=100 % and M=94%
2. Police professionalism W=94% and M=100%
3. When making citizen contact, police officer(s) should explain reason for contact
W=94% and M=100%
4. Police officers' transparency and accountability W=94% and M=100 %
5. Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors
W=94% and M=94%

It is notable that certain policing methods varied by race at the rate of >15%:

1. Community meetings with police W=76% and M=94%
2. Walk and talk with community members W=76% and M=94%
3. Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community W=30% and M=70%
4. Police officers address quality of life issues W=59% and M=76%
5. Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration. W=71% and M=100%

The following four policing methods were similar in percentages based on race:

1. Officers assigned to neighborhoods W=82% and M=88%

2. Visible squad patrols W=86% and M=87%
3. Police solve major crimes W=88% and M=100%*
4. Police need to “get tough on crime” and remain tough W=76% and M=88%

Two policing methods that were statistically similar based on race and less than somewhat important to both races included:

1. Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses) W=76% and M=69%
2. Traffic enforcement W=53% and M=49%

For additional analysis, the completed 33 written surveys results were further separated into four subcategories including race, gender, income (median), and age. This analysis is reviewed in the next several tables. Table 2 outlines the results of police methods by age. There were 19 individuals who described their age as less than or under (U) 55-years-old and 14 individuals who described their age as greater than or over (O) 54. The percentages were rounded. The U=5.3% for each value and O=7.2% out of 100% total value.

Table 2

Likert (1932) Scale for Police Methods by Age

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Doesn't Matter
Community meetings with police	U=12 (64%) O=4 (29%)	U=5 (26%) O=7 (50%)	U=2 (10%) O=3 (21%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Officers assigned to neighborhoods	U=12 (64%) O=7 (50%)	U=5 (26%) O=4 (28%)	U=1 (5%) O=3 (22%)	U=1 (5%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Walk and talk with community members	U=13 (69%) O=7 (50%)	U=4 (28%) O=4 (28%)	U=2 (10%) O=3 (22%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses)	U=1 (5%) O=3 (21%)	U=3 (16%) O=1 (7%)	U=7 (37%) U=9 (65%)	U=8 (42%) O=1 (7%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Visible Squad Patrol	U=10 (53%) O=4 (29%)	U=8 (42%) O=7 (50%)	U=1 (5%) O=2 (14%)	U=0 (0%) O=1 (7%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Rapid response for service	U=18 (95%) O=7 (50%)	U=1 (5%) O=6 (43%)	U=0 (0%) O=1 (7%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Traffic enforcement	U=5 (26%) O=4 (29%)	U=4 (21%) O=3 (21%)	U=7 (37%) O=3 (21%)	U=2 (10%) O=4 (29%)	U=1 (5%) O=0 (0%)
Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community	U=7 (37%) O=4 (29%)	U=5 (26%) O=1 (7%)	U=4 (21%) O=4 (29%)	U=3 (16%) O=5 (35%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police officers address quality of life issues (street lighting, vagrancy, open alcohol, abandoned vehicles)	U=5 (26) O=5 (35%)	U=7 (37%) O=4 (29%)	U=6 (32%) O=3 (21%)	U=0 (0%) O=2 (14%)	U=1 (5%) O=0 (0%)
Police solve major crimes (high-profile murders, assaults, robberies)	U=18 (95%) O=10 (72%)	U=0 (0%) O=3 (21%)	U=1 (5%) O=1 (7%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police Professionalism (appearance, conduct, communication skills)	U=15 (79%) O=10 (72%)	U=3 (16%) O=4 (28%)	U=1 (5%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
When making citizen contact, Police officers should explain reason for contact (if safe) and offer helpful suggestions to address issue.	U=13 (69%) O=10 (72%)	U=5 (26%) O=3 (21%)	U=1 (5%) O=1 (7%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police officer's transparency and accountability	U=17 (90%) O=11 (79%)	U=2 (10%) O=2 (14%)	U=0 (0%) O=1 (7%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors	U=15 (79%) O=7 (50%)	U=4 (21%) O=5 (35%)	U=0 (0%) O=2 (14%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police need to "get tough on crime" and remain tough	U=7 (37%) O=6 (43%)	U=9 (48%) O=5 (35%)	U=1 (5%) O=3 (21%)	U=2 (10%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration (such as drug courts, home monitoring)	U=11 (58%) O=6 (43%)	U=6 (32%) O=5 (35%)	U=2 (10%) O=3 (21%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)

Areas of concern or policing methods that were equally important based on age

include (over 90% find policing method *important* or *very important*):

1. Rapid response for service U=100 % and O=93%
2. Police solve major crimes U=95% and O=93%

3. Police professionalism U=95% and O=100%
4. When making citizen contact police officer(s) should explain reason for contact
U=95% and O=93%
5. Police officer's transparency and accountability U=100% and O=93%

Two policing methods varied by age at the rate of >15%:

1. Visible squad patrol U=95% and O=79%
2. Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community U=63% and O=36%

A total of seven policing methods were similar in percentages based on age:

1. Community meetings with police U=90% and O=79%
2. Officers assigned to neighborhoods U=90% and O=78%
3. Walk and talk with community members U=77% and O=78%
4. Police officers address quality of life issues U=63% and O=64%
5. Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors
U=100% and O=85%
6. Police need to "get tough on crime" and remain tough U=85% and O=78%
7. Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other
than incarceration U=90% and O=78%

Two policing methods were statistically similar based on age and less than somewhat important to both age brackets included:

1. Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses) U=79% and O=72%
2. Traffic enforcement U=52% and O=50%

Table 3 outlines the results of police methods by median income. There were 23 individuals who described their income as less than or under (U) \$74,999 and 10 individuals who described their income as greater than or over (O) \$75,000. The percentages were rounded. The U=4.35% for each value; O=10%.

Table 3

Likert (1932) Scale for Police Methods by Median Income

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Doesn't Matter
Community meetings with police	U=11 (48%) O=5 (50%)	U=9 (39%) O=3 (30%)	U=3 (13%) O=2 (20%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Officers assigned to neighborhoods	U=12 (52%) O=7 (70%)	U=7 (31%) O=2 (20%)	U=3 (13%) O=1 (10%)	U=1 (4%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Walk and talk with community members	U=13 (56%) O=7 (70%)	U=5 (22%) O=3 (30%)	U=5 (22%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses)	U=3 (13%) O=1 (10%)	U=3 (13%) O=1 (10%)	U=9 (39%) O=7 (70%)	U=8 (35%) O=1 (10%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Visible Squad Patrol	U=9 (39%) O=5 (50%)	U=11 (48%) O=4 (40%)	U=3 (13%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=1 (10%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Rapid response for service	U=20 (83%) O=6 (60%)	U=4 (17%) O=3 (30%)	U=0 (0%) O=1 (10%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Traffic enforcement	U=6 (26%) O=3 (30%)	U=5 (22%) O=1 (10%)	U=9 (39%) O=2 (20%)	U=3 (13%) O=4 (40%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community	U=8 (35%) O=3 (30%)	U=5 (22%) O=1 (10%)	U=6 (26%) O=2 (20%)	U=4 (17%) O=4 (40%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police officers address quality of life issues (street light., vagrancy, open alcohol, abandoned vehicles)	U=8 (35%) U=3 (30%)	U=8 (35%) O=3 (30%)	U=6 (26%) O=2 (20%)	U=1 (4%) O=1 (10%)	U=0 (0%) O=1 (10%)
Police solve major crimes (high-profile murders, assaults, robberies)	U=18 (79%) O=10(100%)	U=4 (17%) O=0 (0%)	U=1 (4%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police Professionalism (appearance, conduct, communication skills)	U=17 (74%) O=9 (90%)	U=6 (26%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=1 (10%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
When making citizen contact, Police officers should explain reason for contact (if safe) and offer helpful suggestions to address issue	U=15 (66%) O=8 (80%)	U=6 (26%) O=2 (20%)	U=2 (8%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police officer's transparency and accountability	U=18 (79%) O=10(100%)	U=4 (17%) O=0 (0%)	U=1 (4%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors	U=13 (57%) O=9 (90%)	U=8 (35%) O=1 (10%)	U=2 (8%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Police need to "get tough on crime" and remain tough	U=7 (31%) O=6 (60%)	U=10 (44%) O=4 (40%)	U=4 (17%) O=0 (0%)	U=2 (8%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)
Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration (e.g. drug courts, home monitoring)	U=11 (48%) O=6 (60%)	U=9 (39%) O=2 (20%)	U=3 (13%) O=2 (20%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)	U=0 (0%) O=0 (0%)

Areas of concern for policing methods that were equally important based on median income include (over 90% find policing method *important or very important*):

1. Rapid response for service U=100% and O=90%
2. Police solve major crimes U=96% and O=100%
3. Police professionalism U=100% and O=90%
4. When making citizen contact police officer(s) should explain reason for contact
U=92% and O=100%
5. Police officer's transparency and accountability U=96% and O=100%
6. Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors
U=92% and O=100%

Two policing methods varied by median income (>15%):

1. Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community U=57% and O=40%
2. Police need to "get tough on crime" and remain tough U=75% and O=100%

Six policing methods were similar based on median income:

1. Community meetings with police U=87% and O=80%
2. Officers assigned to neighborhoods U=83% and O=90%
3. Walk and talk with community members U=88% and O=100%
4. Visible squad patrol U=87% and O=90%
5. Police officers address quality of life issues U=70% and O=60%
6. Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration U=87% and O=80%

Two policing methods were statistically similar based on median income and less than somewhat important to both age brackets included:

1. Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses) U=74% and O=80%
2. Traffic enforcement U=52% and O=60%

Table 4 outlines the results of police methods by gender. There were 17 females (F), and 16 males (M). The percentages were rounded. The M=5.9% for each value and the F=6.3% out of 100% total value.

Table 4

Likert (1932) Scale for Police Methods by Gender

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Doesn't Matter
Community meetings with police	F=10 (59%) M=6 (37%)	F=5 (29%) M=7 (44%)	F=2 (12%) M=3 (19%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Officers assigned to neighborhoods	F=12 (70%) M=7 (44%)	F=3 (18%) M=6 (37%)	F=1 (6%) M=3 (19%)	F=1 (6%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Walk and talk with community members	F=11 (64%) M=9 (56%)	F=3 (18%) M=5 (32%)	F=3 (18%) M=2 (12%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses)	F=5 (29%) M=0 (0%)	F=2 (12%) M=2 (12%)	F=8 (47%) M=7 (44%)	F=2 (12%) M=7 (44%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Visible Squad Patrol	F=10 (59%) M=4 (25%)	F=6 (35%) M=9 (56%)	F=0 (0%) M=3 (19%)	F=1 (6%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Rapid response for service	F=14 (82%) M=11 (68%)	F=2 (12%) M=5 (32%)	F=1 (6%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Traffic enforcement	F=7 (41%) M=2 (12%)	F=3 (18%) M=4 (25%)	F=6 (35%) M=4 (25%)	F=1 (6%) M=5 (32%)	F=0 (0%) M=1 (6%)
Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community	F=8 (47%) M=3 (19%)	F=5 (29%) M=2 (12%)	F=1 (6%) M=6 (37%)	F=3 (18%) M=5 (32%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police officers address quality of life issues (street lighting, vagrancy, open alcohol, abandoned vehicles)	F=8 (47%) M=3 (19%)	F=3 (18%) M=7 (44%)	F=5 (29%) M=4 (25%)	F=1 (6%) M=1 (6%)	F=0 (0%) M=1 (6%)
Police solve major crimes (high-profile murders, assaults, robberies)	F=14 (82%) M=14 (88%)	F=2 (12%) M=1 (6%)	F=1 (6%) M=1 (6%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police Professionalism (appearance, conduct, communication skills)	F=13 (76%) M=12 (75%)	F=3 (18%) M=4 (25%)	F=1 (6%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
When making citizen contact, Police officers should explain reason for contact (if safe) and offer helpful suggestions to address issue.	F=13 (76%) M=10 (63%)	F=4 (24%) M=4 (25%)	F=0 (0%) M=2 (12%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police officer's transparency and accountability	F=15 (88%) M=13 (82%)	F=2 (12%) M=2 (12%)	F=0 (0%) M=1 (6%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)

Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors	F=13 (76%) M=9 (56%)	F=3 (18%) M=6 (38%)	F=1 (6%) M=1 (6%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Police need to “get tough on crime” and remain tough	F=8 (47%) M=5 (32%)	F=8 (47%) M=6 (38%)	F=1 (6%) M=3 (18%)	F=0 (0%) M=2 (12%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)
Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration (such as drug courts, home monitoring)	F=7 (41%) M=10(63%)	F=7 (41%) M=4 (25%)	F=3 (18%) M=2 (12%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)	F=0 (0%) M=0 (0%)

Areas of concern for policing methods that were equally important based on gender include (over 90% find policing method *important or very important*):

1. Rapid response for service F=94% and M=100%
2. Police solve major crimes F=94% and M=94%
3. Police professionalism F=94% and M=100%
4. Police officer’s transparency and accountability F=100% and M=94%
5. Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors
F=94% and M=94%

There were only two policing methods that varied by gender (>15%):

1. Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community F=76% and M=31%
2. Police need to “get tough on crime” and remain tough F=94% and M=70%

A total of seven policing methods were similar in percentages based on gender:

1. Community meetings with police F=88% and M=81%
2. Officers assigned to neighborhoods F=88% and M=81%
3. Walk and talk with community members F=82% and M=88%
4. Visible squad patrol F=94% and M=81%
5. Police officers address quality of life issues F=65% and M=63%

6. When making citizen contact, Police officers should explain reason for contact (if safe) and offer helpful suggestions to address issue F=100% and M=88%
7. Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration F=82% and M=88%

Two policing methods were statistically similar based on gender and less than somewhat important to both age brackets included:

1. Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses) F=59% and M=88%
2. Traffic enforcement F=41% and M=63%

RQ 2: What processes are necessary to transform the traditional law enforcement culture into one that is more transparent, service-orientated, and committed to diverse communities?

Participants in the focus group studies completed the written surveys that included nine questions that were relevant to community policing procedures and trending policing methods using the Likert (1932) scale. One of the nine questions referenced how often visible patrol officers were seen within their communities and the responses ranged from multiple times a day, once daily, once a week, hardly ever and never, less than once a week.

Additionally, nine dichotomous (yes/no) questions were asked exploring participants background, police contacts and concerns with current policing culture.

Table 5 outlines the results of police tactics by race and age. The percentages were rounded.

Table 5

Police Tactics by Race and Age

Survey Questions	% reportin g tactic as agree or strongly agree	Race W=whit e (17)	Race M=mino rity (16)	% reportin g tactic as agree or strongly agree	Age U=>54 U=(19)	Age O=55 or older O=(14)
Would you agree that law enforcement agencies in Will County are doing an effective job combatting criminal behaviors?	17/33 51%	W=8 47%	M=9 56%	16/33 48%	U=10 52%	O=6 44%
Community policing requires law enforcement to work closely with the community they serve, is that important to you?	33/33 100%	W=17 100%	W=16 100%	33/33 100%	U=19 100%	U=14 100%
Is it important to have a police presence to maintain the safety of your neighborhood?	23/33 69%	W=11 64%	M=12 75%	23/33 69%	U=13 69%	U=10 70%
Police problem-solving techniques require a close personal relationship between law enforcement and community members, is this important to you?	32/33 97%	W=16 94%	M=16 100%	32/33 97%	U=18 94%	U=14 100%
The broken windows theory requires law enforcement to address quality of life issues within communities, that may seem outside the scope of law enforcement, is having police officers addressing quality of life issues important to you and your community?	31/33 94%	W=17 100%	M=14 88%	31/33 94%	U=18 94%	U=13 93%
Is it important that police officers try to understand and be open-minded when it comes to addressing police related issues from different cultures, ethnic groups and religions?	31/33 94%	W=15 88%	M=16 100%	31/33 94%	U=18 94%	U=13 93%
It is important to protect our children and even if it costs taxpayers additional money, do you feel an armed officer should be in every school to protect our children?	26/33 78%	W=13 78%	M=13 82%	26/33 78%	U=16 84%	U=10 70%
Law enforcement needs to research alternate sentencing methods such as drug courts, home monitoring systems and social support and/or educational programs to reduce the over incarceration of offenders?	26/33 78%	W=13 78%	M=13 82%	29/33 87%	U=17 88%	U=12 86%
On average, how often do you see visible patrol officers in your community?	14/33 42%	W=6 36%	M=8 50%	14/33 42%	U=10 52%	O=4 29%

Note: Last question responses *Once daily or more

Table 6 outlines the results of police tactics by income and gender.

Table 6

Police Tactics by Income and Gender

Survey Questions	% reporting tactic as agree or strongly agree	Income U=>\$74,999 U=(23)	Income O=\$75,000 and over O=(10)	% reporting tactic as agree or strongly agree	Gender F=female F=(17)	Gender M=male M=(16)
Would you agree that law enforcement agencies in Will County are doing an effective job combatting criminal behaviors?	17/33 51%	U=12 52%	O=5 50%	17/33 51%	F=13 76%	M=4 25%
Community policing requires law enforcement to work closely with the community they serve, is that important to you?	33/33 100%	U=23 100%	O=10 100%	33/33 100%	F=17 100%	M=16 100%
Is it important to have a police presence to maintain the safety of your neighborhood?	23/33 69%	U=14 61%	O=9 90%	23/33 69%	F=12 70%	M=11 68%
Police problem-solving techniques require a close personal relationship between law enforcement and community members, is this important to you?	32/33 96%	U=22 96%	O=10 100%	32/33 97%	F=17 100%	M=15 94%
The broken windows theory requires law enforcement to address quality of life issues within communities, that may seem outside the scope of law enforcement, is having police officers addressing quality of life issues important to you and your community?	31/33 94%	U=22 96%	O=9 90%	31/33 94%	F=16 94%	M=15 94%
Is it important that police officers try to understand and be open-minded when it comes to addressing police related issues from different cultures, ethnic groups and religions?	31/33 94%	U=23 100%	O=8 80%	31/33 94%	F=17 100%	M=14 88%
It is important to protect our children and even if it costs taxpayers additional money, do you feel an armed officer should be in every school to protect our children?	26/33 78%	U=18 78%	O=8 80%	26/33 78%	F=11 65%	M=15 94%
Law enforcement needs to research alternate sentencing methods such as drug courts, home monitoring systems and social support and/or educational programs to reduce the over incarceration of offenders?	29/33 87%	U=21 91%	O=8 80%	29/33 87%	F=14 82%	M=15 94%
On average, how often do you see visible patrol officers in your community?	11/33 33%	U=7 31%	O=4 40%	14/33 42%	F=7 42%	M=7 44%

Note: Last question responses *Once daily or more

The Research Questions in Table 6 have been ranked below from one thru nine by collecting the data set by race, age, median income, and gender, then calculating the

means from highest to lowest. Table 7 identifies the survey questions ranked by the highest percentages reporting the (police) tactics as *strongly agree or agree*. Question #9 was based on individuals who responded with once daily or multiple times a day.

Table 7

Survey Question Ranking of Means (Highest to Lowest)

Survey Questions	Ranking
1. Community policing requires law enforcement to work closely with the community they serve, is that important to you?	33/33 or 100% of population
2. Police problem-solving techniques require a close personal relationship between law enforcement and community members, is that important to you?	32/33 or 97% of population
3. The broken windows theory requires law enforcement to address quality of life issues within communities, that may seem outside the scope of law enforcement, is having police officers addressing quality of life issues important to you and your community?	31/33 or 94% of population
4. Is it important that police officers try to understand and be open-minded when it comes to addressing police related issues from different cultures, ethnic groups and religions?	31/33 or 94% of population
5. Law enforcement needs to research alternate sentencing methods such as drug courts, home monitoring systems and social support and/or educational programs to reduce the over incarceration of offenders?	28.25/33 or 85% of population
6. It is important to protect our children and even if it cost taxpayers additional money, do you feel an armed officer should be in every school to protect our children?	26/33 or 78% of population
7. It is important to have a police presence to maintain the safety of your neighborhood.	23/33 or 69% of population
8. Would you agree that law enforcement agencies in Will County are doing an effective job combatting criminal behaviors?	16.75/33 or 50% of population
9. On average, how often do you see visible patrol officers in the community?	13.25 /33 or 40% of population

Table 8 outlines the results of participant's demographics and police issues.

Table 8

Participant's Demographics and Police Issues

Survey Questions	Race	Race	Age	Age	Income	Income	Gender	Gender
	W=17 M=16	W=17 M=16	U=<55 O=>54	U=19 O=14	U=23 O=10	U=23 O=10	F=17 M=16	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Do you have children?	W=9 (52%) M=14 (88%)	W=8 (47%) M=2 (12%)	U=11 (58%) O=12 (86%)	U=8 (42%) O=2 (14%)	U=15 (66%) O=7 (70%)	U=8 (34%) O=3 (30%)	F=14 (82%) M=9 (56%)	F=3 (18%) M=7 (44%)
Do you live in fear for your safety?	W=2 (12%) M=6 (34%)	W=13* (76%) M=10* (34%)	U=5 (26%) O=5 (35%)	U=14 (74%) O=9 (65%)	U=6 (26%) O=4 (40%)	U=17 (74%) O=6 (60%)	F=5 (29%) M=5 (32%)	F=12 (71%) M=11 (68%)
Current crime rate too high in your neighborhood?	W=6 (35%) M=7 (44%)	W=11 (64%) M=9 (56%)	U=8 (42%) O=5 (35%)	U=11 (58%) O=9 (65%)	U=10 (43%) O=3 (30%)	U=13 (57%) O=7 (70%)	F=5 (29%) M=8 (50%)	F=12 (71%) M=8 (50%)
You or family have many police contacts?	W=5 (30%) M=5 (31%)	W=12 (70%) M=11 (69%)	U=8 (42%) O=2 (14%)	U=11 (58%) O=12 (86%)	U=6 (26%) O=4 (40%)	U=17 (74%) O=6 (60%)	F=7 (41%) M=3 (19%)	F=10 (59%) M=13 (81%)
Drug abuse or heroin abuse a concern in your neighborhood?	W=7 (41%) M=7 (44%)	W=10 (59%) M=7* (44%)	U=10 (53%) O=4 (28%)	U=9 (47%) O=8* (56%)	U=9 (39%) O=5 (50%)	U=12* (52%) O=5 (50%)	F=6 (36%) M=8 (50%)	F=9* (53%) M=8 (50%)
Are there enough employment opportunities for you or children?	W=13 (76%) M=9 (56%)	W=4 (24%) M=7 (44%)	U=14 (74%) O=8 (56%)	U=5 (26%) O=6 (44%)	U=13 (56%) O=9 (90%)	U=10 (44%) O=1 (10%)	F=13 (76%) M=9 (56%)	F=4 (24%) M=7 (44%)
Are there positive role models in your life or influencing your children?	W=17 (100%) M=11 (69%)	W=0 (0%) M=5 (31%)	U=16 (84%) O=12 (86%)	U=3 (16%) O=2 (14%)	U=18 (78%) O=10 (100%)	U=5 (22%) O=0 (0%)	F=15 (88%) M=13 (81%)	F=2 (12%) M=3 (19%)
Are there enough accessible educational opportunities for you or family members?	W=15 (88%) M=9 (56%)	W=2 (12%) M=7 (44%)	U=14 (74%) O=10 (72%)	U=5 (26%) O=4 (28%)	U=15 (66%) O=9 (90%)	U=8 (34%) O=1 (10%)	F=11 (65%) M=11 (68%)	F=4* (24%) M=5 (32%)
Do you feel police officers are professional and accountable for their behaviors within your community?	W=15 (94%) M=12 (76%)	W=1* (6%) M=4 (24%)	U=16 (84%) O=11 (79%)	U=3 (16%) O=2* (14%)	U=18 (78%) O=9 (90%)	U=4* (17%) O=1 (10%)	F=14 (82%) M=13 (81%)	F=3 (18%) M=2* (12%)

Note: *Missing Data/Votes

From Table 8, nine questions were collected from the written surveys and using the dichotomous responses of yes or no, a series of queries were obtained in areas of demographics, police issues, and local concerns. In Table 9, the questions are ranked

based on the mean averages from highest to lowest in percentages based on race (White or minority). For this research, minority includes responses from Black (13), Hispanic (2) and Asian (1).

Table 9

Results from Table 8 (ranked high to low by percentages)

Survey question % rounded	% in totality Yes	White	Minority
Are there positive role models in your life or influencing your children?	28/33 or 84%	17/17 or 100%	11/16 or 69%
Do you feel police officers are professional and accountable for their behaviors within your community?	27/33* or 81%	15/17 or 94%	12/16 or 76%
Are there enough accessible educational opportunities for you or family members?	24/33 or 72%	15/17 or 88%	9/16 or 56%
Do you have children?	23/33 or 69%	9/17 or 52%	14/16 or 88%
Are there enough employment opportunities for you or your children?	22/33 or 66%	13/17 or 76%	9/16 or 56%
(Is) Drug abuse or heroin abuse a concern in your neighborhood?	14/33* or 42%	7/17 or 41%	7/16 or 44%
(Is) Current crime rate too high in your neighborhood?	13/33 or 39%	6/17 or 35%	7/16 or 44%
(Do) You or family have many police contacts?	10/33 or 30%	5/17 or 30%	5/16 or 31%
Do you live in fear for your safety?	8/33* or 24%	2/17 or 12%	6/16 or 34%

Note: *Missing data/votes

After the completion of the written surveys, open-ended questions were offered to individuals who were willing to voluntarily share personal experiences of police contacts that were either positive or negative. It was also offered that if any individual did not feel safe or secure in speaking openly in the focus group forum, they could contact me at the end of the focus group, and I would speak to them in private. However, that option was never taken by any participants.

Most prior police contacts involved minor traffic offenses and most stated the officers were professional and polite. Some individuals shared experiences that are noteworthy to this research.

A female individual in focus group #6 stated in summary:

...she had both positive and bad police experiences; however she does feel...especially in Joliet... that things are getting better. She supports the community officers and likes when they take time to attend community meetings. She did explain that she felt her son was racially profiled one night by officers although he was treated fairly and nothing happened, she does feel racial profiling does exist in policing.

Another female at the same focus group (#6) shared in summary:

...her support in law enforcement addressing quality of life issues within poorer communities. She went further to share she felt different communities should be policed differently based on the cultures. She explained we should all recognize our differences but embrace each other at the same time. She felt strongly that there is racial inequality within Will County and especially in the area of employment opportunities.

At focus group #5, a woman shared:

...her concern for not enough police coverage in her unincorporated rural area stating: "I never see a police officer except at the neighborhood block party once a year."

At the same focus group (#5), a male shared:

...he was working inside a bank doing repairs when the alarm was accidentally activated. The responding officers were professional with him; however his co-worker's car was searched without cause and items were thrown in what he felt was a disrespectful manner throughout the vehicle. He stated when officers asked for his co-worker's identification, he could not find it because the responding officers had made such a mess

inside his car when they conducted the unwarranted search. There may have been a lawful reason for the search but both individuals felt disrespected by the officers.

Summary

In Chapter 4, several policing theories (both positive and negative) were discovered which are supported by the research collected throughout Will County, Illinois. By statistically analyzing the data collected from the written surveys, which were completed in the six focus group studies, it was determined that the top two important policing tactics that Will County residents expected from their policing agencies were: rapid responses for service and police professionalism (appearance, conduct, communication skills). The third most important tactic which was ranked above 90% in three of the four research categories (age, median income, and gender but came up short by 2% in race) was police solve major crimes (high-profile murders, assaults, robberies). Interestingly, Whites felt this was an *important or very important* tactic 88% of the time while minorities surveyed felt this was an *important or very important* issue 100% of the time.

The police tactic, which revealed the largest variance in research, was patrol officers represent the racial/ethnic make-up of the community. A larger than 15% variance showed up in all four categories researched; however the largest gaps were from Whites whom revealed this was at least important 30% of the time while minorities felt it was at least important 70% of the time.

Gender revealed a larger gap in that females felt patrol officers should represent the racial/ethnic make-up of the community 76% of the time while males felt this issue at least important only 31% of the time. Age category also revealed a large gap in importance based on the >54 age group felt this issue *important or very important* 63% of the time while the 55 or older group felt this police tactic *important or very important* only 36% of the time.

All four categories felt two policing tactics were statistically lower, often not important than the other fourteen tactics surveyed, and these were aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses) and traffic enforcement.

The data collected in Will County, Illinois overwhelmingly supports community policing which requires law enforcement to work closely with the community they serve. All four categories felt this policing tactic *important or very important* 100% of the time. The highest ranked survey question with a dichotomous response (yes/no) was: are there positive role models in your life or influencing your children, which was answered yes 84% by all individuals surveyed. In what I would consider a positive for Will County is the lowest dichotomous ranked response was: do you live in fear for your safety, which was answered yes only 24% of the time. Fear for your safety becomes a rather ambiguous question in the current atmosphere of politics, teenage addiction, mass violence, or shootings.

Chapter 5 will incorporate more detail and statistical data along with additional police theories that are positively or negatively impacting the Will County communities.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Introduction

In this qualitative study, I examined individual participants who shared personal experiences or perceptions toward their local policing agencies. This insight brought an in-depth vision into what races, genders, income, and age groups perceive about current, cultural policing methods within Will County, Illinois. In the focus group studies, I collected 17 written surveys from White participants and 16 written surveys from minority participants who included 13 Black, two Hispanic and one Asian. During the focus group studies, the Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) model for focus group research was followed that outlines proper methods for conducting qualitative group studies.

The six focus group studies were published on Facebook and posted at the community center or libraries where they were conducted. There was a high interest and involvement by the minority members of the Will County, Illinois community who currently have the most to gain from better communications with their policing agencies and the countywide introduction of police training and involvement in community policing efforts. The Chicago area weather played a role in reducing the number of participants in the focus groups, being a record cold January 2019. However, there was an appropriate sample size completed to conduct credible, saturation-level research.

Creswell (1998) outlined credible, saturation-level phenomenological studies requiring a minimum of 20-30 participants to obtain their goal. However, Creswell further explained that studies should be conducted until saturation level has been

obtained. I am confident the saturation level was been obtained by the similarity in statistical data sets based on redundant questioning and the ability of the participants to openly and safely express themselves during the collection of the research (see Creswell, 1998).

Interpretation of the Findings

Throughout this study, I employed Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux's (1990) community policing theory that relies on community members and police administrators working closely together for a common goal of improving quality of life issues and reducing criminal behaviors within their communities. As far back as 1942 with Shaw and McKay's study of the social disorganization theory, it has been theorized that law enforcement (administrators and patrol officers) must work with their communities, building trust and transparencies to obtain healthy, sustainable neighborhoods. This study supports earlier research (Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015) that outlines individuals support law enforcement as long as the policing tactics used are not too aggressive as to harm the communities they serve. Based on this study, only 24% of those individuals surveyed supported aggressive law enforcement efforts as possible solutions to criminal behaviors (Jenkins, 2015; Johnson, 2016). Even traffic enforcement efforts were averaged at less than 50% felt these police tactics were positive or at least important to serving their communities.

The research surveys offered 16 different questions about current police tactics and asked participants to rank these tactics from *very important*, *important*, *somewhat*

important, not important, and does not matter. These 15 questions were broken into four subcategories based on race (White or minority), gender (male or female), age (54 and under and 55 and older), and median income (under \$74,999 and over \$75,000).

Five police tactics that continually ranked higher than 90% in all four subcategories as *important or very important* included (W=whites; M=minorities)

1. Rapid response for service W=100 % and M=94%
2. Police professionalism W=94% and M=100%
3. When making citizen contact police officer(s) should explain reason for contact
W=94% and M=100%
4. Police officers' transparency and accountability W=94% and M=100 %
5. Police problem-solving techniques are used to address criminal behaviors
W=94% and M=94%.

It should be noted that police professionalism included appearance, conduct, and communication skills.

One police tactic was ranked higher than 90% in three categories (gender, age, and median income) but only ranked 88% by Whites was:

- Police solve major crimes (high-profile murders, assaults, robberies); however, minorities ranked this as *important or very important* 100%.

Another high priority police tactic, which ranked over 90% in three out of four categories, falling short at 88% in the gender (male) group was when making citizen contact police officer(s) should explain reason for contact. This may be an area where

additional research will help police administrators and officers better understand the police tactic.

Of the groups surveyed, minorities, persons over 55 years of age, and females felt this police tactic was *important or very important* 100% of the time. Police professionalism and police officers' transparency and accountability also ranked as *important or very important* 100% of the time in the minority category, which further supports the policing theory that police administrators need to continually build trust and sincerity with minority communities.

I also revealed variances in the subcategories, such as race, when exploring the following police tactics:

1. Community meetings with police (*important or very important*) with Whites 76% and minorities 94%
2. Walk and talk with community members Whites 76% and minorities 94%
3. Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community Whites 30% and minorities 70%
4. Police officers address quality of life issues Whites 59% and minorities 76%
5. The criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration Whites 71% and minorities 100%

These five police tactics outlined show that minority communities want and feel the need for police contribution and cooperation within their communities. The positive changes within these communities may be subtle; however, if these same questions were surveyed

30-40 years ago, would the minority communities have welcomed police involvement at such high percentages (Goldstein, 1979)?

In the subcategory of age, two police tactics varied (over 15%); visible squad car patrol U=95% and O=79%, meaning 95% of those surveyed under the age of 55-years-old, felt it was *important or very important* to have visible squad patrols within their neighborhoods. Somewhat surprising was in the area of patrol officers should represent/ethnic make-up of the community: U=63% and O=36%. Further research could be conducted to address the question: does this imply that racial tolerances have taken a step backwards in recent years (see Jenkins, 2015)? In the gender group, for the same question, the results showed: F=76% and M=31%. When surveyed about police need to “get tough on crime” and remain tough, F=94% stated this as *important or very important* and M=70%. This is understandable considering males on average are the offenders and females are more often the victims of criminal behaviors (see U.S. Crime Report, 2016).

By using interpretive phenomenological analysis to explore prior police experiences and personal relationships, nine dichotomous questions of yes or no answers and nine personal experiences questions were studied. The personal experience questions were ranked from *strongly agree, agree, neither agree or disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree*.

In the four subcategories analyzed, on average 29% or nearly one in three Will County, Illinois residents lived in fear for their safety. In addition, 39% felt that the current crime rate in their neighborhoods were too high. The noticeable difference in the

subcategories percentages was in the gender (female) of 29% or almost one in three live in fear for their safety, and 43% of those surveyed with an income over \$75,000 felt the current crime rate was too high in their neighborhoods. Females had the highest perception of the current crime rate being too high with 50%, and 44% of minorities felt crime is too high in Will County, Illinois.

On average, 43% of Will County, Illinois residents felt concerned about current drug abuse or heroin abuse within their neighborhoods. The sub-category with the highest percentage of concern was age for those under 55 years of age with 53% or more than one in two and females reporting 50%. Positive results of 68% or almost seven in ten felt Will County, Illinois offered enough employment opportunities for the participants and their children. 86% of participants felt there were positive role models in their life or influencing their children. A notable difference was in the race category with 100% of Whites stating yes to having positive role models in their life or influencing their children; however only 69% of minorities felt the same. Further research might provide the answer as to if these role models existed within the family structure or outside influences.

73% of the Will County, Illinois residents surveyed felt there were enough educational opportunities for themselves or family members. However, again in the sub-category of race, there was a noticeable difference of 88% of Whites felt there were enough educational opportunities and only 56% of minorities surveyed felt the same way. This specific question may stray a little from the core research; however, the question of

equitable distribution of opportunities has always followed closely behind the current trend of higher criminal behaviors in less fortunate communities. Once again, in this research, there may appear to be a pattern and/or perception of less educational opportunity and resulting higher criminal behaviors (Williams & Murphy, 1990).

As to the survey question of: do you feel police officers are professional and accountable for their behaviors within your community, 83% of those surveyed *agreed or strongly agreed* with a yes. Again, the sub-category with the largest gap in consensus was race with Whites *agreeing or strongly agreeing* 94% of the time and minorities *agreeing or strongly agreeing* only 76% of the time. That is a gap difference of 18%, which needs further research to better understand why this gap existed. Certainly, this research did an excellent job of exposing issues such as role models, educational opportunities, and police conduct, current crime rates but further research may expose additional issues.

On average 51% of Will County, Illinois participants surveyed either *agreed or strongly agreed* that law enforcement agencies in Will County are doing an effective job combatting criminal behaviors. The largest noticeable gap in this perception was with females who *agreed or strongly agreed* 76% of the time; however their male counterparts were less convinced at 25%.

One of the strongest, clearest results in the survey questions was: community policing requires law enforcement to work closely with the community they serve, is that important to you? 100% of all four sub-categories felt this policing issue as either *important or very important* within their community. This question and response have

seen similar results in previous research (Said, 2015; Jenkins, 2015; Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990); however the response from the Will County, Illinois participants was overwhelmingly supportive. In Will County, Illinois and more specifically the Joliet area community, community policing efforts have been accepted as playing a positive role in community relationships and improving community participation (Antinori, 2014).

Closely following the above support for community policing is an element to implementing community policing procedures, known as problem-solving policing. In this survey question, the response was very strong: police problem-solving techniques require a close personal relationship between law enforcement and community-members, is this important to you? 96% of those surveyed either *agreed or strongly agreed* that this was an important concern. Problem-solving policing and a parallel method known as intelligence-led policing (Bratton, 2015; Braga & Brunson, 2015) had seen mixed reviews in prior research. However, one of the strongest supporters of these policing methods was William Bratton, who used statistical data and officer accountability policies to significantly reduce criminal behaviors in New York City for many years (Bratton, 2015; Johnson, Golub, & McKay, 2010). The initial strong response from participants may have been with the wording of close personal relationship between law enforcement and community-members, but either way the longing for and acceptance of close relationships between law enforcement and community-members again had very strong support.

Moving forward with the same theme, was the question: The broken windows theory requires law enforcement to address quality of life issues within communities, that may seem outside the scope of law enforcement, is having police officers addressing quality of life issues important to you and your community? 94% of those surveyed either *agreed or strongly agreed* that quality of life issues should be addressed by law enforcement. Modern day community policing efforts are a derivative of the early research by Kelling and Wilson (1982) who suggested policing efforts should be closely related to addressing community, quality of life concerns.

Research consistently showed that community-members have expectations that law enforcement should address quality of life concerns within their neighborhoods (Jenkins, 2015; Kelling & Wilson, 1982). Public disorder, abandoned vehicles, broken street lighting are social disorder behaviors that if left unattended become larger criminal opportunities.

To better understand tolerance in policing, the question was surveyed: is it important that police officers try to understand and be open-minded when it comes to addressing police related issues from different cultures, ethnic groups and religions? Another strong response of 94% *agreed or strongly agreed* that this was an important police issue. In looking closely at the sub-categories surveyed in this question, 100% of minorities, those with income below \$74,999, and females all *agreed or strongly agreed* with this question. The correlation between the sub-categories who felt strongest with their response correlates to a similar policing theory in research conducted by Lundman

and Kaufman (2003). Groups such as minorities and those with lower incomes, statistically have more personal contact with law enforcement officers, which leads to higher percentages of arrests in these sub-categories (Lundman & Kaufman, 2003).

The research also allowed for the examination of public policy through the surveyed question of: law enforcement needs to research alternate methods such as drug courts, home monitoring systems, and social support and/or educational programs to reduce the over incarceration of offenders. On average, 87% of those surveyed either *agreed or strongly agreed* this was an important policing issue. The strongest two sub-categories responses were from males (94%) and those who earn less than \$74,999 in income (91%). There have been considerable amounts of research conducted in this area that has seen similar results (Alexander, 2012; Durr, 2015).

In the interest of examining recent events, the following survey question was asked: it is important to protect our children and even if it costs taxpayers additional money, do you feel an armed officer should be in every school to protect our children? The response averaged 78% of those surveyed either *agreed or strongly agreed* this was an important police issue. The strongest support for this new policing policy came from males (94%) and those under the age of 55 (84%). Interestingly, the weakest support came from females (65%) and those older than 55 years of age (70%).

One question that was surveyed, and I now feel may have been too vague was: is it important to have a police presence to maintain the safety of your neighborhood? The response averaged 69% either *agreed or strongly agreed* this issue was important;

however, the strongest support for a police presence came from the income group of those earning over \$75,000 (90%).

Limitations of the Study

This research study was limited by the number of participants, inclement Chicago weather, geographical boundaries of Will County, Illinois residents, time of study, and ability to conduct focus group studies during daytime hours.

Although this research reached saturation levels based on Creswell (1998) descriptors, it may have enriched this study to reach a larger audience with additional ethnic groups such as Asians and Hispanics. Also, the focus group studies were completed during daytime hours at local public places and this may have hindered voluntary participation from daytime working-class employees.

Because this research was conducted during the winter months of 2019 and in the Chicago area, extreme record cold weather may have limited or restricted the number of participants willing or able to travel to the focus group studies. This study was also limited by the geographical limitations of Will County, Illinois.

This research study was limited to the public's participation and may have benefitted by examining the perception of elected officials or law enforcement administrators or police officers to compare their personal and/or professional experiences. As a full-time law enforcement officer, I am confident that my professional experiences did not bring bias to this study and the focus group study participants were truthful and open with their written survey responses and follow-up questions.

Recommendations

As a result of the completed written surveys and follow-up focus group questions, several areas for future research opportunities were identified. Focus group studies could be conducted in areas outside the Will County, Illinois community. Larger cities or municipalities such as Chicago, New York, or Los Angeles are so diverse that policing methods identified through research may be drastically different from culture to culture or ethnic group to ethnic group (Lurigio et al., 2009). By researching community perceptions and understanding policing priorities, additional research may allow for a more flexible understanding by law enforcement administrators and the best policies for policing diverse communities.

This research discovered that 94% of those interviewed either *agreed or strongly agreed* that it is important for police officers to be open-minded and sensitive to different cultures, ethnic groups, and religions but further research is needed to better understand what methods or policies could be introduced to accomplish these goals.

Further research could also be conducted in the area of community policing efforts to explore a better definition or understanding by community or ethnic group of differences or commonality of policing perceptions and their responsibilities. 100% of those surveyed felt it was important for their law enforcement agencies to work closely with their communities. This is a powerful statement and additional research could be conducted to explore what “work closely” means to specific communities or cultures. It is understood that this area of “working closely” with a community has many layers. Police

administrators or supervisors often have a much different relationship with community members and political leaders than street level patrol officers (Jenkins, 2015). This also could be further explored or examined especially if police administrators wanted to implement new policies or procedures, knowing that uniformed patrol obstacles and identifying well-defined goals would allow for a more successful implementation of policies.

Implications

This qualitative research study brought a better understanding of which community policing methods have been positively received and accepted by community members in Will County, Illinois. These included: (1) working closely with community members, using problem-solving techniques, and/or (2) addressing quality of life issues within communities. It was also identified that certain policing tactics such as rapid response for service, the ability of police to solve major crimes, and the expectation of police professionalism, have a high-priority to community members regardless of race, gender, age, or income. Police administrators and patrol officers should have a better understanding of which policing methods or tactics are perceived as important to community members and can implement policing policies to support these methods.

Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux (1991) identified in their research the importance of older, traditional policing methods such as foot patrol and visible patrols. Modern policing has adapted and implemented these traditional tactics into community policing efforts, but this research did not support their importance in every community. In

comparison, police tactics such as community walk and talk was *important or very important* only 76% of the time to White participants; however 94% of minorities surveyed felt this tactic was *important or very important*.

This research also supports previous findings (Jenkins, 2015; Said, 2015) that aggressive enforcement efforts (even for minor offenses) are not supported by community members. This was further supported by one of the research questions: law enforcement needs to research alternate sentencing methods, such as drug courts, home monitoring systems, and social support programs.

On average, 87% of those surveyed felt alternate methods could be implemented or discovered to reduce incarceration as the only corrective measure. Interestingly, 91% of those surveyed with a median income under \$74,999 felt alternate sentencing methods were *important or very important* and further research may show this category of individuals may be most affected by these proposed changes.

Police officer's transparency and accountability ranked very high (above 90%) as *important or very important* with the all groups surveyed. These results are understandable, especially in the Chicagoland area with the recent incident involving the Chicago Police Department and the shooting of Laquan McDonald (Chicago Tribune, 2019). Chicago Police Officer Jason Van Dyke was tried and convicted for unjustly shooting McDonald and sentenced to 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ years in prison (Chicago Tribune, 2019). Critics have argued that initially this case was covered up and financial payments were made to the family as hush money. However, after the body camera videos of the officers

involved were released to the public, criminal charges were brought against Van Dyke. Will County, Illinois borders Chicago (Cook County) to the south and the influences of Chicago are often felt throughout the collar counties.

Conclusion

The research collected from this in-depth study overwhelmingly supports the community policing efforts in Will County, Illinois, that were implemented in the early 1990s (Joliet Police Department, 1992).

Individuals who participated in this research from the Will County, Illinois community, identified areas of policing methods or policing tactics that were of high priority to their perception as to how law enforcement could improve police relationships. The results of this study and others such as Jenkins (2015) and Said (2015) showed that community policing and the interactions between governing policing agencies and the communities they serve should be collaborating towards the common goal of improving community perceptions and fears regarding criminal behaviors.

Community members of all races are clear that they do not want to be excessively policed or experience continual aggressive enforcement actions within their communities. Lombardo and Donner (2018) explain that controlling criminal behaviors within a community does not equate to social control of that same community. This research also outlined that individuals expect police administrators to solve crimes and be professional without overstepping into areas of social control or aggressive enforcement tactics (Regoeczi & Kent, 2014).

Certain police departments within Will County, Illinois have already implemented written policies to support community policing efforts (Joliet Police Department, 1992). Police agencies, regardless of size or population that have not begun implementing community policing efforts should begin the process of understanding and accepting these practices into their policing culture. Community policing efforts and the underlining practices of problem-solving policing appears to be widely accepted and encouraged by the individuals living within the Will County, Illinois communities.

I am hopeful that this research may have positive social implications throughout the Will County, Illinois community. Police administrators and law enforcement officers may explore this study to better understand what police policies and tactics are important to community members. By better understanding what police procedures are significant to community members, new policies and procedures may be implemented to build communal trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve. This trust and understanding is the basis for community policing efforts (Kelling & Wilson, 1982), and this research may play a pivotal role in creating an open line of communication and accountability between community members, political leaders, and law enforcement. Repeatedly throughout this research, the majority of community-members, regardless of race, income, gender, or age, supported the positive movements of community policing. Now is the time for police administrators to implement community policing efforts into their communities, into their policing culture, and into their training requirements.

Will County, Illinois police agencies owe a debt of gratitude to Dennis Nowicki, the retired Chicago Police Commander who came to Joliet Police Department in 1989 as the new Chief of Police. Nowicki had a vision of a new policing culture and this research confirms his “new policing theory” introduced as community policing is still positively impacting the Will County, Illinois communities to this day (Goldstein, 1979). Police administrators must work openly and transparently with the communities they serve, this includes not only political and community leaders but also the individuals who make up the fabric of each community.

This study underscores that collaborations of trust and acceptance begin when both sides remove themselves from the safety of closed doors and meet in person to be held accountable for their actions or inactions.

It is also anticipated that this research may open new doors for law enforcement officers and administrators to explore the gaps in this research and look for new inspiring ways to improve community relationships. Education, especially advanced education, is currently scrutinized as too expensive, not-worthy, or inapplicable to modern day law enforcement (Alexander, 2012; Rice & Mathews, 2012). This is a dangerous slope and it is my hope that this community study offers new insight into what policing methods or tactics are important and a better understanding that often police perceptions and community-perceptions are vastly different (Huggins, 2012).

I would suggest that this research has shown that community policing is not a separate unit or method of policing; it is the new policing culture than needs to start at the

hiring of new police officers. A new mind set for law enforcement may be that our future is not “us against them” but more of “us with them.” By working closely with community members and addressing community concerns, police officers may have the ability to reduce criminal behaviors before they originate (U.S. Department of Justice, 2014). In no way does this research diminish the dangers of policing or the belief that bad people will always commit heinous crimes, however by reducing minor offenses or social injustices before they become major offenses the reduction in criminal behaviors may be achievable (Bass, 2001).

Bayley, Davis, & Davis (2015) have a relevant line in their study that “police should seek to preserve public favor, not by pandering to public opinion, but constantly demonstrating absolutely impartial service to law.” Law enforcement administrators should accept the community expectations that police officers are mental health advocates, family counselors, narcotics experts, and law enforcement professionals, and they should proudly accept these community roles and titles. Law enforcement officers need to be highly-trained and police administrators need to be well-educated and experienced to understand that as society expectations change so must law enforcement to improve relationships within their communities. The State of Illinois (2019) has recently implemented additional training requirements for law enforcement officers to include annual mental health training and cultural awareness. Bratton (2105) realized that implementing advanced training requirements and identifying defined areas as “areas of responsibility” to command staff greatly improved the reduction of unwanted criminal

behaviors. It also is worthy to reflect on Jenkins (2015) study that the higher the rank or level of education within the policing agency the more support or willingness there was to accept new policing methods, such as broken windows policing.

Thibault, Lynch, and McBride (2011) describe proactive community policing as working closely with the community to achieve the common goals of law enforcement through transparency and decision-making. I would add the term “positive” decision-making in that these cooperative goals and more importantly decision-making processes need to be positive advancements.

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Appendix A: Joliet Police Department: Personnel Order 92-031

JOLIET POLICE DEPARTMENT	PERSONNEL ORDER	Number: 92-031
Issued: 01/15/92	Effective: 01/26/92	Distribution Code: B
Subject: N.O.P.T. ASSIGNMENTS		

Effective January 26, 1992, the following patrol officers are assigned to the Neighborhood Oriented Policing Team:

Sgt. James Powers	Supervisor
Sgt. Ruben Coronado	Supervisor
P.O. David Starceovich	McDonough & Joliet Street area
P.O. Brian Benton	
P.O. Jay Sanders	Benton & Garnsey Avenue area
P.O. John Perona	
P.O. James Scarpetta	
P.O. Edgar Gregory	Second & Union Street area
P.O. Frank Gonzales	
P.O. Tomas Ponce	Broadway & Western Avenue area
P.O. David Sova	
P.O. Robert Blackburn	St. Patrick's area
P.O. David Saxon	Jefferson Street
P.O. Dwayne Killian	
P.O. Michael Sheridan	Joliet Housing Authority
P.O. Anthony White	
P.O. Jeffrey Kneller	
P.O. Lee Foster	

By order of:

DAVID L. GERDES
 DAVID L. GERDES
 Deputy Chief of Police

Appendix B: Written Survey

Methods Law Enforcement Can Utilize to Improve Relationships within the Will County, Illinois Communities.

Survey Questionnaire:
(Please circle answers)

1. What is your age?

18-24
25-34
35-44
45-54
55-64
65-74
75 or older

2. What is your gender?

Female
Male

3. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

American Indian or Alaskan Native
Asian/Pacific Islander
Black or African American
Hispanic
White/Caucasian
Other

4. What is your yearly personal income?

\$0- \$14,999
\$15,000- \$29,999
\$30,000 - \$44,999
\$45,000 - \$59,999
\$60,000 - \$74,999
\$75,000 - \$99,999
\$100,000 or above

5. Do you currently reside in Will County, Illinois ?

No
Yes, How long?
Under 12 months
1-3 years

- 3-5 years
5-10 years
Over 10 years
6. What best describes your current relationship status?
Married
Widowed
Divorced
Separated
In a domestic partnership or civil union
Single, but cohabiting with a significant other
Single, never married
7. Do you have any children?
No
Yes
8. Where you live do you fear for your safety or the safety of your children?
No
Yes, and why? (please circle all that apply)
- Crime rate is too high in our neighborhood
Police contacts or tactics
Excessive drug abuse in community or in family
Too few or no employment opportunities
Lack of positive authority figures or broken homes
Lack of educational opportunities
9. Is the current crime rate too high in your neighborhood?
No
Yes
10. Do you or family members have many police contacts?
No
Yes
If yes, are the police contacts
Negative experiences
Positive experiences
A little of both
11. Is drug abuse or the heroin epidemic a concern in your neighborhood?
No
Yes

12. Do you feel there are enough employment opportunities for you and/or your children?
No
Yes
13. Do you feel there are positive role models in your life or influencing your children?
No
Yes
14. Do you feel there are enough accessible educational opportunities for you and your family members?
No
Yes
15. Would you agree that law enforcement agencies in Will County are doing an effective job combatting criminal behaviors?
Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
16. Community policing requires law enforcement to work closely with the community they serve, is that important to you?
Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree
17. On average, how often do you see visible patrol officers in your community?
Multiple times a day
Once Daily
Once a week
Hardly ever
Never, less than once a week
18. Is it important to have a police presence to maintain the safety of your neighborhood?
Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree

Disagree
Strongly disagree

19. Do you feel, police officers are professional and accountable for their behaviors within your community?

No
Yes

20. Police problem-solving techniques require a close personal relationship between law enforcement and community members, is this important to you?

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

21. The “Broken windows theory” requires law enforcement to address quality of life issues within communities that may seem outside the scope of law enforcement, is having police officers addressing quality of life issues important to you and your community?

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

22. Is it important that police officers try to understand and be open-minded when it comes to addressing police related issues from different cultures, ethnic groups and religions?

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

23. It is important to protect our children and even if it costs taxpayers additional money, do you feel an armed officer should be in every school to protect our children.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree

Disagree
Strongly disagree

24. Law enforcement needs to research alternate sentencing methods such as drug courts, home monitoring systems and social support and/or educational programs to reduce the over incarceration of offenders.

Strongly agree
Agree
Neither agree or disagree
Disagree
Strongly disagree

25. Using the scale below please indicate the importance of the following police tactics.

	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Doesn't Matter
Community meetings with police					
Officers assigned to neighborhoods					
Walk and talk with community members					
Aggressive enforcement efforts (even minor offenses)					
Visible Squad Patrol					
Rapid response for service					
Traffic enforcement					
Patrol officers represent/ethnic make-up of the community					
Police officers address quality of life issues (street lighting, vagrancy, open alcohol, abandoned vehicles)					
Police solve major crimes (high-profile murders, assaults, robberies)					
Police Professionalism (appearance, conduct, communication skills)					
When making citizen contact, Police officers should explain reason for contact (if safe) and offer helpful suggestions to address issue.					
Police officer's transparency and accountability					
Police problem-solving techniques are utilized to address criminal behaviors					
Police need to "get tough on crime" and remain tough					

Our criminal justice system needs to explore alternate sentencing programs other than incarceration (such as drug courts, home monitoring)

SURVEY COMPLETE