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Policing Diversity with Diversity: Exploring Organizational Rhetoric, Myth, and Minority Police Officers' Perceptions and Experiences

Justin K. Szeto
Wilfrid Laurier University, szet9140@mylaurier.ca

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Policing Diversity with Diversity: Exploring Organizational Rhetoric, Myth, and Minority Police Officers' Perceptions and Experiences

by

Justin Keith Szeto

MA THESIS

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Abstract Police services are responding to the current realities of diversity. Specifically, police services attempt to adopt diversity policies, initiatives, and practices as a way to reflect community representation. The present study examines how minority police officers' perceive and experience organizational diversity. While diversity is a broad term encompassing such variables as race, sex and sexual orientation, the present study focuses primarily on racial diversity. Through in-depth interviews with 12 Canadian police officers and 1 diversity trainer, as well as descriptive statistical data pertaining to the last 15 years of recruitment trends, the perceptions held by participants suggest that police services attempt to provide an image of embracing diversity philosophies. Although the image of diversity is portrayed by the organization, intrinsic challenges, barriers, and tensions within the organization are concealed in a *window dressing* effect (Cashmore, 2002). This study uncovers how minority officers' perceptions of organizational diversity identify a *rationalized institutional myth* (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). That is, minority officers' perceive a discrepancy between the adoption of diversity philosophies and the realities with respect to their implementation within the organization. While external legitimacy and appearance is maintained, the *myth* remains untouched in the organization.

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I dedicate this paper to my parents, Forrest and Vanissa. Thank you always for your love and support.

<u>Table of Content</u>

Chapter 1: Introduction

Diversity and the demographic reality in Canada have evolved into a substantial area of focus for research in the modern era. Specifically in the Canadian context, diversity (race, gender, and sexual orientation) and multiculturalism have been increasingly pertinent in the diversification towards new socio-politico aspects of the 21st century - one aspect most evident in the occupational workforce of policing. For the purposes of this thesis, the dimensions of diversity that will be examined include race, sex, and sexual orientation. The specific focus of this study, however, is on racial diversity. Canada is home to many visible minorities, indigenous peoples, a multiplicity of cultures and religious beliefs, and sexual orientations (Griffiths, 2013). While diversity and multiculturalism have impacted the ways in which police organizations interact with the community, it is increasingly evident that diversity has impacted the structure and makeup of the police services also. From the changing demographic landscape of Canada as well as policy changes (e.g. policies regarding police uniforms) and governmental initiatives (e.g. Employment Equity Act), the need for a workforce that is representative of the realities of Canada's population is clear - police organizations attempt to diversify in response to the context of the social environment.

As a population becomes more diversified, the needs of the community become more complex, and pose particular challenges for law enforcement agencies. These challenges are presented to police services in many ways ranging from recruitment and training, encounters between police and citizens, police-community relations, and inter-organizational relations amongst staff members and colleagues (Griffiths, 2013). In fact, policing continues to be a challenge in diverse societies due to an inadequate police-community relation resulting in residents' perceived hindered legitimacy of law enforcement (Kochel, 2012). Canada is unique in

incorporating and adopting an identity of multiculturalism (Ben-Porat, 2008), and this identity

has influenced policies specifically directed at diversity and multiculturalism. One such policy is

evident in the growing need for a more diverse representation of minorities in law enforcement.

Consequently, affirmative action and employment equity policies allow for greater opportunities

in the workforce for visible minorities through hiring directives and mandates as a means of

generally reflecting the diversity in communities that police organizations serve (O'Neill and

Holdaway 2007; Cashmore, 2002).

For example, mandates such as the Employment Equity Act of Canada require employers

to proactively seek out minority candidates (women, people with disabilities, visible minorities,

and aboriginals) in order to increase workplace representation. The act calls for employers to

remove barriers associated with recruitment and requires reasonable accommodation for minority

employees (Employment Equity Act of Canada, 2012). Affirmative action plans act as positive

discrimination by providing special opportunities that favour disadvantaged groups. Thus,

affirmative action and employment equity that target the recruitment of minority candidates have

given rise to an increased diversification in police organizations and an increase in the

employment of visible minorities (Irlbeck, 2008; Zhao et al, 2005; Cashmore, 2002; Jain et al,

2000; Zhao & Lovrich, 1998).

This study explores Canadian police officers' perceptions of diversity within their own

organization with specific attention towards visible minority police officers. While there is a

strong literature base on policing, there is far less empirical research available on diversity within

policing and even less on diversity and policing within a Canadian context. The main research

question of this study asks: *How do minority officers perceive and experience organizational*

diversity? In order to understand organizational diversity within Canadian policing I adopted a

social constructionist perspective and drew on literature in the sociology of organizations (Best, 1993; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Through this theoretical lens, I examined: (1) the hiring tends of Ontario police services over the past 15 years, (2) the organizational rhetoric and approach to diversity, and (3) minority officers' perceptions and experiences of organizational diversity. From this analysis I contend that minority officers perceive police services to adopt diversity policies, procedures, and practices that directly respond to the changing societal landscape. I further argue that the organizational response to embrace diversity is perceived by these officers as rhetorical in nature. These perceptions, I argue, identify Meyer and Rowan's concept of rationalized institutional myth (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) - an organizational process of adopting policies as a means of maintaining and validating an external appearance. Thus, while officers perceive corporate imagery to be seen by the organization as vital to the success and legitimacy of police services, they also perceive such organizational rhetorical philosophies as concealing more intrinsic barriers and challenges within the service in a *window dressing* effect (Cashmore, 2002).

I present this study in seven chapters. I begin by outlining the theoretical framework and literature review on policing and diversity. I then discuss the methodological approach taken. Next, I examine current recruitment trends in Canadian policing as well as provide descriptive analysis on the realities of police employment over the last 15 years. I then turn my attention to an analysis of the organizational rhetoric and embracement of diversity before providing an account of the lived experiences of minority police officers in the context of organizational diversity. In the final section, I conclude with a summary that lists the study's contributions, as well as its limitations and areas for future research.

Chapter 2: *Theoretical Framework and Literature Review*

Contextual Constructionism

This study adopts a contextual constructionist framework for understanding officers' perceptions and claims regarding diversity in policing (Best, 1993). The theoretical framework of social constructionism considers how social phenomenon of everyday life are developed, interpreted, and internalized in social contexts (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). The assumptions underlying a social constructionist framework revolve around the basis that knowledge and reality are dependent on the production of social constructs. That is, the way in which an individual or group perceives a social phenomenon ultimately shapes the way in which they interact and understand the world (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Moreover, everyday reality becomes the most basic form of knowledge - the taken-for-granted familiarity and awareness of social phenomenon - through the maintenance of social interactions (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). As Berger & Luckmann (1966) state: "What is 'real' to a Tibetan monk may not be 'real' to an American businessman. The 'knowledge' of the criminal differs from the 'knowledge' of the criminologist" (p.15). Thus, social contexts and the relationships within social constructs forms everyday knowledge and perceptions of reality.

Specifically, social constructionism theorizes that knowledge and understanding is shaped by other human beings in a social context. Human beings continuously shape their perspective of reality through others' forms of knowledge and one important interest of social constructionism is how individuals participate in their construction of social reality. Since the construction of social reality exists in the interaction of claims, attention towards the analysis of claims-making becomes a central focus. Influential statements and claims-making allow for a

constructionist perspective of how issues are defined and mediated (Best, 1987). Moreover, analyzing claims can establish a contextual framework for social problems - one which Spector and Kitsuse (1977) define as "the activities of individuals or groups making assertions or grievances and claims with respect to some putative [generally considered or assumed] conditions" (p.75). Focusing on the rhetoric of participants in an exploratory manner allows the analysis of how participants make sense of their lived experiences as police officers.

Social constructionism framework allows for an examination of the specific "grounds" implicit in statements provided by law enforcement personnel (Best, 1987). These grounds "provide the basic facts which serve as the foundation for the discussion which follows" (Best, 1987: 104) and ultimately allow for a theoretical understanding of how law enforcement personnel interpret policies aimed at diversification, and how these inform their understandings of diversity within their own police agency. The importance of studying 'claims' through a social constructionist perspective can be best illustrated by Best's (1987) study of social problems and the missing children problem. Within this study, claims-making follows a rhetorical structure through the use of definitions, examples, and the estimation of the extent of the problem. Warrants, such as the *value of children* or *deficient policies* are rhetorically used as conclusions and justifications for a call for action to the social problem. In essence, "claims-makers articulate their claims in ways which they find (and believe their audiences will find) persuasive" (Best, 1987: 117).

Adopting a social construction framework allows me to be attentive to the meanings officers' attribute to organizational policies and initiatives directed at diversity, as well as to their everyday interactions with others in the organization. As Blumer states, the "response" of each individual is not directly based on the actions of others, but rather upon the meanings that are

attached to such actions. Human interaction is thus "mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions" (1969: 79). Thus, a social constructionist perspective enables an examination of how officers' define and make sense of diversity within their respective organizations within the context of their interactions with others.

Organizational Diversity

Since this study analyzes officers' perceptions of diversity within their own organizations, it is important to situate the theoretical framework upon specific literature pertaining to how diversity is constructed. In the broader literature on the construction of diversity and race, Portes and Rumbaut (1996, 2001) argue that the role of acculturation impacts the negotiation of ethnic identity. Acculturation is the process of embracing the culture of one's social environment. Such factors that appear to influence ethnic identity include generational status, parents' ethnicity, retention or relinquishing of the native language, and the ethnic community upbringing of an immigrant child (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996, 2001; Irlbeck, 2008). Within a more specific focus on identity, 'race' can be constructed and sustained through the discourse of everyday life, definitions, meanings, and representations (Miles, 1989). While 'race' is a term used scientifically, 'racialization' through cultural processes has been increasingly pertinent in sociological discussions that examine lived experiences of race issues (Barot & Bird, 2010).

Within the organizational context, race is articulated within the police workforce through occupational culture. Holdaway (1997) argues that the "occupational culture of the rank and file is a framework of assumptions and relationships within which all officers undertake police work and relate to colleagues" (p.22). Race and diversity is ultimately defined and understood through the mundane practicalities of police work and the elements of occupational culture. In other

words, the process of constructing 'police ethnicity' is rooted in definitions of ethnicity *and* racialized relationships in police work (Holdaway & O'Neill, 2006). Overall, organizational diversity is identified through officers' perspectives of integration, learning, access, legitimacy, discrimination and fairness. These perspectives influence how individuals interpret the meaning of their racial identity at work (Ely & Thomas, 2001). In essence, constructions of race and ethnicity do not only happen within the level of the individual, but also through the social context of the organization.

Policing and Diversity: A Review of the Literature

With an established theoretical framework of social constructionism, this section situates this study amongst literature pertaining to policing and diversity. Existing literature concerning diversity and policing has focused on four aspects of policing: the impact of race and relations on perceptions of the police (Weitzer, 2000); policing ethnic communities (Satzewich and Shaffir, 2009; Hajek, Giles, Barker, Lin, Zhang, and Hummert 2008; Glover, 2007); recruitment of visible minorities as police officers and the changing organizational demographic of policing (Nancoo, 2004; Jain, Singh, and Agocs, 2000); and perceptions and experiences of visible minority police officers (Black and Kari, 2010; O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007; Cashmore, 2002). While diversity has been explored in the existing literature, as illustrated below, few studies have focused on officers' perceptions of diversity *within* the police organization. Thus the present study fills this gap in the literature by focusing on officers' perceptions of organizational diversity.

Perceptions of the Police - Race and Relations

Most research on policing and diversity has focused on the relationship between the police and the community. Studies have shown that there are differing perceptions of police officers amongst racial groups. For example, research suggests that non-Caucasian communities are less satisfied with law enforcement (Garcia and Cao, 2005; Tuch and Weitzer, 1997; Jefferson and Walker, 1993). Moreover, fear of the police can be measured as a predictor that significantly influences public perceptions of law enforcement. Latino immigrants' perceptions of police authorities, for instance, have been assessed revealing perceptions of fear in calling the police and feelings of police bias against Latinos. As such, immigrants' negative perceptions of the police are often shaped by past experiences with law enforcement in one's home country (Menjivar and Bejarano, 2004). However, this perception is not universally shared amongst all non-White communities. Research has also shown that Asians have a more favourable perception and attitude towards the police with a higher measure of approval and co-operation when compared to Blacks and Whites (Jefferson and Walker, 1993). Overall, the literature pertaining to the relationship between perceptions of the police and racial identity has focused primarily on the racial identities of members of the public. This study takes into account the racial identities of minority police officers and their perceptions of organizational makeup and diversity.

Policing Ethnic Communities

There is limited research on how police officers engage in racial profiling. Of this limited research, Glover (2007) reveals that rhetorical 'color-blind' strategies such as the "White boy in a no White boy zone" are contemporary racial profiling discourses used as a means of neutralizing racialized issues. The term discourse is described as formal ways of articulation within defined social boundaries, and as such, racial profiling is expressed by police officers in a way that

redirects connotations of racial profiling towards observable cues of criminality (Glover, 2007). In a Canadian context, Satzewich and Shaffir (2009) suggest that police officers neutralize and deflect allegations of racial profiling by means of referring to three rhetorical neutralizations - *intolerance of intolerance, the multicultural society deflection,* and *blaming the victim.* For example, police officers may refer to existing organizational rhetoric reflecting diversity, tolerance, and fairness as a means to neutralize claims of racist policing practices. Moreover, police officers may claim that current recruitment mechanisms are more attuned to diversity thus limiting the possibility that officers will engage in racial profiling. The study also suggests that police officers may utilize a deflection strategy of blaming the victim in that the issues of racial profiling are deflected upon individuals and organizations that claim racial profiling is a problem (Satzewich & Shaffir, 2009). While the existing literature on profiling is important in situating systemic issues of policing diverse communities, the interest of the present study lies within the perspectives of police officers with respect to diversity within their organization.

There is an increase in literature related to the process of improving community relations. Policing a multicultural population can be challenging for police organizations due to an array of factors - language, culture, rapport, connectedness, and understanding (Hajek, Giles, Barker, Lin, Zhang, and Hummert 2008). Due to these challenges, diversity training aims to educate police officers about cultural issues existent in the communities they police. Gould (1997) argues that cadets seem to be more receptive of diversity training than more experienced officers. Moreover, generating trust and compliance has been enhanced when language barriers between civilians and police were reduced (Hajek, Giles, Barker, Lin, Zhang, and Hummert 2008). In fact, higher police service quality has an effect on higher levels of collective efficacy (the willingness to act and address social problems) within neighbourhoods (Kochel, 2012). Policing multicultural

populations has created challenges for Canadian policing in adapting to a multicultural setting

such as recruitment and training, policing practices, and community involvement (Ben-Porat,

2008). In the Canadian context, Ruddell and Lithopoulos (2011) found that officers working for

the First Nations Policing Programs had less favourable attitudes towards the effectiveness and

goals of the service delivery. The study reveals that the demographics of police officers and the

experiences they have are important variables that shape the perceptions of police effectiveness.

Overall, the studies referenced above address the difficulties of policing multicultural

communities and the challenges associated with the *policing of diversity*. Identifying the

challenges for policing diversity is thus important in examining the impact of diversity within

policing through officers' perceptions.

The Changing Organizational Demographic of Policing

With the minimal representation of minorities within policing organizations, there has

been a call for increased representation of visible minorities through recruitment, selection, and

promotional strategies (Jain et al, 2000). In response, the recruitment of visible minorities,

females, and openly gay officers are transforming the demographics of law enforcement.

Although the progress towards a fully representative police agency is moderate, the progress

towards organizational diversity is continuing (Sklansky, 2005). In Canada for example, the

representation of visible minorities and aboriginal people has progressed, and can been seen in

the areas of recruitment, selection, and promotion (Jain, Singh, and Agocs, 2000). Visible

minorities seeking a career in policing have benefit from the efforts by law enforcement agencies

to increase diversification. While affirmative action plans target increasing demographic

representation, racial minority applicants do not have any apparent preferential privilege over

White applicants in the American police selection process (Ho, 2005). The advantages of

diversity in police organizations are ultimately emphasized through the values of a democratic society wherein the push towards a greater representative law enforcement agency at both the managerial and front levels are becoming increasingly recognized (Nancoo, 2004).

The potential impact of visible minority and female recruitment ultimately affects police performance, public attitudes, and the police subculture (Walker, 1985). Yet despite the changing demographic landscape of organizational diversity, there exist challenges that may impede on the progress of demographic representation. For example, a career in law enforcement may be viewed as unattractive due to the negative views towards the police. Because of this public perception, the pool of minority applicants may be too small for any substantial gains in organizational diversity (Kaminski, 1993). Indeed, one of the contributions of this study supports existing literature by revealing particular cultural barriers that shape perceptions of police work. Nonetheless, motivations for becoming police officers are similar regardless of race and gender therefore recruitment strategies targeted at minority candidates need to further emphasize the benefits of the job such as promotion opportunities and security (Raganella & White, 2004). Although the cited literature reports an increase in the numbers of visible minority police officers, there remain few studies, especially in the Canadian context, which focus on the specific process of recruitment. With the evidence of the changing demographics of policing, further attention needs to be paid to the experiences of minority police officers.

Perceptions and Experiences of Minority Police Officers

The little research that is available on officers' perceptions of diversity within the organization has concentrated on racism and various forms of discrimination in the workplace. For example, Hassell and Brandl (2009) examined how minority police patrol officers' identities

(in terms of race, sex, and sexual orientation) impacted their experiences. The findings of the study conclude that racial, female, and gay/lesbian officers had the least favourable workplace experience when compared to White, male, heterosexual officers. Race and gender have been found to be significant in determining negative feelings of police officers. Specifically, Black police officers have a greater chance of becoming cynical, paranoid, depressed, angry, dominant, and hostile (Gould, 2000). On the other hand, Dowler (2005) examined the attitudes and perceptions of African American police officers and found that Black officers are more likely to feel criticized. The same study also found that Black officers are more likely to believe that they are perceived as militant, but less likely to feel negative or depressed about their job. Research pertaining to minority officers' perceptions and experiences in the workplace has focused on institutional discrimination of minority police officers (see Stroshine & Brandl, 2011; Rojek & Decker, 2009; Slonaker et al., 2001; Manning, 1997; Holdaway, 1982;1987;1997). For example, Holdaway (1997) reveals that stable features in the occupational culture of policing are stereotypical thinking, jokes, and banter, which amplify racialized prejudice and discrimination. Furthermore, team membership occupies one aspect of 'rank-and-file' policing, and visible minority officers' extent of membership is often limited in the policing organizational culture. Accordingly, race and gender play a role in the experience of heightened visibility, isolation, and limited opportunities for organizational advancement - minorities are tokens in their occupational workforce. Experiences of Black police officers (both male and female) reveal that race and gender are a strong predictor of tokenism among law enforcement agencies (Stroshine & Brandl, 2011), as well perceived feelings of solidarity (Britz, 1997).

Of the limited research available, Black and Kari's (2010) study suggests that *minority group status* played an important role in police cadets' self-perceived ability to work in diverse

communities. Thus members of minority groups, especially women, are more comfortable in working with diverse environments due to the self-perceived ability to relate and assess the needs of minority communities. Similarly, Sun (2003) and Boyd (2010) argue that Black police officers are more willing to address problems within the community. Black police officers are more likely than White officers to have supportive attitudes towards the policing of communities due to shared racial and ethnic backgrounds and feeling more connected to residents in disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Ben-Porat (2008) suggests that recruitment of minorities to the police force may benefit interactions with communities that are culturally or linguistically alienated from the police. Ben-Porat (2008), however, claims that minority police officers may adopt existing cultural practices of 'professionalism' thus limiting the impact of police diversification. That is, the police subculture may 'blur' racial boundaries and differences with a culture of loyalty while superseding racial identification (Decker & Smith, 1980). As such, Skogan and Frydl (2004) argue that there is no credible research that minority officers interact differently with citizens due to officers' race or ethnicity. Similarly, Sun and Payne (2004) found that the behaviours of Black and White officers are similar towards Black and White citizens. However, a study of arrest outcomes reveal that officer race influences White and Black officers' decision to arrest. Interestingly, White officers are more likely to arrest suspects, however, Black officers are more likely to arrest Black suspects which suggests that Black officers are more coercive towards Black citizens (Brown & Frank, 2006).

While Black and Kari's (2010) study may be useful in understanding gender and ethnicity differences in attitudes toward non-traditional styles of policing and officers' self-assessed ability to police diverse communities, it is nonetheless a preliminary study of police cadets. Moreover,

Irlbeck (2008) reveals that many Latino police officers do not express a strong Latino identity and community attachment - in fact, some exclusively self-identified as "White/Anglo". This finding challenges both public policy and research assuming that police officers of 'minority group' status (such as ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation) are better able to relate, interact, and develop rapport with those of the same 'minority group' communities. Similarly, most police officers tend to first identify themselves through their nationality and then as ethnic minority police officers (Jaegar & Vitalis, 2005). In fact, the identities of police officers are not entirely referred towards the *blue cop* or *racial cop* identity. Instead, the identities of minority police officers are contingent on the roles and functions of the job as well as the social environment (Sun & Payne, 2004).

Yet amongst police officers belonging to a 'minority group', a concept important to analyze is organizational *window dressing* (Cashmore, 2002). Empirical examination pertaining to the recruitment of minority applicants and the diversification of policing agencies provides a context for 'window dressing' - the appearance of positive action through targeted recruitment (O'Neill and Holdaway, 2007; Cashmore, 2002). I have situated the present research within this existing literature on policing and diversity, as well as the cited literature on the challenges of organizational and cultural barriers. Specifically, my research draws upon the perceptions and experiences of Canadian police officers, a focus that is significantly missing in policing literature.

Window Dressing, and Rationalized Institutional Myths

In order to make sense of Canadian police officers' perceptions and experiences of diversity in policing, I draw on the concepts of *window dressing* and *rationalized institutional*

myths from the organizational literature. Much of the literature on how organizations interpret and adopt diversity policies and practices has been isolated in higher education studies. The word 'diversity' may invoke difference however it does not necessarily turn into any organizational commitment or redistributive justice (Deem & Ozga, 1997). It is suggested that diversity is marketed as a strategy to provide for an enhanced organizational image. From this marketization, embracing, managing, and valuing diversity is processed as a philosophy that focuses solely on diversity. However, the continuation in the focus upon diversity conceals institutional disparities (Ahmed, 2007). In essence, diversity is documented as a sign of good performance, as expressions of commitment, and as descriptions of "being" diverse. In reality, research has found such documents to conceal forms of racism and systemic inequalities (Ahmed, 2007).

There have been some policing studies that support the literature noted above. Two important research studies on the perceptions of minority police officers and targeted recruitment have been explored by Cashmore (2002) and O'Neill and Holdaway (2007). These studies examine the concept of 'window dressing'. Cashmore (2002) examined bedrock assumptions concerning the benefits associated with recruiting more visible minorities as police officers and the push for enhancing cultural diversity training for police. Through the perspectives of Black and Asian police officers in a British setting, the findings of the study suggest a 'window dressing' effect where police agencies present an image of positive action however doing little to address systemic problems of racial disparity, discrimination, isolation, and limited advancement opportunities for minority police officers within the organization. In contrast however, O'Neil and Holdaway (2007) examined the same bedrock assumptions often attached to diversity recruitment and training programs and found *favorable* opinions from minority police officers.

The findings argue that internal support networks have a positive impact on the perceptions of diversity recruitment and training (O'Neil & Holdaway, 2007).

Thus, organizations may adopt institutionalized products, services, techniques, policies, and programs in order to increase legitimacy and accountability. The act of adopting these principles is known as 'rationalized institutional myths' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Institutions attempt to reflect the societal landscape and the situated surrounding environment as a means to obtain internal and external legitimacy, such as ethnic community outreach programs and incorporating organizational diversity policies. The actions of organizations are rationalized to provide an image of action - the *myth* is that such actions do not generally reflect the intrinsic structures of the organization. The formal structures of organizations dramatically reflect the myths of the institutional environment thus maintaining appearance and validation (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The maintenance of appearance can be evident in corporatized imagery where the public sees first-hand the organizational structure and its make-up.

The concepts of window dressing and institutional myths are useful theoretical constructs for understanding officers' perceptions of organizational initiatives (such as recruitment and organizational mantras) and their experiences of organizational diversity. The present study is situated within the literature on police recruitment, policing ethnic communities, organizational rhetoric, and experiences of diversity.

Chapter 3: Methodology

With the theoretical and academic knowledge brought within context, I will now discuss my methodology of the study. In this chapter, I will outline the methodology employed for understanding organizational diversity within Canadian policing. In the initial stages of this study, the conceptualization of the research questions and objectives shaped the entirety of this research. I will provide detail of the approval of ethics and the methods of data collection. I will also discuss my method of snowball sampling and its usefulness in researching elites. Furthermore, I will outline the process of quantitative and qualitative data collection and discuss the ways in which I analyzed and theorized my data. Finally, I discuss the challenges associated with this study and the ways in which I overcame those challenges. Although minority police officers were targeted for the study, data collected from non-minority police officers were also analyzed.

Research Questions and Objectives

The purpose of this study is to examine police officers' perceptions of diversity within their organization. The main research question of the proposed study is: *How do minority officers perceive and experience organizational diversity?* For the purposes of this study, in-depth interviews were employed in order to discover shared understandings amongst minority police officers (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The population of this research is representative of diversity issues and is operationalized through race, gender, and sexual orientation. Using the literature as a comparative template (Richards & Morse, 2013), key themes of diversity and policing suggest important issues concerning recruitment, organizational practices, and community impact. In measuring perceptions held by Canadian police officers on organizational

diversity, three main themes were highlighted: 1) recruitment and hiring philosophies with respect to diversity; 2) the perceived impact of organizational diversity upon specific communities; and 3) the perceived impact of diversity upon the organization. Specifically, the research was guided by the following questions: i) *What do police officers believe are the goals of recruiting visible minorities in their police organization?* ii) *How do police officers perceive the impact of diversity within policing on the communities they police?* iii) *How do police officers perceive the impact of diversity on their police organization?*

Ethics Approval

Ethics approval had to be acquired from the Research Ethics Board of Wilfrid Laurier University because human participants were involved in the study. There were some concerns with this study in terms of participant risks. For example, there were potential social risks involved in the proposed study as police services with few minority officers in the organization may have been more likely to be identified than their Caucasian co-workers. Moreover, psychological risks were also potential as participants would be asked to reflect on the perceived impact of diversity towards the communities they police. This inquiry may have allowed a chance for participants to critically reflect on their experiences, some of which may have been sensitive and/or personal. Within the ethics application, the Research Ethics Board requested clarification of the recruitment model of snowball sampling and its ensured confidentiality to each participant. Addressing this concern, every individual mentioned in an interview, including names of individuals or community members were given a pseudonym. With the use of snowball sampling, the recruitment method would only be used to acquire names and contacts, and participants would not be aware if others have participated in the study. To maximize the comfortability and anonymity of participants, interviews took place at a time and place chosen

by each participant. All information provided was to be kept confidential, pseudonyms would replace participant names, and no identifiers would be included in the final report. The Research Ethics Board of Wilfrid Laurier University reviewed the proposal and determined the proposal to be ethically sound (approval #3722).

Data Collection: Gaining Access & Developing Rapport

To acquire a contextual backdrop in which to situate police officers' perceptions of diversity within Canadian policing, I first collected descriptive numerical data on police hiring practices. I obtained contact information from my thesis supervisor and used this point of contact to request demographic information of police recruits at a Canadian police academy. I was granted access to police recruit demographic data from 1999 to 2012. The categorical variables for recruit demographics included age, sex, visible minority status (race), marital status, military experience, language, and education. Each demographic variable was accounted for in each year of intake at the specific Canadian police college, and a total of 15716 recruits encompassed the data set.

Participant Observation

The site for this study was in Canada. Participant observation took place in the initial stages of data collection at a Canadian police academy[1] where police recruits complete a 15 week constable training program. Two lectures from the Diversity and Professional Practice course were attended and the setting was in the main lecture hall with an attendance of approximately 90 recruits in each session. Participant observation provided an appreciation of law enforcement culture and a rich and unique understanding of diversity issues through

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[1] The 'Canadian police academy' is a pseudonym used to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of those involved in the study.

educational interaction and reaction of recruits. Moreover, participant observation allowed for insights into how recruits are socialized in understanding issues of diversity, and how rhetoric is used by instructors and students to construct perceptions of social issues. I was granted permission to conduct observation research during four Diversity and Professional Practice sessions held for new recruits at the police academy. These sessions became a forum for discussion and learning issues related to diversity, workplace harassment, racial profiling, criminal profiling, aboriginal awareness, and hate crimes. The diversity sessions involved PowerPoint lecturing and there were instances of class participation. For example, recruits were instructed early in the lecture to write down the first three things that came to mind when relating to the term 'diversity'. After a few minutes, the instructor asked the class what they had written down. I recorded the responses given from the recruits and some words used included: 'multiculturalism, traditions, food, Bollywood, experiences, music, and dress'. Recruits were then asked whether those words referred to their own experience. The purpose of the exercise was to illustrate that diversity is about individual experience and inclusivity. I was able to record the reactions of students (such as nods, smiles, awkward looks, etc.) as they were challenged in their way of thinking. Another class exercise involved matching photos of individuals - males and females of different racial ethnicities - with occupations. Again, I was able to record the interactions between students and instructors and the reaction of recruits when the 'correct' occupations were matched with each individual. Throughout the diversity sessions, I situated myself in the back corner of the class which provided two advantages: 1) I would not be seen by the recruits while the session was in progress, 2) I had a view of the whole class and was able to observe any recruit while also being able to see what was projected onto the PowerPoint. In particular, participant observation provided a contextualized backdrop that informed both the

interviewing of police officers and the overall understanding of how officers participate in the process of organizational diversity policies and training. As such, the knowledge gained from participant observation was grounded in the semi-structured interviews which allowed for further exploration into officers' perceptions of organizational and community diversity.

Semi-Structured Interviews

In order to acquire an in-depth understanding of police officers' perceptions of diversity within policing, I conducted semi-structured interviews with police officers, including: patrol officers, equity officers, diversity trainers, human resource personnel, and recruitment officers. All interviews were recorded using a digital recording device with the exception of one participant who wished not to be digitally recorded. With each interview, I recorded field notes during and immediately following each in-depth discussion.

Through the stages of qualitative data collection, 91% of sworn Canadian police officers in the study (n=12) had at least 11 years of experience in Canadian policing. There were two police officers with less than 11 years of experience - one had four years of service in policing and the other had five years of experience. The ranks of the police officers ranged from patrol constable (n=5), detective constable (n=1), sergeant (n=3), acting sergeant (n=1), and staff sergeant (n=1). Some of the roles that participants had undertaken included recruitment and human resourcing, diversity coordinator, patrol, community response unit, offender management unit, and First Nations affairs in policing. A total of six Canadian police services were represented in the sample. Nine participants were male and three were female. Moreover, 10 participants were racial minorities and of that, eight were African Canadian, one was East Asian, and one was Aboriginal. Most police officers interviewed had a university degree or college

diploma (75%) and only two participants only had a high school diploma (17%). I also

interviewed one female diversity trainer at a Canadian police academy. Even though she is not a

police officer, I included her in the total population of participants in the study (N=13).

Originally there were six themes for each sub group totaling 18 questions. These

questions were designed to be open-ended to allow respondents to articulate their answers while

also allowing for opportunities to probe deeper into important issues. Such an approach was

valuable for this study because it allowed for the flexibility needed for qualitative interviewing,

and provided opportunities for clearing up inconsistencies. As Bryman et al. (2009) notes, open-

ended questions allow respondents to answer in their own opinionated terms, without providing

answers to participants. They also allow for in-depth probing, as well as identification and

further exploration of emergent issues (Charmaz, 2006). For example, recruitment strategies of

police services were a highlighted theme throughout the study. With the re-evaluation and

constant analysis of collected data, it was found that organizational *standards* - both historic and

contemporary - were important emergent areas of interest and a common theme amongst all

participant interviews. Organizational *standards* became a major theme of organizational

diversity and policing, and a highlighted issue in this study as it developed into a principle

question in subsequent qualitative interviews with police officers. In the end, a total of 23 items

were used in the interview guide.

Semi-structured qualitative interviews took place in various private and public settings

and were conducted at a time and location preferred by each research participant. Five interviews

took place in public settings such as cafes, restaurants, public libraries and similar

establishments. Of those four, one interview took place in the researcher's car in a public parking

lot. Furthermore, seven interviews took place in private settings either in offices or interview

rooms located in police detachments and/or headquarters. One interview was completed by telephone. During the time of the interviews, five police officers were in their off-duty hours and seven police officers were on-duty or 'on the job'. All semi-structured interviews were on average 40 minutes long; eight interviews exceeded 40 minutes.

Sampling

Emphasis on recruitment was targeted towards Canadian minority police officers situated in the province of Ontario. I employed snowball sampling which is a technique of recruitment where subjects provide names of other potential participants, who in turn, will provide names of others and so on (Atkinson & Flint, 2004). The use of snowball sampling created an opportunity for yielding unique types of social knowledge that was 'emergent, political, and interactional' (Noy, 2008: 327). For example, many visible minority police officers had the tendency of naming other visible minority officers opening up a spectrum of unique insights and experiences through a particular social group. In the initial stages of the study, I was able to obtain contact information from my thesis supervisor and this became a vital component in acquiring names of potential participants. These individuals were initially contacted and the response rates were highly successful. At the conclusion of each interview, participants were asked if they knew of other police officers who would be interested in the study. Most participants were keen on providing other names of colleagues and/or friends. Through use of snowball sampling, six additional names of Canadian police officers were obtained. Further names and contact information were obtained through in-person invitation at career fairs where recruitment police officers were present however the response rate for participation in the study were unsuccessful in these special cases.

DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006) insist on the importance of developing and establishing rapport during the phases of in-depth interviews. Due to the flexibility of interview times, there were opportunities for me to meet up with police officers prior to the interview providing opportunity to communicate on an informal basis. On one occasion, having lunch at a local restaurant prior to the in-depth interview allowed for both my participants and myself to share life experiences and stories as well as to become acquainted with each other in a sociable manner. As I was granted the opportunity to engage in a sociable manner with my participants, it proved valuable to this study by reducing barriers and creating a sense of comfort and trust. Moreover, interviews did not commence on the initial meet of the researcher and participant. An amount of time was allotted for an in-formal discussion of life experiences and of 'getting to know each other' prior to the start of the in-depth interview. Throughout the interview itself, I was able to continue a level of rapport as the discussion allowed for shared experiences of both interviewer and interviewee and I also found an ease of rapport development through each stage of the interview. In essence, the process of the interview allowed for a period of learning, listening, testing, and a sense of bonding and sharing (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). In all instances, coffee, tea, refreshments or lunch were provided by the researcher as a sign of appreciation for each interviewee's participation in the study.

Data Analysis: Descriptive Statistics

The data was analyzed and produced into charts and tables to illustrate the hiring trends over the last 15 years spanning from 1999 to 2012. The demographic data provided were transferred to an Excel spreadsheet and then produced into line graphs and pie charts. The demographic variables used in the analysis included age, gender, education, visible minority status, and language. Through this examination, a comparative analysis as well as a timeframe

demographic analysis took place to exemplify contemporary realities of organizational diversity. Furthermore, the statistical data provided a backdrop for understanding the changing demographics of Canada, the recruitment trends of current police services, and the overall change in the organizational makeup of policing. While the data provided were insubstantial in producing inferential statistics, it nonetheless served an important purpose in examining the effects of policy changes in policing.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Due to the exploratory methodology, a small sample size was justifiable however continued effort to recruit participants occurred until theoretical saturation was achieved (Charmaz, 2006). As Morse (2004) describes in qualitative research, theoretical saturation occurs when continued sampling has reached a phase in data analysis where no new data appear and concepts explored are well-developed. Data stemming from in-depth interviews were analyzed through a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2006). Initial coding of data took place in order to identify, assess, and explore theoretical insights, themes, and key issues. The initial coding scheme is a process in which labels for codes emerge and are reflective of more than one key theme (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012). A hard copy of each interview transcript was printed out and coded line-by-line by pen and paper method. This initial coding process was carried out during the data collection phase and a total of 43 labels emerged from the data. Consequently, the initial analysis produced a set of categories which constituted the preliminary findings and common themes of the qualitative data. Initial coding thus allowed for a) a study of the interview; b) to preserve processes and discern sequences; c) highlight participants' implied and explicit meanings and actions; and d) to make comparisons between data (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012).

With a constructivist grounded method, interviews were analyzed more than once - first through initial coding and subsequent focused coding. According to Charmaz and Belgraze (2012), focused coding "uses the most frequent and/or significant initial codes to sort, synthesize, and conceptualize large amounts of data" (p.356). Focused coding allowed for a consideration of all available data and its application towards theoretical concepts. Special attention was paid towards new emergent themes that otherwise were unpredicted or unforeseen through the initial planning of the research design. In effect, phases throughout much of the data collection and analysis were continually shaped by re-evaluation with the ultimate goal of situating all available data within a theoretical framework. While initial coding yielded 43 initial codes, 23 theoretical categories were used for focused coding. For example, categories such as 'promotion of diversity', 'service competition', 'police attractiveness', and 'importance of recruiters' were conceptualized in the initial coding process. By comparing and contrasting, as well as synthesizing these categories, a focused code of 'challenges of recruitment' emerged from the analysis. The process of focused coding took place through NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software program.

Upon completion of the coding process, the data were then theorized. Many research meetings with my thesis supervisor were beneficial for data analysis and theorizing. The research meetings helped me acknowledge some areas of interest and made theorizing more apparent. The research meetings also provided unique opportunities for theorizing through verbal dialogue. Memos were recorded throughout the research process such as the initial conceptualization stages, data collection, and data analysis. Memos provided a useful foundation for theorizing the chapters of this paper. Even after exhausting the analytical potential of theoretical codes, memos allowed me to make analytic connections and comparisons between my data and the empirical

literature (Charmaz & Belgraze, 2012). In addition to memos, I created a concept map during theorization. By creating a visual representation of experience, themes, theoretical insights, and categories, concept maps provided a unique and useful way to ground theory within the data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Concept mapping thus situated my data with my memos as well as the existing literature, allowing me to identify the relationships that existed among themes and among the emergent analytic insights.

Challenges in Field and Reflexivity

As an empirical study there were particular research challenges faced throughout the process: 1) gaining access; 2) researching a paramilitary organization; and 3) interviewer effects. For one, there were difficulties in gaining access to various Canadian police agencies. An initial contact through e-mail had been sent to various organizations that included an outline of the study along with its purposes and overall research goals. Attached to each email was also an informed consent document which stated the process of the interview and provided more detailed information about the study. The email served as the initial formal invitation to participate in the study; however, the response rate was fairly low even after follow-up emails. Furthermore, individual emails were sent to police officers. Some officers showed interest in the study and agreed to participate. However, there were others who opted to speak to their legal departments of their service or to forward it to their supervisors for permission. In these cases the response rates were unsuccessful even after follow-up emails. Also, in-person invitations were sent to police officers at career fairs however interest remained low for participation in the study.

Whether it be fear of time constraints or realization of organizational flaws, I had anticipated that the sensitive topic of the research would raise concerns for particular police

services and my experience with recruiting participants undoubtedly signifies that conducting

research in paramilitary organizations is a challenging process. Because this study attempted to

explore the subject of 'diversity', I anticipated this challenge. Racial profiling and issues of

policing prejudice were anticipated to make the exploration of diversity a more delicate issue to

discuss because they represent sensitive political and social issues. In combating this research

challenge, participants were explicitly notified that interviews were to be kept anonymous and

confidential. It was clearly explained that the goals of the research were to explore the

perceptions of diversity within a police organization and how they are constructed and

maintained by Canadian police officers and not on specific practices of policing prejudice. In

addition, since the study was voluntary in nature, time constraints on officers due to work,

family, and other commitments made it unfeasible for some to participate in the study.

Finally, since the study explored diversity and I am of ethnic minority status, I anticipated

that this situation could create an interviewer effect in the way participants respond to each

question. Interviewer effects can be described as the interviewer's characteristics that can

potentially affect the responses given (Bryman et al. 2009). Choi and Comstock (1975) suggest

adequate training of the interviewer and periodic field assessment in reducing the effects of

interviewer characteristics on research participants. The first step for me in combating this

challenge was to evoke a professional demeanour and to stress that any answer was acceptable.

Many of the skills needed for an effective and successful interview were developed prior to the

planning process of this study through academic workshops and field experience. The method of

delivering the in-depth interview was also an important consideration. I noted the ways in which

participants responded paying close attention to the delivery of each question and how I

responded to each participant's answers. My goal was to be as consistent as possible in the method of question delivery and to respond in the same consistent manner for all participants.

Attention on the ways a researcher's social identities can shape academic research have not been limited to race but also age, gender, class, and nationality (Gallagher, 2000). Because I am a visible minority, my social identity may have had a reverse effect on minority police officers. On occasion, some participants utilized my own race to help illustrate their answers in order to provide a concrete example of cultural understanding. Participants would talk about their own race and the language, customs, and traditions associated with their culture and, in turn, would shift to me for verification by asking about my own race, culture, and language. In this regard, I was able to show my understanding in the context of race and culture and be able to provide a response that was easily connected with the participants of visible minority status. Perhaps there was a shared understanding and a sense of bonding through race. Incidentally, I could have been considered an 'insider' as I share a social identity with some of my participants which fosters opportunities for access, the ability to ask more meaningful questions, and to be able to read non-verbal cues (Merriam et al. 2001). I also considered the fact that I was an 'outsider' of the policing culture. But in many cases, my insider status seemed to be granted more importance than my outsider status, and I was able to ask taboo questions with little fear of repercussion. In addition, participants may have felt empowered to discuss issues of diversity and may have felt less threatened to be conversing to a younger individual. This 'power-based' relationship' between the researcher and the researched provided a foreground of knowledge and teaching (Merriam et al. 2001). That is, those interviewed were not only able to negotiate their power by deciding where and when to be interviewed and what information to share, but also to 'teach' or 'pass knowledge' to me as the researcher who adopted the role as the 'learner'. Although

challenges exist in researching police services, the methodology used in the present study paid

endless dividends in providing rich data for analysis. Now that I have outlined the methodology

employed I move to an analysis of descriptive statistics pertaining to the last 15 years of

recruitment trends.

Introduction

This chapter focuses on a descriptive analysis of recruitment in Canadian law enforcement and utilizes demographic data from a Canadian police academy to illustrate recruitment trends and community reflection. The use of descriptive statistics is important for providing a contextual understanding in which to situate police officers' perceptions of diversity within their organization. Furthermore, the analysis of recruitment trends provides a contextual grounding for organizational practices of diversity. I begin by discussing the changing demographic environment of Canada and outline the existing literature on the recruitment of visible minorities in law enforcement. I then provide a descriptive analysis of recruitment trends in the last 15 years and provide possible rationales for these trends. As such, this chapter aims to inform readers of the realities of police employment over the last 15 years.

The Changing Demographic Environment

Canada's immigration policy is reflected in the nation's ethnic diversity. Immigration is projected to dramatically increase as Canada will see its foreign-born population increase four times greater than its Canadian-born population. Canada's religious composition is also changing as over one third of the population represents non-Christians (Statistics Canada, 2011). The demographic environment of Canada is even more evident as there are a minimum of one hundred thousand members in 33 ethnic groups; of the 33 ethnic groups, 10 have at least one million members (Statistics Canada, 2006). From the span of 2010 to 2012, a total of 787,284 persons became permanent residents and approximately 49% were sourced from the Asia and Pacific region. The second largest source region belong to Africa and the Middle East with

23.1% followed closely by South and Central America (13.9%) and Europe and the United Kingdom (10.5%) (Government of Canada, 2013).

In light of Canada's multiplicity of culture, ethnicity, and race, diversity is an important element of the national identity. According to Statistics Canada (2011), nearly 6,264,800 people identified themselves as visible minorities. In fact, visible minorities in Canada comprise approximately 19.1% percent of the population. At the provincial level, British Columbia has the highest percentage of visible minorities at approximately 21.6%, followed by Ontario 19.1% and Alberta 11.2% (Statistics Canada, 2010). When taking into account raw numbers, Ontario holds the highest population of visible minorities at 54% of all Canadian visible minorities. At the municipal level, Toronto is the most populated metropolitan setting of visible minorities in Canada with an approximate percentage of residents at 37%. It is projected that by 2031, the proportion of visible minorities will increase dramatically in urban areas such as Toronto (63%), Edmonton (59%), and Montreal (31%). Toronto will see its highest South Asian population while Vancouver will see its highest growth of Chinese citizens (Statistics Canada, 2010).

The aggressive and expansionist nature of Canada's immigration policy has impacted many urban centres changing the landscape of a Eurocentric community into a multiracial metropolis. In fact, the increasing rates of visible minorities appear most apparent in urban centres such as Toronto - Canada's largest metropolis. Visible minority groups are not dispersed amongst the entirety of urban centres but instead are concentrated in pockets, communities, and suburban areas. In Toronto for example, Koreans are on Bloor Street extending its community towards Bathurst. The concentration of West Indians appear in Warden Avenue in Scarborough while many South Asians reside in Markham (Relph, 1997). One concern arising from the changing demographic landscape of metropolises is the critical impact on social structures and

racial tensions - concerns justified through cultural diversity, equity, and discrimination. However, although tensions do rise from time to time, cities such as Toronto should be celebrated for its public discourse on harmony and accommodation (Reitz & Lum, 2006). In response to the rising diversity, governmental institutions attempt to implement changes throughout the structures of education, health, and social services in providing inclusivity for the racial composition of its population.

Recruitment of Visible Minorities as Police Officers

The trend towards increasing the employment of visible minorities as police officers has been noticeably cited in the academic literature (Mastrofski and Willis, 2010; Irlbeck, 2008; Zhao et al, 2005; Maguire and King, 2004; Nancoo, 2004; Cashmore, 2002; Zhao & Lovrich, 1998; Walker 1985). For example, a predictor of overall employment of African Americans by American police departments is a result of the community's demographic population (Zhao and Lovrich, 1998; Schroedel, Frisch, Hallamore, Peterson, and Vanderhorst, 1996) – the more visible minorities in a community, the greater the likelihood that visible minorities will be employed within a police department. In addition to the employment of visible minorities, Lewis (1989) and Schroedel et. al (1996) found that the presence of a minority police chief as well as an affirmative action plan had a positive effect on the number of African-Americans hired as police officers. A strong predictor of organizational makeup is thus influenced by the racial composition of the community as well as racial identity of those in leadership positions within policing.

Representation of visible minorities and aboriginal people has progressed in Canada with an increase in recruitment, selection, and promotion (Jain, Singh, and Agocs, 2000).

Representation in the Toronto Police Service for example gives clear evidence of the recruitment of visible minorities. Ben-Porat (2008) states that "statistics collected in 2007 find that among uniform police racial minorities occupy 9.3% of the senior positions, 7.7% of staff sergeants and 17.3% of constables and a total of 15.6% of the uniform employee" (p.419). Recruitment of visible minorities are not only apparent in Toronto but also in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police - Canada's federal police agency - as well as Ottawa Police Service which once had 90% of White male recruits but presently these only constitute 50% or less of recruit classes. In fact, Ottawa Police Service has begun an organizational census in an attempt to identity the demographics of its workforce. The survey was voluntary and anonymous and asked about visible (e.g. race and ethnicity) and non-visible (e.g. religion and sexual orientation) characteristics. Approximately 73% of Ottawa Police Service employees participated. The results of the survey would aid in police recruitment strategies so that the police service would be more reflective of the population it serves (Ben-Porat, 2008). It is perhaps justifiable that the recruitment of visible minorities and the diversification of the police seem most evident in cities and urban centres where diversity is most predominant and continues to grow. It must be noted however that there are few Canadian studies that empirically analyze the diversification of police services in less diverse communities.

While there is an increase in diversification within policing, research suggests that racial minority applicants do not have any apparent preferential privilege over White applicants in the American police selection process (Ho, 2005). Nonetheless, the advantages of diversity in police organizations are emphasized through the values of a democratic society wherein the push towards a greater representative law enforcement agency at both the managerial and front levels are becoming increasingly recognized (Nancoo, 2004). Yet efforts to diversify a police

organization through recruitment of visible minorities are not only based on the premises of population representation. Diversifying the police workforce also plays a part in improving the community's perceived police performance (Ben-Porat, 2008). Ultimately, efforts to increase organizational diversity are reinforced with the attempt to take into account community needs.

Recruitment Trends of the Last 15 Years

The data set illustrated in this section displays demographic data pertaining to the last 15 years of recruits that attended a Canadian police academy. The categorical variables for recruit demographics include age, sex, visible minority status, language, and education. Each demographic variable was accounted for in each year of intake at the police academy and a total of 15716 recruits encompassed the data set. Through this analysis, a comparative analysis as well as a timeframe demographic analysis will exemplify contemporary realities of organizational diversity. A timeframe demographic analysis reveals the change of a phenomenon through a specific period of time. Furthermore, the analysis attempts to display the data over a timeframe and to explore in detail the stagnant or changing data. However, it is important to note that the data provided are insubstantial in producing inferential statistics. Moreover, every year of intake for the police academy varies as some police services hire according to budgetary constraints and organizational needs. Therefore the percentage of each year of intake for each demographic variable is used to illustrate the recruitment trends over the last 15 years. The quantitative data collected from the police academy plays an important role for a demographical time frame analysis. In addition, an analysis of quantitative data is important for providing context and a backdrop for the social constructions of police culture and its social structure (Best, 1993). Paying close attention to the demographic context in which social problems emerge will ultimately yield a greater understanding of the issues of diversity within policing. Thus, claims-

making occurs within context (Best, 1993), and by examining the trends of recruitment, we will

be able to recognize how claims of diversity are situated within the organization of policing.

Age

Table 1: Age of Recruits by Year of Intake

	24 or Younger	25-29	30-34	35-39	40 or Older	Total Intake
1999	328 (23.4%)	719 (51.3%)	270 (19.3%)	72 (5.1%)	13 (0.9%)	1402 (100%)
2000	284 (25.3%)	523 (46.7%)	238 (21.2%)	59 (5.3%)	17 (1.5%)	1121 (100%)
2001	285 (25.3%)	238 (21.2%)	255 (22.6%)	79 (7.0%)	24 (2.1%)	1128 (100%)
2002	349 (25.7%)	570 (41.9%)	309 (22.7%)	94 (6.9%)	37 (2.7%)	1359 (100%)
2003	267 (24.4%)	465 (42.5%)	250 (22.9%)	75 (6.9%)	36 (3.3%)	1093 (100%)
2004	214 (22.8%)	376 (40.3%)	229 (24.5%)	92 (9.9%)	23 (2.5%)	934 (100%)
2005	218 (24.6%)	351 (39.7%)	195 (22.0%)	84 (9.5%)	37 (4.2%)	885 (100%)
2006	318 (23.1%)	585 (42.5%)	268 (19.4%)	136 (9.9%)	71 (5.2%)	1378 (100%)
2007	367 (26.2%)	520 (37.1%)	319 (22.8%)	142 (10.1%)	53 (3.8%)	1401 (100%)
2008	334 (27.6%)	441 (36.4%)	230 (19.0%)	134 (11.1%)	72 (5.9%)	1211 (100%)
2009	314 (23.5%)	527 (39.4%)	267 (20.0%)	161 (12.0%)	69 (5.2%)	1338 (100%)
2010	207 (25.0%)	325 (39.3%)	144 (17.4%)	109 (13.2%)	42 (5.1%)	827 (100%)
2011	145 (21.0 %)	286 (41.4%)	140 (20.3%)	76 (11.0%)	43 (6.2%)	690 (100%)
2012	131 (20.6 %)	293 (46.0%)	123 (19.3%)	64 (10.0%)	26 (4.1%)	637 (100%)
Total (%)	3761 (24.4%)	6466 (42.0%)	3237 (21.0%)	1377 (8.9%)	563 (3.7%)	15404 (100%)

Fig. 1.0   Recruitment of Older Applicants
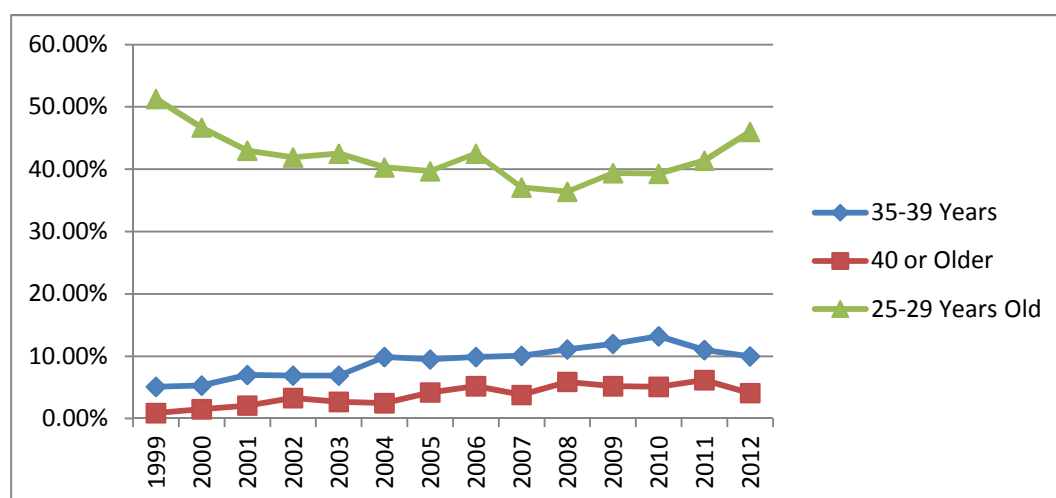
In the last 15 years, the majority (42%) of recruits are 25 to 29 years old. Moreover, 24.4% are aged 24 years or younger, 21% are 30-34 years old, 8.9% are 35-39 years old, and 3.7% are 40 years or older. There is a shift amongst recruitment trends as police organizations are hiring older applicants. This is apparent in 1999; over 50% of new recruits were 25 to 29 years old but represented only 36.4% by the 2008 year of intake. On the other hand, there has been a rise in applicants 35 years and older. What once comprised a mere 6% in 1999 have now grown to represent 14.1% for recruits 35 years and older by 2012. However, the majority of new recruits are still 25 to 29 years of age.

Sex

Table 2: Gender of Recruits by Year of Intake

	Male	**Female**	**Total Intake**
1999	1172 (81.6)	265 (18.4%)	1437 (100%)
2000	917 (80.3%)	225 (19.7%)	1142 (100%)
2001	952 (82.6%)	201 (17.4%)	1153 (100%)
2002	1140 (82.4%)	244 (17.6%)	1384 (100%)
2003	897 (79.7%)	228 (20.3%)	1125 (100%)
2004	743 (78.0%)	210 (22.0%)	953 (100%)
2005	725 (79.9%)	182 (20.1%)	907 (100%)
2006	1166 (83.8%)	226 (16.2%)	1392 (100%)
2007	1121 (79.7%)	285 (20.3%)	1406 (100%)
2008	997 (81.9%)	221 (18.1%)	1218 (100%)
2009	1096 (80.6%)	264 (19.4%)	1360 (100%)
2010	643 (77.5%)	187 (22.5%)	830 (100%)
2011	549 (79.6%)	141 (20.4%)	690 (100%)
2012	495 (77.2%)	146 (22.8%)	641 (100%)
Total (%)	12613 (80.7%)	3025 (19.3%)	15638 (100%)

Fig. 2.0
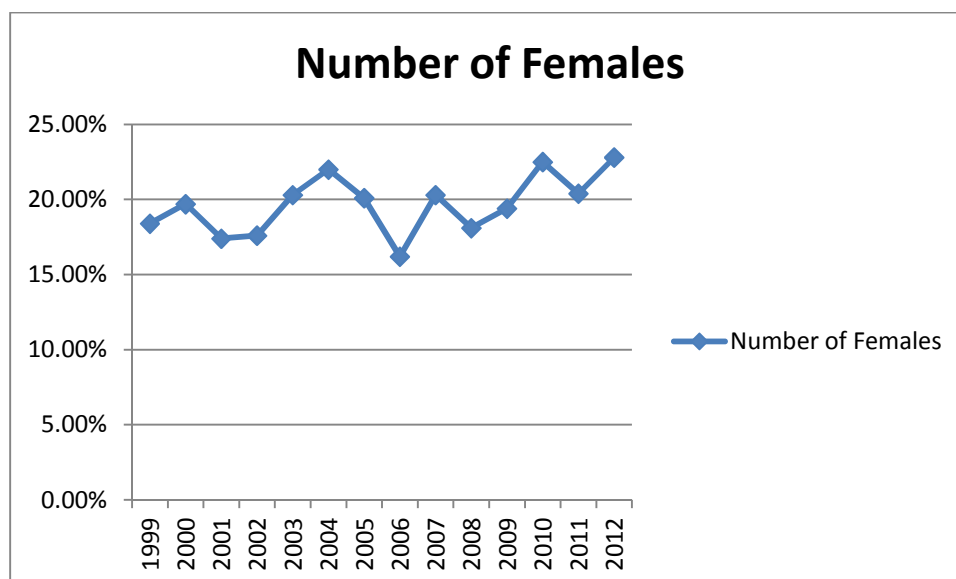
Recruitment trends still signify a male dominated workforce. Over the last 15 years,

80.7% of recruits have been male and less than 1 in 5 (19.3%) are female recruits. Illustrated in

Figure 2.0, there has been an increase in female recruits between the years 2001 and 2004 (4.9%)

as well as 2006 and 2012 (6.6%) and also between 1999 and 2000 (1.3%). Over the 15 years

(from 1999-2012), the data reveals an overall increase in the representation of females (4.4%)

and the highest recorded years of female recruitment are 2010 (22.5%) and 2012 (22.8%)

Visible Minority Status - Race other than Caucasian

Table 3: Visible Minority Status of Recruits by Year of Intake

	Visible Minority or First Nation/Aboriginal	**Neither Visible Minority or First Nation/Aboriginal**	**Total Intake**
1999	190 (13.5%)	1215 (86.5%)	1405 (100%)
2000	156 (13.9%)	965 (86.1%)	1121 (100%)
2001	131 (11.6%)	997 (88.4%)	1128 (100%)
2002	146 (10.8%)	1212 (89.2%)	1358 (100%)
2003	189 (17.3%)	903 (82.7%)	1092 (100%)
2004	180 (19.3%)	753 (80.7%)	933 (100%)

2005	176 (20.2%)	697 (79.8%)	873 (100%)
2006	264 (20.0%)	1057 (80.0%)	1321 (100%)
2007	284 (20.6%)	1093 (79.4%)	1377 (100%)
2008	217 (18.5%)	957 (81.5%)	1174 (100%)
2009	263 (20.0%)	1048 (80.0%)	1310 (100%)
2010	140 (17.3%)	669 (82.7%)	809 (100%)
2011	141 (21.1%)	526 (78.9%)	667 (100%)
2012	84 (13.5%)	540 (86.5%)	624 (100%)
Total	2560 (16.9%)	12632 (83.1%)	15192 (100%)

Fig. 3.0
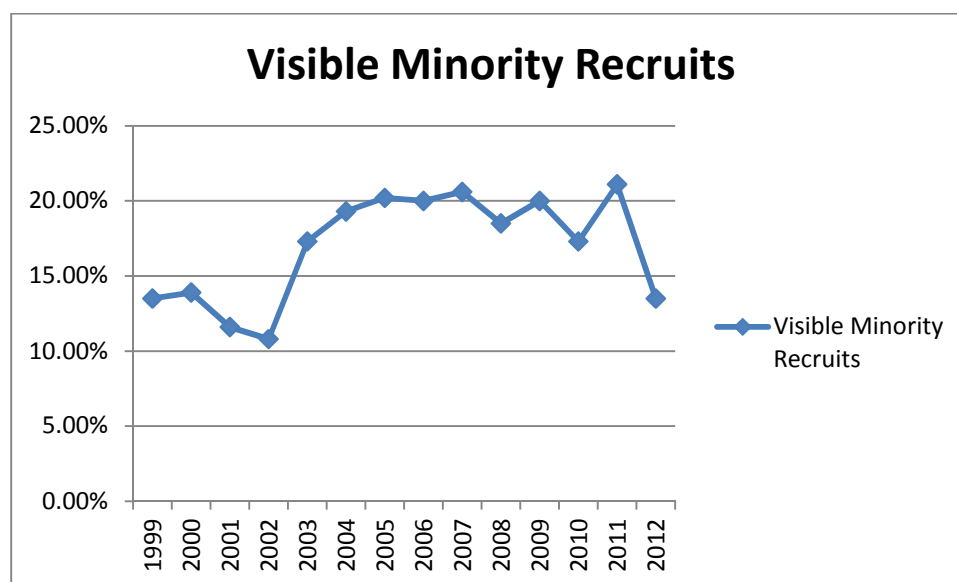
Similar to gender, recruitment trends over the last 15 years suggest not only a male-dominated, but also an existent Eurocentric-dominated workforce in law enforcement. The data collected reveal over 83% of recruits are neither visible minority[2], First Nation, or aboriginal. In the last 15 years, recruitment trends of law enforcement agencies show that 16.9% of recruits are visible minority. Figure 3.0 illustrates an increase of visible minority recruits from 2002 to 2005. In that time span, 691 visible minority applicants were hired as recruits and an overall increase of

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[2] Visible minority status refers to individuals who do not identify themselves as Caucasian.

9.4% in that period. The highest representation of visible minorities occurred in 2011 with a

percentage of 21.1% in comparison to 2002 (13.5%) which represented the lowest year of visible

minority recruitment.

<u>Language</u>

Table 4: First Language of Recruits by Year of Intake

	English	French	English/ French	English & Other	Other	Total Intake
2008	849 (72.5%)	15 (1.3%)	68 (5.8%)	126 (10.8%)	113 (9.6%)	1171 (100%)
2009	1155 (87.8%)	9 (0.7%)	28 (2.1%)	8 (0.6%)	116 (8.8%)	1316 (100%)
2010	744 (90.4%)	31 (3.8%)	2 (0.2%)	6 (0.7%)	40 (4.8%)	823 (100%)
2011	163 (66.8%)	0 (0.0%)	20 (8.2%)	10 (4.1%)	51 (20.9%)	244 (100%)
2012	529 (83.2%)	0 (0.0%)	48 (7.5%)	2 (0.3%)	57 (9.0%)	636 (100%)
Total	3440 (82.1%)	55 (1.3%)	166 (4.0%)	152 (3.6%)	377 (9.0%)	4190 (100%)

Fig. 4.0
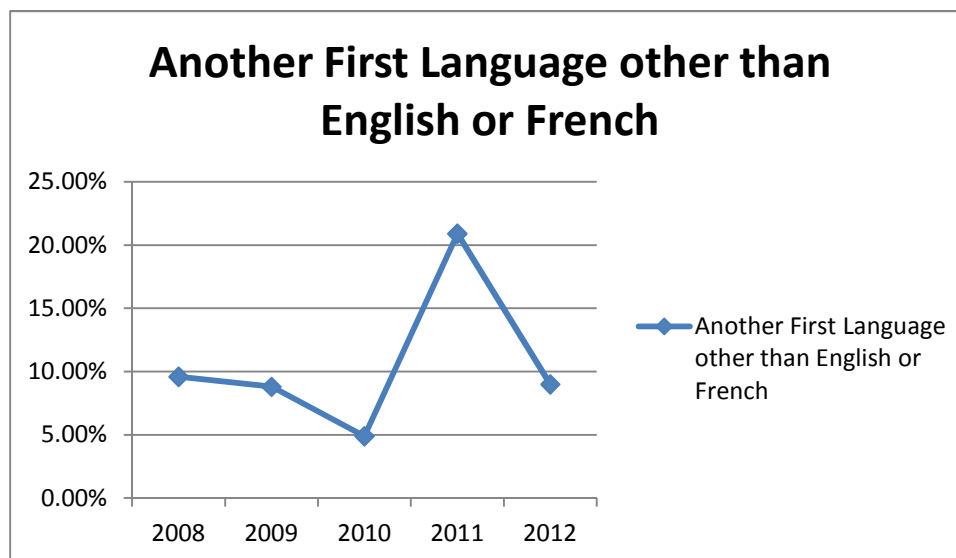
Within 5 years of data pertaining to language, 82.10% of recruits consider English as

their first language. In addition, 9% have another first language other than English or French and

7.6% consider English and another language as their primary dialect. An increase of recruits with

another first language other than English or French occurred from 2010 to 2011 - an approximate

16% increase in one year and a sudden drop of 11.9% the year after.

Education

Table 5: Level of Education of Recruits by Year of Intake

	No College or University	Some College or University	Only College or Equivalent Completed	University Completed	Total Intake
1999	100 (7.0%)	172 (12.0%)	543 (27.9%)	617 (43.0%)	1432 (100%)
2000	100 (8.8%)	138 (12.2%)	560 (49.4%)	335 (29.6%)	1133 (100%)
2001	91 (8.0%)	128 (11.2%)	595 (52.2%)	326 (28.6%)	1140 (100%)
2002	113 (8.2%)	158 (11.4%)	774 (56.0%)	337 (24.4%)	1382 (100%)
2003	117 (10.5%)	129 (11.6%)	559 (50.3%)	305 (27.5%)	1110 (100%)
2004	99 (10.5%)	116 (12.2%)	459 (48.5%)	273 (28.8%)	947 (100%)
2005	93 (10.3%)	67 (7.4%)	448 (50.4%)	298 (32.9%)	906 (100%)
2006	117 (8.5%)	165 (12.0%)	669 (48.6%)	429 (31.1%)	1380 (100%)
2007	60 (4.3%)	160 (11.4%)	742 (53.0%)	439 (31.3%)	1401 (100%)
2008	64 (5.6%)	124 (10.8%)	504 (52.4%)	361 (31.3%)	1153 (100%)
2009	128 (9.5%)	160 (11.9%)	632 (47.0%)	424 (31.6%)	1344 (100%)
2010	30 (3.7%)	47 (5.8%)	387 (48.0%)	344 (42.6%)	808 (100%)
2011	119 (17.3%)	68 (9.9%)	233 (33.8%)	269 (39.1%)	689 (100%)
2012	34 (5.3%)	38 (5.9%)	271 (42.3%)	298 (46.5%)	641 (100%)
Total	1265 (8.2%)	1670 (10.8%)	7376 (48.4%)	5672 (32.6%)	15466 (100%)

Fig. 5.0   Higher Education
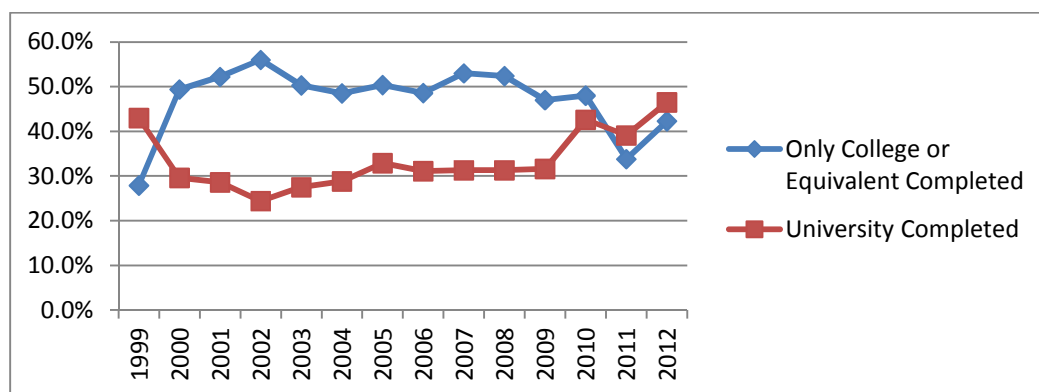
The majority of recruits (91.8%) over the last 15 years have some college or university education. Recruits in the past decade are more educated as over 80% of recruits have completed university and/or college. In fact, recruits who have completed university have been increasing since 2002 and the largest percentage of recruits who have completed university was in 2012 at 46.5% which is an increase of 22.1% in the span of 10 years.

Discussion and Conclusion

One important aspect to highlight is the recruitment of females and visible minorities - both of these demographic characteristics started to increase in the year of 2002. The recruitment of female police officers has been increasing up to the 2012 year of intake and there has been a growth of female recruits from 2006 to 2012. Similarly, the recruitment of visible minorities has increased from 2002 to 2007. Since 2002, a total of 2090 females and a total of 1937 visible minorities were hired as recruits in the ten year span. In effect, the overall increase of recruitment of females and visible minorities may be a result of the growing recognition of the need and value of organizational diversity, as well as governmental policies aimed at employment equity.

For example, the Employment Equity Act 1995 requires employers to proactively engage in employment practices aimed at increasing the representation of Canada's diversity. The purpose of the Act is to "achieve equality in the workplace so that no person shall be denied employment opportunities or benefits for reasons unrelated to ability and, in the fulfilment of that goal, to correct the conditions of disadvantage in employment experienced by women, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities" (Employment Equity Act 1995). The strategy of the employment policy aims to remove the barriers that are discriminatory in nature and to support a progressive representation of the community.

Organizations attempt to identify, evaluate, and change policies and practices that may obstruct access and retention for members of underrepresented groups. Moreover, under the Employment Equity Act, organizations attempt to create an organizational culture that is inclusive of diversity and free of harassment. Since the Employment Equity Act of 1995, the analysis supports the findings of Jain et al., (2004) given that there has been a positive effect in the overall representation of females, visible minorities, and aboriginal officers. While the roots of the Employment Equity Act serve as legislation for federal police services, it has paved way towards provincial practices of employment.

With more emphasis on provincial mandates, there have been some proactive employment practices coinciding with the rise in the recruitment of females and visible minorities. For instance, in 2002, the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) implemented a recruiting initiative called "OPP Bound". The goal of this initiative was to target females and to provide an experiential opportunity to work alongside a police officer for those interested in a career in policing (Montgomery, 2002). Similarly, an accelerated employment equity program was put in place in 1987 for the Ontario Public Service. A report of the advisor on race relations to the premier of Ontario, Bob Rae, highlighted the shortcomings and the marginal gains for racial minority designated groups (Lewis, 1992). Subsequently during the 'Rae Days', policies were introduced requiring Ontario police services to hire more women, visible minorities, aboriginals, and people of disabilities (Maychak & Priest, 1991). Employment policies appear to have an impact on the organizational recruitment of Canadian police services. In the Greater Toronto Area, for example, the Peel Police Service implemented an Equal Opportunity Plan in 1996. On the other hand, employment policies for Toronto Police Service led to 14% representation of new officers as visible minorities in 2002. In the following year, the figure jumped to 28.3%, and the

year after, 30% (Toronto Police Service, 2014). In all, the sharp increase in the recruitment of females and visible minorities from 2002 onward may be a result of employment equity policies that focus on proactive recruitment.

In general, demographic data obtained from a Canadian police academy reveals that police organizations are hiring older applicants and are also recruiting individuals with higher education. There has been a slow but steady increase in the diversity of police services both in the representation of females and visible minorities. There has been a noticeable spike in 2011 of recruits who have a first language other than English and French and this could be correlated with the highest recruitment of visible minorities of the same year. Yet, the data reveal that these changes are minimal when compared to how demographics have changed in a provincial setting. over the last 15 years. These police services generally do not reflect the diversity of the communities especially considering the organizational makeup of Canadian police services in major cities and the representation of visible minorities and Aboriginal peoples (Jain et. al, 2000). In addition to the last 15 years, recruitment trends reveal less than 1 in 5 females are hired to be police recruits. If we consider the 17,726,000 female citizens that encompass over 50% of Canada's population (Statistics Canada, 2013), there is a disproportion in the representation of females in Canadian law enforcement. However, it must be noted that the extent of the representation of females within policing and the demographics of the broader community of comparison is limited due to the data provided.

Although departments report concerted efforts to progress beyond a White male profession, concerns arise that the progress may be slowing (Sklansky, 2006). Nonetheless, such progress to date is impressive and has broad ramifications for both the police organization and the community (Sklansky, 2006). In particular, there has been a general increase of diversity

through this chapter's examination of recruitment trends. There are however some limitations to note. The data set is limited in that it provides basic descriptive analysis and therefore cannot produce inferential statistics. There are also other variables which the data does not take into account, such as organizational needs and budgetary constraints - both of which may have an effect on the numbers of recruits hired. Overall, this chapter has attempted to describe the current recruitment trends of policing in a provincial setting in Canada. The motivation of the police for embracing diversity philosophies, however, cannot be solely attributed to political legislation. Increasing police legitimacy in the eyes of ethnic communities, as well as realization of the benefits of organizational diversity, may have an impact towards the rationale of police agencies adopting diversity philosophies. Through this chapter, I have provided a contextualized understanding of recruitment trends and will now move towards the analysis of organizational diversity and rhetoric.

Chapter 5: Adopting Diversity and Legitimacy: Officers' Perceptions of Organizational

Emphasis

Police departments have made strides in incorporating a mission of equity, inclusivity, and diversity as a response to the current social environment. The findings in this section reflect the officers' perceptions of: organizational rhetoric and embracing diversity; recruitment philosophy and cultural barriers to recruitment; and organizational standards. Organizations attempt to adopt diversity policies, procedures, and practices as a response to the changing societal landscape. The officers' perceptions are that police organizations adopt a rhetorical philosophy that embraces diversity in order to maintain an image of positive action. These perceptions' are in keeping with Meyer and Rowan's (1977) theorizing about rationalized institutional myth that is formed when police organizations attempt to maintain an organizational appearance of diversity and inclusiveness for the purposes of legitimizing and validating its own institution. As such, rhetorical philosophies of diversity and corporate imaging are perceived as a *window dressing* effect where organizations ambiguously appear more diverse then perhaps they really are (Cashmore, 2002).

"The Village People": Officers' Perceptions of Organizational Rhetoric and Embracing Diversity

In the exploration of organizational rhetoric, diversity plays an extremely important role in police-community relations. All participants within this study believe that the focus of their police service is to be more diverse, and the more diverse a police service is, the more it benefits the relationship between the community and the police.

> "I think it benefits the community. I think people who see diverse officers in the
> community feel that sense of 'my police service is working for me' particularly if
> they're members of those communities. I know when I go out into the community as

a Black officer, when young Black people see me they always want to come up and talk to me because I think they don't see many officers who look like me and it's probably an encouraging feeling to see somebody that resembles them. I think the community is happy." (Officer #6)

"If they [the public] don't see themselves in the police service as well then they [the public] are going to have less trust and less faith in the whole organization because they [the public] are going to feel like people don't understand them. And again for policing purposes too, if they [the public] see people like them then they [the public] are going to be more comfortable talking to them and opening up to them. So if you're looking for information from the community, if somebody completely different than you walks in, you're going to go I don't really want to talk to that person." (Officer #10)

A strong notion of 'community', 'outreach', and 'relationship building' can be identified by the above quotes. What is interesting to note, however, is the idea of bringing 'comfort'. Participants of the study believe that organizational diversity allows minority individuals to feel more comfortable during police-public interaction. As evidenced in the quotes above, organizational diversity is seen as playing an important role in bridging the relationship between the police and the community. Police officers believe that diversity within their own organization can benefit the relationship with the community they serve. In effect, they feel the community's 'trust' is gained, equipping police services with a practical working relationship with community members.

When police officers discuss the impact of diversity, they focus on the ways in which organizations embrace the concept of diversity. The principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion are about reflecting the community. As the following recruitment officer explains: "It's about being open-minded, inclusive, real and not paying lip service" and sending the message to the community that "the service is open to diversity" (I07, recruitment officer). Moreover, to be representative of the community is to emphasize that "the community are the police and the

police are part of the community" (Officer #11) or that "the people are the police and the police are the people" (Officer #2). Furthermore, diversity is regarded as a core value for many police officers. For example, Officer #8 states,

> "[My service] has made great strides to make sure that diversity is at the top of our list and diversity is one of our core values, it's one of our core competencies to have more diversity... I really do think that [my service's] recruitment is definitely a top priority to be considering diversity - this is something that they are dealing with everyday and how to create a diverse pool of candidates." (Officer #8)

Officers note that as organizational emphasis is placed upon embracing diversity, police services are focusing on campaigns, education, and advertisement. In addition, police services are meeting the communities through a wide variety of community forums, job fairs, and educational institutions. The purpose of publicizing law enforcement agencies is to "increase mass appeal" (Officer #11). For example, police services are making a continuous effort to put a personalized image into their corporate message so that individuals are able to relate to the organization. Officer #11 explains,

> "We have a variety of posters and our corporate imaging - we are careful to be inclusive of everybody. So someone looks at our posters you can see a White male, a White female, a Black male, female, aboriginal...we're just trying to basically portray policing as a huge active community".

Officer #3 also asserts that,

> "Those recruit posters are good to have minority officers on them especially if they are actual officers because if I'm a regular guy I'm looking at that thing and I go hey that police service has some minority officers, a Black person or an Asian person or whatever".

There is skepticism however for some minority and non-minority police officers in response to their police service's corporate image. As the following officers explain:

"To me I always have to admit you always do a little smirk when you see that photo... The pictures sometimes make me smile when they go out of their way to make us a little more diverse than maybe what we truly are." (Officer #8)

"We don't really laugh at the situation but it's true everywhere and you always see who they choose and camera friendly is key but again that's their choice is exactly that. We just got three new vans for human resources and stuff like that to do their campaigns and of course that's a visible minority and a female usually." (Officer #5)

From the above quotes, there is a common perspective amongst all participants that much of the corporate imagery through recruitment posters and banners of police services portray visible minorities and females. However, the corporatized images of police services can be misleading by overemphasizing diversity. This corporate imagery becomes a symbolism of "the Village people" (Officer #9) as all ethnicities are covered in one essential snapshot. In essence, one minority officer describes the posters she has seen as overkill:

"Sometimes depending on the poster that I've seen I think it's an overkill. When I see that it's an overkill then it makes me concerned about if I would apply to that service because I feel like they are trying too hard. Once you see that they are putting those faces in there...so when I see a poster that shows four out of five that are Black then I'm going to be thinking ok that's overkill, they are trying too hard". (Officer #12)

Many police officers question the accuracy and authenticity of their service's efforts in creating an image that is inclusive and open to diversity. While participants agree that the philosophy behind the construction of corporate imagery is diversity and representation, it is believed that such imagery can be misleading with respect to the actual outcome of the quest for diversity. Police services lacking diversity, or having limited diversity, can give the wrong impression that they are more diverse than in actuality.

As police services promote diversity, police officers reveal an underlying myth in the occupation of law enforcement. According to the participants of the study, there is a widely held perception within the police community that visible minorities are being hired more than White

male applicants. In reality however, and from their perspective, there is still an obvious number of White males being hired as police officers. As discussed in the last chapter, recruitment trends reveal that 83% of individuals that are not visible minority, First Nation, or aboriginal, have been hired over the last 15 years. Statistics alone debunk the common recruitment myth. The following three quotes by police officers highlights the reality of hiring practices in policing and the falsehood of the myth, 'white men need not apply'.

> "Yeah you know it's an unfortunate myth that's out there that people believe that you're not going to get hired if you're White and that just comes from this attitude that Black officers or visible minority officers are getting hired more than everybody else. The problem with that myth is that if that were the case, we would have more than six or seven Black police officers out of 600 in [my service]. If that were the case, we'd have much more diversity in all services." (Officer #6)

> "In the history of [my service] we have never sent a class down to [a police academy] that wasn't White dominated. I would venture to say that in the history of policing you can't find me one major service that sent down a class that wasn't male White dominated." (Officer #9)

> "Just look at the organization and you know that that's false. So you've got a big line up of minority officers coming in from the door. I see other people that we hire and when we were hiring a lot you may see one or two minority officers in a recruit class. I look at my recruit class, I was one of three visible minorities out of a class of 20." (Officer #3)

As noted above, the reality of policing is that there still exists a lack of organizational diversity and representation. The perceptions held by many officers are that the common myth of 'White men need not apply' is construed to the public belief that visible minorities are being hired more than White men. According to the research participants, the recruitment myth is a by-product of a corporatized image that embraces diversity. In essence, corporate imaging through promotional practices and public relations of police organizations portrays an image that White males are not being hired, when indeed, they are. Officer #6 concludes by stating: "I always say that diversity

starts at home so before we can go into the community and tell of praises of diversity and all things that we are doing, we need to get our house in order". The perceptions of these minority police officers suggest that there is a discrepancy between an organizational rhetoric that embraces diversity, the realities of representation within the organization, and the disingenuous image that is portrayed to the public.

'Representing the Community': Goals of Recruitment

All participants in the study believe that the goals of organizational recruitment are to be reflective of the community they serve. Specifically, the recruitment philosophies of police services are based upon the population that is being served and its diverse background.

> "You can't have a community... say a Black community have all White officers, you can't. You have to have a mix in there to represent the community. Do I think that our service is there? I don't think we're there yet. Do I think that we want to be there? Yeah, I do, *it's written right in our business plan and it's one of our core values* as well." (Officer #3, *emphasis added*)

> "There's no point in trying to hire Black officers and go to Sioux Lookout unless somebody wants to and I think that's awesome to have somebody like him who was born and raised in Toronto who wants to go up to Sioux Lookout, that's awesome. But again, is there a point for us to be like well we should have 3 Black officers and maybe one Punjabi officer in Sioux Lookout? What is the benefit of that right?" (Officer #8)

The above quotes reveal an emphasis placed upon visible minorities and race, and the view that the ultimate objective of the police should be to recruit new police officers that represent the community. Many of the minority officers' perceptions of community demographics and organizational makeup support existing literature. Research has found that the overall employment of minorities in police departments can be predicted by the overall demographic makeup of the social environment (Zhao and Lovrich, 1998; Schroedel, Frisch, Hallamore,

Peterson, and Vanderhorst, 1996). Therefore, the perceptions of participants suggest that the more visible minorities present in the community, the more visible minorities in the police service.

Many participants of the study are skeptical about the outcome of full organizational representation. For many officers, the goal to have a law enforcement agency that represents the makeup of the community is seemingly unattainable and extremely challenging. There is a general disagreement amongst police officers in how they feel that the goal of recruitment should be carried out. Some police officers believe in a mirror representation of the community by way of ratio makeup.

> "Well the goal is based on the population that we serve and their diverse background, say in a region, let's say 20% are Asian or Chinese. So they want to get 20% of police officers to be from that background, sort of like a ratio." (Officer #2)

> "Idealistically, you want to have your police service being a cross-section of the community that they police. So if you have 50% women in your community then your service should also be 50%. Or say you have 20% people that are visible minority or 30% whether it be Black or Oriental or South Asian, then your service should also represent that." (Officer #10)

On the other hand, some police officers believe that having a ratio makeup is impractical.

> "I don't necessarily think it has to be even. I don't agree with 'let's stop hiring male Whites now until the females or the visible minorities catch up'. I don't agree with that. And I think I can say that because I'm a visible minority. I agree with having visible minorities and females as long as they are still competent. I'm not saying hire a female who can't pass the test or a visible minority can't pass the test. We shouldn't just push them through just because of that. They should still be able to satisfy the requirements of being a police officer." (Officer #10)

Officer #10 is not alone in this perspective. Officer #8 states, "But, I don't think you can say that and I don't even think that's positive because that's not what our worlds look like. The worlds are not made up of everything being equal". Finally, Officer #11 states, "nobody has and nobody

should ascribe numerical values like you got to have this much of this or this much of that. That's not practical and that's not something that us or anybody else that I know of try to actively do that". The perceptions above reveal that some participants do not find favour in organizational policies and initiatives that attempt to mirror the social environment. It is evident within these perceptions that many feel that the aggressive hiring of visible minorities may negatively affect the overall quality of policing.

Nonetheless, many police officers agree that representing the community is a good guideline to follow for recruitment regardless of how it should be carried out.

> "I think it's a good guideline. I don't know if I would say that should be the goal but maybe a guideline so if it turns out that 80% are Blacks but on the service there's 10% then I think that's a problem because White officers or officers that aren't apart of the culture or don't identify with the culture are going to police that call different than the person who is that part of that culture." (Officer #12)

> "You know I don't know that there's a set goal. I mean we don't have a number. We don't have a quota. We have a goal to become more diverse and whatever that looks like it looks like as long as we're on the path to sort of working towards that goal...so if 15% is the number, we want to try to work towards that number but we don't have a quota to get that number. But the goal is to be reflective of the community and it's about recognizing that if you have more French speaking people in the community, it only makes sense to have French speaking officers in the community. And the same goes for the Black community and the Asian community and other racialized communities." (Officer #6)

Similarly, Officer #8 states,

> "I think you have to have a goal. You may never ever reach it, right? This is an industry that men are more attracted to the women. We are polar opposites to the nursing profession - that is female dominated industry and this is a male dominated industry. We will never reach that 51%, probably not in my lifetime or yours but we'll always have a goal of that 51% and I think as long as you have that goal and you chase that goal in good faith then you are on the right road". (Officer #8)

In essence, it is believed that the goals of recruitment for many officers are to ultimately reflect the community in which their organization serves. While such a goal may be unattainable, working towards that goal is considered important for progressing towards a more diverse and representative police service. The challenge of recruiting in a way that will reflect the diversity of the community, as discussed below, relates to the lack of positive relations among diverse communities and the police.

"Getting the numbers is not easy": Perceived Challenges of Police Recruitment

In a broader sense, officers' perceptions with respect to the recruitment and diversity of a police service were that these are dependent on financial flexibility and the available resources to hire, train, and compensate new recruits. In fact, one of the most frequently cited constraints identified was the economics of policing (Officer #1, 3, 4, 7, 10). However, aside from the straight forward sense of budgetary constraints, there are more intrinsic barriers, both cultural and attitudinal, to police recruitment.

Many participants attribute cultural and attitudinal barriers of recruitment officers as a reason for the lack of diversity within police organizations. For instance, Officer #1 states,

> "I think the generation that is sitting there recruiting; you have senior police officers who get sent into recruitment. *People tend to recruit those who are like themselves.*" (Officer #1, *emphasis added*)

Similarly, Officer #6 notes,

> "If you have somebody who's in recruiting who doesn't necessarily believe in diversity or doesn't look at the recruiting practice with the lenses of diversity or human rights, you could run into issues where decisions are made about a particular candidate that well this person doesn't fit in. *So there are certain attitudes that can also be a barrier.*" (Officer #6, *emphasis added*)

The concerns identified by Officers #1 and #6 reveal the perception that biases can exist in the recruitment process. Officer #1 suggests a generational impediment towards the recruitment of police officers in which favour is granted towards shared understandings, similarities, and likeness between recruiter and the recruited. On the other hand, Officer #6 suggests that personal biases and attitudinal barriers can serve as an impediment towards specific diversity initiatives in the recruitment process.

The perceptions of police officers' are that recruitment officers are endorsed with a sense of power that can make or break a recruitment strategy. Even if a police service's number one priority and strategy is to actively promote and recruit visible minorities, recruitment officers have a major impact in the fulfillment of diversity goals in a police service. Part of this issue is that recruiters are 'culturally unaware' of potential barriers that may be experienced by potential ethnic participants (Officer #6). In another sense, recruitment officers may overlook the tangible and intangible benefits of having a diverse officer (such as language and a valued understanding of a certain ethnic culture). As Officer #9 describes, there may be more tangible and intangible benefits to the organization of having an ethnic applicant who scored 80 than a non-diverse applicant who scored 90. The views expressed bring light upon officers' perceptions of bias in the process of recruitment. This bias operates as a challenge and a barrier for greater diversity and organizational representation.

Another reason why the recruitment of visible minorities is perceived as challenging pertains to the demographics of the police service and the community. Specifically, the lack of organizational diversity amongst police services may be affected by the surrounding community. Many interview participants noted how the lack of cultural diversity in some Canadian

communities as well as the organization could negatively impact police recruitment and

retention. Officer #6 states,

"People of diversity would be less likely to be applying to places if they know that
well I'm going to be the only Black or I'm the only Asian officer out there, why
would I go in and be the only individual out there when I can go to the [larger police
service] and feel included, right? So it's not just the fault of police services, a lot of
times it's just demographics." (Officer #6)

Similarly, Officer #12 states,

"I remember and I was looking...I didn't see any Black females so I was struggling
with that. I've always lived in [region] so I was struggling with that if I should
apply...for those reasons." (Officer #12)

The officers' experiences above suggest that minority applicants may feel less inclined to apply

to different services where there is a lack of diversity for reasons of feeling isolated and

excluded. The lack of organizational diversity within these situated police services further

reinforces the perceptions of an uninviting environment for police work. The end result is an

even greater challenge for homogeneous police agencies to seek minority applicants in an

attempt to increase organizational diversity. Thus, the present research supports other research in

the field by identifying how the demographics of a community significantly impact police

recruitment and retention of minority police officers as well as the determinants of minority

employment in police agencies (Zhao, He, & Lovrich, 2005; Zhao & Lovrich, 1998).

Participants also identified cultural and emotional barriers to the recruitment of visible

minorities. Police officers believe that their line of work is not seen as an attractive career for

visible minority communities. Officer #9 states that "a lot of people either fear the police or don't

have an admirable scope of the police". Because of this public perception of law enforcement,

people "don't want to be part of the police" (Officer #9). In fact, many participants of the study attributed a poor perception of the police which is influenced by one's home country.

> "So some backgrounds, policing is not a desirable profession that people coming out of different countries - Pakistan or Iran or Iraq or even Croatia or Bosnia - police are not seen as good people so some family coming here whether they are first or second generation, they're not going to want to grow up knowing their son is going to be a police officer because in Bosnia they are not good people. So that's the struggle in Canada." (Officer #8)

> "The majority of the 200-300 thousand come here a year are from Asia and South Asia worldwide and if you come from India everybody culturally - they're goal is to become a doctor or a lawyer, that's what they push for...Sri Lanka same thing, engineer. They're not coming here to become cops. Where they are from, there is a lot of corruption in cops, Caribbean same thing. And so it's not necessarily admirable to be a police officer here." (Officer #9)

What is identified through the above quotes is that the perceived challenge of recruiting visible minority applicants becomes exacerbated by public perceptions of the police held amongst visible minority communities. For immigrants alike, there may be perceptions and experiences with the police in one's home country that are negative in nature. Consequently, immigrants' perceptions of crime and the police can be influenced by former experiences with crime and the homeland's justice system. Immigrants see and interpret their experiences using their home country as a point of reference including societal institutions such as law enforcement and police authorities (Menjivar and Bejarano, 2004). The goal of representing the community through organizational diversity is thus hampered when individuals of immigrant communities perceive policing as an unattractive career. As participants of the study note, there is a perceived struggle for police services to provide an image of police work as an attractive career and to inform the public that their police organization is a viable employer. The goal of organizational diversity is

thus premised upon the task of *attracting* individuals of minority communities to seek and apply for careers as police officers.

While challenges exist in recruiting individuals from specific immigrant communities, cultural and emotional barriers have also manifested amongst existing racialized communities. According to some participants, there are significant challenges based on "historical negative relationships" between the police and marginalized communities (Officer #6).

> "So when you talk about Aboriginal communities and you look at the relationships that they've had with not only provincial and federal governments but by proxy police services, through the whole process of colonization, through residential schools, and the 60s scoop and all of those things - it has created negative interactions. So those have been exacerbated by more current issues like Ipperwash and Caledonia and some of the issues where police and Aboriginal communities have confrontations. So when you have things like that happening, you're trying to become more diverse as a police service - particularly in the Aboriginal community - those incidents don't help us because the perceptions not amongst all but amongst a vast majority of Aboriginals that joining the police service wouldn't be something that would be looked upon variably by some members of the community. With respect to other communities, you know the Black community has had historically negative relationships with the police as well. When you look at issues around racial profiling and Black communities being the number one target and stigmatized by the practice of racial profiling, it's very difficult then to stigmatize a community by racial profiling. Essentially sort of castigate an entire community and showing them as the usual suspects and then turn around and say well we would like to hire from your community - it's very difficult to sort of make those two arguments." (Officer #6)

As clearly outlined above, the perceived challenges of recruiting members of visible minority groups are not only related to immigrant communities but also amongst ethnic and racialized groups that are marginalized.

As noted earlier, all participants believe that the goals of organizational recruitment are to be reflective of the community they serve. Yet there is a distinct conflict between issues and biases pertaining to the policing of ethnic communities (i.e. racial profiling and prejudice

policing) and the goals of reflecting the demographics of the community. One of the biggest

impediments towards building bridges and repairing relationships is the perceived resistance of

police to change:

> "The status quo is very easy to maintain so when you're talking about changing an
> organization that has been predominantly male for most of its life cycle and then
> you're *trying to change deeply entrenched attitudes and behaviours in a paramilitary
> organization, sometimes you meet resistance*" (Officer #6, *emphasis added*).

Thus, a contradiction exists between police services that embrace diversity and focus its policing

philosophy on embracing diversity and representing the community and the ways in which ethnic

and racialized communities are policed. Cultural impediments within the organization of policing

only seem to deteriorate public perceptions of the police held by minority communities. The

accounts given by police officers reveal perceived issues such as racial profiling and

discriminatory policing practices existent within the practice of policing that negatively shape

public perceptions of the police. These negative perceptions ultimately create the impression that

law enforcement is unattractive and unappealing which in turn lead to significant challenges and

difficulties for both recruiting and retaining visible minorities. With the discussion of

recruitment, another organizational impediment to diversity involves the standards of police

services.

'Eurocentric' Standards

> The duties of a police officer include the principles of:

> "preserving the peace; preventing crimes and other offences and providing assistance
> and encouragement to other persons in their prevention; assisting victims of crime;
> apprehending criminals and other offenders and others who may lawfully be taken
> into custody; laying charges and participating in prosecutions; executing warrants
> that are to be executed by police officers and performing related duties; performing
> the lawful duties that the chief of police assigns; enforcing municipal by-laws, and
> completing prescribed training" (Police Services Act, 1990).

As such, there are certain standards, or criteria, that must be met for individuals seeking a career in policing. In order to be a police officer, an individual must be a Canadian citizen or a permanent resident of Canada; be at least eighteen years of age; be physically and mentally able to perform the duties of the position, having regard for his or her own safety and the safety of members of the public; be of good moral character and habits; and have successfully completed at least four years of secondary school education or its equivalent (Police Services Act, 1990).

While the standards are clearly identified, many participants believe there are ambiguities in these standards. In particular, the perceptions held by police officers are that the minimum levels of education are inconsistent with the realities of current hiring trends. In order to possess the qualities and attributes necessary for policing, Officer #8 asserts:

> "To me, integrity and honesty are things at the top. I think leadership - no matter what rank you are - I don't think leadership is necessarily a rank thing but you need to have people who are independent and are able to work on their own. I think more and more of that does come from higher education". (Officer #8)

In fact, there appears to be an organizational emphasis on higher education (see Fig. 5.0 in Chapter 4). For instance, one participant explains,

> "Our organization believes in continued education - it's pretty big there. You'll find a lot of the people that work for our police service have quite a variety of education. Some of them have university degrees not even in criminology but engineering or social work and everything. And then you have the other people too that have their college diplomas" (Officer #3).

Although the bare minimum is listed as a high school diploma, a policy requiring a university or college degree would significantly alter the traditional makeup of recruit classes. One possible outcome is that the impact of higher educational requirements will change the organizational composition of the police - women and minority may effectively be excluded in such cases

(Decker & Huckabee, 2002). Perhaps one of the explanations for women and visible minorities to be excluded can be attributed to organizational barriers imposed by standards.

All participants believe in a concrete set of standards that should not be altered under any circumstances.

> "The standards should remain and that's what I'm saying even for promotion and senior officers and all that stuff. There should be a certain standard and those officers should also meet that standard because that's what legitimizes the whole thing." (Officer #3)

> "The worlds are not made up of everything being equal and the problem for policing is that let's say a city like Toronto they are only getting 20 or 30% of their applicants either Black females or White females - you still got to hire the best people possible. So out of that 30%, only 10 of those people come with the credentials and the standards. You got to keep the standards exactly the same no matter what the diversity is. So that to me is about keeping the standards and finding those people within the community that meet those standards." (Officer #8)

There is a general consensus among all participants that lowering standards as a means for inclusivity and diversity is implausible and will pose many challenges for the quality of policing. Implicit in this statement is the idea that visible minorities are not as qualified to be police officers compared to non-minorities. Within such perceptions, it is believed that organizational standards serve as a principle for police services and are what legitimizes law enforcement agencies. Without standards that are set high, it is perceived that police services lose credibility with the public.

For some however, the quality of policing has been negatively impacted due to lax standards not set high enough for recruits. For example, there may be a change in organizational standards which has occurred over the years. It can be tough for human resources to "weed" out

thousands of applications to recruit the best applicants (Officer #5). However some police

officers believe that the recruitment process is faulty. Again Officer #5 explains,

> "you realize that they weren't the best people for the job and that's the process we're
> seeing more and more right now is that the individuals that are coming up and
> through are not...I don't think the standard was set high enough. That's why I'm not
> seeing that...or they're not doing well". (Officer #5)

Similarly, some participants believe that those who do not necessarily support the idea of

diversity feel that standards have been lowered and that the candidates are less qualified. What

ultimately occurs, as they see it, is a 'devaluing' of interpersonal diversity (see chapter 6 for a

detailed discussion)

In reality, the standards of policing have been changing. Many police officers made

reference to the changing physical requirements through ambiguous recruitment philosophies of

policing - at one point, applicants had to be of a certain height until police services realized the

benefits of having women on the police force. Police services began to recognize that the

structures put in place for the requirements of policing "that were in the books were effectively

decimating against women" (Officer #6). Although a change and recognition has been made

concerning gender, making accommodations for racial groups becomes a challenging and

sensitive topic to address. Through the process of evaluating standards, organizational barriers

may impose challenges for organizational diversity. While the change in physical requirements

reduced the barriers for women (Shephard & Bonneau, 2002), there are other organizational

barriers that impede on those of racial minorities. For example, barriers that are discriminatory in

nature may affect those who are diverse because there is differing access to the same

opportunities that others accustomed to Canada might have. Similarly, one of the criteria

established by some police services requires candidates to have good credit rating.

"Police services want to see that you are fiscally responsible. So having a good credit rating is a good measure of that. So if we have candidates that come in who have problematic credit ratings, they generally will...they may not make it through the process because they are going to be seen as irresponsible" (Officer #6).

Credit rating, according to Officer #6, does not take into account the context of the applicant such as caring for a family and cultural understandings of finance. For some cultures, supporting a large family is valued as an important duty and therefore credit ratings are reflective of such responsibilities. Additionally, Officer #9 states,

"If you've created a Eurocentric test score then it's any wonder why male Whites are leading the pack. They created the test because most of them are already in that position and of course then it lends itself to allow people of that demographic to be successful. It's not done maliciously, it is what it is". (Officer #9)

Officer #9 reveals that some of the testing and procedures set in place for applicants are insensitive towards the different cultures of the public. He states: "There's probably a million different questions that you could ask in society, let's just take policing out of the equation where people get screened out because it is culturally insensitive and it doesn't bode well for them" (Officer #9). Further, he states: "We're not screening out Asians; it's just that they are not passing the test. Well who knew that the line of questioning and the interpretation behind the answer was unnecessary of unfairly screening the Asian applicant? So that's what I say as a Eurocentric, that's the kind of question that is Eurocentric" (Officer #9). What Officer #9 referred to was a question that asked whether applicants liked boys. For some cultures, there may be a general preference for boys, and in particular because Asian applicants were answering yes, they were screened as possible pedophiles. With this 'Eurocentric' standard of testing, there is a perceived systemic barrier placed upon individuals who may have different cultural understandings.

Thus in evaluating and assessing the various organizational standards that are put in place, the quality of policing and the subject of accommodation becomes a delicate issue for

police officers. Participants do not believe in lowering standards in order to encourage diversity and representation. Whether male or female, racially diverse or not, participants believe in a definite standard - that all, no matter race or gender, should be able to satisfy the requirements of being a police officer. They also believe that the definite standard must pertain to all facets of diversity. Nonetheless, the interviews reveal that there are perceived organizational barriers in a 'Eurocentric' profession of law enforcement.

Conclusion

The findings of this chapter reveal a unique understanding of the perceptions held by police officers in relation to diversity within the organization. Police officers question the rhetoric of embracing diversity and this is evident in Cashmore's (2002) concept of *window dressing*. The bedrock assumptions concerning the benefits associated with organizational diversity and the recruitment of visible minorities as police officers is parallel to the thought of a viable police-community working relationship. Organizational emphasis is placed upon campaigns, advertisements, and initiatives targeted at promoting the concept of diversity. Yet there is the perception that an organizational image of positive action is inconsistent with the realities of both the organizational makeup as well as individual officers' experiences. There are certain criteria that police organizations have no control over and most are basic bona-fide job requirements set by government policy. There are however, criteria that police services do have control over. Some police officers believe that standards are ambiguous and serve as an organizational barrier for inclusivity and diversity. And while there is a general agreement amongst police officers that the goals of organizational recruitment should revolve around representing the community, the police officers of this study are skeptical whether that goal will ever be reached. As such, the goals of recruitment such as community representation are shaped

by policies and initiatives that attempt to reflect the current demographic reality. However, the goal of greater representation is not met without its challenges. Minorities perceive policing as an unattractive career. This negative perception of the police results in the difficulties of hiring minority candidates.

In essence, the perceptions held by the participants of this study suggest a *window dressing* effect. Organizational policies emphasizing the embracement of diversity give the appearance of progress; however little is actually achieved in addressing organizational barriers. Although there has been an increase in the hiring of women and visible minorities as discussed in Chapter 4, there is still massive underrepresentation amongst police organizations. Police officers perceive organizational barriers as an impediment to the continued progress towards organizational diversity. The perceptions of police officers ultimately suggest that organizational policies and directives become a 'rationalized institutional myth'. Organizations adopt institutionalized products, services, techniques, policies, and programs in order to increase legitimacy and accountability. The formal structures of organizations dramatically reflect the myths of the institutional environment by means of adopting organizational policies of diversity as a response to the societal landscape in which they are situated (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). In other words, the relationship between police organizations and their environments is that the police structurally reflect socially constructed reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). As the *times are changing* and a reality exists where diversity is widespread, police organizations attempt to reflect this phenomenon. Through the act of corporate imagery, campaigns, community initiatives, and education, police services ultimately portray a diversity-minded organization as a means of external legitimacy. In acquiring internal legitimacy, diversity policies, training, and departments geared towards accommodation, inclusivity, and education provide a sense of

organizational responsibility and obligation towards the promotion of diversity. Thus, the

emphasis upon philosophies of diversity maintains appearances and validates the organization.

Chapter 6: Living Diversity: Minority Officer's Experiences in an Image-Conscious

Organization

In an attempt to seek validation and legitimacy, police agencies desire to make policing a viable and attractive career for minorities. The present chapter focuses specifically on minority officers' perceptions and experiences to illustrate the systemic and cultural barriers existing in policing. By creating an image of diversity-inclusiveness, police organizations seek to 'win people over'. However, interviews with minority officers show that policies and initiatives aimed at enhancing organizational representation are perceived as rhetorical maneuvers that work to conceal systemic and cultural issues within the workforce. The informal characteristics that endure behind window dressing, as described by participants, identifies a policing subculture that is predominantly male, White, ethnocentric, and heterosexual. Similarly, empirical research on police culture reveals a gendered-dominated culture exhibiting heteronormativity and hypermasculinity (Chan et. al, 2010; Miller et. al, 2003). The continued call for reforming police culture has been in relation to racism and biases amongst the police. As such, the police culture has been met with political, academic, and public scrutiny that has permeated the public perceptions of police services (Chan, 1997). With the employment of racial minorities and females towards the police force, there are challenges unique to the experiences of minority police officers of the study. In what follows, I explore and discuss these barriers as they relate to police recruitment and retention. I begin by exploring the 'tension' of organizational rhetoric within individual experiences as it relates to diversity and its utilization in policing. I conclude by arguing that organizational diversity within policing is perceived as a rationalized institutional myth that constructs a window dressing effect obscuring important problems experienced by minority police officers.

Symbolizing the Face of Policing through the Utilization of Diversity

It is important to examine how organizations make use of diversity in the everyday operations of police work. The majority of the research participants spoke about the opportunities available for visible minorities in policing. The utilization of diversity becomes a central interest for police agencies as effort is placed on recruiting ethnic minority candidates. Participants of the study explain that their police services are keen on finding the *right qualified minority candidates*.

> "You bring different points of view. If you've got a police service that's got a variety of different faiths and religions and cultures, you've got a variety of different ways of thinking and doing things which has to be better than everybody who thinks the same. I'm not saying that all White men think the same but traditionally policing has been an all White male dominated career." (Officer #10)

> "We need officers who have that experience to help us, to educate us in terms of hey this is rude if you look at a girl that way. It's a big learning curve but the police service without that knowledge we would offend a lot of people, a lot of different cultures and not even know it." (Officer #2)

Both of these minority officers specify that diversity within the organization plays a beneficial role in the service of policing. The view offered is that visible minority officers provide a perspective that is better attuned to culturally sensitive topics - something that has been often ignored in policing practices. The argument reinforces the importance of organizational diversity and is premised on the fact that current police agencies continue to lack diversity (even with the increase of females and visible minorities as illustrated in Chapter 4), consequently leading to overlooked issues of cultural awareness.

Language acts as a barrier between the police and diverse communities. As such, ethnic officers who can speak different languages are utilized operationally as the bridge between the community and the police.

> "Even for operational things...I have someone here that can speak French and I have a victim here and I need extensive French translation, [I can]call a colleague over and that makes it better. Think about the opportunity and how much better it would be if an officer that speaks that person's language can speak with them. Depending on the situation, having someone that is readily available that can speak with that person can positively impact many different outcomes." (Officer #11)

Because language barriers among police and the public they serve can negatively impact trust and community relations, police services understand the tangible benefits of having diverse, multi-lingual officers.

Not only do services see the benefits of diversity for enhancing trust and community relations, but they also see benefits in diversity for intelligence gathering. This is endorsed by Officer #4 who works undercover:

> "I can tell you personally my own race has been very handy. It's given me benefits that I wouldn't normally have specifically in the undercover capacity. For example, if I'm being selected to penetrate a Jamaican gang, obviously being a White male is not going to help...They [the police] will tell you 'we're not interested in White males' because they [the police] already have so many. And sometimes if you need say an Indian male, there are very few to pick from so those if maybe one or two can't do it now we have nobody. But we've got so many White males that are willing to do, thanks but we already have so many, we don't need any more." (Officer #4)

The quote above identifies how there are specific roles within the police that are opportunistic for visible minorities to occupy. Police organizations utilize diversity by providing certain minority officers surveillance, intelligence gathering, and undercover roles. These opportunities however carry underlying assumptions that visible minority police officers will police in roles that are interactive with the same cultures as their own. This leads to possible challenges for

minority officers who do not want to work with their own culture, or that minority police officers are isolated in specific roles which lead to less promotional opportunities.

Due to specific roles that are isolated, participants question organizational advancement and career progression. In particular, one question arises: what is the current hierarchical diversity in policing? In answering this question, some participants refer to police services in a metropolitan area where there is greater diversity of not only the community but also the police service.

> "I really want us to be more like [the urban police service that is]...a very diversified police service. That's what I want us to be where we have the numbers or we just don't have the minority officers but we also have the minority officers that are in the senior ranks. *I just don't think it's having minority officers as constables but in the senior ranks making decisions for the services as well.* We have a couple minority officers at our police service who are, I would say, senior officers, they're like staff sergeants, you know, one step below and that's the highest rank as far as our senior minority officers are. *To me, that's not good enough for a service of 700 people.*" (Officer #3, *emphasis added*)

Officer #3 is not the only participant that believes that there is a lack of hierarchical representation in their police service. In fact, almost all of the participants of the study identify an underrepresentation of minority police officers in higher ranks. The references by Officer #3 and many other participants demonstrate that organizational diversity is not only valued as a goal of police services but that hierarchical diversity is just as, if not more, important. Due to law enforcement agencies being a paramilitary organization, the decision making process originates from the top. From the perspectives of many minority police officers, the view offered is that systemic organizational barriers exist making it a challenging endeavour for visible minorities to attain high ranking positions.

On one account, a female minority police officer states:

"You've got to wonder about the barriers, do they put those barriers up intentionally or do they realize there are barriers...but there are definitely barriers." (Officer #10)

Officer #10, a Black female with 28 years of experience as a police officer describes in her quote that the process of promotion and attaining a higher position in policing poses many challenges for particular officers. The significance of the quote however is not simply that organizational barriers exist in policing. Rather, the view offered by Officer #10 questions whether organizational barriers are systemic in nature. Because power is represented within the hierarchy of policing, diversity is believed to be the 'change' that brings new perspectives and understandings towards overlooked issues systemically put in place. In essence, it is perceived that diversity rhetoric obscures the problems visible minorities face with respect to promotional opportunities. While the perception is that organizations embrace diversity as a philosophy, there is little organizational acknowledgment of the problems and barriers of career advancement experienced by visible minorities.

Finally, some officers provided perspectives of hierarchical representation that questioned the validity of increasing the recruitment of visible minorities and the motives behind such policies.

"Much like through the ranks, you just don't want to see them all within the front lines because that says something too that we're up there and they're just front line workers. So you have to have [the representation] right throughout the service. It adds that trust factor too. It buys in that we're not just smoke and mirrors, but that we actually support it." (Officer #10)

"On the streets it's very important because the community has to see who the service is hiring. They are kind of hidden if they are up there in the service but it's important that the frontline officers who are considered the minority in the community...it is important to see that they are up there because that's where the power is and that's where the change needs to be. Right now it's not representative." (Officer #12)

The final two quotes reveal that corporate imagery and the utilization of diversity are closely coupled together. Because most of the visibility of the police occurs at the frontline level, the public are able to see firsthand the diversity of a police service - the frontline is what is most visible to the public. Moreover, most of police-public interactions occur at the frontline level which further reinforces a corporate image amongst the public. Thus, frontline patrol officers become an essential symbol of the police because they *are* the symbolic face of the organization and this emphasis impedes promotion to positions within the organization that are less visible to the public.

To summarize, it is argued by participants that diversity brings new perspectives as well as cultural understandings and sensitivities that are beneficial to police organizations and police-public interactions. There is also an underlying expectation that visible minority police officers will utilize their diversity as a tool to build bridges between police services and the communities they serve. Yet, the utilization of diversity within police organizations appears to be isolated towards specific roles and functions that seemingly deal with diverse communities, and often intelligence gathering. As such, visible minority police officers perceive challenges and organizational barriers that impede hierarchical advancement, especially at the higher ranks of policing. Because of organizational barriers and the systemic utilization of diversity, there is a lack of hierarchical representation amongst police services. Diversity is restricted to the frontline to create an *image* of diversity and this emphasis creates systemic barriers to advancement within the organization (while concealing systemic issues and barriers within the organization).

"I almost quit the first few years. I have gone through some incredible experiences" (Officer #10):

Living Diversity

In the exploration of organizational rhetoric, as discussed in the previous chapter, the embracing of diversity lies within the corporate image of policing. That is, policies and initiatives are adopted and shaped to fit with the demographic makeup of the community that is served by the police service. In this chapter, the belief by all participants is that the goals of recruitment should be to increase organizational diversity. Police organizations rely on public relations and corporate imagery as a strategy to combat the challenges associated with recruiting visible minorities. In this section, visible minority participants express their views of policing by sharing their experiences, often negative, of working as a visible minority police officer. The challenges faced by these particular officers bring light upon feelings of devaluation, heightened visibility, isolation, and stigmatization.

Heightened Visibility

A tension exists in the goal of 'community representation' and the philosophy of embracing diversity. There are specific challenges unique to those who do not necessarily represent the makeup of the community. The lack of organizational diversity and representation has amplified the visibility of ethnic minority police officers within the service and the community. The experiences of visible minority police officers reveal that many feel a sense of heightened visibility because they stand out more in a homogeneous environment.

> "Well first of all I needed a map to find the place. I get there and I'll never forget it. I'm like oh what did I get myself into and it's still predominantly farm country and a high [Caucasian] population. I remember a lot of times I walked in the beat people were staring at me. Back then there were no Black people period and for sure there were no Black police officers." (Officer #9)

> "I know when I go to calls being a Black officer, I know people go 'hey there's a Black officer' but I think they also go 'hey that's a Black officer but he's also a police

officer that knows what he is doing too' and I think that makes a big difference."
(Officer #3)

Officer #9 and #3 are not the only ones who share this sense of heightened visibility. Many

visible minority officers describe being more noticeable in the community where the public will

do 'triple takes' (Officer #12). The premise of these experiences is based on unaccustomed and

unfamiliar grounds where the lack of diversity at both the organization and community leads to

minority police officers being more noticeable.

Consequently, many minority police officers explain that the lack of diversity and

heightened visibility has led to greater scrutiny while on the job.

> "Realistically they [the public] can complain about you easier...*I have to use my
> discretion a lot differently* than everybody else because all they [the public] have
> to do is say that it was the Black female officer and they [the police service]
> would know who it is." (Officer #11, *emphasis added*)

> "*You live under a microscope*. Everybody knew who I was and so it made me a
> better officer in the long run because I couldn't hide behind my colour because if I
> screwed up they just had to say it was that Black officer...well we know who that
> is. If you screwed up and say oh it was a White officer...it's like ok we have 50 at
> that division, which one? I don't know...it was a White guy, right? As soon as they
> say it was a Black officer...yeah we know who he is you don't have to tell us
> anymore. *So knowing that there was no anonymity for me I did everything...there
> wasn't even a hint or no thought of doing anything but by the book*." (Officer #9,
> *emphasis added*)

The views offered by these minority police officers reveal the perception of a cultural

challenge that is experienced by officers of colour. The experiences of heightened visibility and

greater scrutiny not only exist when minority officers are hired onto the service (Officer #11 with

4 years' service) but well into their careers in policing (Officer #9 with 23 years' service).

Mistakes become more salient and minority officers are under continued pressure to police more

conservatively for fear of reprisal. Ultimately, the perceived cultural challenges faced by visible

minority police officers are exacerbated and made worse when there is a lack of diversity at both the organizational and community levels. Comparably, it is believed that there is less scrutiny for White colleagues and therefore more anonymity for prejudice and biased policing. Because of heightened visibility, minority police officers perceive themselves to be more careful and cautious in policing fairly than are Caucasian police officers.

Feeling Devalued

Many police officers' perceptions of their police service are that the lack of minority representation is harmful towards the individual experiences of minority police officers. Because of this lack of representation, many minority officers believe that their interpersonal characteristics and qualifications are devalued.

> "Part of the reason I think I got on was because I walked in and the minute I walked in they were like fat kids on a smarty with me because they were looking for females, looking for females of colour, it was that time where they were trying to add more diversity to their service... I think I was one of the first female of colour to come on the service - there weren't a lot of them." (Officer #10)

> "What people don't understand and some people when I was in [college] they were saying oh you're going to get hired because you're a Black guy but what they seem to forget is I also graduated at the top of my class. So people think 'oh you're Black you're automatic you could be an idiot and get hired'. But you got to look at it that way and even most of the officers that we hire here are White so I don't know why people are thinking that." (Officer #3)

The same perception exists for Officer #4:

> "Because there are very few visible minorities in the uppers, the perception is that they are trying to push visible minorities up. So anytime a Black male or female gets a rank that somebody else, say a White male wants, automatically the assumption is 'oh it's because she's female or just because she's Black'. They can't say 'oh she's more qualified than me'. They are pointing to the fact that 'oh it's got to be something', which is not necessarily the case, but a lot of people I guess maybe you

can feel better about yourself knowing it's not because they are better than me".
(Officer #4)

The references above reveal the perception of a systemic problem within the organization. Again, the underlying 'myth', as identified in the last chapter, is that visible minorities are ostensibly being hired more than White male applicants. Visible minority police officers believe that the emphasis on organizational diversity has led to a public perception which believes in policies and initiatives that are politically motivated. Unfortunately, many of the same minority officers believe that the over-emphasis on embracing diversity has led to less appreciation of individuality and further devalues any interpersonal skills, characteristics, and achievements. In effect, the organizational embracement of diversity coupled with a lack of representation is believed to be doing more harm than good as it takes away the legitimacy of visible minority police officers.

Stigmatization

The lack of organizational diversity becomes a challenging aspect for visible minority officers in the everyday function of the job. When asked if there exist any organizational support networks, many participants explained that their service did not have any internal support networks that are specific towards certain ethnic groups. Most participants attribute this towards a lack of organizational diversity for any kind of support group to exist.

> "There's a bit of a stigma attached to it. Although I think that they are great programs but I'm sure because of the stigma attached to maybe the LGBT community and officers...female officers, lesbian officers, who have for years had to sort of remain or keep their sexuality personal and in the closet, and now people are more open about their sexuality, sometimes people haven't become practiced at being open about their sexuality." (Officer #6)

> "It would be like somebody who I would describe it to guys and they sort of like tease me 'oh you're going to your women's training thing' and I say 'well it's like you going to a hockey game'." (Officer #8)

Even if minority officers desire to seek out support groups, they may feel a sense of

stigmatization. While support groups may be seen as a good outlet for providing support for

minority officers, some police officers may not want to be involved due to particular stigmas

attached and being "teased" (Officer #8) for attending such groups.

Isolation

As attention is shifted towards the cultural environment, challenges within the culture of

policing leads many minority officers to feel excluded and marginalized.

> "But you couldn't help but feel different. You couldn't help but feel...I don't think
> anybody meant to make me feel ostracized from the community or whatever that is
> but when you spend 12 hours and never see a person that looks like you...not even
> seeing another person of your colour and we work 12 hour shifts. You spend the
> whole entire day, go home, wake up, and go back to work. You go a week and not
> see another person that looks like me and that can affect the human psyche. That was
> a bit of a struggle for me." (Officer #9)

> "You have an officer in a police service where culturally he's isolated - it creates
> dynamics of exclusion and that officer is not going to stick around very long. On the
> other side of the coin, if an officer is in a place where he feels included it's much
> easier to retain that officer." (Officer #6)

Retention becomes an identified setback for visible minority officers. The culture of policing

creates an exclusive environment for individuals who are diverse and this effectively impacts the

motivation to stay at a particular service. Retention is thus an underlying challenge that deters the

progression of organizational diversity when diverse police officers feel excluded from their

cultural work environment.

According to some participants, sexism is a common lived experience within the culture

of policing:

"When I got on the first few years I struggled with myself because if I was driving out with a guy and even these days a lot of the guys are type A personalities. I had people tell me to not touch the radio, you're not driving the car. And you look at them and go really? It's 2014, really? *I almost quit the first few years. I have gone through some incredible experiences*. I was probably the only Black female there...the first four or five years I was there I worked with a partner who drove around and was whistling at women." (Officer #10, *emphasis added*)

"The other one was you hire women and then you see the difference in terms of being someone who is...they feel that they need to conform, to fit in to be one of the guys. So they will walk in a different way, they'll talk in a different, they'll all of a sudden become these really really tough as nail kind of people and they lose any sort of...like they don't want to be seen in any way shape or form as even being slightly feminine because they have to be so masculine so that they can fit in and they can be one of the guys. When you have younger police officers right now coming in who you know wouldn't mind having a nose piercing or wouldn't mind having nail polish that they are looked down upon and they're challenged and they're seen as ok why would you do that. Or if they wanted to have their hair long and just basically put it in the bottom like...go get your haircut. What appears to be simple things but it really has this kind of impact on...when you're talking about diversification, there's a lot of conflict." (Officer #1)

It appears that the culture of policing is characterized as a male dominated profession. Female officers may experience the struggles of fitting in with their male counterparts. In turn, female officers may attempt to conform to the social work environment as a way to be accepted into the male dominated culture of policing. As such, female officers are continuously challenged by a culture that is both critical and un-accepting of forms of femininity.

Furthermore, racism is identified as a systemic and cultural barrier in the culture of policing:

"Even with myself if I go out there and let's say my sergeant says ok you need to get a certain amount of tickets for today, and I'm not saying I don't get them because there was one day where I didn't get it and I believed I got disciplined for it. Five months later I hear that another colleague of mine was also told to go out there and give out tickets. I hear the next day at the parade that they [White colleagues] are joking about it and he only got like 7 and I got 6...I wasn't really pushing too hard for my day. So I'm sitting there thinking you're not going to get disciplined because you guys are joking about it. I got disciplined for it. And we're dealing with the same

sergeant, same staff. *And so I'm thinking there's a difference and he doesn't even see it, he doesn't even recognize that he's joking about this.*" (Officer #11, *emphasis added*)

The accounts offered by Officer #10 and Officer #11 illustrate that officers perceive a systemic problem to exist within the organization. Specifically, the police culture creates dynamics of exclusion where individuals outside of the culture are left isolated in the work environment. The culture of policing becomes a set of "built in behaviours" and "rites of passages" that are persistent in a White male dominated attitude (Officer #6). Because most of the accounts of gender and racial discrimination within the organization of policing are offered by minority participants, gender and race is uniquely important in the study of diversity and policing. The views offered by the study's female participants identify racial and sexual discrimination existent in policing.[3] Ultimately, the policing culture creates socio-cultural relationships that exclude rather than include which in turn lead to racial and gender discrimination.

Conclusion

The views expressed by participants are premised under a theme of a public policing image. The *rationalized institutional myth* (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) takes form when police organizations attempt to 'win people over'. Thus, police agencies attempt to maintain an appearance of diversity in the hopes of creating a corporate image that is attractive to ethnic minority communities. The motive to attract and hire more visible minorities serves the purpose of legitimizing and validating the organization. Again, the resulting effect is *window dressing* (Cashmore, 2002) where an appearance of positive action (through the recruitment of minorities) overshadows more intrinsic systemic and cultural issues within the organization of policing.

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[3] One of the limitations of this study is that there is a small sample size, especially in regards to female minority participants. Further research is needed in this area.

The experiences presented by minority police officers reveal deeply entrenched issues within the organization of policing that are both systemic and cultural. Visible minority officers feel devalued when there is a public perception that policies and initiatives are politically motivated to embrace diversity. Furthermore, the lack of organizational diversity has led to a heightened visibility which consequently leaves minority officers to feel scrutinized and under constant pressure to police conservatively. In addition, diverse officers feel isolated, stigmatized, and excluded due to an occupational culture that is predominantly male, White, Eurocentric, and heterosexual. In all, these negative experiences serve as challenges that diverse police officers face.

The focus of this chapter has been to examine exclusively the experiences of visible minority police officers as they live diversity in a non-diverse working environment. Thus, the accounts given by the participants of this study reveal existing issues within policing where discrimination, isolation, and exclusion are the by-products of a problematic cultural work environment. The rationale for minority recruitment and the rhetorical embracement of diversity seem to conceal the issues identified by minority police officers thus providing an image of a diversity-inclusive occupation. Little effort, however, is actually given to address the problems within the organization and the unique challenges minorities face in recruitment and retention.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

In summary, this study has adopted a social constructionist framework for understanding officers' perceptions and claims regarding diversity in policing. Recruitment trends over the last 15 years reveal the continued lack of representation in the composition of Canada's population. This finding is contrary to the popular belief that police services are aggressively diversifying. It is perhaps within this belief that a corporatized image embracing diversity has shaped the external perception of the organization. Moreover, police services seem to adopt diversity policies and initiatives in order to reflect 'community representation'. Serving as institutional myths, such actions are rationalized on the basis of maintaining appearance and validation (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Evident in the lack of representation in many police services, rhetorical philosophies of diversity and corporate imaging results in the ambiguous appearance of greater diversity than in actual reality. Because emphasis is placed upon the embracement of diversity, intrinsic issues within the organization are concealed in a *window dressing* effect (Cashmore, 2002). The perceptions and experiences of minority police officers reveal cultural and emotional barriers towards the recruitment and experiences of visible minorities. Furthermore, minority police officers are challenged by a male, white, dominated police culture. Such a culture has led to experiences of heightened visibility, feeling devalued, stigmatization, isolation, sexism, and racism. While policing continues to motivate itself upon rhetorical embracement of diversity, little effort is given to address the systemic and cultural issues existent within the organization.

One of the intentions of this study has been to inform readers. There have been few studies that focus on officers' perceptions of diversity *within* the police organization. As such, the theoretical contribution of this study progresses academic knowledge by focusing on officers' perceptions of organizational diversity with specific attention towards minority officers'

perceptions and experiences. Furthermore, few qualitative studies exist in Canadian research pertaining to policing and diversity. Given that this study has attempted to acquire an analytical understanding of police officers' perceptions, this study has provided a rich analysis into the ways claims are constructed under the context of organizational diversity. With a specific examination into the perceptions and experiences of minority police officers, this study also contributes to the literature on diversity within policing.

Challenges and tensions within the organization, as well as cultural barriers, are brought to light. The impact of this study towards policy implications is useful in highlighting the challenges and processes of recruitment and organizational diversity. One of the key findings of this study is that a gap exists between organizational philosophy and officer attitudes and perceptions of organizational diversity. In order to bridge this gap, there is potential for important practical insights that may assist with police recruitment and retention. For one, organizational standards must *move with the times*. It is imperative that standards be continually evaluated that satisfy the requirements of police work, as well as to be equitable to the continued changes in the demographical landscape of Canada. Recruitment strategies should also be shaped with an approach that acknowledges the potential cultural barriers of different ethnic communities. Engaging with, and investing time in, the younger generation of ethnic minorities may be useful in providing a larger pool of applicants in the future. Having a positive presence amongst visible minority communities, especially youths and children, may benefit and improve the overall public perception of policing and police work.

Because the organizational policing culture is a source of the challenges minority officers face, the simple argument for more recruitment and representation of police services will not necessarily address the tensions within policing. Rather, police services need to focus more

efforts on improving the internal legitimacy of diversity. Again, I use Officer #6 to illustrate this point:

> "Diversity starts at home so before we can go into the community and tell of praises of diversity and all things that we are doing, we need to get our house in order". (Officer #6)

The discrepancy between organizational rhetoric and the realities of tensions within the organization is detrimental to the overall body of policing. The experiences of minority police officers need to be more closely examined. I emphasize that more attention is increasingly needed in the ever changing dynamics of organizational work. Thus, bringing light upon the challenges experienced by minority officers may, in turn, lead to efforts towards a more thriving, inclusive, and supportive work environment. Police services will need to be prepared for the progressive change in the composition of its police officers.

Although I have listed the theoretical and practical contributions, I do acknowledge the limitations of the study. The descriptive analysis of the trends of recruitment over the last 15 years serves to inform readers of the realities of police employment. The data set, however, is limited in providing basic descriptive analysis and therefore cannot produce inferential statistics. Because I was not provided with raw data, more statistical techniques could not have been employed to determine statistical differences between years and diversity. It would be useful for future research to narrow recruitment trends further by taking into account specific police services. By analyzing more specific recruitment trends amongst services, this will provide an understanding of community makeup and its correlation with organizational diversity. Further, all participants believe that organizational diversity benefits the community. Future research should examine the impact and effectiveness of organizational diversity on specific communities that are served by the police.

It is also acknowledged that the study has a small sample size (N=13). In particular, there are few female minority police officers represented in this study. It is suggested that future areas of research consider a stronger sample of female minority police officers. Similarly, the study's focus on organizational diversity mainly centred upon race. There has been limited data in this study that speaks to officers' perceptions of diversity with respect to sex and sexual orientation. Nonetheless, the data available has been important in highlighting future areas of research. As such, academic attention towards other facets of diversity such as sex and sexual orientation as well as age and education may be useful in understanding officers' perceptions and experiences of diversity at all levels.

The present study is unique in incorporating, descriptive statistical analysis and semi-structured interviews, as well as the use of participant observation for providing a contextualized backdrop that informed the interviews of police officers. The use of this methodology has provided a greater contextual understanding of diversity and a richer analysis of the data. By seeing through the eyes of those studied, we can better understand the meanings people attribute to their world. We can now more fully understand the intricacies of systemic and cultural barriers that effect the recruitment and experiences of minority police officers. Therefore, bold and concerted efforts amongst police services are needed in order to address the continued 'tensions' that diversity is told to have.

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