THE CAMPBELL COLLABORATION

Title registration for a review proposal: Legitimacy policing's impact on crime and disorder in communities and places

Submitted to the Coordinating Group of:
X   Crime and Justice
___   Education
___   Social Welfare
___   Other

Plans to co-register:
X   No
___   Yes   ___ Cochrane   ___ Other
___   Maybe

TITLE OF THE REVIEW

Legitimacy policing's impact on crime and disorder in communities and places

BACKGROUND

Briefly describe and define the problem

The extant criminological literature clearly shows that building police legitimacy in communities and places is important for increasing citizen levels of compliance, cooperation and satisfaction (see Jackson, Bradford, Stanko, & Hohl, 2012). A growing body of research indicates that when police are viewed as respectful, concerned, and possessing legitimate authority, citizens are more likely to hold favourable attitudes toward police and comply with the law. Increasing the perceptions of police legitimacy within the community may both reduce community levels of crime and increase the willingness of the community to control and prevent crime (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). When police are perceived as legitimate, citizens feel an obligation to voluntarily comply with their directives, and it is suggested that the indirect effects include a reduction in crime, reoffending and social disorder (Mazerolle, Bennett, Davis, Sargeant, & Manning, 2013). Our proposed review aims to assess whether or not interventions aimed at promoting police legitimacy reduce the levels of crime and disorder in communities and places.

Citizen perceptions of police legitimacy are not simply a reflection of police effectiveness in reducing crime (Braga & Weisburd, 2010). Scholars show that the primary pathway to promoting legitimacy is through the use of procedural justice (Hinds & Murphy, 2007; Reisig, Bratton, & Gertz, 2007; Tyler, 2001; Tyler, 2004). Tyler (2004, p. 91) argues that "the legitimacy of authorities and institutions is rooted in public views about the appropriateness of the manner in which the police exercise their authority." The procedural

justice model describes the way in which the police can exercise this authority in a fair and just way through both the "quality of treatment" and the "quality of the decision making process" (Reisig et al., 2007, p. 1006). Legitimacy policing extends fair and respectful treatment not only to law abiding citizens, but to all citizens including offenders, even in high crime areas (Braga & Weisburd, 2010). In recent research procedural justice is thus operationalised as the way in which police treat citizens and the fairness of the decisions made (Reisig et al., 2007; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). Procedural justice, as described in the literature, typically comprises four essential components: citizen participation in the proceedings prior to an authority reaching a decision, perceived neutrality of the authority in their decision making, whether the authority showed dignity and respect throughout the interaction, and whether the authority conveyed trustworthy motives (Goodman-Delahunty, 2010; Tyler, 2008; Tyler & Huo, 2002; Tyler & Murphy, 2011).

In a recent systematic review on legitimacy policing, Mazerolle and her colleagues (2013) found that procedurally just dialogue during a police-citizen encounter is more important for promoting citizen compliance and cooperation with police than is the particular vehicle of the police intervention. They found that, whilst police legitimacy interventions do not directly affect public perceptions of legitimacy, these interventions increase satisfaction and confidence in police, compliance and cooperation, and perceptions of procedural justice, as well as effecting a marginal reduction in individual level reoffending (Mazerolle et al., 2013). In practical terms, this means that police can achieve positive changes in citizen attitudes to police through adopting procedurally justice dialogue as a component part of any type of police intervention. Figure 1 (below) summarises the theories of the causes and consequences of police legitimacy, and demonstrates five pathways to achieving perceptions of police legitimacy. Following Mazerolle et al. (2013), this review will focus on the procedural justice pathway to the creation of legitimacy. Figure 1 also shows the theorised pathway from procedural justice to the indirect outcomes of reductions in crime, reoffending and social disorder.
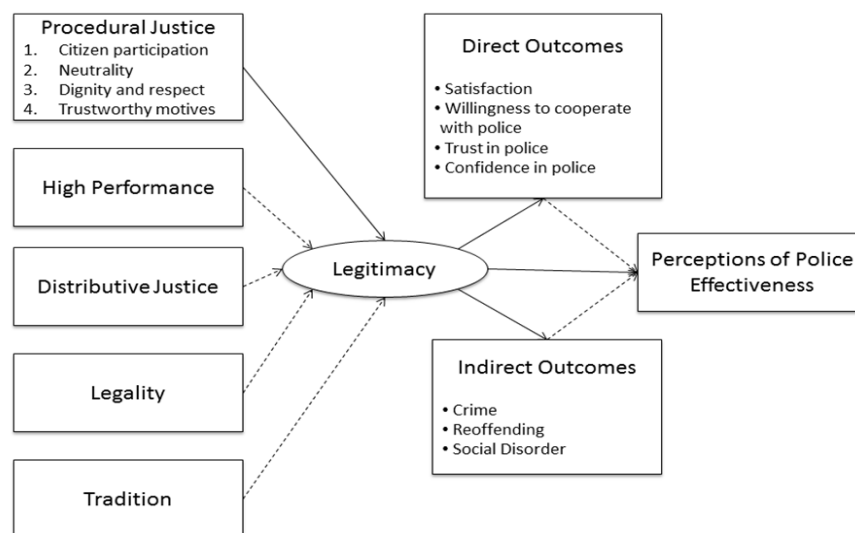
Figure 1. Theoretical model of police legitimacy process (Mazerolle et al., 2013)

Research suggests that police legitimacy increases both citizen compliance and the willingness to cooperate with police (see, for example, Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2002; Tyler, 2004; Tyler & Fagan, 2008) and that procedurally just police-citizen encounters have the capacity to control crime and disorder problems in communities, neighbourhoods and beats (see Jackson et al., 2012). To date, however, no systematic review exists that explores the impact of legitimacy policing on the capacity of police to reduce or control crime and/or

disorder. The review by Mazerolle and her colleagues (2013) only included outcome measures at individual level perceptions of police, or of self-reports of crime and re-offending. Their review did not examine studies that included outcome measures at geographic levels of aggregation, such as communities, neighbourhoods, places or police beats. As such, this proposed review aims to assess whether or not interventions that aim to promote police legitimacy or contain key elements of procedural justice reduce crime and disorder at an aggregated geographic level.

Briefly describe and define *the population*

This review focuses specifically on the community or place level impact of police legitimacy interventions. Our systematic review takes a broad perspective on the unit of analysis that comprises a "community or place"; however, we follow Bowers and colleagues (2011) in defining place as a local geographic area that is smaller than a city or a region. We will include legitimacy policing interventions where the impact is measured at macro places such as communities and neighbourhoods, as well as micro places such as buildings, streets, and retail areas. Our population of interest therefore is a geographic place, measured as, for example, a block, beat, or neighbourhood.

We will consider interventions conducted in any country or region, and apply no restriction to the location of the interventions. We recognise that a differential impact of police legitimacy interventions may be demonstrated at varying degrees of geographic aggregation, and across different regions. We also recognise that the impact of an intervention specifically targeted at a geographic place may be different to a more general intervention. To assess whether this is the case, subgroup analyses will be performed during the synthesis stage of the analysis. In our research synthesis, we aim to assess the differential impact of interventions at macro and micro levels of geography.

Briefly describe and define *the intervention*

We recognise that legitimacy policing interventions may take many forms; however, consistent with the findings from the Mazerolle et al. (2013) review, we agree that a procedurally just "dialogue" must be identified as the key characteristic of police-citizen encounters that cultivates public perceptions of legitimacy (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2012). In order to ensure that the intent of the intervention was to enhance public perceptions of police legitimacy, we will only include interventions that specifically state this as their aim, or where the dialogue of the intervention includes at least one of the four elements of procedural justice: participation, neutrality, dignity/respect, and trustworthy motives.

Interventions may include, for example, community policing interventions such as beat policing, community meetings and reassurance policing; problem-oriented policing strategies; school-based policing interventions; police training strategies; restorative justice conferencing interventions; and organisational innovations such as the creation of police oversight procedures. It is plausible that the diffusion of benefit from some interventions may be greater than for others; therefore, subgroup analysis will be performed for the different intervention strategies identified in the review.

Examples of specific legitimacy policing interventions that are eligible for inclusion in this review include: the Suburban crime prevention team (Segrave & Collins, 2005), the Local Management of Community Safety project (Singer, 2004) and the Hollenbeck initiative (Tita et al, 2003). The evaluations for each of these interventions were quasi-experimental and included measures of recorded crime as an outcome.

The Suburban crime prevention team (SCPT) was a proactive community policing intervention deployed in Canberra, Australia, that embedded two specialist community policing officers in a target neighbourhood and tasked them with identifying and responding

to community needs (Segrave & Collins, 2005). Improving the community's perceptions of police legitimacy was central to the intervention: two of the key objectives of the SCPT program were to increase community satisfaction with the police and to improve police-stakeholder relations.

The Local Management of Community Safety (LMCS) project was a reassurance policing project conducted in Milton Keyes, UK (Singer, 2004). Reassurance policing aims to increase police-citizen communication, perceptions of safety and security, as well as satisfaction and confidence in police, by deploying a police presence that is visible, accessible and familiar (Singer, 2004). The intervention was a partnership between district and parish councils and local police that included community representation and beat policing.

The Hollenbeck initiative was a replication of Operation Ceasefire, a community coalition aimed at reducing gang-based gun violence, implemented in Los Angeles, USA (Tita, 2003). The intervention consisted of both prevention services and legal enforcement. Whilst this intervention did not specifically aim to increase perceptions of police legitimacy, it utilised key elements of procedural justice: participation, neutrality, dignity/respect, and trustworthy motives. Central to the intervention was a clear message to gang members that emphasised procedural justice, in which both police and community partners broadcast the fact that the program would be implemented, detailed the consequences of violence, as well as options available to gang members who wished to desist from violent behaviour.

Outcomes: What are the intended effects of the intervention?

The immediate aim of police legitimacy interventions is that the public will perceive the police as a legitimate authority and will be more likely to cooperate and comply with police directives. This review, however, focuses its attention on the indirect benefits of legitimacy policing: changes in levels or rates of crime and disorder as measured at the community or place level of analysis. We aim to assess whether or not citizen perceptions of police legitimacy actually lead to a reduction in crime and disorder.

The primary outcome of interest for our review is crime and/or disorder, measured at various geographic units of aggregation that are smaller than a city or region. Preliminary examinations indicate that studies may report outcomes including reported total crime rates, reported violent crime and/or reported arrests. We will code all outcomes related to aggregated crime and/or disorder, and perform subgroup analysis at the meta-analytic stage of the review.

OBJECTIVES

This review aims to synthesise published and unpublished empirical evidence on legitimacy policing interventions, and assess the impact of these interventions on reported crime, measured at the aggregated community or place level of analysis. In doing so, we will examine whether or not this impact varies by the type of crime, level of geography or the specific type of legitimacy policing intervention.

METHODOLOGY

Inclusion criteria

Interventions must either (1) state that they explicitly aim to improve or enhance police legitimacy or (2) explicitly use at least one element of procedural justice in dialogue with citizens.

Whilst the concepts of legitimacy and procedural justice have been primarily developed since 1990, earlier work underpinning this body of literature began to appear in the 1980s. Therefore we will include studies from 1980 to 2012.

The units of analysis will be any geographic place (e.g. block, beat, building, school or neighbourhood or community) that is at a smaller level of geographic aggregation than a city or a region.

There will be no global geographic limitations for inclusion.

Studies must report at least one geographically-aggregated measure of crime or disorder.

Studies must use a quantitative evaluation design with a valid comparison group. We will include randomised trials, natural experiments, time-series designs, regression discontinuity designs, and any quasi-experimental design with a matched or non-matched comparison group, including matched comparison groups, propensity score matched comparisons, and post-hoc statistically matched comparisons.

We will include evaluations where the comparison group is "business as usual", or no intervention, but not where two treatments are compared with no baseline "business as usual" comparison, as these types of design are highly subject to bias.

To be eligible for inclusion in a meta-analysis, the study must report an effect size, or provide sufficient detail such that an effect size can be calculated.

Exclusion criteria

Studies where the unit of analysis is the individual will be excluded from the review.

Studies where the unit of analysis is the entire city, state, region or nation will be excluded from the review.

Studies without a valid comparison group will be excluded from the review.

Method of synthesis

If the systematic search results in the extraction of suitable data for meta-analysis, we will use meta-analysis to synthesise the results of the included evaluations. We will use random-effects models to combine study results, and weight the effect sizes by the inverse of their variance. We will present forest plots of the effect sizes and their 95% confidence intervals.

We will examine sources of heterogeneity in the intervention impact, including intervention strategy, location, implementing agency; population under study; whether the intervention was geographically focused; and evaluation quality, using subgroup analysis (analogue to the ANOVA) for categorical outcomes and meta-regression for continuous predictors. We will test and adjust for publication bias using a range of approaches suggested in Rothstein, Sutton, and Borenstein (2005); depending on the data collected, this may include funnel plots and trim-and-fill analysis.

We will use Comprehensive Meta-Analysis software for calculations and production of figures.

SOURCES OF SUPPORT

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None of the authors have any known conflicts of interest.

REQUEST SUPPORT

No additional specialist support is required.

AUTHOR(S) REVIEW TEAM

Lead reviewer:
Name: Angela Higginson
Title: Dr
Affiliation: The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research
Address: Campbell Road, St Lucia
City, State, Province or County: Queensland
Postal Code: 4067
Country: Australia
Phone: +617 3365 6307
Email: a.higginson@uq.edu.au

Co-author(s):
Name: Lorraine Mazerolle
Title: Professor
Affiliation: The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research
Address: Campbell Road, St Lucia
City, State, Province or County: Queensland
Postal Code: 4067
Country: Australia
Phone: +617 3346 7877
Email: l.mazerolle@uq.edu.au

Name: Elise Sargeant
Title: Dr
Affiliation: The University of Queensland Institute for Social Science Research
Address: Campbell Road, St Lucia
City, State, Province or County: Queensland
Postal Code: 4067

Country: Australia
Phone: +617 3365 6829
Email: e.sargeant@uq.edu.au

ROLES AND RESPONSIBLIITIES

- Content: Angela Higginson, Lorraine Mazerolle, Elise Sargeant

- Systematic review methods: Angela Higginson

- Statistical analysis: Angela Higginson

- Information retrieval: Angela Higginson

PRELIMINARY TIMEFRAME

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