Association Between Law Enforcement and Media Portrayals

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Background

In recent years, there has been a strong development of anti-police movements based upon news shown throughout media outlets, for example, on television or on social media websites. While some may disagree that the media has affected their view of law enforcement, people tend to believe what they see or hear within the media.

Study Purpose

The study was conducted to find relationships between how the media portrays law enforcement and how the media can affect real perceptions of police.

Methods

A convenience sample of surveys among Facebook and in three classrooms on Morehead State University's campus were utilized. The total surveys were combined to make 185 respondents. The survey was fourteen questions long and all questions pertained to the amount of hours people watch television or browse social media, how much they trusted the media, and the impact of media on the respondent's perception of law enforcement.

Results

39.5% Received Ticket from Law Enforcement

74.6% Have/ knew someone arrested

77.3% Stated they did **NOT** have a bad experience with law enforcement.
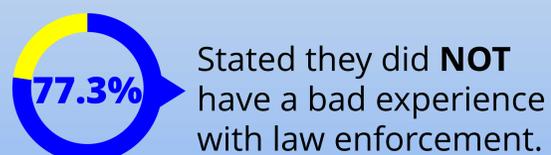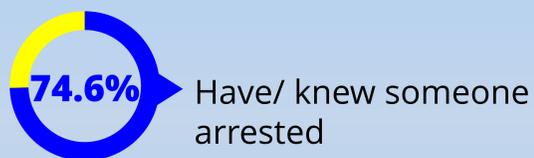
The majority of respondents were between ages 17-21. This contributes to the fact that more of the younger generations are being influenced by what they see in the media. Social media websites and TV news outlets are helping to develop opinions of its younger viewers.

Age:
■ 17-21 ■ 22-28 ■ 29-34 ■ 35+

3.2%
11.9%
17.8%
67%
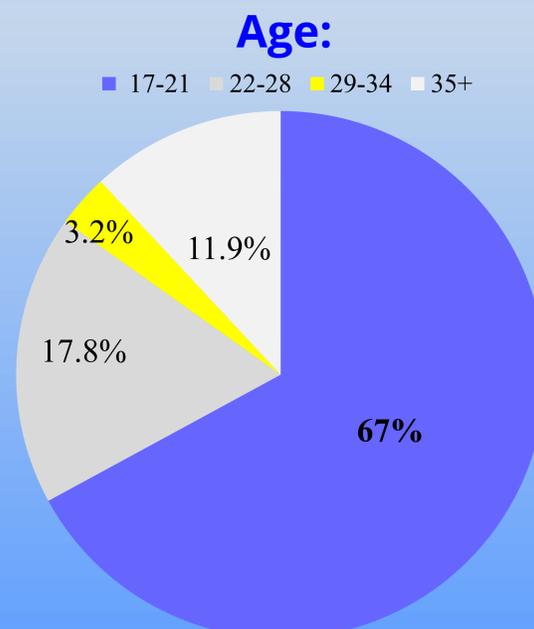
Respondents showed that **53%** of them were on social media websites **1-4 hours** per day.
The survey also showed that **79.5%** of respondents watched TV **1-4 hours** per day.

Of all the respondents who spent multiple hours on social media or watching TV, **11.9%** of them said that they trusted **MOST** of what they were viewing and **63.8%** of respondents said that they only trusted **SOME** of what they were viewing.
The importance of this finding was that, while many say they only believe some of what they see in the media, **89.7%** of respondents believed that **based upon the media African Americans have higher arrest rates.**