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Community College Students' Perceptions of Law Enforcement

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Adult and Lifelong Learning

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to extend our understanding of public perception towards law enforcement. Students from three different Kansas community colleges were surveyed about their perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism, and what might impact those perceptions.

A total of 159 community college students responded to the survey. The majority of the respondents were female (78%), and Caucasian (77.4%). Respondent's age represented the following percentage breakdowns: 29.6% being 18-19 years old, 27.7% being 20-24 years old, and 30.8% being 25-34. Resulting in 88% of respondents being between the ages of 18-34 years old.

Mean and standard deviation statistical procedures were calculated to determine the overall perception of law enforcement effectiveness ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.800$) and professionalism ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 0.708$). The categories of race and gender were further examined using mean and standard deviation procedures. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedure was used to analyze the data, with no significant differences in mean perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness by gender and race ($F(1, 150) = 0.52$, $P = 0.4712$) or in mean perceptions of law enforcement professionalism ($F(1, 149) = 2.40$, $P = 0.1231$). A Chi-Square test was used to determine there was no relationship difference between media consumption and gender ($\chi^2(3, N = 158) = 2.7478$, $p = 0.4322$) or media consumption and race ($\chi^2(3, N = 155) = 2.5875$, $p = 0.4597$). However, results did indicate a significant difference related to the total number of hours of media consumption and the perception of whether it was positive towards police ($\chi^2(15, N = 159) = 70.86$, $p < .0001$).

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	6
Purpose of the Study	8
Significance of the Study	9
Theoretical Framework	11
Social Construct Theory	11
Cultivation Theory.....	12
Social Learning Theory	13
Summary.....	14
Limitations and Delimitations.....	15
Definitions of Terms	16
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	18
General Perceptions of Police	18
Determinants of Perceptions of Police.....	20
Race as a Determinant	21
Age Factors.....	23
Gender	25
Contact With Police.....	26
Influence of Education.....	27
Other Determinants.....	29
Media Consumption	30
Media Consumption and Race.....	32
Media Consumption and Age	33
Media Consumption and Education	34
Media Consumption and Contact with Police	35
Media Consumption and Crime-Related Programming	38
Summary of Literature Review	40
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	42
Overview	42
Population and Sample.....	43
Research Design.....	47

Research Variables	47
Data Collection Instrument	48
Data Collection Methodology	51
Data Analysis Methodology	52
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS	54
Objective One Results	56
Objective Two Results	59
Objective Three Results	61
Part One Results	62
Part Two Results	62
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION	65
Discussion of Results	65
Community College Students' Perceptions of Law Enforcement	66
Community College Students' Perceptions of Law Enforcement: Race and Gender	67
Community College Students' Media Consumption and Perceptions of Law Enforcement	68
Limitations and Delimitations	70
Suggestions for Future Research	71
Conclusion	72
REFERENCES	74
APPENDIX	81
APPENDIX A: IRB Exempt Approval Letter	81
APPENDIX B: Vera Institute Approval	82
APPENDIX C: Letter of Invitation	83
APPENDIX D: Informed Consent	84
APPENDIX E: Survey Questions	87

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Police Officer Ratio per City Population.....	5
Table 2. Ten Most Costly U.S. Civil Disorders	10
Table 3. Population of College A Student’s Race/Ethnicity for Academic Year 2018	43
Table 4. Population of College B Student’s Race/Ethnicity for Academic Year 2018	44
Table 5. Population of College C Student’s Race/Ethnicity for Academic Year 2018	45
Table 6. Population of College A Student’s Age for Academic Year 2018	46
Table 7. Population of College B Student’s Age for Academic Year 2018	46
Table 8. Population of College C Student’s Age for Academic Year 2018	47
Table 9. Respondents’ Race/Ethnicity	54
Table 10. Respondents’ Ages	55
Table 11. Respondents’ Education Levels.....	56
Table 12. Respondents’ Perceptions of Police Effectiveness by Gender and Race.....	57
Table 13. Respondents’ Perceptions of Police Professionalism by Gender and Race.....	57
Table 14. Respondents’ Perception of Police Effectiveness by Gender and Race Separated	58
Table 15. Respondents’ Perceptions of Police Professionalism by Gender and Race Separated.	58
Table 16. One-Way ANOVA for Perception of Law Enforcement Effectiveness by Race	59
Table 17. One-Way ANOVA for Perception of Law Enforcement Effectiveness by Gender	60
Table 18. One-Way ANOVA for Perception of Law Enforcement Professionalism by Race	60
Table 19. One-Way ANOVA for Perception of Law Enforcement Professionalism by Gender	61
Table 20. Respondents’ Media Consumption (hours per day) by Gender and Race Separated ...	62
Table 21. The Relationship between Media Consumption and Respondent Perception of it being Positive Police Media.	63
Table 22. Chi-Square of Media Consumption for Gender.....	64
Table 23. Chi-Square of Media Consumption for Race	64

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Daily media exposure among children 8-18, by Race and Ethnicity	33
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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

“Every society gets the kind of criminal it deserves. What is equally true is that every community gets the kind of law enforcement it insists on.” Robert Kennedy

Law enforcement in the United States is provided by more than 17,300 diverse federal, state, and local agencies that protect and serve our citizens (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016). Though public opinion of law enforcement agencies remains positive, confidence levels vary by demographic variables such as age, race and ethnicity, education, income, and location. Publicized events have negatively affected public confidence levels in law enforcement officers and activities. The names Rodney King, Freddie Gray, Michael Brown, and Trayvon Martin may spark emotions that may directly influence the level of trust in law enforcement officers in the United States.

The primary purpose of the criminal justice system is to provide a proper balance between order and liberty (Zalman, 2011). In this country, officers have traditionally served the public with high levels of professionalism and trust. The profession itself was established in 1829 as a noble career with high standards and integrity. Sir Robert Peel, who established the first organized police force in London in 1829 and is identified as the “Founder of Modern Policing,” outlined nine Peelian Principles for effective policing. The majority of his principles are established with consideration of public perception and trust.

Peelian Principle 1 - *“The basic mission for which the police exist is to prevent crime and disorder.”*

Peelian Principle 2 - *“The ability of the police to perform their duties is dependent upon public approval of police actions.”*

Peelian Principle 3 - *“Police must secure the willing co-operation of the public in voluntary observance of the law to be able to secure and maintain the respect of*

the public.”

Peelian Principle 4 - *“The degree of co-operation of the public that can be secured diminishes proportionately to the necessity of the use of physical force.”*

Peelian Principle 5 - *“Police seek and preserve public favour not by catering to the public opinion but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to the law.”*

Peelian Principle 6 - *“Police use physical force to the extent necessary to secure observance of the law or to restore order only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient.”*

Peelian Principle 7 - *“Police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police; the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.”*

Peelian Principle 8 - *“Police should always direct their action strictly towards their functions and never appear to usurp the powers of the judiciary.”*

Peelian Principle 9 - *“The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it.”*

Since Sir Robert Peel first modernized a police force, agencies have evolved and developed through a number of stages. Distinct eras in the evolution of policing supported and reinforced the societal climate of those time periods and include the political era (1840-1920), reform era (1920-1970), and the community era (1970-current) (Lee, 2018). Roles and

responsibilities of police officers have developed accordingly and have transitioned from a primary focus on crime fighting to a position that encompasses responsibilities such as emergency services, community outreach, and crime prevention. While responsibilities and expectations have increased, staffing and budgeting have decreased.

Police services have traditionally been based on a level of personal judgment and decision making by an officer. This discretionary power has been challenged by the public when decisions made by law enforcement officers are perceived as unethical or officers are involved in misconduct. From 1991 through 2019, a number of occurrences have led to more negative perceptions of police officers. The Rodney King beating in 1991 and LAPD corruption in the Rampart Scandal of the 1990s damaged public confidence in law enforcement. The civilian deaths of victims such as Trayvon Martin in 2012, Michael Brown in 2014, and Freddie Gray in 2015 may have further deteriorated confidence and trust in the police.

Just one high-profile event can seriously affect the image of a police department, and media coverage of that event can change attitudes toward law enforcement officers (Weitzer, 2002). After Rodney King and the Rampart Scandal, there were mass protests; many individuals were injured, communities were destroyed, and significant costs were imposed on local communities and society in general. The impact of the Rodney King incident on citizen attitudes toward police was studied by J.R. Lasely in 1994. Lasley (1994) reported that perceptions of police fairness were significantly lower and longer lasting among African-Americans than any other respondent group. Just after the incident, Jefferis et al. (1997) stated that “history has demonstrated that, when relationships between police and minority communities are strained, a single critical incident can have a deleterious effect” (p. 391). Further demonstrating the validity of that statement, Michael Brown’s death in Ferguson, Missouri, set off mass protests in that city

and the surrounding St. Louis area. Similar to the Rodney King protests, individuals were injured, communities were destroyed, and significant costs were imposed on society. Freddie Gray's death in Baltimore continued to provoke national protests and riots.

Major incidents, political climate, and media have brought forth issues with police conduct, perceptions, and community-police relations. Negative perceptions have negative effects on police departments, including diminished interest in the profession. Many departments struggle to fill vacant positions. As of July 2018, the Chicago Police Department was 1,000 officers under their authorized staffing level. The Dallas Police Association estimates the Dallas Police Department is 800 officers under the budgeted allotment. "Protests and Holiday Strain Thin DPD" (Young, 2018) outlines law enforcement concerns about staffing levels, quoting Officer Nick Novello as saying, "you no longer have a viable policing function in Dallas, Texas," and later as "what has gone from 'not viable' to 'impossible' and hence, potentially deadly, to those of us in patrol and to those we protect and serve."

In 2018, Netflix released their documentary series, *Flint Town*. Flint Police Department in Michigan is another police department that was greatly understaffed and under-budgeted. In one episode, the sergeant on duty advises there are only four cars on the road for 100,000 people and that the call volume is rising quickly. He states they will, "never get this caught up," and begins reading the long list of current calls pending (Peeler et al., 2018). The series focused on the underfunded police budget, the lack of available officers, the strain on community relations, the community's perception of the department, and the strain on police officers working under those conditions. At the time of filming *Flint Town*, the Flint Police Department had 98 officers to provide services to nearly 35 square miles of city boundary and a population of 102,000. Table one shows the average officer per 10,000 population for this town size is 15.9; Flint has 10

officers for every 10,000 residents. Flint Police Department was 60 officers shy of the national average. This issue is of nationwide concern. In a 2018 *Washington Post* article, journalist Tom Jackman stated that 66 percent of police departments had a decrease in applications for police officers, noting that even the FBI had a drop from an average 21,000 applications per year to 13,000 in 2017. The total number of full-time sworn officers has dropped since 2000, even as the U.S. population has risen (Jackman, 2018). The nationwide shortage has led departments to find new ways to market and recruit potential officers. The Seattle Police Department posted billboards in Chicago, Detroit, and Indianapolis to recruit officers, and other agencies have followed similar tactics with an offer of sign-on bonuses.

Table 1. Police Officer Ratio per City Population.

Jurisdiction Population	Average Officers Per10k Population	Average Total Personnel Per 10k Population	Number of Departments
25,000-50,000	17.0	21.2	773
50,000-100,000	16.1	20.7	433
100,000-200,000	15.9	20.9	171
200,000-500,000	18.7	24.5	76
500,000+	24.3	30.8	32
All over 25,000	16.8	21.4	1,485

Source: Governing calculations of 2016 FBI UCR data.

Mass media availability during this era has advanced dramatically and often covers sensational, negative cases of police behavior. The current political climate in 2019 had changed the scope of police officers serving the public and enforcing laws (Downey, 2019). More consent decrees, such as the ones in Ferguson and Baltimore, were being issued for police departments restricting what type of and how enforcement takes place. Officers are often fearful of being sued for taking a law enforcement action; this action is often referred to as de-policing.

With rapid advancements in media technology, videos of officer are being recorded and posted to mass media sights regularly.

The combination of police-community tension, a nationwide shortages of officers, and mass media coverage of sensational interactions between the police and community members continues to plague communities. Demographic variables of race, ethnicity, and gender may exacerbate the perception problems of officers and their actions, which only add to the problems identified above. Other variables, such as education and age, may also influence the way the public views the police, and study of these may lead to a better understanding of police-community tensions.

Statement of the Problem

Police officers in the United States protect and serve the citizenry of this country. Public confidence in the law enforcement community is necessary for safety and well-being in our society, and when that confidence falters it must be restored. Law enforcement in 2019 finds itself in a climate of mistrust, amidst calls for reform and protests because of incidents in recent years.

In 2017, the Pew Research Center published results of two of the largest surveys of American law enforcement ever administered (Morin et al., 2017). Conducted largely in response to the number of deaths of black Americans during encounters with police officers, Pew researchers surveyed 8,000 police officers in 2017 and over 4,500 citizens in 2016 to identify problems with perception of law enforcement (Morin et al., 2017). Their research provided a great deal of insight into the differences between how police officers view their jobs and their actions versus the way citizens view them. Morin et al. (2017) provided a broad overview of the commonalities and differences between police and public opinion on a variety of contentious

issues that currently face law enforcement. Highlights below show the biggest issues identified in the survey; race is the defining characteristic of most of the issues.

- Fatal encounters between police officers and blacks. White and Latino officers largely view the deaths of blacks at the hand of police as limited incidents, but sixty percent of the public and fifty-seven percent of black officers believe the incidents point to a deeper problem between police and blacks. Eighty-seven percent of officers in large departments and sixty-one percent in small departments say police interactions with blacks have become more intense. Eighty-six percent of officers in large departments say they are less willing to stop and question those they believe to be suspicious, but only fifty-four percent of those in small departments feel the same (Morin et al., 2017).
- Fatal attacks on officers. Eighty-six percent of police officers believe the public does not understand the risks to their safety from attacks such as ambushes, but eighty-three percent of adults say they do (Morin et al., 2017).
- Officer shortages. Eighty-six percent of police officers report there are not enough officers in their department to police their communities effectively; they also report the job being more difficult and challenging because of the shortages (Morin et al., 2017).
- Use of body cameras. The use of body cameras was more supported by the public (93%) compared to officers (66%), but both the public and officers support the use of body cameras by a majority (Morin et al., 2017).
- Cause of protests. Officers (92%) and the public (79%) believe anti-police bias was a reason why protests occurred (Morin et al., 2017).

Media coverage of police actions is another concern in the perception of police actions.

Block (1971) found there was a rise in negative attitudes toward police officers with media

coverage of police use of force abuse and crime. In addition to media coverage, fast-growing development of technology has allowed more recordings to surface on unregulated media platforms. Unregulated platforms such as Deepfake have created new problems because the media may not contain factual information, but it is disseminated in high speed across multiple outlets. Deepfake allows Artificial Intelligence to superimpose faces with videos so that a recording is available of something that never happened (Ellis, 2018). To date, these cases have been deemed as protected under the First Amendment. Mbuba (2010) stated, “possible exposure to crucial data from the media, which itself is mostly skewed toward sensation and emotional appeal instead of objectivity” (p. 211), outlines a significant problem for law enforcement and community relations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore college students’ perception of law enforcement.

The specific objectives of the study was to:

1. Describe college students’ perception of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism.
2. Describe the difference, if any, between college students’ perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender.
3. Explore whether or not a significant difference exists in college students’ perceptions toward law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on media consumption.

Significance of the Study

While three of the top four most costly civil riots were police-related, the data in Table 2 do not take into account the cost of more recent riots such as those in St. Louis after the death of Michael Brown and in Baltimore after the death of Freddie Gray.

The details laid out in an article written in 2004 by Victor Matheson and Robert Baade, “Race and Riots: A Note on the Economic Impact of the Rodney King Riots,” demonstrates the economic impact far beyond just police community relations. Matheson and Baade (2004) reported that Los Angeles has, after 10 years, started recovering economically from the Rodney King riots which resulted in \$4.9 billion in forgone sales and \$171 million in lost revenues through 2002. The researchers suggest that cities struggling with race relations should consider the economic cost of failure (Matheson & Baade, 2004).

Table 2. Ten Most Costly U.S. Civil Disorders

In estimated insurance losses

Location & Date	Event	Cost of claims at the time	In 2013 dollars
Los Angeles <i>April 29-May 4, 1992</i>	After acquittals of police officers in Rodney King beating.	\$775 million	\$1.3 billion
Los Angeles <i>Aug. 11-17, 1965</i>	The Watts riots.	\$44 million	\$325 million
Detroit <i>July 23, 1967</i>	After a police raid on an unlicensed bar.	\$42 million	\$293 million
Miami <i>May 17-19, 1980</i>	After police were acquitted in death of Arthur McDuffie.	\$65 million	\$184 million
Washington <i>April 4-9, 1968</i>	After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.	\$24 million	\$161 million
New York <i>July 13-14, 1977</i>	During the New York City blackout.	\$28 million	\$108 million
Newark, N.J. <i>July 12, 1967</i>	Riots in which more than two dozen people died.	\$15 million	\$105 million
Baltimore <i>April 6-9, 1968</i>	After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.	\$14 million	\$94 million
Chicago <i>April 4-11, 1968</i>	After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.	\$13 million	\$87 million
New York <i>April 4-11, 1968</i>	After the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.	\$4 million	\$27 million

Source: Insurance Information Institute, Tribune reporting

It is also significant to research perceptions and develop more adequate methods to keep police and community relationships strong. Development of strategies and programs that bridge community and police interaction can offer numerous advantages to the public, including supporting educational platforms that facilitate future police applications. A PoliceOne article written in 2018 by Jordan Shearer reported that applicants for law enforcement jobs are decreasing nationwide, and that departments receive ten or less applicants for positions that a decade earlier would have produced hundreds of applications (Shearer, 2018). Verga et al., 2016, said “These findings serve to highlight [the] issue of the importance of attitudes toward

police and support attempts by police departments to improve relations between the police and the community. There is little doubt that resident support is needed for policing efforts to be successful” (p. 37). That statement provides the significance of understanding what influences the perceptions of law enforcement.

The working relationship between police and community can be traced back as far as 1829 with Sir Robert Peel’s modernization of law enforcement. Police effectiveness is built upon public trust and confidence (Decker, 1981). When a disturbing event involving the police occurs, the public becomes less willing to work with law enforcement, even if the officers acted properly (Weitzer, 2002). Deep-rooted beliefs in the minority community surface and can result in anger and suspicion towards the police (Weitzer, 2002). The relationship between youth and police is a critical element of the police-community relationship, as youth are more likely to come in contact with police as their behavior develops through adolescence (Chow, 2010).

Theoretical Framework

This focus of this study was on community college students’ perceptions of law enforcement officers in terms of their effectiveness and professionalism. No single theory could be found to guide this particular study but the following are examples of theories that help explain how perceptions may be influenced by society and the media.

Social Construct Theory

Social Construct Theory was formally acknowledged in Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann’s 1966 book, *The Social Construction of Reality*. Berger and Luckmann (2016) argued that common sense knowledge of everyday reality is gained from social interactions. These social interactions are negotiated and turned into reality; for example, a parent negotiates rules for children, who then gain knowledge that the rules are reality. Further research by

Gurevitch and Levy (1985) held that individuals assumed a problem was genuine because the public perceived it as such, not because the problem was real. Media outlets are adept at manipulating information by framing and reporting news in a specific way. Public opinions can be influenced by this type of reporting, and there can be consequences because of the way problems are presented (Gans, 1979; Iyengar, 1991; Nelson & Kinder, 1996).

Cultivation Theory

Cultivation Theory was conceptualized by George Gerbner in the 1960s and has been examined extensively ever since, especially since the rapid growth of mass communication. In his study of Cultivation Theory, Gerbner coined the term “mean world syndrome,” which proposed humans who consume large amounts of television were more likely to believe or have their moral values and general beliefs shaped, modified, or changed by what they view. The theory has numerous concepts and has adapted over time, with more than 125 studies endorsing the theory. Gerbner contended that learning occurs from the exposure to television and individuals form beliefs and values around persuasive content, such as storytelling or symbolic functions (Mosharafa, 2015).

Following the end of World War II in 1945, American household ownership of televisions drastically increased; ownership ballooned from .05% of households in 1946 to 87% in 1960. By 2001, the U.S. Census Bureau reported an average of 2.4 televisions in each household (Robert & Foehr, 2008). The drastic increase in televisions gave rise to health concerns, and by the late 1960s, government funding for public television was being evaluated by the U.S. Senate as a means to reduce the total amount allotted to public television.

In 1969, Fred Rogers provided testimony to the U.S. Senate in an attempt to save funding for national public television. Mr. Rogers was only given a few minutes to defend why the

government should provide \$20 million in funding for national public television, specifically educational series for children. Mr. Rogers expressed his concern about what children watch as he spoke of effects on mental health, comparing children who see simple family situations and meaningful expressions of caring on television as opposed to aggressive behaviors such as someone who “bops” someone over the head. Towards the end of Mr. Rogers’s testimony, he provided senators with the words to one of his songs that came directly from a child. The words said, “What do you do with the mad that you feel when you feel so mad that you could bite, when the whole wide world seems oh so wrong and nothing you do seems very right.” After hearing the words of the song, Rhode Island Senator John Pastore told Mr. Rogers, “I think it’s wonderful,” and “looks like you just earned the \$20 million dollars” (Senate Statement of PBS Funding 1969). The following year PBS funding appropriation increased from \$9 million to \$22 million dollars. Individuals were starting to express their concerns over how the content of media could influence individual’s beliefs and perceptions of social norms and problems.

Gerbner provided testimony before Congress in the 1980s regarding elements of cultivation theory. In 1982, the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) reported it was perceived that media violence was a public threat to youth and their behavior. Since the 1990s, researchers in the field have consistently held that media violence does affect youth behavior in terms of aggressiveness and violence (Anderson et al., 2003; Grossman & DeGaetano, 2014).

Social Learning Theory

The foundation of Social Learning Theory comes from B.F. Skinner’s work on operant conditioning, which was further developed and refined by Bandura in the late 1970s. Bandura’s theory explained that behaviors could be acquired through either direct experience or observation of others (Bandura, 1977). Bandura also included a component that centered on cultural

intelligence, or identifying specific behaviors and beliefs that are found within a culture.

Bandura primarily examined children and adult cognitive behaviors and how those behaviors were influenced by social experiences, which transitioned Social Learning into Social Cognitive Theory (Grusec, 1992).

The growth of mass media has led to a growth in research on its impact, with many researchers applying the principles of Social Learning Theory. Researchers Anderson and Bushman (2001) found significant correlations between violent television consumption and aggressive behaviors in individuals, including how playing video games decreased prosocial behavior. A Kaiser Family Foundation survey in 2010 revealed 56% of all 8-18 year olds have played the game *Grand Theft Auto* despite its M rating (Mature, recommended for mature audiences). Rideout et al. (2010) reported 25% of 8-10 year olds, 60% of 11-14 year olds, and 72% of 15-18 year olds reported playing the game. The Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania (2017) revealed gun violence's dramatic increase from 1985-2015 in PG-13 related films compared to R-rated films.

Summary

In 1999 the Columbine High School massacre occurred, and national news media coverage lasted all day. Lt. Col. Dave Grossman and DeGaetano (2014), considered an expert in this field, has conducted research on what he terms "Killology." His first book, *Stop Teaching Our Kids to Kill*, looked at the links between media violence and aggression in children, similarly to the above-mentioned theories. Grossman and DeGaetano (2014) stated there was not enough being done to address the root cause of the problem, which was the number of hours spent in front of televisions, movies, and video games. Consistent exposure to sensational and graphical behavior such as murder and rape portrays to children these acts are acceptable in

society, but, in contrast, he also notes that it is not normal for students in school to hunker down or hide under a table when another student comes to kill them (Grossman & DeGaetano, 2014).

Grossman furthered his studies, and in 2009 authored *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*. Two sections in the book, Section III (Killing and physical distance: From a distance, you don't look anything like a friend) and Section VIII (Killing in America; What are we doing to our children) provided insight into the issues discussed here. Grossman offered that correlation does not prove causation, such as stating that television or video games cause violence, but consideration must be given to accepting the verdict of 217 correlation studies (Grossman, 2009).

These theories examine different aspects of behavior and what may or may not be an influence on perception.

Limitations and Delimitations

According to Creswell (2009), limitations are weakness or problems within a study. The primary method for data collection will be a public opinion survey. Since this was a study that used a convenience sample, there are some external threats to the validity of the results. The samples were limited to community colleges in Kansas and should not necessarily be generalized to all college and university populations; however, some common demographical characteristics may exist. Kansas community colleges were chosen because of the accessibility to their college students. The assumption was all participants would answer the community college survey questions truthfully based on their perception of law enforcement, but errors in participant bias in other factors could not be controlled.

Definitions of Terms

- **App:** defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as the abbreviation for application: a computer program or piece of software designed for a particular purpose that you can download onto a mobile phone or other mobile device.
- **Citizenry:** defined in Merriam-Webster as a whole body of citizens.
- **Demographics:** defined in Cambridge Dictionary as the number and characteristics of people who live in a particular area or form a particular group.
- **De-policing:** defined in Longman Dictionary as a way of keeping control over an area in which the police deliberately ignore small crimes by members of ethnic minorities so that they are not accused of racism.
- **Internet:** defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as the large system of connected computers around the world that allows people to share information and communicate with each other.
- **Perception:** defined in the Cambridge Dictionary as a belief or opinion often held by many people and based on appearances.
- **Police Effectiveness:** Oxford refers to police effectiveness as the extent to which police achieves its properly officially sanctioned goals.
- **Police Professionalism:** Merriam Webster refers police professionalism as exhibiting a courteous, conscientious and general businesslike manner in the work place or ethical standards of a profession.
- **Media:** Oxford refers to media as the main ways that large numbers of people receive information and entertainment that is television, radio, newspaper, and the internet.

- **Media Consumption:** operationally defined in this study as the amount of media (Internet) usage to consume police related activity.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

“I sometimes wish that people would put a little more emphasis upon the observance of the law than they do upon its enforcement.” Calvin Coolidge

Public confidence in the law enforcement community is necessary for our society to function effectively. Since the 1980’s, there has been an expansion of research that examines perceptions of law enforcement that affect that confidence. The body of research has primarily focused on the overall awareness of law enforcement and dates back to 1935 with Bellman’s “Police Service Rating Scale,” where Arthur Bellman and August Vollmer developed a method of rating police organizations utilizing established standards and a point-based rating scale (Bellman, 1935). Further research in the field has continued in hopes of improving the ability to evaluate citizen attitudes towards police. Decker’s work in 1981, “Citizen Attitudes Toward the Police: A Review of Past Findings and Suggestions for Future Police,” expanded the field of study by identifying and analyzing variables that affect the perceptions of citizens (Brown & Benedict, 2002). This study adds to the body of literature on citizen attitudes towards police by focusing on college students’ perception of law enforcement and examining their overall awareness of and attitudes towards police, comparing the differences in perceptions among race and gender of college students, and exploring their media consumption.

General Perceptions of Police

There is a long-standing, well-documented history of public attitudes towards law enforcement. Historically, it has been held that attitudes toward law enforcement overall have been positive (Benedict et al., 2000; Chermak et al., 2001; Ekins, 2016); however, there is literature that contradicts these findings and reports that public perception of law enforcement

remains more negative (Callanan & Rosenberger, 2011; Fratelo, et al., 2013; MacAlister, 2011).

De Angelis and Wolf (2016) provided an analysis of a major government satisfaction survey that provides insight into attitudes towards police accountability and satisfaction. The survey was designed to measure community satisfaction with government, but many of the survey questions pertained to public satisfaction with police services. The survey represented a large U.S. western city with a population of more than 250,000. The survey included 15,000 targets and garnered an average response rate of 28% (4,201 surveys) each year over a six-year period of 2006-2011; the 2009 survey was not included in the analysis because it did not include questions on police accountability that had been present in the other years. A total of 3,725 surveys were validated for inclusion in the survey of police services. The surveyed jurisdiction included a municipal police department of 1,000+ officers and a sheriff's office with 800+ sworn officers.

Researchers documented a stable satisfaction response for officer conduct the first three years with a satisfaction rate from 60-67%, but satisfaction dropped to 49% by 2011. A similar pattern resulted for police services, with an excellent rating from 61-67% the first three years, dropping to 53% by 2011. Several correlations were identified during the analysis. First, respondents with higher levels of satisfaction of perceived accountability were more likely to report satisfaction with police. Second, most of the community context variables such as strong sense of community and feeling safe were related to higher levels of satisfaction.

Respondents who had been a victim of a crime tended to be less satisfied with police in each of the survey years, and those who reported neighborhood disorder had lower levels of police satisfaction. Race determinants revealed African-Americans were more likely to rate

police service satisfaction higher than Caucasians in 2008, but were significantly less likely to in 2011. Age was an important predictor, with older respondents being more likely to report satisfaction than younger respondents. The study determined females were more satisfied with police services than their male counterparts in both 2010 and 2011. Researchers determined there was no significance in the survey for contact with police, and that race and ethnicity were not significant predictors of satisfaction of police with the exception of 2006 (De Angelis & Wolf, 2016, p. 246). Researchers found that neither race nor ethnicity were consistent predictors of satisfaction with police services. Researchers concluded that respondent perception of police accountability was strongly related to satisfaction with the police, and public belief that efforts are being taken to control officer conduct correlates to positive satisfaction levels. This particular analysis provides results that are somewhat contrary to those determined by other research efforts.

Determinants of Perceptions of Police

Researchers have explored and continue to explore the variety of factors that contribute to perceptions of law enforcement. Studies have continuously found that race, age, and contact with police remain consistent variables impacting perception (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005; Nadal & Davidoff, 2015; Alberton & Gorey, 2018), with race and contact with police identified as the strongest predictors affecting attitude towards police (Mbuba, 2010; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005). It has also been found that indirect contact, meaning that which occurs with family or friends, can lead to negative perceptions of police (Hinds, 2009; Longan et al., 2001; Miller & Davis, 2008; Rosenbaum et al., 2005; Mbuba, 2010). The role of media coverage of police actions in the perception of police is another variable, as is the impact of social media and the use of rapidly-developing technological advances (Block, 1971; Brown &

Benedict, 2002). Education is also a factor that contributes to perceptions of law enforcement; research-based knowledge gained from higher education provides an individual with the ability to identify and separate sensationalism that is so often attached to media coverage (Mbuba, 2010).

Race as a Determinant

Researchers have consistently found that members of minority groups, specifically African- Americans, tend to be more negative towards law enforcement when compared to Caucasians (Reisig & Parks, 2000; Miller & Davis, 2008; Schunk, Rosenbaum, & Hawkins, 2008; Mbuba, 2010).

Hurst, Frank, and Browning (2000) researched responses from public high school students to determine the differences between Caucasian and African-American juveniles' perceptions of police. They reported in their findings that African-American youth were less positive in their assessment of police. The researchers found African-Americans have a widespread lack of confidence in the police, and overall, juveniles do not feel police are effective in their duties as officers. Hurst et al. (2000) indicated a significance difference between Caucasian and African-American respondents regarding teenagers' perceptions in whether or not police are doing a good job; 47% of white respondents felt police did a good job compared to 26.5% of African-American respondents. However, their findings showed three areas in which African-Americans were more positive than Caucasians: talking to a police officer while on the street, talking to an officer while in school, and being arrested. Their study found there was no significant difference between Caucasian and African-American respondents in their view of police behavior, though African-American respondents were slightly more favorable (Hurst et al., 2000).

Avdija (2010) surveyed 304 undergraduate university students in 2009 to partially fulfill an explanatory and descriptive research study. The 141 questions used a Likert-type scale to address five hypotheses centered on police behavior, voluntary citizen-initiated contact, female/male comparison, African-American/Caucasian comparison, and socio-economic status. The 169 males and 135 females between the ages of 15 to 54 years old represented 71.1% Caucasian, 21.4% African-American, 1.3% Asian, 1.3% Hispanic, and 4.9% other. The study compared African-American and Caucasian attitudes towards police, and the result was a statistically significant difference where African-Americans were more likely to hold negative attitudes towards police. The researcher furthered investigated and divided race into six categories: Asians, African-Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, Caucasians, and Multiracial. African-Americans were more likely to have negative attitudes compared to Caucasians and other racial groups, and it was also documented there was a significant difference between Caucasians and other racial groups. African-Americans results were $M=86.16$ and $SD 18.95$ compared to Caucasians $M=101.70$ and $SD 20.78$.

In 2002, Weitzer and Tuch (2005) conducted a survey of 1,792 African-American, Caucasian, and Hispanic respondents who were residents of a large metropolitan area with a population of 100,000 or more. The researchers used Knowledge Networks (KN), a web-based survey research firm with more than 25,000 households in their system. As part of the data collection, respondents participated in no more than four surveys per month over a two to three year period. Survey results showed 46% of Caucasians were “very satisfied” with police, but only 22% of African-Americans and 36% of Hispanics felt the same. Results showed that 27% of African-Americans and 20% of Hispanics were “dissatisfied” with police, but only 14% of Caucasians were “dissatisfied.” As part of the study, researchers examined racial differences in

satisfaction with police from a city perspective compared to a neighborhood perspective. Data collected reported consistent measures among races with 86% of Caucasians, 73% of African-Americans, and 80% of Hispanics either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with city police, compared to 87% of Caucasians, 77% of African-Americans, and 79% of Hispanics who were either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” with neighborhood police. There was a similar pattern for “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with city or neighborhood police; 14% of Caucasians, 27% of African-Americans, and 20% of Hispanics were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with city police and 13% of Caucasians, 13% of African-Americans, and 21% of Hispanics were “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with neighborhood police. African-Americans showed the most change between city and neighborhood measures, with a 4% increase for satisfaction with neighborhood police and a 4% decrease for dissatisfaction for neighborhood police. The study revealed, “African-Americans and Hispanics are less satisfied with local police than Caucasians” (p. 293).

Age Factors

To examine the determinant of age, particularly youth, Stewart et al. (2014) gathered data from 3,500 students attending the G.R.E.A.T. program in 22 middle schools from six U.S. cities. The team of researchers surveyed students who were 12 years of age and older for five consecutive years; students first took the survey in 1995 and took it annually through 1999. Gender breakdown was 45% male and 55% female. Results revealed both genders held similar characteristics. Respondents who held positive attitudes toward police remained stable throughout the survey, and those who held negative attitudes also tended to be stable. Results of the survey showed slightly more males than females (10.4% to 8.5%) expressed high positive attitudes; slightly more females than males (9.3% to 10.0%) expressed negative attitudes. Data

from midrange responses showed that at age 13 positive attitudes started to decline, and at age 16 the lowest levels of attitudes were expressed about police. The research suggested nearly half of males and more than half of females have positive attitudes toward police and a small group has negative attitudes, both of which remain consistent over time. However, positive attitudes of some youth decline rapidly by age 13, with 15.2% of males and 5.5% of females showing decline. The findings suggest male attitudes toward police tend to be more negative than female attitudes.

To further explore the narrative behind perceptions of youth towards law enforcement, Carr et al. (2007) investigated youth attitudes towards police among three high-crime neighborhoods in Philadelphia. Participants were recruited in each of the areas by researchers to ensure their goal of equal number of participant characteristics of gender and delinquency. Each of the 153 participants were paid a \$25 honorarium to complete an interview and a self-report survey. The sample population represented 51.7% male and 48.3% female; 65% of the population was still in high school with 70% under the age of 18. Racial makeup was 32.8% Caucasian, 36.4% African-American, and 28.1% Latino. Delinquency was self-reported and measured at 30% of the population. Of the 153 participants, only 10% stated they would call the police in any circumstance. Interviews provided 223 different responses expressing dispositions toward police, and 61.8% of the responses were negative. Overall data showed youth with a significant negative attitude towards police. Data revealed three specific categories for negative attitudes towards police: negative interactions with police (18.4%), ineffective police (15.2%), and generalized negative view (9.8%).

Negative attitudes toward police in these neighborhoods are plentiful among the youth interviewed in this study and did not vary between neighborhoods or gender. Latino and

Caucasians were more likely than African-Americans to mention police harassment or excessive force, even though Latino males experienced more excessive force than African-American or Caucasians. These negative attitudes predominantly stemmed from interaction and experience the respondents had with police. Positive comments shared during the interviews were more common among Latinos and Caucasians than African-Americans. Positive comments were less likely to be based on actual interactions, instead focusing on a generalized positive view (13.4%) and calling the police (6.7%). When asked how to combat crime, 30.5% of the youth interviewed responded with “more police.” This outcome was consistent among all races, gender, and type of youth.

Carr et al. (2007) offered that participant statements are predominantly negative and biased by experience and negative interaction with police, but participants see the value in police as an effective tool in an effort to reduce crime.

Gender

Research suggest that males and females have different perceptions of law enforcement. Some literature suggests that male perception is much more negative than that of females (Miller & Davis, 2008; Mbuba, 2010). This has been supported by research and data collection that show males are more apt than females to engage in criminal behavior, so males experience more law enforcement interaction and are more likely to mistrust the police (Mbuba, 2007; Mbuba, 2010).

Contrary to these findings, Avdiija (2010) found in his 2009 survey that males were statistically more likely to hold a positive attitude toward police than females.

Contact With Police

Personal contact or interactions with police play a vital role in perceived attitudes towards police. Weitzer and Tuch (2005) examined determinants of satisfaction with police, specifically evaluating personal contact, neighborhood crime, and policing practices. They collected data for a larger study to examine levels of citizen satisfaction with police. Other variables in the study demonstrated that while personal experience is not significant in the total sample, both African-American and Caucasian satisfaction with police significantly decreased through vicarious experiences. The authors also documented that African-American satisfaction levels are different among gender and age; males tend to be less satisfied than females, and older African-Americans tend to be less satisfied than younger. In Hispanic participants, satisfaction with police increased with age. Weitzer and Tuch said,

“People who believe that police are frequently involved in corruption, verbal abuse, brutality, and unjustified street stops are inclined to be dissatisfied more general with their local police. This finding is robust – it applies to both the total sample and each of the racial groups” (p. 294).

Police behavior has been determined by researchers as a variable that affects citizens' attitudes towards the police. Avdija (2010) sought to investigate the extent to which citizen attitudes are influenced following negative interactions with police behavior and how more generalized attitudes are influenced by the interpretation of the interactions. Police behavior was identified as having significant impact on attitudes towards police, with measured factors of rude/impolite, verbally abusive, disrespectful, and tendency to use force. Voluntary citizen-initiated contact produced more positive attitudes, but the results were not statistically significant. The study determined police behavior affected citizen attitude toward police, and

there are links between personal experiences based on demographics. The data suggested that African-Americans attitudes toward police were more negative than Caucasians.

Influence of Education

Mbuba (2010) investigated views of police of students attending a four-year, mid-sized university including 86% white and 14% minority respondents and 48% male and 52% female respondents. The 333 usable student surveys came from a wide array of departments. The study focused on four areas: (1) to establish the differences between the Caucasian and minority racial groups regarding their attitude toward the police; (2) to explore the differences between males and females regarding their attitude toward police; (3) to establish whether a negative police encounter alters the attitude toward the police among the respondents; and (4) to verify whether there is a difference in the attitudes toward the police between individuals who have taken at least one criminal justice course and those at comparable educational levels who have not. Mbuba (2010) found participants responded differently to each of the four areas of inquiry and holds that “racial background of citizens continues to be the single most significant predictor of the type of attitude a person will have toward law enforcement” (p. 211). Caucasians respondents showed more affirmation than minorities for the services police provided to their communities; however, a high proportion of minorities believe police provide an important service. This could be attributed to education level or exposure to factual information versus the general public obtaining data from media. It is also pertinent that, in this study, minorities did not blame police for high crime rates or think that they were corrupt, lending to an overall positive perception towards police work by both white and minorities. Mbuba (2010) suggested further studies are needed to examine the differences between white and minority groups, males

and females, those with and without prior negative encounters, and those across various stages of educational achievement.

Verga et al. (2016) studied satisfaction of college students in a criminal justice program with a local police department by evaluating variables such as location, gender, and race. The study included 176 undergraduate students from Suffolk County (Long Island) and New York City and focused on the differences in satisfaction between those from urban and suburban areas, race, and gender. Almost half of the group, 46.8%, were Hispanic/Latino, 29.5% were Caucasian, 20.9% were African-American, and 2.9% unidentified. Gender makeup of the group was 51.1% female and 48.9% male, with the median age being 22 years old. The study measured student satisfaction with local police based on responses by those who resided in New York City and those who resided in Suffolk County. Results of the survey showed significant differences between students who lived in urban areas and those who lived in suburban areas. Students from New York City strongly disagreed/disagreed (30.25%) that they were satisfied with local police, while only 12.71% of students from Suffolk County strongly disagreed/disagreed. Only 33.3% of New York City students agreed/strongly agreed to the question of whether they felt safe going out at night, but 60.3% of those from Suffolk County agreed/strongly agreed. Responses revealed a significant difference between urban and suburban areas when evaluating satisfaction with local police. Results also revealed a slightly higher tendency for males to view police more positively than females. Finally, Caucasians were significantly more satisfied with local police than African-Americans, but no significant differences were found with the Hispanic group and either African-Americans or Caucasians. Researchers acknowledge the study was limited to small samples of each ethnic group, but consider survey results important in the attempts to improve relations between police and

communities they serve. Results are more significant to the overall question of influence of education and college education on perceptions of police officers.

Other Determinants

Fear of crime and disorders within neighborhoods (the broken window theory) could be a variable affecting citizen's perception of police. Luo, Ren, and Zhao (2017) researched 2,393 residents from Houston, Texas, in an effort to research public attitudes toward the police. Data were collected from 1,250 residents in 2010 and an additional 1,143 residents in 2012 who were 18 years of age and older living within the city limits of Houston.

A majority of respondents (58.3%) were 50 years of age and older, 24.7% were between the ages of 35-49, and 16.9% were 34 years of age and younger. Gender disparities were minimal, with 45.8% of respondents being male and 54.2% being female. Race demographics were 39.9% Caucasian, 24.3% African-American, and 35.7% Hispanic. The study was an assessment of Houston Police Department Officers being courteous, honest, respectful, fair, and communicating well. Further assessments focused on specific aspects of police performance such as traffic, narcotic enforcement, responding to gangs and prostitution, and response time.

Houston residents held a fairly positive attitude towards police; even though the average disorder incident was 84.49, residents did not perceive disorders to be serious issues in the neighborhood. Researchers noted only 16.7% of respondents had been a victim of crime within the last 12 months. In addition, a majority of respondents (59.3%) had never had contact with the police. Of those that had been in contact with police, 16.7% reported the contact was voluntary and 24% reported the contact involuntary.

Data collection from this study supported citizen expectations were a strong predictor in influencing perceptions of police, and those whose expectations were fulfilled were more apt to

have a positive attitude towards police. Researchers found respondents who were victimized, those who had been a victim of a crime, held a less positive view than those residents who had not been victim, and those who had been victimized had a higher level of perceived disorder and fear of crime.

Researchers also found that both African-Americans and Hispanics held a less positive view towards the police than Caucasians; however, no significant differences attributed to races existed when specific attitudes towards the police were evaluated. Luo, Ren, and Zhao (2017) noted, “Hispanic and African-Americans influenced GATP (General Attitudes Toward the Police) only, but not SATP (Specific Attitudes Toward the Police), indicating that diffuse/GATP among the minority members was related to their racial/ethnic background rather than their specific evaluations of police performance in their immediate neighborhoods, making it plausible to state that the formation of their diffused attitudes towards police was beyond the neighborhood characteristics” (p. 405-406).

The study revealed gender was another strong predictor of perception of disorder and fear of crime, but it was not reflective for general attitudes or specific attitudes towards police. The research concluded that perceptions play an important role in shaping attitudes toward police. That conclusion adds to the vital need expressed by Verga et al. (2016):

“These findings serve to highlight issue of the importance of attitudes toward police and support attempts by police departments to improve relations between the police and the community. There is little doubt that resident support is needed for policing efforts to be successful” (p. 37).

Media Consumption

“I think that everyone is kind of confused about the information they get from the media and rightly so. I'm confused about the information I get from the media.” Bob Woodward

Perceptions of police and public confidence in the officers and their activities may be affected by the media. The combination of mass media availability, rapid advancements in media technology, and a tendency towards sensationalism may increase the opportunities for media to influence citizen opinions (Mbuba, 2010).

Communication has changed and evolved through the years, but nothing has impacted human interaction in the same manner as computers. Computers have made communication instantaneous, allowing users to connect with a tremendous number of others within seconds. Traditional methods of communication such as letters, telephone conversations, and face-to-face exchanges have given way to e-mail, text messages, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat. Traditional media such as television, print magazines, and newspapers now compete with digital media available on Internet websites, social media, and digital audio. By 1989, 25% of households with children ages three to seventeen had a computer, and within 15 years that percentage had risen to 75% (Roberts & Foehr, 2008). When Internet access became available in the early 1990s, consumers were provided with access to more media content than ever before.

By 1997, 22% of Internet usage was attributed to individuals aged three to seventeen years. By 2003, that usage had risen to 63%. As far back as 2008, researchers claimed we were surrounded by it (Roberts & Foehr, 2008). People who are exposed to media information often have their opinions influenced or shaped by the presentation and the information within it. That information is consumer-driven and often geared towards sensation and emotion rather than fact (Tsafati & Cappella, 2003). Many of the same determinants that affect perception of police and public confidence also affect the influence of media upon the public.

Media Consumption and Race

Graziano and Gauthier (2018) explored the extent of media consumption and its influence on public views of police legitimacy (public perception of how procedurally just the police institution is in regards to having the moral right to exercise authority). Their research, conducted between July and October of 2015, consisted of telephone interviews with 1,197 residents in a city near Los Angeles. The data regarding perceptions of policing, contact with police, nature of media consumption, and awareness of news coverage were collected from 300 African-Americans, 300 Caucasians, 300 Hispanics, and 297 Asians aged 18 and older.

Researchers analyzed the frequency of media consumption and the type of media format used, which included local television, national television, and the Internet. Results showed media consumption was relatively high among respondents, with the Internet being the most important source of news; additionally, more than half of the respondents watched either local or national news every day or most days on the television. Local television rather than Internet news was the most important news source for police legitimacy, and respondents who viewed local television stations held police legitimacy higher than those who consumed Internet news. Police were seen as less legitimate by those who viewed negative news coverage. Data on being stopped by police were collected, with over half of African-Americans who had been stopped reporting dissatisfaction with police. Though awareness of negative news and local television had some impact on those who had been stopped compared to those who had not, there was no difference among African-American respondents. The researchers concluded that overall, African-Americans view police legitimacy with lower satisfaction than Caucasians.

Roberts and Foehr (2008) sought to examine how both media use and media exposure vary with demographic factors and psychosocial variables. They examined variables such as

race and ethnicity as shown below in Figure 1 (Roberts & Foehr, 2008, p. 17) and found that African-American children were exposed to more media than Caucasians, and there was a significant difference in regards to TV and movie exposure between the two.

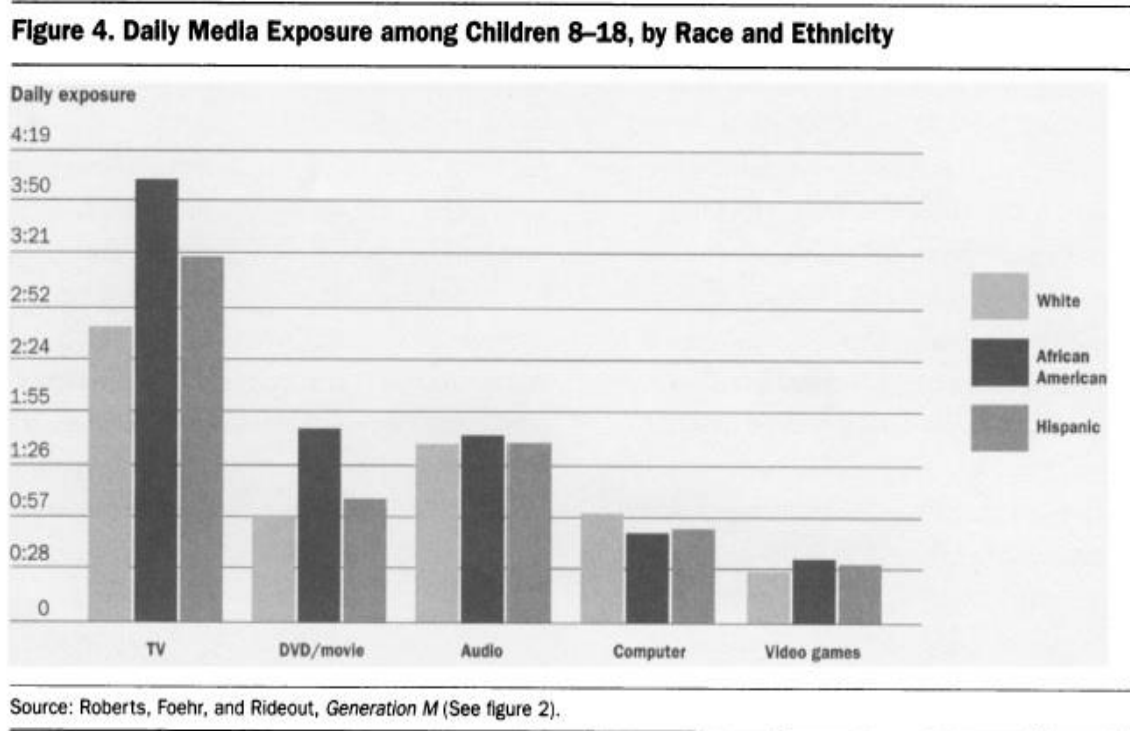


Figure 1. Daily media exposure among children 8-18, by Race and Ethnicity

Media Consumption and Age

In an attempt to understand media consumption trends in adolescents, Twenge, Martin, and Spitzberg (2018) examined trends among 8th, 10th, and 12th graders in the United States between the years of 1976 to 2016. Their goals were to acquire large national samples of those who spent time with digital media and to evaluate any increase in use of digital media compared to increases or decreases in legacy media (print or television). The researchers utilized information from Monitoring the Future (MtF), a time-lag national survey, on 15,000 students across the United States in each of three grades (8th, 10th, and 12th). Groups provided a national

representation reflective of those adolescents as a whole, including racial demographics for Caucasians, African-Americans, and Hispanics. Results showed several important trends.

- There was a significant increase in digital usage by both genders and all races from 2006-2016 by 12th graders (100%), 10th grade (75%), and 8th grade (68%).
- By the mid-2010s, 12th graders spent six hours a day using texting, Internet, or social media; 10th graders spent five hours a day; and 8th graders spent four hours a day.
- In 2008, 52% of 12th graders visited social media sites every day. By 2016, that number had increased by 30%. Numbers were similar for 8th and 10th grade, with females, Hispanic, and African-American use slightly higher.
- In the 1970s, 60% of 12th graders read a book or magazine daily; that number decreased to 16% in 2016.
- In the 1990s, 22% of 8th graders watched five or more hours of television daily; that number decreased to 13% by 2010.

“Thus, adolescent’s total screen time nearly tripled between the late 1970’s and 2016” (Twenge, 2018, p. 12). Television use among adolescents remained high, even though it had declined; however, when time using television, texting, social media, and Internet use was combined, 12th graders reported spending just under eight “screen time” hours a day. The study concluded that digital media occupies more adolescent time than legacy media – books, magazines, newspapers, television, and movies.

Media Consumption and Education

Intravia, Wolff, and Piquero (2018) surveyed undergraduate students attending a large Midwestern university to obtain data on media consumption concerning attitudes toward police. Their sample consisted of students who were both criminal justice and non-criminal justice

majors. The 245 undergraduate students surveyed were 80.3% Caucasian and 19.7% minority, 43.6% male and 56.4% female, and an average of 19.7 years old. The only media related measure to be significantly related to perception of police was reading news online. Those respondents who consumed more online news demonstrated significant negative associations regarding attitudes towards police legitimacy. The study revealed that non-Caucasians and those who perceived more issues in their communities had significantly more negative views than Caucasians and those who had not experienced issues in their communities. In this study, social media consumption resulted in more favorable attitudes toward police legitimacy but was only marginally significant. Likewise, differences between genders were only marginal. The study ultimately revealed reading news online influenced attitude more negatively than the use of social media applications, which resulted in a high perception toward police legitimacy (p. 975). Researchers in this study reported when it came to young adults, contact with police either direct or indirect, had no impact on their perceptions of police.

Media Consumption and Contact with Police

Police interventions or actions continue to be a variable that affects attitudes towards the police. Boivin et al. (2017) conducted a study on two groups of students from an undergraduate criminology class. Both groups watched four fictional police videos, two showing a police “takedown” with no injuries and two showing officers using weapons that suggested injuries. Participants in Group A filled out a questionnaire that asked eleven general questions about the videos, and Group B answered the eleven general questions and six specific questions. Data showed that Group B participants reported significantly less favorable opinions toward the police, and they were twice as likely (29.7% to 14.7%) as Group A to view police brutality as more frequent. Group B also reported higher opinions that officers used too much force, but

both groups disagreed with the statement that police were aggressive. There were no significant differences between the groups when asked about police misconduct and criminal justice systems, suggesting the videos mainly affected opinions directly related to use of force. Data showed that 95.6% of the respondents had never been involved in a situation in which a police officer used force against them, thus relying on indirect contact to form their opinions (Boivin et al., 2017, p. 372). Researchers concluded that controversial videos of police actions do affect opinions about use of force, but there is limited impact on general attitudes toward police.

Highly-publicized events such as the beating of Rodney King and the deaths of Michael Brown and Freddie Gray have continued to burden police and community relations. Sensational events such as these presumably affect citizen attitudes towards police and a support of riots and demonstrations. Researchers continue to look at methods to evaluate the impact of incidents such as these on society (Lasely, 1994; Jefferis, 1997; Dowler, 2002; Desmond et al., 2016).

Jefferis et al. (2010) examined individual perceptions of a videotaped arrest of a young African-American male at a downtown bus stop. Social science students from a large, urban university in the Midwest viewed the videotaped arrest and then completed a survey. Participants were told before viewing that the arrest was a real event that occurred in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1995. The incident was aired on local news and caused social and political conflict within the area. The study measured independent variables of general attitudes towards the police and contact with the police, and control variables such as age, sex, race, etc., were also collected in the survey. Participants were 66.3% female, 77.5% Caucasian, and 79.9% were political science majors. College freshman accounted for 46.9% of the participants, and sophomores made up 28.9% of the total. Data showed that participants believed police generally used too little or the right amount of force (60.3%) and believed racial profiling was not

necessary in effective policing (80.1%). Questions focusing on police contact showed 34.3% of respondents had either no contact or a ticket given, 51.7% reported that someone close to them had been arrested, and 14% reported someone close to them had been forcefully arrested. When surveyed about the specific videotaped arrest, 74.8% indicated the arrest was unjustified. Results showed 65.6% found it to be an illegal arrest, 83.3 % found it to be violent, and 87.9% thought the police had used too much force. Jefferies et al. (2010) concluded general attitudes toward the police will have an impact on the perceptions of specific events involving the police.

Adding to the research of how controversial incidents affect attitude, Desmond, Papachristos, and Kirk (2016) researched police-related calls for service before and after publicized cases of police violence (misconduct) against community members. The authors investigated calls for service for the year prior to and the year after a high-profile police misconduct case was publicized. They found that after the story was publicized, 911 calls for service significantly declined in the black community. The decline in 911 calls and citizen crime reporting from the African-American communities lasted well over a year, but white communities had just a small decline and rapidly returned to previous levels. The incident had a more substantial effect on the black community than on the white community, with effects in the black community that “lasted for over a year and resulted in a total net loss of approximately 22,200 calls for service” (Desmond et al., 2016, p. 857). Researchers found that similar incidents affected African-American communities’ more than Caucasian communities, and they concluded, “Publicized cases of police violence against unarmed black men have a clear and significant impact on citizen crime reporting” (Desmond, et al., 2016, p. 870).

Media Consumption and Crime-Related Programming

One of the variables that has been examined for its possible influence on citizen attitude is crime-related programming. Kort-Butler and Hartshorn (2011) researched whether or not crime-related television programming (i.e., news, drama, and nonfiction documentaries) influenced perception and fear of crime by consumers of that media. Researchers used data from the 2007 Nebraska Annual Social Indicator Survey (NASIS), which is a computer-assisted telephone survey. The survey was conducted from February through August, 2008, and targeted Nebraska residents 19 years of age and older. The 784 participants were randomly selected, with a median age of 54.8 and a racial demographic of 94.8% Caucasian. Questions focused on the criminal justice system, specifically the frequency of television consumed each week and participants' fear of crime. A majority of respondents reported watching local news every day, but those ages 19-34 were significantly less likely than those 35 and older to watch every day.

Data suggested that viewing nonfictional crime shows contributed to higher levels of fear of crime, with Caucasians more likely to consume the shows and females more likely to be fearful (p. 45). Younger people were more likely to be fearful and perceive increased crime rates, and they were less supportive of the criminal justice system. Kort-Butler and Hartshorn (2011) stated "The more often people watch nonfictional crime programming, the more fearful they were of criminal victimization," and "Fear and perception of an increased national crime rate appeared to undermine their confidence in the ability of the criminal justice system to reduce crime, protect citizens and treat them fairly" (p. 48).

Callanan and Rosenberger (2011) researched media influence on citizen attitudes towards police through consumption of crime-related media. Their study examined three dependent variables (confidence in police, perception of police fairness, and police use of excessive force)

and five types of media variables (crime-related shows, crime dramas, newspapers, national and local news, and number of hours watching television). The survey sample was drawn from 4,245 California residents between March and September of 1999, with an average response rate of 69.9% for the 100 questions. Dependent variables were measured using a four point Likert-type scale. Demographic data revealed a median age of 44, with respondents being 60.5% Caucasian, 10.5% African-America, 18.8% Latino, 7.6% Asian, and 2.6% other. Analysis of the dependent variables showed the following.

- African-Americans have less confidence in police than Caucasians.
- Latinos are more likely to view excessive police force as a problem.
- Watching television news and viewing crime-reality shows significantly influences respondent attitudes.
- Respondents who had never been arrested and viewed crime-reality shows and television news had an increased confidence in police.
- Caucasians were significantly positively influenced after viewing crime-reality shows and television news.

The final finding of their research suggests television news and crime-reality shows significantly increased positive opinions of the police, especially by raising confidence in law enforcement, but holds “consumption of television crime dramas, newspapers, and television hours had little to no relationship with the dependent variable” (Callanan & Rosenberger, 2011, p. 181). The study suggests better measurements for media consumption to determine influence on attitude towards police. A limitation of Callanan and Rosenberger’s study is that those respondents who were police supporters may watch more crime-related television.

Summary of Literature Review

Research conducted on the impact media has had on public perception has been well documented in the work of Beckett and Sasson (2003); Ford (1997); Sigler and Curry (1992); Tuch and Weitzer (1997); Jefferis et al. (2010). Even more research has documented how media consumption has impacted public opinions related to fear of crime and the criminal justice system in the work of Gerbner and Gross (1976); Eschholz (1997); Kort-Butler and Hartshorn (2011); Intravia et al. (2018). Even in this research, examining the impact of media on attitudes toward police is scarce and has overlooked the importance of how media shapes public attitudes (Callanan & Rosenberger, 2011; Intravia et al., 2018).

Public perception and opinion greatly shapes the criminal justice system and policy, even though most of the public are unaware of complexities of the law enforcement profession and criminal justice system (Roberts, 1992; Jefferis et al., 2010). Public opinion that shapes our criminal justice system is largely experienced through indirect contact and media exposure, such as those events involving Rodney King, Michael Brown, and other high-profile cases, which can significantly skew individual attitudes (Flanagan & Vaughn, 1995; Jefferis et al., 2010).

Research has found that there are determinants of how media impacts an individual's perception, and those determinants are based on race, education, and other variables also linked to identified determinants of attitudes toward police (Manning, 2003; Jefferis et al., 2010).

In 2013, research reported that by 2015 the average person would consume an average of 15.5 hours of media a day through television, radio, phone, and computers, which amounts to 6.9 million gigabytes of media flowing to individuals and their households (University of Southern California Marshall School of Business, 2013). The report also noted that there is a substantial

increase of use (6.3 billion hours to 35.2 billion hours) of Facebook and YouTube (University of Southern California Marshall School of Business, 2013).

A large portion of research regarding media consumption has focused on traditional or entertainment media platforms such as those previously mentioned (crime-related television, television news, and newspapers). The areas that have experienced explosive growth because of technological advances is the Internet and social media, and how these advances impact public perception of the police has been largely neglected in research until now (Intravia et al., 2018).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Overview

Police officers in the United States protect and serve the citizenry of this country. Public confidence in the law enforcement community is necessary for societal safety and well-being. Law enforcement currently finds itself in a climate of mistrust, amidst calls for reform and protests because of incidents in recent years.

As early as 1971, there was evidence that media coverage of police actions may influence perception of law enforcement. Block's (1971) research revealed a rise in negative attitudes toward police officers with media coverage of controversial police use of force incidents and crime rates. In addition to media coverage, the fast-growing development of technology has allowed more video recordings to surface on unregulated media platforms. Unregulated platforms such as Deepfake have created new problems because the media may not contain factual information, but it is disseminated in high speed across multiple outlets. Deepfake allows Artificial Intelligence to superimpose faces with videos so that a recording is available of something that never happened (Ellis, 2018). To date, these cases have been deemed as protected under the First Amendment. Mbuba's (2010) statement, "possible exposure to crucial data from the media, which itself is mostly skewed toward sensation and emotional appeal instead of objectivity" (p. 211) outlines a significant problem for law enforcement and community relations.

The purpose of this study was to explore college students' perception of law enforcement, specifically perceptions of police effectiveness and professionalism by race, gender, and media consumption.

Population and Sample

This target population for this study was students enrolled in community colleges. The accessible population was both full and part-time community college students in the state of Kansas who were enrolled in courses during the spring 2019 semester.

The Kansas Board of Regents (KBOR) requires all community colleges to report their student enrollment data. Data that were reported and collected outlines student demographics specific to community colleges; therefore, this study used a non-probability sampling approach through a convenience sample which allowed easy access to the community college student data. Student data reported to KBOR is compiled and made available to the public online.

College A is a large urban area based college and in academic year 2018 had a total enrollment of N=12,849 students and of those, the student race breakdown is represented in Table 3.

Table 3. Population of College A Student's Race/Ethnicity for Academic Year 2018

Race	Percentage (%)
Caucasian	64.0
Hispanic	11.7
African-American	8.3
Asian	5.2
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	.2
Two or more races	0
Unknown	6.1
Non-Resident Alien	3.3
	100

College B is a small rural area based college and in academic year 2018 had a total enrollment of N=2,383 students and of those, the student race breakdown is represented in Table 4.

Table 4. Population of College B Student’s Race/Ethnicity for Academic Year 2018

Race	Percentage (%)
Caucasian	69.9
Hispanic	8.6
African-American	8.7
Asian	1.4
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.7
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	.4
Two or more races	0
Unknown	5.7
Non-Resident Alien	3.6
	100

College C is a small to mid-sized rural college and in academic year 2018 had a total enrollment of N=2,894 students and of those, the student race breakdown is represented in Table 5.

Table 5. Population of College C Student’s Race/Ethnicity for Academic Year 2018

Race	Percentage (%)
Caucasian	79.3
Hispanic	5.1
African-American	4.3
Asian	.9
American Indian or Alaska Native	2.5
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	.1
Two or more races	0
Unknown	6.8
Non-Resident Alien	1.0
	100

Females (53.9%) held a slightly higher percentage of overall enrollment in Kansas Community Colleges compared to males (46.0%). This trend is reflected in the three colleges where data were collected for the study. College A (N=12,849) had 58% female enrollment compared to 42% male enrollment. College B (N=2,383) had 64% female enrollment compared to 36% male enrollment. College C (N=2,894) had 66% female enrollment compared to 34% male enrollment.

Community college student ages were divided into six different age ranges and are represented for each of the participating colleges in Tables 6, 7, and 8 below.

Table 6. Population of College A Student's Age for Academic Year 2018

Age	Percentage (%)
<18	6.6
18-19	23.4
20-24	40.2
25-44	26.1
45-64	3.5
65+	.2
	100

Note. AY2018 enrollment for College A was N=12,849.

Table 7. Population of College B Student's Age for Academic Year 2018

Age	Percentage (%)
<18	11.9
18-19	27.3
20-24	37.9
25-44	18.3
45-64	3.6
65+	1.0
	100

Note. AY2018 enrollment for College B was N=2,383

Table 8. Population of College C Student’s Age for Academic Year 2018

Age	Percentage (%)
<18	13.1
18-19	20.5
20-24	26.4
25-34	22.5
45-64	8.2
65+	9.3
	100

Note. AY2018 enrollment for College C was N=2,894

Research Design

This study used a descriptive research design and quantitative data that was collected through the use of an instrument, developed by the researcher, which was administered to students enrolled in the three community colleges in Kansas. The survey included questions to determine college students’ perceptions of law enforcement to explore trends within the responses, as the purpose was to learn about this population rather than predict outcomes (Creswell, 2012). Approval to conduct this research was sought through the Institutional Review Board at the University of Arkansas and was granted on April 15th, 2019 (See Appendix A).

Research Variables

The primary research dependent variables for this study were police professionalism, police effectiveness, and media consumption. Police professionalism is exhibiting a courteous, conscientious and general businesslike manner in the work place. Police effectiveness refers to the extent to which police achieves its properly sanctioned goals. Media consumption was

operationally defined in this study as the amount of media (Internet) usage to consume police related activity. The primary research independent variables for this study were race and gender. Other variables of this study included age, education level, and police contact.

Data Collection Instrument

The data collection instrument that was utilized in this study was adopted from one used by the Vera Institute of Justice in its New York Community Survey: Public Opinions of the Police. Researchers from the Vera Institute of Justice conducted a nine-month study to examine what shapes perceptions of law enforcement. The researchers questioned the way in which police treat citizens, and whether that may have a ripple effect when they tell their stories to others. Additionally, the researchers sought to explore if news media portrayal of police was an important determinant of public opinion even if the person had direct or vicarious contact. They surveyed nearly 2,000 people in five different New York Precincts about their opinions of and experience with police, and if so, what was their media consumption. During the same time the researchers also collected monthly consumer satisfaction surveys from precinct community leaders and people who had voluntary contact with police. Finally they tracked media coverage from six news sources (Miller et al., 2004).

Permission was obtained from Daniel Mocombe of the Vera Institute of Justice to adapt that survey for this study (See Appendix B). The data collection instrument was reconstructed using Qualtrics Software licensed through the University of Arkansas, and was made available to the participating institutions via a website link. The 25 question instrument was divided into five sections including police effectiveness, police professionalism, police contacts, media consumption, and demographics.

Section One: Police Effectiveness

The first section of the instrument, police **effectiveness**, contained five survey questions. Participants were asked to respond to these five questions using a Likert-type scale, with a “5” being strongly agree and a “1” being strongly disagree.

1. In terms of fighting crime the police do a good job?
2. The police are prompt in responding to calls for assistance from citizens.
3. The police are helpful to people who have been victims of a crime.
4. The police are doing a good job of working together with citizens or communities to solve local problems.
5. The police are doing a good job of solving the problems that concern their communities.

Section Two: Police Professionalism

The first section of the instrument, police **professionalism**, contained five survey questions. Participants were asked to respond to these five questions using a Likert-type scale, with a “5” being strongly agree and a “1” being strongly disagree.

1. It is common for the police to stop people on the street, or people driving in their cars, without good reason.
2. It is common for the police to use excessive force, for example using their weapons unnecessarily, or using more physical force than required.
3. It is common for the police to use offensive language when dealing with criminal suspects or other members of the public.
4. It is common for the police to break the law or break police rules and regulations when carrying out their work.

5. The police treat citizens respectfully.

Section Three: Police Contacts

The third section of the instrument, police contacts, contained eight survey questions. Participants were asked to respond these questions with three variations. The first variation reported if the participant has never approached or been approached by the police and if they have approached or been approach within the last 6 months. The second variation responses used a Likert-type scale with a “5” strongly agree and a “1” strongly disagree. The third variation reported if the participant heard about someone approaching the police or the police approaching someone: such as, an immediate family member, family relative, friend or neighbor, or another acquaintance.

1. The following are some statements about any experiences you may have had **seeking help or assistance** from the police. This could include reporting a crime, asking for assistance, calling or going into a police station, or approaching a police officer on the street. Which of the following best describes your experience?
 - On the last occasion you approached the police, I was treated respectfully.
 - The last time I heard about someone approaching the police, it involved:
 - On that occasion, the police treated that person respectfully.
2. Which of the following statements best describes any experiences you may have had **being approached or stopped** by the police. This might involve a police officer stopping you while you were driving or walking, or having an officer come to your home to question you about an incident.
 - The last time I was approached by the police, I was treated respectfully.
 - The last time I heard about someone who the police approached, it involved:

- On that occasion, the police treated that person respectfully.

Section Four: Media Consumption

The fourth section of the survey instrument, media consumption, contained three survey questions. Participants were asked to respond to these questions using a Likert-type scale, with a “5” strongly agree and a “1” strongly disagree. They also were asked to respond to consumption of police related news none of the last 7 days and every day, as well as 4 or more hours a day and 1 hour or less.

1. In the last 7 days, I have used the Internet (including apps) to watch, listen, or read about police related news....
2. In a day, the total number of hours I spend accessing the Internet or apps to watch, listen, or read about police related news is...
3. The police related news that I have seen, heard, or read within the last month on the Internet or apps were positive towards police.

Section Five: Respondent Demographics

The fifth section of the survey instrument, demographics, contained four survey questions. Participants were asked to respond to their age group, racial or ethnic heritage, highest grade or year of school, and gender. (See Appendix D)

Data Collection Methodology

The study used a two-step process to collect the survey data. The first step was obtaining permission to participate from each of the community college presidents. An email was sent to each of the Kansas Community College’s presidents requesting their participation in the research and for an individual from their institution that would be able to directly distribute the survey to the student body. Three community colleges agreed to participate and provided contact

information for the person who would be designated to send the email invitation that contained the survey link to the students.

All students enrolled for the spring 2019 semester at the participating community colleges were sent the email invitation to participate. The email invitation was sent directly to all students enrolled through the institutions' electronic mail system. Spring 2019 student enrollment for College A was 7,549, College B was 1,345, and College C was 3,200. A total number of 12,094 email invitations to participate were sent to students among the three community colleges.

Data Analysis Methodology

Data were analyzed according to the objectives of the study. The three objectives of the study included:

1. Describe college students' perception of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism.
2. Describe the difference, if any, between college students' perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender.
3. Explore whether or not a significant difference in college students' perception toward law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on media consumption.

Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) version 9.4 was utilized to complete the statistical analysis of quantitative variables for the study by objective. The specific statistical tests used by objective are outlined below:

- Objective One: Means and standard deviations were calculated and reported for the instrument items that measured college students' perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism.

- Objective Two: An Analysis for Variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the differences of effectiveness and professionalism based upon race and gender. The categories for race used for ANOVA include and gender was based upon being male or female.
- Objective Three: An Analysis for Variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the differences of effectiveness and professionalism based upon media consumption. A Chi-Square test was used to assess the relationship between media consumption and race, and media consumption and gender.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The goal of this study was to describe community college students' perception of law enforcement and if differences between race and gender existed. Participants were also surveyed about their media consumption to explore how different their perception of law enforcement may be regarding the amount of media they consume. The findings of this research study are presented by objectives in this chapter. The survey was activated on April 24th, 2019 and closed on June 3rd, 2019. The delivered sample consisted of n=159 completed surveys and the sample consisted of a majority of female participants (n = 159, 78%) than male (n = 159, 22%).

The race of respondents was 77.4% Caucasian and 22.6% were Other. Other races included the following collapsed categories: African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Two or more races, and Unknown. Data on the race of respondents are represented in the categorical data in Table 9.

Table 9. Respondents' Race/Ethnicity

Race	Percentage (%)
White	77.4
Hispanic	5.7
African American	3.1
Asian	0.6
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.9
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.6
Two or more races	8.2
Unknown	2.5
	100

A majority of participants' ages (88%) were between the ages of 18-34 years old with largest group being 25 to 34 years old (30.8%) followed by 18 to 19 years old (29.6%). Age contained the following categories: 18-19 years old, 20-24 years old, 25-34 years old, 35-44 years old, 45-64 years old, 65 or older. Age categorical data is represented in Table 10.

Table 10. Respondents' Ages

Age	Percentage (%)
18-19 years old	29.6
20-24 years old	27.7
25-34 years old	30.8
35-44 years old	7.5
45-64 years old	4.4
65 or older	0
n=159	100

Respondents were asked to indicate their education level. The largest group of respondents had some college but no degree (49.7%) and followed by those who held an associate's degree (33.3%). Education level contained the following categories: Less than high school degree, High school graduate, Some college but no degree, Associate degree in college, Bachelor's degree in college, Master's degree, and Doctorate degree. Those data are represented in Table 11.

Table 11. Respondents' Education Levels

Education	Percentage (%)
Associate degree in college (2-year)	33.3
Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)	7.6
Doctoral degree	0.6
High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)	6.9
Less than high school degree	0.6
Master's degree	1.3
Some college but no degree	49.7
n=159	100

Objective One Results

The first objective was to describe community college students' perception of law enforcement. The mean for law enforcement effectiveness among participants (n=159) was 3.60, (*SD* = 0.800). The mean for law enforcement professionalism among participants (n=158) was 2.76, (*SD* = 0.708).

The mean and standard deviation for police effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender are represented in tables below.

Table 12. Respondents' Perceptions of Police Effectiveness by Gender and Race

Gender	N	M	SD
Female	124	3.65	0.769
Male	34	3.42	0.903
Total	158		
Race	N	M	SD
Caucasian	123	3.62	0.817
Other	32	3.58	0.710
Total	155		

Note. $n=159$, One subject ($n=1$) chose not to disclose their gender, and four subjects ($n=4$) chose not to disclose their race.

Table 13. Respondents' Perceptions of Police Professionalism by Gender and Race

Gender	N	M	SD
Female	124	2.71	0.677
Male	34	2.97	0.784
Total	158		
Race	N	M	SD
Caucasian	122	2.73	0.681
Other	32	2.89	0.797
Total	154		

Note. $n=158$, Four subjects ($n=4$) did not to disclose their race.

The mean and standard deviation for police effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender combined is represented in the tables below.

Table 14. Respondents' Perception of Police Effectiveness by Gender and Race Separated

Race	Gender	N	M	SD
Caucasian	Female	100	3.67	0.772
	Male	22	3.39	1.004
Other	Female	21	3.59	0.747
	Male	11	3.56	0.668
Total		154		

Note. $n=159$, Five subjects ($n=5$) did not to disclose either their gender or race.

Table 15. Respondents' Perceptions of Police Professionalism by Gender and Race Separated

Race	Gender	N	M	SD
Caucasian	Female	99	2.66	0.623
	Male	22	3.04	0.850
Other	Female	21	2.92	0.861
	Male	11	2.82	0.690
Total		153		

Note. $n=158$, Five subjects ($n=5$) did not to disclose either their gender or race.

Objective Two Results

The second objective was to describe the difference, if any, between community college students' perception of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender.

Two-way ANOVA assessment was used to measure the difference among race and gender regarding perception of police effectiveness. There was no significant difference in mean perception of law enforcement effectiveness by gender and race: $F(1, 150) = 0.52, P=0.4712$. Because there was no significant difference of police effectiveness between race and gender a one-way ANOVA assessment was used to assess each separately. Therefore, police effectiveness and race, Caucasian compared to Other, resulted in $F(1, 153) = 0.07, P=0.7934$ as reflected in Table 16.

Table 16. One-Way ANOVA for Perception of Law Enforcement Effectiveness by Race

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Model	1	0.0437	0.0437	0.07	0.7934
Error	153	97.2450	0.6355		
Corrected Total	154	97.2887			

Note. Groups were the two races as defined in this study among the community college students attending the community colleges where the study was conducted (n=159).

Police effectiveness and gender, male compared to female resulted in $F(1, 156) = 2.19$, $P=0.1409$.

Table 17. One-Way ANOVA for Perception of Law Enforcement Effectiveness by Gender

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Model	1	1.4008	1.4008	2.19	0.1409
Error	156	99.7981	0.6397		
Corrected Total	157	101.1989			

Note. Groups were the two genders as defined in this study among the community college students attending the community colleges where the study was conducted (n=159).

Two-way ANOVA assessment was used to measure the difference among race and gender regarding perception of police professionalism. There was no significant difference in mean perception of law enforcement professionalism by gender and race: $F(1, 149) = 2.40$, $P=0.1231$. Given that there was no significant difference of police professionalism between race and gender a one-way ANOVA assessment was used to assess each variable separately. Therefore. Police professionalism and race, Caucasian compared to Other, resulted in $F(1, 152) = 1.32$, $P=0.2522$ as reflected in Table 18.

Table 18. One-Way ANOVA for Perception of Law Enforcement Professionalism by Race

Source	<i>df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Model	1	0.6593	0.6593	1.32	0.2522
Error	152	75.8510	0.4990		
Corrected Total	153	76.5103			

Note. Groups were the two races as defined in this study among the community college students attending the community colleges where the study was conducted (n=158).

Police professionalism and gender, male compared to female resulted in $F(1, 155) = 3.61, P=0.0593$ as reflected in Table 19.

Table 19. One-Way ANOVA for Perception of Law Enforcement Professionalism by Gender

Source	<i>Df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P</i>
Model	1	1.7784	1.7784	3.61	0.0593
Error	155	76.3422	0.49253		
Corrected Total	156	78.1207			

Note. Groups were the two genders as defined in this study among the community college students attending the community colleges where the study was conducted (n=158).

Objective Three Results

The third objective was to explore whether or not a significant difference in college students' perceptions towards law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism existed based on media consumption. This was completed in two separate steps. Part one utilized an Analysis for Variance (ANOVA) to compare the differences of effectiveness and professionalism based upon media consumption. Part two utilized a Chi-Square test to assess the relationship between media consumption and race, and media consumption and gender.

The mean for media consumption among participants (n=159) was 1.25, (SD = 1.38).

Table 20. Respondents' Media Consumption (hours per day) by Gender and Race Separated

Race	Gender	N	M	SD
Caucasian	Female	100	1.37	1.605
	Male	22	1.05	0.898
Other	Female	21	1.10	0.889
	Male	11	0.64	0.504
Total		154		

Note. n=159, Five subjects (n=5) chose not to disclose either their gender or race

Part One Results

Participants reported varying police activity media consumption rates: 23.9% reported none, 59.1% reported 1 hour or less, 12.0% reported 2 to 3 hours and 5.0% reported 4 or more hours. Results, comparing media consumption against two variables: effectiveness and professionalism, indicated that there was no significant difference in mean perception of law enforcement effectiveness by media consumption, $F(1, 155) = 0.96, P=0.4138$. Results indicated there was no significant difference in mean perception of law enforcement professionalism by media consumption, $F(1, 154) = 2.00, P=0.1166$.

Part Two Results

Similarly, when comparing two additional variables: gender and race results indicated no relationship difference between media consumption and gender (male and female), $\chi^2(3, N = 158) = 2.7478, p = 0.4322$. Results indicated no relationship difference between media consumption and race (Caucasians and Others), $\chi^2(3, N = 155) = 2.5875, p = 0.4597$.

However, results did indicate a significant difference related to the number of hours of media consumption and if it were positive towards police, $\chi^2(15, N = 159) = 70.86, p < .0001$.

Tables 21 - 23 shows the relationship between media consumption and perception of positive police media. No respondents, who reported consuming 4 hours or more of police related activity, believed that media was positive towards police.

Table 21. The Relationship between Media Consumption and Respondent Perception of it being Positive Police Media.

Media Consumption	Positive Police Media Portrayal					<i>I have not seen, heard, or read any police related activity.</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>		
1 hour or less	19	31	23	10	11	0	94
2 to 3 hours	3	2	8	3	2	1	19
4 or more	2	4	2	0	0	0	8
none	2	6	7	4	1	18	38
Total	26	43	40	17	14	19	159

Note. Groups were the hours of media consumption among community college students of the colleges where this study was conducted (n=159).

Table 22. Chi-Square of Media Consumption for Gender

Media Consumption	Gender			χ^2	Φ
	Female	Males	Total		
None	29	9	38	3	0.4322
1 hour or less	72	22	94		
2 – 3 hours	15	3	18		
4 or more hours	8	0	8		
Total	124	34	158		

Note. Groups are the gender by hours of media consumption of the college's students among the community colleges where this study was conducted.

Table 23. Chi-Square of Media Consumption for Race

Media Consumption	Race			χ^2	Φ
	Caucasian	Other	Total		
None	30	8	38	3	0.4597
1 hour or less	70	21	91		
2 – 3 hours	15	3	18		
4 or more hours	8	0	8		
Total	123	32	155		

Note. Groups are the races by hours of media consumption of the college's students among the community colleges where this study was conducted.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

“Growth is never by mere chance; it is the result of forces working together.” James Cash Penney

Since the 1980’s, research has shown that both positive and negative personal experiences with the police can impact an individual’s perception of law enforcement. There are a number of variables that may significantly impact this perception, including race, gender, age, education, social economic status, and media consumption. Another factor is the technological advances in media that now provide individuals with quick, accessible videos of police activities that may not be entirely factual or representative of circumstances. The purpose of this study was to describe college students’ perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism, describe the differences between their perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender, and explore whether or not there is a significant difference in college students’ perceptions towards law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on media consumption. The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on positive and negative perceptions of law enforcement.

Discussion of Results

The three objectives of this study were to:

1. Describe college students’ perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism.
2. Describe the difference, if any, between college students’ perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender.
3. Explore whether or not a significant difference exists in college students’ perceptions toward law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on media consumption.

These objectives were developed based upon the review or recommendations of the Decker (1981), Weitzer and Tuch (2005), Mbuba (2010), Verga et al. (2016), Intravia et al. (2018), and Twenge et al. (2018) studies. Chapter 4 focused on the analysis of data regarding the objectives, and this chapter provides additional information on the findings of this study related to what has already been studied on this topic and to offer insight into the findings.

Community College Students' Perceptions of Law Enforcement

In terms of the first objective, results from the study indicate the participants perceive law enforcement as effective, but disagreed that law enforcement personnel are professional. These findings support previous research that found positive attitudes toward law enforcement (Benedict et al., 2000; Chermak et al., 2001; Ekins, 2016); however, there was literature related to this study that contradicts these findings and suggests that public perceptions of law enforcement remains more negative (Callananan & Rosenberger, 2011; Fratelo, et al., 2013; MacAlister, 2011).

The results may suggest that those pursuing further or higher education have a different understanding of criminal justice processes perhaps because of their own level of education, or that of their parents or family members, or because of specific coursework related to civics and policing. As the results were consistent, it appears there was a clear understanding among participants of the difference between police effectiveness and police professionalism. This finding could also be related to students' familiarity with survey research or even the nature of social media they consume.

Community College Students' Perceptions of Law Enforcement: Race and Gender

Objective two of this study was to describe the difference, if any, between community college students' perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender. There were no significant differences among these variables.

Regarding law enforcement effectiveness, data suggested Caucasian and Other (African American, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or two or more races) agreed that law enforcement personnel was effective. The mean for Caucasian participants was 3.62, which was slightly higher than those who identified as Other ($M = 3.58$). Gender differences were similar, with a male mean of 3.42 compared to a female mean of 3.65.

Regarding law enforcement professionalism, Caucasian participants and those who identified as Other disagreed that law enforcement officers were professional, but the difference between races was not significant. Caucasian ($M = 2.73$) participants actually perceived law enforcement officers were more professional than those who identified as Other ($M = 2.89$). Gender differences similar, with a male mean of 3.42 compared to female mean of 3.65.

These findings contradict some of the research that found minority groups tend to view law enforcement less favorably than Caucasians (Reisig & Parks, 2000; Miller & Davis, 2008; Schunk, Rosenbaum, & Hawkins, 2008; Mbuba, 2010, Avdija, 2010; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005). In addition, the results contradict Avdija's (2010) findings that females were more likely to view law enforcement more positively than males, but do support the research conducted by Miller & Davis (2008) and Mbuba (2010) that found male perception is more negative than that of females.

When separating race and gender into their own categories, the study found a comparable mean score for law enforcement effectiveness among Caucasian females ($M = 3.67$), Caucasian males ($M = 3.39$), Other females ($M = 3.59$), and Other males ($M = 3.56$). These means suggest no significant differences in perceptions among participants based on both race and gender in their feeling that law enforcements is effective.

When race and gender were compared in this study for perceptions of law enforcement professionalism, it was found Caucasian females perceived law enforcement professionalism the lowest ($M = 2.66$) and Caucasian male had the highest perceptions ($M = 3.04$). Other female ($M = 2.92$), and Other male ($M = 2.82$) fell in the middle of these comparisons. These means suggest no significant differences and perceptions among both race and gender in their positive perception of law enforcement being effective.

It is possible that females view law enforcement as slightly more effective than males because of the nature of their interaction with officers. Males may be involved more often than females with law enforcement officers and the circumstances of their interaction could be quite different. In terms of professionalism, the slight difference in females' perceptions could be related to factors such as their expectations of law enforcement officers being respectful and using language they consider to be appropriate.

Community College Students' Media Consumption and Perceptions of Law Enforcement

Objective three was to explore whether or not a significant difference in college students' perception toward law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism existed based on media consumption. The results of this study indicated a large percentage of participants consume one hour or less of police-related activities (59%) or no media consumption of police-related activities (24%) via the Internet. Results of this study demonstrated participants who identified

as Other males had the lowest mean score ($M = 0.64$), while Caucasian females had the highest mean score ($M = 1.37$) of media per hour consumed. Other females revealed a mean of 1.10 hours per day of media consumed and Caucasian male media consumption revealed a mean of 1.05 hours per day. These results demonstrate no relationship between media consumption and gender or race.

Research evaluating the amount of public media consumption has revealed a significant increase of nearly 40% between 1997 and 2003 (Roberts & Foehr, 2008). Roberts & Foehr's study (2008) also focused on racial differences, and found African-American children were exposed to more media than whites. Twenge et al. (2018) further contributed to the literature with their finding of significant differences in digital usage in terms of both gender and race. Results from their study revealed that between 2006 – 2016 digital usages among 8 - 12th graders significantly increased. In addition, they reported that in 2008, 52% of 12th graders visited social media sites every day. By mid-2010, 12th graders were spending 6 hours a day either texting, on the Internet, or on social media. Thus, adolescent total "screen time nearly tripled between the late 1970s and 2016" (Twenge, 2018, p. 12); however, results of this study revealed media consumption of police related activity was less than that reported in other studies. They reported in their study only a slightly larger difference in the consumption of social media among African-Americans ($d = .81$) and Caucasians ($d = .67$). Hispanics' rate of consumption ($d = .81$) aligned with African American consumption rates. This study differed from previous studies in that only Internet consumption of police related activity was measured. Additionally, other studies researched traditional means of media such as television or print newspaper.

In this study, Objective 3 did yield a significant difference in community college students' perceptions of law enforcement based on the amount of media consumed. Results

indicated the more hours of media consumed, the less positive were perceptions towards police. Perhaps this is because, as Mbuba (2010) mentioned in his research, most media is skewed toward sensation and emotional appeal; thus, the more police related activity a person consumes the deeper the emotional reaction.

Limitations and Delimitations

As with the majority of studies, the design of the current study is subject to limitations. The first was sample size. This study had a low response rate which lead to a small sample (n=159). The study used a confidence level of 95% and margin of error of 7.72%. An acceptable margin of error by survey researchers falls between 4% to 8% at a 95% confidence level. Future researchers should consider how to increase response rates to reduce margin of error to 5% which is a standard for all research. A second limitation is respondent bias. This study was conducted during a time period where no major law enforcement incidents were being publicized; however, previous incidents such as those involving Michael Brown or Freddie Gray may still have an impact on participants' responses.

A delimitation was this study was bound, as the population of this study focused specifically on three Kansas community colleges; therefore, the study did not include community college students from other states, university students, or those who were not enrolled in a community college. A second delimitation was media consumption. This study focused on total media consumption of the Internet; therefore, it did not include traditional media such as television, newspapers, etc., nor did it break down specific methods of consuming media such as through Facebook, YouTube, applications, etc. Future research should examine or explore the option to include media other than the Internet.

Suggestions for Future Research

The following recommendations are based on the findings of this study:

- This study analyzed community college student perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism. The results revealed a difference between these two areas. Further exploration of each area would provide additional insight into public perception of the police. While law enforcement professionalism in this study was viewed more negatively than law enforcement effectiveness, variables specific to professionalism could be researched. Examples could include verbal and non-verbal components, such as the language used versus body language.
- This study used quantitative methods to explore and describe perceptions of law enforcement using different variables such as race, gender, and media consumption. A qualitative study could be conducted to investigate more deeply reasons why these perceptions of law enforcement exist.
- As Callanan and Rosenberger (2011) recommend, better measures of media consumption (identifying specifics such as a news app, YouTube, etc.) with larger samples could be used to determine influence on attitude towards police. They identified in their research, as a potential limitation, that police supporters may watch more law enforcement crime related television. Graziano and Gauthier (2018) further support examining the coverage of policing to identify trends that may impact public attitudes.
- Research on the types of media consumption could add to further understanding of how these perceptions are developed. Examining whether publicized national news

incidents or day-to-day posted videos (such as those on Facebook or YouTube) might explain how positive or negative perceptions are formed.

- Future research might also explore using a pre-test and post-test research design to evaluate how a specific video may or may not impact perception. A survey could be conducted with community college students before showing a police video and then again after students viewed the same video.

Conclusion

This study used a quantitative research design to provide new information on community college students' perceptions of law enforcement. Although findings from this study suggest that differences in perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism exist based on race and gender, there were no significant differences based on these variables. This would imply that most individuals perceive law enforcement to be effective. Perhaps this is because this population has been exposed to more civic or government education courses, leading to a better understanding of the police actions being officially sanctioned by law. And increased focus on education and training for police in the area of professional practice, as well as education for community members on criminal justice processes used to deal with challenging situations would strengthen relationship between the community and law enforcement. This is important as it provides information that can be used to establish programs to educate both law enforcement and community members.

Results from questions related to the amount of media consumed by community college students were noteworthy; results of this study found most of the respondents viewed one hour or less of police related activity. While previous studies revealed very high consumption rates, this study found that police related activity being consumed by community college students via the

Internet was minimal. The expressed fear, largely by law enforcement, of individuals who are consuming large amounts of controversial police related media was found to be very limited. The study did indicate a significant relationship between the number of hours per day media was consumed and how the participants' perceptions of that media coverage was negative or positive.

Public confidence in law enforcement is necessary for safety and well-being in our society, and a strong relationship between police and community is necessary for this public confidence to exist. Positive public perceptions makes enforcing the law less difficult as law enforcement relies heavily on community members to cooperate and participate with policing efforts. It is often said community members are the eyes and ears of their neighborhoods. As Sir Robert Peel identified in 1829, "Police are the public, and the public are the police." Law enforcement can only be effective if they have community support in providing information and assistance during investigations. This relationship is critical in providing quality services and minimizing crime, and in maintaining interest in law enforcement as a viable and attractive career option.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: IRB Exempt Approval Letter



UNIVERSITY OF
ARKANSAS

To: Jason L. Sharp
From: Douglas James Adams, Chair
IRB Committee
Date: 04/15/2019
Action: Exemption Granted
Action Date: 04/15/2019
Protocol #: 1903182409
Study Title: Community College Students' Perception of Law Enforcement

The above-referenced protocol has been determined to be exempt.

If you wish to make any modifications in the approved protocol that may affect the level of risk to your participants, you must seek approval prior to implementing those changes. All modifications must provide sufficient detail to assess the impact of the change.

If you have any questions or need any assistance from the IRB, please contact the IRB Coordinator at 109 MLKG Building, 5-2208, or irb@uark.edu.

cc: Kenda Shea Grover, Investigator

Page 1 of 1

APPENDIX B: Vera Institute Approval

From: Daniel Mocombe [mailto:dmocombe@Vera.org]

Sent: Thursday, March 15, 2018 1:58 PM

To: Kenda Shea Grover <kgrover@uark.edu>

Cc: Megan O'Toole <motoole@Vera.org>

Subject: Survey Instrument Use

Hi Kenda,

Thank you for reaching out to us. We are more than happy to grant you permission to adapt the publicly available New York Community Survey. The researchers who designed the survey are no longer staffed at Vera unfortunately. However, if you would like to ask any follow-up questions please feel free to contact anyone from Vera's Policing program.

Best,

Daniel

APPENDIX C: Letter of Invitation

Invitation to Participate

My name is Jason Sharp and I am a doctoral candidate in the Adult and Lifelong Learning program at the University of Arkansas. I am conducting research for my doctoral dissertation on community college students' perception of law enforcement. In particular, we are investigating how students' perceptions of law enforcement are impacted by their media consumption.

We are looking for participants who are willing to complete an online survey that includes questions pertaining to law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism, along with questions related to media consumption and demographics such as age, race, and gender.

Participation is completely voluntary, and the survey should take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

To begin, simply click on the following link:

https://uark.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8uXZj7XmxtDnctT

If you have any questions about the study or would just like more information, please email me at jls042@uark.edu, or you may call my office phone at *****.

For questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact Ro Windwalker, the University's IRB Coordinator, at (479) 575-2208 or by e-mail at irb@uark.edu.

Sincerely,

Jason Sharp

APPENDIX D: Informed Consent

Community College Students' Perception of Law Enforcement

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Principal Researcher: Jason Sharp

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Kenda Grover

INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

You are invited to participate in a research study about college student's perceptions of law enforcement officers. You are being asked to participate in this study because you have been identified as a community college student.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE RESEARCH STUDY

Who is the Principal Researcher?

Jason Sharp, Doctoral Candidate in Adult and Lifelong Learning

jls042@uark.edu

Who is the Faculty Advisor?

Dr. Kenda Grover, Associate Professor of Adult and Lifelong Learning, University of Arkansas

kgrover@uark.edu

479-575-2675

What is the purpose of this research study?

The purpose of this study is to explore community college students' perception of law enforcement.

The specific objectives of the study are to describe students' perception of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism and the difference, if any, between students' perceptions of law enforcement effectiveness and professionalism based on race and gender. Additionally, the study will explore students' perception toward law enforcement based on their consumption of media.

Who will participate in this study?

College students from nineteen Kansas Community Colleges.

What am I being asked to do?

Your participation will require you to answer a variety of questions about your perception of law enforcement officers through an online survey.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?

There are no anticipated risks to participating in the survey.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

Possible benefits of participation include making a contribution to the body of knowledge related to how law enforcement officers are, and how the profession is, perceived by community college students.

How long will the study last?

The participant will complete a web-based survey that is expected to take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

Will I receive compensation for my time and inconvenience if I choose to participate in this study?

No

Will I have to pay for anything?

No, there will be no cost associated with your participation in the study.

What are the options if I do not want to be in the study?

If you do not want to be in this study, you may refuse to participate. Also, you may refuse to participate at any time during the study. Your relationship with the community college will not be affected in any way if you refuse to participate.

How will my confidentiality be protected?

All information provided is considered confidential; names will not be included or in any other way associated with the data collected in this study.

Will I know the results of the study?

At the conclusion of the study you will have the right to request feedback about the results. You may contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Kenda Grover, kgrover@uark.edu or Principal Researcher, Jason Sharp, jls042@uark.edu

What do I do if I have questions about the research study?

You have the right to contact the Principal Researcher or Faculty Advisor as listed below with any concerns you may have.

Jason Sharp, doctoral candidate in Adult and Lifelong Learning

jls042@uark.edu

Dr. Kenda Grover, Assistant Professor of Adult and Lifelong Learning, University of Arkansas

kgrover@uark.edu

479-575-2675

You may also contact the University of Arkansas Research Compliance office listed below if you have questions about your rights as a participant, or to discuss any concerns about, or problems with the research.

Ro Windwalker, CIP

Institutional Review Board Coordinator

Research Compliance

University of Arkansas

109 MLKG Building

Fayetteville, AR 72701-1201

479-575-2208

irb@uark.edu

I have read the above statement and have been able to ask questions and express concerns, which have been satisfactorily responded to by the investigator. I understand the purpose of the study as well as the potential benefits and risks that are involved. I understand that participation is voluntary. I understand that significant new findings developed during this research will be shared with the participant. By completing this survey, I agree for my responses to be used in this research.

APPENDIX E: Survey Questions

Instructions:

The following questions relate to your perceptions of police effectiveness. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement using this five-point scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree or disagree, 4= Agree and 5=Strongly Agree.

Police Effectiveness

q1 In terms of fighting crime the police do a good job.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q2 The police are prompt in responding to calls for assistance from citizens.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q3 The police are helpful to people who have been victims of a crime.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q4 The police are doing a good job of working together with citizens or communities to solve local problems.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q5 The police are doing a good job of solving the problems that concern their communities.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

Instructions:

The next set of questions relate to your perceptions of police professionalism. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement using this five-point scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree or disagree, 4= Agree and 5=Strongly Agree.

Police Professionalism

q6 It is common for the police to stop people on the street, or people driving in their cars, without good reason.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q7 It is common for the police to use excessive force, for example using their weapons unnecessarily, or using more physical force than required.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q8 It is common for the police to use offensive language when dealing with criminal suspects or other members of the public.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q9 It is common for the police to break the law or break police rules and regulations when carrying out their work.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q10 The police treat citizens respectfully.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

Instructions:

The next set of questions asks about the contact you have had with police. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement using this five-point scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neither agree or disagree, 4= Agree and 5=Strongly Agree.

Police Contacts

q11 The following are some statements about any experiences you may have had **seeking help or assistance** from the police. This could include reporting a crime, asking for assistance, calling or going into a police station, or approaching a police officer on the street. Which of the following best describes your experience?

1. I have approached the police within the last 6 months.
2. I have approached the police within the last 6 - 12 months.
3. I have approached the police in the past, but not within the last 12 months.
4. I have never approached the police.

q12 On the last occasion you approached the police, I was treated respectfully.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. Have never approached the police

q13 The last time I heard about someone approaching the police, it involved:

1. A member of my immediate family
2. Another family relative
3. A personal friend or neighbor
4. Another acquaintance

q14 On that occasion, the police treated that person respectfully.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

q15 Which of the following statements best describes any experiences you may have had **being approached or stopped** by the police. This might involve a police officer stopping you while you were driving or walking, or having an officer come to your home to question you about an incident.

1. The police have approached me within the last 6 months.
2. The police have approached me within the last 6 - 12 months.
3. The police have approached me in the past, but not within the last 12 months.
4. The police have never approached me.

q16 The last time I was approached by the police, I was treated respectfully.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. The police have never approached me

q17 The last time I heard about someone who the police approached, it involved:

1. A member of my immediate family.
2. Another family relative.
3. A personal friend or neighbor.
4. Another acquaintance.

q18 On that occasion, the police treated that person respectfully.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree

Instructions:

The final three questions provide you with the opportunity to tell us about your media consumption.

Media Consumption

q19 In the last 7 days, I have used the Internet (including apps) to watch, listen, or read about police related activity....

1. Every day.
2. 5 or 6 out of the last 7 days.
3. 3 or 4 out of the last 7 days.
4. 1 or 2 out of the last 7 days.
5. None of the last 7 days

q20 In a day, the total number of hours I spend accessing the Internet or apps to watch, listen, or read about police related activity is...

1. 1 hour or less.
2. 2-3 hours a day.
3. 4-6 hours a day.
4. 6 or more hours a day.

q21 The police related activity that I have seen, heard, or read within the last month on the Internet or apps were positive towards police.

1. Strongly agree
2. Agree
3. Neutral
4. Disagree
5. Strongly disagree
6. I have not seen, heard, or read any police related activity.

Instructions:

Please tell us about yourself.

Demographics

q22 Please select your age group.

1. 18 or younger
2. 18-19 years old
3. 20-24 years old
4. 25-34 years old
5. 35-44 years old
6. 45-64 years old
7. 65 or older

q23 Which of the following categories best describes your racial or ethnic heritage?

1. Caucasian
2. African-American
3. Hispanic
4. Asian
5. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
6. American Indian or Alaskan Native
7. Two or more races
8. Unknown

q24 The highest grade or year of school you have completed?

1. Less than high school degree
2. High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent GED)
3. Some college but no degree
4. Associate degree in college (2-year)
5. Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)
6. Master's degree
7. Doctoral degree
8. Professional degree (JD, MD)

q25 Which of the following is your gender?

1. Male
2. Female