Police Practice and Research

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POLICE INTEGRITY IN THE NETHERLANDS AND THE UNITED STATES: AWARENESS AND ALERTNESS

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Police integrity is an important subject for both police theory and practice. This paper presents the results of survey research on the perceptions of police officers in the Netherlands and the USA on two specific aspects of integrity. First, their views on the seriousness of types of integrity violations and, second, the willingness to report deviant behavior (and to break the so-called 'wall of silence'), are examined. The Dutch police appeared in their response to be stricter in norms and values ('awareness') and more willing to report colleagues for violations ('alertness') than their American counterparts. These perceptions of seriousness have, however, changed in the Netherlands and an attempt is made to explain those changing perceptions and also the changes in the willingness to report (based on 47 in-depth interviews with police officers). This paper has led to a provisional model that will be tested in future research.

Keywords: Police integrity; Netherlands; United States; Survey research; Police corruption; Integrity awareness

INTRODUCTION

Police officers play a unique role in enforcing the criminal law on behalf of society and the police organization is, therefore, subjected to more demanding scrutiny of its conduct than almost any other institution. Nevertheless, scandals, official inquiries, and media reporting have periodically called attention to serious deviance from the legal and ethical standards that we can legitimately expect of the police. Policing in some ways uniquely creates

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opportunities and dilemmas that potentially foster deviance from legal, professional and ethical norms. In New York, for instance, the revelations of the Knapp Commission of 1972 and the Mollen Commission of 1994 showed the vulnerability of the police. Scandals have also been reported in police forces in countries such as Britain, Belgium, Germany, Spain, Turkey and Australia (Newburn, 1999; Punch, 2000).

Researching this area is clearly contentious because it relates to significant deviance that the participants do not want exposed and that is generally not openly discussed. There are thorny problems of access, reliability and validity for the researcher. The 'dark figure' of police deviance is probably unknowable because some officers may be ignorant of what takes place in different segments of the force, or may not want to know, while others have obvious reasons for not being honest on the subject because they are implicated in it (Sherman, 1974; Newburn, 1999). There is, furthermore, a powerful norm of not exposing deviance committed by colleagues – the so-called 'blue wall of silence' (also 'blue curtain' or 'the code') – and also a tendency to protect one's profession and organization given that the police are often subject to sustained criticism and can display the closeness of a threatened and defensive 'tribe' (Crank, 1998; Skolnick, 2000).

Although this makes researching police integrity a hazardous methodological venture, we in the Netherlands are trying to tackle the issue by adopting different types of research. In this paper we will sketch the results of two of those projects. First, we will report the results of survey research that we conducted on the perceptions of integrity among police officers, which we will contrast with the perceptions of their American colleagues. Dutch officers appeared to be somewhat stricter in their opinions than American officers. This is particularly true of accepting gratuities such as gifts and free meals. Also, in terms of willingness to report, it appeared that the Dutch police were firmer in their expressed resolve than their American colleagues. However, a direct and convincing explanation for those differences, say preferably through extensive comparative research, is missing.

Fortunately, a second research project brings some clarification. During in-depth interviews with Dutch police officers it became clear that the last decades have brought significant changes both in the officers' perception of the seriousness of integrity violations as well as in the enhanced openness and transparency within the forces. The research enabled us, then, to make conclusions about the importance of a number of factors that seem relevant to these changes: namely, the extent of the corruption problem, and the policies that have been implemented in the Netherlands to fight corruption and safeguard integrity. Of course, caution is necessary with that type of qualitative research. Nevertheless, it does enable us to present a model to be tested in further research. In summary, the model surmises that the willingness to report is determined by the perceptions of seriousness of the violation and the trust in police management. The perception of seriousness is likely to be influenced by the ethical awareness within the institutional environment, by the integrity policies adopted by the forces and by the structural conditions employed to facilitate the impact of those policies on officers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

We participated in a survey research project on Police Integrity under the leadership of Professor Carl Klockars of the University of Delaware with Bill Geller, Maki Haberfeld, Sanja Kutnjak Ivkovich, Bill Harver and Aaron Udess (in various roles and at different stages). Klockars has defined integrity as the normative inclination among the police to resist

temptations to abuse the rights and privileges of their occupation (Klockars, Kutnjak Ivkovich, Harver and Haberfeld, 1997). He decided that the emphasis of the survey should fall on the *perceptions* of police officers about a number of readily recognizable and fairly universal scenarios based primarily on temptations faced by officers in their daily work; to how seriously they took the issues themselves, and to how seriously they thought their organization took them (Klockars *et al.*, 1997; Kutnjak Ivkovich, Harver and Klockars, 1997; Haberfeld, Klockars, Kutnjak Ivkovich and Pagon, 2000). Following research in the USA, in three well-led, well-equipped departments with an emphasis on professionalism and integrity, the project was expanded to include a cross-national, comparative element with surveys in several countries. One of the authors (Punch) was responsible for carrying out the Dutch survey as part of the project.

The project questionnaire comprises 11 scenarios (Table I); then for each scenario identical questions are posed related to how officers felt about the seriousness of the offenses, about the discipline that should and would follow, and about their willingness to report the offenses.[2]

The philosophy behind most of the scenarios or cases is that they concern choices where the police officer could gain some form of advantage by abusing his/her authority. A number of scenarios refer to bribing and fraud; other cases concern classical forms of passive acceptance of advantages arising from the work situation. The other scenarios describe excessive force by an officer, the situation of turning in a fellow officer caught in a drunk-driving incident and a supervisor offering days off in return for a tune-up of the supervisor's car. The questionnaire used in the research in the Netherlands was a translation of the questionnaire used in the comparative research project. This is always linguistically hazardous in that concepts may have different meanings in different cultures. And the scenarios may not have the same relevance in every researched country. This means that a measure of caution has to be exercised in that the advantage of using standard scenarios across cultures, enabling us to make comparisons, has to be balanced against possible linguistic and cultural differences.

Three of the 25 regional Dutch police forces were selected for research on the basis of advice from police and others, on personal contacts and on the expectation that they would be willing to participate. Random sampling was not employed and this was true of the other countries as well. However, an attempt was made to spread the selection around the country to get a broad regional 'balance' in large sized agencies with a mixture of police activities that could roughly be deemed 'representative' of policing throughout the country. The forces were guaranteed anonymity and are, therefore, not named.

The questionnaire was sent out in early to mid-1999. The rules for distribution were as follows. Only 'sworn' police officers were to be involved and not civilians; and the distribution, which was done by the forces themselves, was to be as broad as possible according to branch, age, rank, gender, etc. Of course, respondents were guaranteed anonymity. Three police forces were surveyed; one with between 2000 and 2500 officers and two with about 1000 officers (the average size of the Dutch forces is 1600 officers). The response rates were 69.2, 44.6 and 46.2%, respectively, with 342, 223 and 230 questionnaires being returned.

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[2] The question for seriousness was: 'How serious do YOU consider this behavior to be?' with 1 = 'not at all serious' and 5 = 'very serious' and for willingness to report: 'Do you think YOU would report a fellow police officer who engaged in this behavior?' with 1 = 'definitely not' and 5 = 'definitely yes'.

TABLE I   Case scenarios

Case 1.   *Off-Duty Security System Business*

A police officer runs his own private business in which he sells and installs security devices, such as alarms, special locks, etc. He does this work during his off-duty hours.

Case 2.   *Free Meals, Discounts, on Beat*

A police officer routinely accepts free meals, cigarettes, and other items of small value from merchants on his beat. He does not solicit these gifts and is careful not to abuse the generosity of those who give gifts to him.

Case 3.   *Bribe from Speeding Motorist*

A police officer stops a motorist for speeding. The officer agrees to accept a personal gift of half of the amount of the fine in exchange for not issuing a citation.

Case 4.   *Holiday Gifts from Merchants*

A police officer is widely liked in the community, and on holidays local merchants and restaurant and bar owners show their appreciation for his attention by giving him gifts of food and liquor.

Case 5.   *Theft of Watch at Crime Scene*

A police officer discovers a burglary of a jewelry shop. The display cases are smashed and it is obvious that many items have been taken. While searching the shop, he takes a watch, worth about 2 days' pay for that officer. He reports that the watch had been stolen during the burglary.

Case 6.   *Automobile Repair Shop 5% Kickback*

A police officer has a private arrangement with a local car repair shop to refer the owners of the cars damaged in accidents he attends to the repair shop. In exchange for each referral, he receives a payment of 5% of the repair bill from the shop owner.

Case 7.   *Supervisor: Holiday for Tune-Up*

A police officer, who happens to be a very good auto mechanic, is scheduled to work during coming holidays. A supervisor offers to give him the days off, if he agrees to tune-up the supervisor's personal car. Evaluate the SUPERVISOR'S behavior.

Case 8.   *Cover-Up of Police 'DUI' (Driving Under Influence) Accident*

At 2 a.m. a police officer, who is on duty, is driving his patrol car on a deserted road. He sees a vehicle that has been driven off the road and is stuck in a ditch. He approaches the vehicle and observes that the driver is not hurt but is obviously intoxicated. He also finds that the driver is a police officer. Instead of reporting this accident and offense he transports the driver to his home.

Case 9.   *Drinks to Ignore Late Bar Closing*

A police officer finds a bar on his beat which is still serving drinks a half hour past its legal closing time. Instead of reporting this violation, the police officer agrees to accept a couple of free drinks from the owner.

Case 10.   *Excessive Force on Car Thief*

Two police officers on foot patrol surprise a man who is attempting to break into an automobile. The man flees. They chase him for about two blocks before apprehending him by tackling him and wrestling him to the ground. After he is under control both officers punch him a couple of times in the stomach as punishment for fleeing and resisting.

Case 11.   *Theft from Found Wallet*

A police officer finds a wallet in a parking lot. It contains the amount of money equivalent to a full day's pay for that officer. He reports the wallet as lost property, but keeps the money for himself.

Although it is clear that the research is based on a limited and non-random sample, there are arguments to support the thesis that the perceptions of the officers in the three forces are representative of the selected forces as well as for the Dutch police. First, a number of important characteristics of the group of respondents matched with characteristics of the forces. These included a predominance of constables first-class, brigadiers and inspectors and a relatively small numbers of ordinary constables and senior officers. Roughly 60% belonged to the uniform branch in all three forces; 4–5% worked in administrative positions or in the control room; and that left about 35% who were in general detective functions and specialized units. Most worked in units of between 25 and 75 or 76 and 200 people. Second, we found remarkable similarities in the perceptions of the officers in the three forces, even though the three forces differed considerably in characteristics such as size, region and management style. This suggests, for us quite unexpectedly, a degree of consensus within the Dutch police.

One argument opposing the representative nature of the sample has to be mentioned. The willingness of the leadership of the three police forces to cooperate in the research could be related in some way to the attitudes it expects from those within the organization. The picture might, then, be too positive as it may reflect more progressive forces, or more progressive chiefs, who were willing to cooperate. At the same time it is important to realize that the same stricture applies to the research project in the USA where personal contacts were also used to secure cooperation (Haberfeld *et al.*, 2000).

INTERVIEWS WITH OFFICERS

Another research project is used to shed light on possible explanations of the comparatively aware and alert attitude of Dutch police officers. The project's aim was to collect information about the everyday integrity dilemmas of police officers and their experiences with all sorts of integrity violations. This meant we had to address the issue of how to get police officers to talk freely and fully about dilemmas and violations. We chose to include experienced journalists in the project. Our expectation was that their skills and experience with in-depth interviewing would bring something extra in the information collection and interview reports.

The journalists were informed and trained in the content of the subject matter and a common framework for the interviews was developed. The interviews were semi-structured; they started as open as possible, giving the respondent the opportunity to talk about anything concerning integrity that he or she was worried about. The second part contained precise questions about 10 selected types of integrity violations, the changes that had occurred in this field and the causes that might be relevant to understand these changes (as, for example, openness of the force and the role of management).

The three journalists were selected after an open selection procedure (with more than 60 applicants). All three of them had an academic background (anthropology, theology, psychology), with an interest in scientific research. Some 47 police officers were interviewed, almost all of them 'street-level workers' in different settings. We selected teams involved in community policing, in crime investigation, in arresting dangerous suspects and in youth and vice squads. Additionally, we ensured that officers from different forces and regions of the country were included. Most of the respondents were selected by their team leader (which obviously may have influenced the representativeness). The journalist's impression was that the respondents were generally honest and open, but that not all of them were willing to tell everything about more specific integrity violations.

TABLE II   Perception of seriousness of 11 scenarios and the willingness to report

Cases	Rank[a]	Seriousness Own view Average	Std. dev.	Reporting Own view Average
Case 5 – Crime Scene Theft of Watch	11	5.00	0.05	4.87
Case 3 – Bribe from Speeding Motorist	10	4.98	0.17	4.67
Case 11 – Theft from Found Wallet	9	4.87	0.49	4.49
Case 7 – Supervisor: Holiday for Tune-Up	8	4.67	0.59	4.13
Case 9 – Drinks to Ignore Late Bar Closing	7	4.57	0.62	3.78
Case 10 – Excessive Force on Car Thief	6	4.56	0.69	3.79
Case 6 – Auto Repair Shop 5% Kickback	5	4.37	0.86	3.93
Case 2 – Free Meals, Discounts, on Beat	4	4.28	0.80	3.42
Case 4 – Holiday Gifts from Merchants	3	4.11	0.87	3.49
Case 8 – Cover-Up of Police DUI Accident	2	3.83	1.03	3.12
Case 1 – Off-Duty Security System Business	1	2.53	1.32	2.25

[a] From most serious (11) to least serious (1).

RESULTS: SERIOUSNESS OF CASES

On the issue of seriousness of the cases presented in the survey research, there was almost complete agreement across all three regional police forces that were investigated. This seems to reflect a *strong consensus* among Dutch police officers as to what they considered serious. The respondents also felt that others would think similarly. Table II gives a general indication of the responses from Dutch officers on the seriousness of violations of integrity. The scenarios are placed in relation to their ranking. Case 5 'Crime Scene Theft of Watch' is considered the most serious and is accorded a rank order of 11. On a scale from 1 to 5 the average is 5.00; that means that virtually everyone found this quite serious. Case 1 'Off-Duty Security System Business' is held to be the least serious and scored on average 2.53. The standard deviation is also important. It indicates how large the range of answers was; the less the range, the more the respondents agreed with one another. The third column in the table shows that the answers are most diverse on the scenarios that were considered less serious (standard deviations more than 1.0). On the two most serious cases there was almost complete unanimity (standard deviation 0.05 and 0.17).

Almost all the scenarios have an average of more than 4 on seriousness. This means that almost all the cases scored on average as serious to quite serious. Only Cases 1 and 8 scored lower. Running one's own business clearly received the most 'tolerance' (score 2.53 indicates that on the scale from not serious to very serious, it scored in the middle). Also, bringing home a drunken colleague, who landed in a ditch with his car, was treated fairly leniently compared with the other cases (score 3.38).

The top three contain the scenarios 3, 5 and 11 with an average above 4.75. Many respondents clearly considered these serious offenses. The scenarios have in common that they relate to a combination of abuse of duty plus direct personal profit (theft of watch, theft from wallet, taking a bribe from a speeding motorist). These two elements are also to be

TABLE III Relation between perception of seriousness and the willingness to report

Cases[a]	Own view (very) serious/(definitely) not report (%)	Others view (very) serious/(definitely) not report (%)
Case 5 – Crime Scene Theft of Watch	0.5	0.6
Case 3 – Bribe from Speeding Motorist	1.7	1.3
Case 11 – Theft from Found Wallet	3.6	3.3
Case 7 – Supervisor: Holiday for Tune-Up	6.3	8.0
Case 9 – Drinks to Ignore Late Bar Closing	12.6	13.4
Case 10 – Excessive Force on Car Thief	11.4	15.0
Case 6 – Auto Repair Shop 5% Kickback	5.1	6.1
Case 2 – Free Meals, Discounts, on Beat	17.0	19.9
Case 4 – Holiday Gifts from Merchants	10.0	11.0
Case 8 – Cover-Up of Police DUI Accident	14.2	18.1
Case 1 – Off-Duty Security System Business	16.5	26.1

[a] From most serious to least serious.

found in the free drinks after closing time, but that appears to relate to a more acceptable form of gaining advantage (relatively limited in scope and the officer is passive in his orientation). The same sort of reasoning seems to be at work with Case 6, the agreed sum for passing on work to a garage (which in a way is surprising because it concerns accepting almost a form of bribe – or certainly a 'kickback'). The judgment is also mild when the profit is not directly related to a specific act for a particular individual by the officer – the free meals and generous holiday gifts can be found in the lower middle range.

To what extent does judging behavior negatively also lead to reporting that behavior? Table II shows that Dutch police officers were not prepared to report every matter that they considered quite serious. Police employees were not very willing to report about free meals, holiday gifts, a drunken colleague and the off-duty business (average is less than 3.5).

SERIOUSNESS AND REPORTING

When one compares the averages for perception of seriousness and willingness to report, a strong relationship shows. Officers who see integrity violations as 'more serious' are more willing to report the violation. This is also apparent in the Pearson correlation coefficient for all cases: it is (strongly) positive and significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. However, if we want to know the strength of the 'code of silence,' we should look at the respondents who perceive the violation as (very) serious but state that they are (definitely) not willing to report the violation. Table III shows these results.

It is clear that willingness to report is influenced by the overall ranking of the seriousness of the case. Of the 'strict' respondents only a few would not be willing to report the two cases that are generally perceived as most serious. Six cases show that, notwithstanding the moral condemnation of the cases, relatively many respondents were still not willing to report the

violation. On the one hand there are the two dilemmas where loyalty to colleagues, and mutual dependence, play a role: protecting colleagues using excessive force (11.4% of the strict respondents were not willing to report) and protecting a drunken colleague stuck in a ditch (14.2%). On the other hand, there are three cases that include limited forms of private benefit: accepting free meals (17.0%), presents on holidays (10.0%), and drinks for late closing (12.6%). The sixth case concerns the off-duty security system business where 16.5% of the strict respondents are not willing to report. In order to complete the picture, we also looked at the respondents who thought the violations were not (at all) serious and were, therefore, not willing to report. This analysis was limited by the small number of respondents who perceived the violations as not (at all) serious.

Nevertheless, we can conclude that even if respondents think there is no (serious) violation, about 10% was still somewhat willing to report the violation (highest about 40%, lowest about 2%). This probably implies that respondents may put their own perception of seriousness aside as they recognize that the organization will hold a different opinion on the subject.

Others

The question was also raised as to how respondents think that their colleagues feel on the subject of seriousness and reporting. Respondents tended to expect that their colleagues would judge a situation as less serious and would report it less. For all respondents together, it is the case that 3.5% considered that their colleagues would judge more strictly, that 77.6% saw no difference and 18.9% perceived themselves to be stricter. More prominent were the differences in the data on reporting; 7.1% thought that others are more likely to report, 61.6% saw no difference, while 31.4% believed that they themselves would be more likely to sound the alarm.

Table III looks at this issue from another perspective. The results show that, except for a few cases, there were relatively small differences between the percentage of respondents who perceived the cases as (very) serious but were nonetheless not willing to report, and their perception of how others fare on this issue. The exceptions were the cover-up of the driving under influence (DUI) (14.2% own perception and 18.1% perception of others), and the excessive force (11.4% vs. 15.0%) where loyalty to colleagues plays a role, and most of all the off-duty security business (16.5% vs. 26.1%). This latter case might reflect the lack of unanimity between respondents on this issue (the case had a lowest ranking with an average of 2.53 and the highest standard deviation with 1.32).

On the one hand this justifies the conclusion that most officers will report offenses that are considered to be serious and they expect the same attitude from their colleagues. On the other hand, it is clear that the overall willingness to report is somewhat less than the individual willingness. Overall the cases with the least likeliness of reporting are cases which involve on the one hand gratuities such as free meals, holiday gifts, and drinks to ignore closing a late bar, with on the other hand loyalty to colleagues such as helping a colleague caught at a DUI and the excessive force on a car thief. Then lastly there are cases which lack unanimity on perceived seriousness among colleagues such as the off-duty business.

COMPARISON WITH CROSS-NATIONAL DATA

As mentioned before, the research in the Netherlands was part of an international project and this offers the chance to compare countries. Is the Dutch police officer more or

TABLE IV Differences between five countries: own perceptions of seriousness of cases

Cases	Average/rank				
	Netherlands	USA	Slovenia	Croatia	Poland
Case 1 – Off-Duty Security System Business	2.53 1	1.46 1	2.73 3	2.57 2	2.29 1
Case 2 – Free Meals, Discounts, on Beat	4.28 4	2.60 2	2.80 4	3.01 4	3.70 5
Case 3 – Bribe from Speeding Motorist	4.98 10	4.92 10	4.78 10	4.47 9	4.79 10
Case 4 – Holiday Gifts from Merchants	4.11 3	2.84 3	1.99 1	2.13 1	3.21 3
Case 5 – Crime Scene Theft of Watch	5.00 11	4.95 11	4.87 11	4.72 11	4.80 11
Case 6 – Auto Repair Shop 5% Kickback	4.37 5	4.50 7	4.32 8	3.86 7	4.02 6
Case 7 – Supervisor: Holiday for Tune-Up	4.67 8	4.18 6	4.15 7	4.09 8	4.18 7
Case 8 – Cover-Up of Police DUI Accident	3.83 2	3.03 4	2.37 2	2.79 3	3.02 2
Case 9 – Drinks to Ignore Late Bar Closing	4.57 7	4.54 8	3.81 6	3.85 6	4.77 9
Case 10 – Excessive Force on Car Thief	4.56 6	4.05 5	3.01 5	3.03 5	3.46 4
Case 11 – Theft from Found Wallet	4.87 9	4.85 9	4.70 9	4.55 10	4.48 8

less critical about misbehavior and more or less prepared to speak out about that misconduct than others? Comparable data are available for the USA, Slovenia, Croatia and Poland. Table IV presents the data from the different countries about views on the seriousness of the scenarios (Punch, Huberts and Lamboo, 2000; based on Haberfeld *et al.*, 2000).

The first conclusion that emerges is that there is considerable agreement across countries on *ranking*. It is the forms of theft and corruption that were generally most condemned. Kickbacks from the garage, misuse of office by the supervisor, and excessive violence belong to the middle categories. And running own company, free meals, helping a drunken colleague, and presents at holiday time were treated the most leniently.

Nevertheless, it is also noticeable that there appear to be remarkable differences between police perceptions of seriousness in the different countries (the averages in Table IV). The officers in the Netherlands clearly differed from the four other countries: the Dutch respondents considered most scenarios more serious. We focus on the differences between the USA and the Netherlands – on the grounds that Eastern Europe represents, in some respects, a less readily comparable policing situation given that until recently the police was more of a centralized, semi-military agency of state control.

Only one scenario was perceived as more serious by US officers: the kickback from the garage owner (for recommending clients for repairs to their car). This is in line

TABLE V   Differences between the Netherlands and USA in respect to perception of seriousness and reporting

Cases	Own seriousness			Own reporting			Others reporting		
	NLD	USA	NLD – USA	NLD	USA	NLD – USA	NLD	USA	NLD – USA
Case 1 – Off-Duty Security System Business	2.53	1.46	1.07	2.25	1.37	0.88	2.12	1.46	0.66
Case 2 – Free Meals, Discounts, on Beat	4.28	2.60	1.68	3.42	1.94	1.48	3.03	1.82	1.21
Case 3 – Bribe from Speeding Motorist	4.98	4.92	0.06	4.67	4.19	0.48	4.34	3.92	0.42
Case 4 – Holiday Gifts from Merchants	4.11	2.84	1.27	3.49	2.36	1.13	3.20	2.28	0.92
Case 5 – Crime Scene Theft of Watch	5.00	4.95	0.05	4.87	4.54	0.33	4.69	4.34	0.35
Case 6 – Auto Repair Shop 5% Kickback	4.37	4.50	–0.13	3.93	3.95	–0.02	3.55	3.71	–0.16
Case 7 – Supervisor: Holiday for Tune-Up	4.67	4.18	0.49	4.13	3.45	0.68	3.80	3.29	0.51
Case 8 – Cover-Up of Police DUI Accident	3.83	3.03	0.80	3.12	2.34	0.78	2.88	2.28	0.60
Case 9 – Drinks to Ignore Late Bar Closing	4.57	4.54	0.03	3.78	3.73	0.05	3.42	3.47	–0.05
Case 10 – Excessive Force on Car Thief	4.56	4.05	0.51	3.79	3.39	0.40	3.29	3.07	0.22
Case 11 – Theft from Found Wallet	4.87	4.85	0.02	4.49	4.23	0.26	4.19	3.96	0.23
Average score	4.34	3.81	0.54	3.81	3.23	0.59	3.50	3.05	0.48

with the situation that kickbacks to the police are only a minor issue in discussions about police integrity and police corruption in the Netherlands. This might be due to the lack of commercial competition in sectors as car towing or ambulance services. All the other forms of misconduct attracted a more critical evaluation from the Dutch officers than from their American colleagues. With regard to five offenses there were scarcely differences, these are the serious cases that were widely condemned. On six scenarios relating to the minor offenses, however, there was quite some variation.

The judgment clearly differed with regard to the minor 'perks' that in many countries seem to be associated with the standard, informal benefits of being a police officer. The free meal and holiday gifts were not exactly offenses that the average American police officer saw as morally reprehensible (score on seriousness 2.60 and 2.84). The opinion on this within the Dutch police was quite different; these were seen as serious or very serious (scores 4.28 and 4.11); the difference between the Dutch and American officers amounts to 1.68 and 1.27.

Another question is whether the differences in police perception are reflected in their willingness to report behavior. The second column of Table V offers an answer. First, it is important to note that the perception of seriousness seems very important for the willingness to report on the part of the Dutch as well as the American police officers. Of course, that is hardly a surprising conclusion, but it is nevertheless important because it means that it is plausible that changing attitudes on seriousness will lead to more willingness to report. Second, the research makes very clear that police employees are not willing to report every case of serious deviance by colleagues. The gap between the view on seriousness and the willingness to report points at the existence of the 'blue wall of silence.' The average for seriousness in the Netherlands is 4.34, the average for willingness

to report is 3.81 (difference of 0.53). In the USA these figures are 3.81 and 3.23 (difference 0.58). The differences between 'seriousness' and 'willingness to report' are an indicator of the 'height' of the wall.[3]

Although there is certainly a wall of silence, for the Netherlands its dominance should not be exaggerated. A clear majority of Dutch police officers said they would report unacceptable behavior concerning more serious cases of police deviance. Some skepticism must be added, however, as is shown by the research results concerning the officers' opinions about whether the colleagues in the force are willing to report. Table V shows that there is a difference between the officers' own willingness to report and the willingness of others to report misconduct. The average score for 'Own reporting' is 3.81, for 'Others reporting' 3.50 (for the USA comparable differences can be seen, with the figures 3.23 and 3.05).

Table V also illustrates that some optimism is justified concerning the detection of more serious forms of police corruption, fraud and crime (as in Cases 3, 5 and 11). Officers were willing to report these cases and expected that other officers would do the same (the lowest score for these cases is for 'Others reporting' Case 3 in the USA, but the score on a 5-point scale is still 3.92). Pessimism is more adequate concerning other types of police deviance. This clearly raises the issue whether police forces are sufficiently informed about the milder forms of misconduct, such as accepting free meals.

Nevertheless, in terms of willingness to report it is also clear that the Dutch police were more alert than their American colleagues. The own willingness to report as well as others' alertness was substantially higher in the Netherlands. We come, then, to a modest conclusion that the Dutch police officers displayed a strong consciousness on integrity (*awareness*), at least in comparison with their colleagues in the USA, which resulted in more willingness to report violations of integrity (*alertness*). Of course, this immediately provokes the question what causes are responsible for this situation.

EXPLAINING DIFFERENCES IN AWARENESS AND ALERTNESS

What might explain the differences in problem awareness and alertness between the US and Dutch police? It is clear that the willingness to report (*alertness*) is very much determined by the perception of seriousness of the integrity violation. Additionally, the trust in police management and their policies might have significant influence on alertness. When police officers have no confidence in their leaders, they might refuse to report their colleagues. An indicator of this trust might be the perception of fairness of disciplinary measures.

Table VI shows that there are differences between the perception of fairness in Dutch and American police forces. This seems especially true for cases such as 'free meals' and 'holiday gifts' and less relevant for cases of corruption and fraud.

The table shows there is a difference in perception of fairness between the USA and the Netherlands, although it should not be exaggerated. More American officers thought the forces were too harsh and this could partly explain their reluctance to report unethical behavior. So it seems justified to consider the perception of fairness of policies to be the explanatory factors of the differences in willingness to report between the USA and the Netherlands.

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[3] For the international comparison only the average scores on the variables are available. It is therefore not possible to compare differences in percentage of respondents on strictness vs. not willing to report.

TABLE VI   Percentage of Dutch and US police officers finding discipline too harsh or too lenient, by case

Cases	Discipline too harsh		Discipline too lenient	
	NLD (%)	USA (%)	NLD (%)	USA (%)
Case 1 – Off-Duty Security System Business	17.3	13.1	10.5	2.9
Case 2 – Free Meals, Discounts, on Beat	16.3	26.5	13.8	9.0
Case 3 – Bribe from Speeding Motorist	10.4	9.4	13.9	11.9
Case 4 – Holiday Gifts from Merchants	16.4	27.0	8.9	6.7
Case 5 – Crime Scene Theft of Watch	2.3	3.4	3.8	7.6
Case 6 – Auto Repair Shop 5% Kickback	12.9	12.5	10.7	7.7
Case 7 – Supervisor: Holiday for Tune-Up	6.5	10.3	22.6	18.6
Case 8 – Cover-Up of Police DUI Accident	23.8	30.3	7.9	6.8
Case 9 – Drinks to Ignore Late Bar Closing	11.0	13.4	8.3	8.3
Case 10 – Excessive Force on Car Thief	14.2	21.5	10.8	6.9
Case 11 – Theft from Found Wallet	7.9	6.9	8.4	9.5

CHANGES IN DUTCH AWARENESS

The most important factor for alertness seems to be the perception of seriousness. What explains the differences in that *awareness* between the Netherlands and the USA? In order to answer that question we would need a plausible explanatory model with factors to take into consideration as well as data about those variables for the USA as well as the Netherlands. Because there is no such model, and because the international research was limited to the perceptions, we have to follow an indirect research strategy.

We focus on the development of integrity awareness in the Netherlands because this awareness has changed significantly during the last decades. This was shown by research that included in-depth interviews with 47 police officers about moral dilemmas and integrity violations in their work (Huberts, Naeyé, Busato, van Zweden and Berger, 2003). The results are summarized below:

1. There appeared to be a far-reaching consensus on the seriousness of many of the distinguished 10 types of integrity violations, which is based on shared common experiences in the first years within the police (working out on the street). The types of violations that have been discussed with officers were (1) corruption including bribing, nepotism, cronyism and patronage; (2) fraud and theft; (3) conflict of (private and public) interest, e.g., through assets or gifts; (4) conflict of interest through jobs and activities; (5) improper use of violence; (6) other improper methods of policing (improper means for often 'noble causes'; Crank and Caldero, 2000); (7) abuse and manipulation of information; (8) discrimination and sexual harassment (indecent conduct toward colleagues or citizens); (9) the waste and abuse of resources and (10) misconduct in off-duty, private time.

2. The classical dilemma between the organizational duty to 'report misconduct of a fellow officer' and 'loyalty and collegiality' was recognized and acknowledged by many respondents. The research does not enable clear conclusions on the officers' actual

behavior in those situations. The attitudes towards 'silence' differ, also when misconduct is considered serious (for example: driving under the influence of alcohol). It makes it plausible that the willingness to report is influenced by one's perceptions of the reactions of colleagues (the perception that others would not report will have a negative impact on one's own willingness to do so).

3. There was unanimity that the Dutch police have undergone significant changes concerning integrity: it has even become something of a 'hot item.' Integrity has become a topic of debate in many meetings of police chiefs, politicians and policymakers and in diverse contexts. Most importantly, norms and behavior have changed, most prominently concerning aspects of a police macho-culture, such as not dealing adequately with emotions after stressful situations and watching pornography during night shifts instead of working, and conflicts of interest issues (accepting gifts, drinks, and meals). Until the late 1980s, it was for example accepted common practice within the Dutch police to accept discounts on meals, whereas nowadays accepting benefits and gifts is commonly seen as an unacceptable violation of police standards and morals.

4. There was almost complete unanimity among the police officers on the changing role of police chiefs and police management: they are far more than in the past presenting a 'good example,' and there is less doubt about the integrity of management.

5. The changes mentioned developed slowly over time during more than a decade, starting in the 1980s. Officers most often mentioned the following causes for the changing importance of integrity: governmental and force integrity policies, the reorganizations of the police (which opened up working teams to more scrutiny) and changing values and norms in the wider environment (society).

Before we elaborate on these three causes let us add that there is no evidence that there have been fundamental changes in the extent of corruption during the research period (1985–2000). The Netherlands does not have an extensive record of corruption in public life in general and in the police in particular. There have been a few police scandals, in the 1970s in Amsterdam for example (Punch, 1985), but widespread police corruption and embedded municipal corruption are not held to be typical of Dutch public life (Huberts, 1995; van Kesteren, Mayhew and Nieuwbeerta, 2001). Nevertheless, despite the relative absence of overt corruption cases and scandals, integrity has reached the national political agenda and now plays a role in *every* Dutch police force. In fact, we can determine precisely when the subject was launched in the public arena.

The late Ms Ien Dales, then Minister of Home Affairs, brought up the matter in a speech in 1992. She responded to a few cases of corruption in local government, particularly related to tendering for contracts by firms and (small) payoffs to local politicians. Those cases attracted extra attention because of the discovery at that time of large-scale corruption in countries like Italy (Operation 'Clean Hands' and the devastating effect on the political parties held responsible for it). Another important factor for Minister Dales was the fear that organized crime was becoming powerful enough to infiltrate local and even central government but also the police (there was something of a 'moral panic' about organized crime at the time).

Since 1992, then, *every police force* in the country has been required to take initiatives to implement integrity policies (Van der Steeg, Lamboo and Nieuwendijk, 2000). It meant that Dutch forces have gone through a cycle of attempts to increase the awareness and to influence the behavior of police officers. Police management claims that its policies have

something to do with the increased awareness, but there is no real proof for the causal link (an alternative explanation might be that all of society has become more involved in issues of 'morals' and 'ethics'). Nevertheless, as the interviews with officers have shown, these explicit policies cannot be ignored.

Integrity policies were developed concerning a broad range of integrity violations, including policies concerning gratuities, and unacceptable forms of conflict of interest through second jobs and activities. The integrity policies are also diverse in the type of instruments that are employed. Policies concern structure (compliance, control, rules, audits and inspections) as well as culture (codes, training, personnel policies, and good example by management). These policies have been framed as integrity policies, contributing to the quality and professionalism of policing. It is not or not only about preventing what is wrong (corruption, fraud, etc., but also about doing 'the right thing').

This broad integrity policy is in line with, and extends, the hypothesis of Anechiarico and Jacobs (1996) based on extensive research on anti-corruption policies of the New York Police and city administration. They stressed the negative consequences of those policies, creating ineffectiveness without always diminishing corruption. In a comparative study of the Netherlands and the USA, Anechiarico later stated that Dutch governmental and societal anti-corruption policies seemed more successful because more attention has been paid to cultural change (Anechiarico, 1998; Fijnaut and Huberts, 2002). This might also account for the described differences between the Dutch and American police.

Additionally, changes in the police organization, culture and environment have to be considered as possible causes of the increasing awareness of the Dutch police. A number of developments are worth mentioning. First, there is the reorganization of the police at the beginning of the 1990s into 25 regional and 1 national police force. This major institutional reform fits into a tendency towards centralization of policies, with more possibilities for the Ministries of Home Affairs and Justice to steer and influence the police organization and policies. On the other hand it also led to the reorganization and breaking up of existing teams which helped change existing habits. This effect of restructuring police forces has also been experienced in the UK (Dixon, 1999). Second, the environment changed concerning a reappearance of morals and ethics on the political agenda on the one hand and a rising fear of (organized) crime on the other. Since the early 1990s, news on the malfunctioning of governmental agencies has created minor scandals and has kept alive the public debate on the integrity of government. As mentioned before, the possible corruptive role of organized crime in Dutch society alarmed the Minister of the Interior, which, in turn, also influenced police integrity policies. Apart from this indirect influence through policies, the public debate on governmental morals and the public fear of organized crimes might also have had a direct influence on the awareness of police officers and teams.

The discussion of factors gives rise to a model that might be tested in future research. The model does not explain what the content or extent of integrity violations will be. The model shows which factors are important for the willingness of officers to report an integrity violation (Fig. 1). This willingness to report or 'alertness' is determined by the perceptions of seriousness of the violation and the trust in police management (its policies and use of sanctions). The perception of seriousness of a certain integrity violation is influenced (directly and indirectly) by the ethical awareness of the environment, by the integrity policies of the forces (importance of the issue, compliance factors as well as altering culture) and the structural conditions that facilitate transmitting policy to the officers.
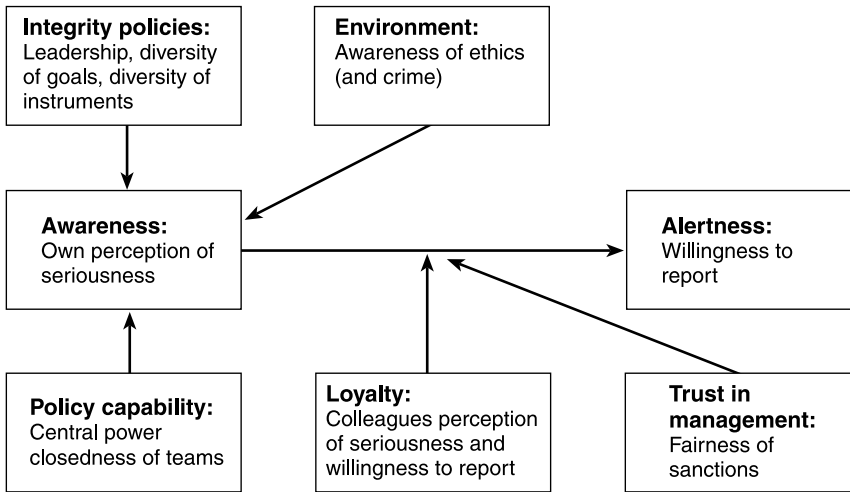
FIGURE 1   A model to explain changes in integrity awareness and alertness

CONCLUSIONS

First, we have to place the reported findings in a context of qualifications about the research. The limitations that are inherent in integrity research have to be taken into account. This does imply that the data and conclusions have to be approached with some caution. Nevertheless, we do feel strengthened in our view that valuable information and insights on this area can be gleaned. In this paper we reported about the research in the Netherlands as part of the international comparative research project of Klockars, Haberfeld, Ivkovich Kutnjak and others on the perceptions on the problem of police integrity.

A consensus on seriousness emerges strongly from the surveys in five researched countries. A fair amount of consensus existed when officers were asked to rank the 11 offenses. This aspect of integrity, the police perception of a hierarchical ordering of misconduct, seems to be near universal. The variation is to be found in the intensity with which the various forms of misconduct are viewed as serious. The Dutch officers judged 9 of the 11 cases of the international comparative survey as serious or very serious. In a comparison with the American survey we can see that the Dutch officers were definitely stricter in their opinions than American officers. This was particularly true of accepting gifts during one's duty.

The research makes clear that police employees were not willing to report every case of deviance by colleagues. The gap between the views on seriousness and the willingness to report indicates the existence of the 'blue wall of silence,' although the importance of the wall – in the perception of the police themselves – should not be exaggerated. A clear majority of Dutch police officers said they would report unacceptable behavior concerning more serious cases of police deviance.

Dutch officers seemed more aware and more alert in this area than their colleagues in the USA. A number of explanations were examined, based on the analysis of changing integrity awareness in the police in the Netherlands (drawing on in-depth interviews with officers). It

resulted in a model to be tested. The model states that the willingness to report or alertness is determined by the perceptions of seriousness of the violation and the trust in police managements' reactions to reports; the perception of seriousness is influenced by the ethical awareness in the environment, by the integrity policies of the forces and by structural conditions harnessed to facilitate policy influence on officers.

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