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RELATIONSHIP AMONG DEPARTMENT SATISFACTION, TRAINING AND
POLICE BEHAVIOR

by

Matthew Garvin

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate School,
the College of Arts and Sciences
and the School of Criminal Justice, Forensic Science, and Security
at The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

The call for police reform has been sparked by incidents involving the shooting and killing of individuals by the police. Public and political scrutiny of police behavior and procedures has created a social identity of “Us Versus Them” mentality among police officers. Proactive policing strategies have diminished in response to the heightened scrutiny of police procedures and behavior, in turn, initiating a reduction in police protection and an increase in crime. While research has identified the importance of police presence, the literature does not yet answer questions regarding factors which influence police proactivity. To address the gap in understanding, this project examines the relationships among police agency satisfaction, training and police proactivity and illustrates the important role of police agency culture and its impact on police behavior. These findings can be utilized and potentially implemented to reform police practice by developing programs and policies to encourage police proactivity which is grounded in evidence-based training and programming.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>PPB</i>	Portland Police Bureau
<i>NYPD</i>	New York Police Department
<i>APD</i>	Atlanta Police Department
<i>SOP</i>	Standard Operating Procedures
<i>COP</i>	Community Oriented Policing
<i>FTO</i>	Field Training Officer

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION

During 2020, the United States experienced social and political events which resulted in increased concerns with police conduct and tactics. Police in America encountered heavy scrutiny from political actors, the media, and the public. Amplified media coverage regarding several high-profile fatal encounters with police persisted throughout 2020 highlighting police use of force during encounters with African Americans. These events revealed much about police behavior and created national dialogue regarding structural and systemic racism (Arden, 2021; Byers, 2014; Flores et al., 2020; Ford, 2020; Martin, 2021; Rodack, 2022; Silverman & Sanchez, 2020; Yancey-Bragg, 2020).

The increased and sustained media attention would soon create major issues within the ranks of police departments across the country (Arden, 2021; Byers, 2014; Flores et al., 2020; Ford, 2020; Martin, 2021; Silverman & Sanchez, 2020; Yancey-Bragg, 2020). Social and political questions regarding the need for and importance of law enforcement arose in several major cities where discussions on defunding police began to be more prevalent (Yancey-Bragg, 2020). “Defunding the police” is not a new demand, rather this movement began during the 1960s when raised by civil rights activists (Tchoukleva et al., 2020). Initially, the movement focused on abolition of the prison industrial complex. Activists like Angela Davis urged society to develop long-lasting alternatives to punishment and imprisonment and to create conditions within communities’ police are obsolete (Tchoukleva et al., 2020).

Across the country, city leaders have begun to defund police departments in several major cities (National Police Support Fund, 2021; Yancey-Bragg, 2020; Zaru &

Simpson, 2020). According to the National Police Support Fund (2021), New York City defunded their police department by \$1 billion and Seattle defunded the police department by \$850,000. Many politicians have called for more defunding of the police to curb systemic racism, inequality, and injustice (Zaru & Simpson, 2020). Moral among police officers continue to drop since the widespread de-policing among officers in response to the shooting death of Michael Brown in 2014 in Ferguson, Missouri. Police started withdrawing from daily police work in response to the negative publicity that was placed on police agencies (Shjarback et. al, 2017). St. Louis Police Chief Sam Dotson devised the term “Ferguson Effect” when discussing the hesitancy of officers to enforce laws due to the fear of the public and the threat of legal action (Byers, 2014). As cities begin to defund police departments and decriminalize disorderly conduct, what will happen to the crime rates (Mack, 2022; Yancey-Bragg, 2020)?

March 2020 brought attention to police procedures and use of force. Following the death of Taylor, protests and riots erupted throughout Louisville, Kentucky and all over the country, speaking out against police culture and systemic racism (Martin, 2021). People in these communities believe that police procedures were unfair to minorities, specifically African Americans (Datz, 2017). The Louisville Police Department began to see officers leaving the department through resignations and retirements at a higher rate than before. According to an article in the Newsweek publication (2021), about seventy-five percent of police officers with the Louisville Police Department indicated that they would leave the department if given the opportunity. This study was conducted by the analysis and assessment firm Hillard Heintze which stated that the turnover is mainly due

to serious morale issues within the police department, a report that comes only ten months after the death of Breonna Taylor (Martin, 2021).

Several news articles from different media outlets have reported on police morale issues throughout the United States (Arden, A., 2021; Flores, J. et al., 2020; Ford, H., 2020; Silverman & Sanchez, 2020; Yancey-Bragg, 2020). Media coverage of low morale is more prevalent, uncovering specific issues that officers are encountering. Portland Police Bureau (PPB) in Portland, Oregon is one department that is experiencing low morale issues among police officers. Officers from this department stated their concerns in exit interviews that are voluntarily completed when an officer leaves a department (Arden, 2021). Community members insulting the police, constant scrutiny from the city council, and working excessive hours are among the reasons that officers left the PPB (Arden, 2021). A thirty-year-old male officer expressed that he lost all faith, trust, and respect for the city's leadership (Arden, 2021). The fear of retribution and prosecution by the district attorney has triggered several officers to seek employment with other departments or to leave the law enforcement career all together (Arden, 2021). Support from elected officials and department administration is a quality that police officers look for in an employer (Arden, 2021). Officers begin to question the loyalty of their leaders and administration when they are seen supporting those that are creating the disturbances that the officers are called to control (Arden, 2021; Mack, 2022). Former NYPD police commissioner, William Bratton, spoke on the increasing decriminalization of disorderly conduct in several major cities throughout the United States (Mack, 2022). Bratton stated that the most shocking example of inequity is the scrutiny of police officers and protecting actual criminals from the same scrutiny (Mack, 2022). Bratton stated, "The

idea is that criminals are getting their records sealed, meanwhile, they are demanding that the records of police officers – litigations, disciplinary actions – be made available to the public, where is the equity?” (Mack, 2022).

The protests and riots in 2020 were fueled by incidents that shed a bright light on police procedures and use of force issues. The most notable incident that sparked the call for police reform is the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, in Minnesota (Flores et al., 2020). This event led to civil unrest and riots throughout the United States and in some places, ambushing police officers (Flores et al., 2020). Two weeks after the death of George Floyd, Rayshard Brooks was shot and killed by police in the parking lot of a Wendy’s restaurant in Atlanta, Georgia (Flores et al., 2020). Actions of the police officers in both Minnesota and Atlanta were being called excessive, especially among minority communities (Flores et al., 2020; Ford, 2020; Silverman & Sanchez, 2020). Once again, these events led to police officers leaving the department. Just four days after the death of Rayshard Brooks, nineteen officers resigned from their positions with the Atlanta Police Department along with seven police officers from the Minneapolis Police Department (Flores et al., 2020). Officers that are leaving the police department in Minneapolis are citing lack of support from both department and city leaders as reasons for leaving their positions (Flores et al., 2020; Silverman & Sanchez, 2020).

The year 2020 continued to display increases police resignations and retirements in major cities across the United States (Flores et al., 2020; Ford, 2020; Silverman & Sanchez, 2020; Yancey-Bragg, 2020). August 2020 recorded an additional twenty-eight officers resigning from the Atlanta Police Department (APD) along with eleven officers retiring from their positions within the department (Ford, 2020). These numbers are

shocking when compared to the average monthly resignation for the year 2019 of five and a half officers, with a total of sixty-seven resignations during the year 2019 (Ford, 2020). Sergeant Jason Segura, president of the International Brotherhood of Police Officer, Local 623, stated that most officers are leaving for other police and sheriff departments in response to the lack of support at the APD (Ford, 2020).

As citizens and other members of the community continue to scrutinize officers, a diminished self-efficacy begins to grow amongst the officers (Ford, 2020). Self-efficacy is defined by Bandura (1997) as the belief one's ability to influence events that affect their lives. Albuquerque, New Mexico mayor, Tim Keller, spoke of this self-efficacy by stating that officers are not fully trained to deal with issues of social work, drug addictions, and child abuse (Flores, et al., 2020). Keller went on to create a division comprised of social workers, housing and homelessness specialists, and violence prevention coordinators that will answer to calls of inebriation, homelessness, addiction, and mental health (Flores et al., 2020). Mayor Keller continued by stating that there should be trained professionals responding to these types of calls instead of people with a badge and a gun (Flores et al., 2020).

Officer self-efficacy is questioned among officers at departments like APD (Flores et al., 2020; Ford, 2020; Silverman & Sanchez, 2020). Each officer is trained by an accredited academy on what an officer can and cannot do in the scope of the job. The academy is also teaching the officers what the laws state and how to enforce those laws. Each department has policies and standard operating procedures (SOP) specific to that individual agency that depict how officers are to conduct themselves within their specific communities. It gets unclear to the officers when department and community leaders,

along with the citizens, are telling the officers that they should be doing things different from how they were trained or not abiding by the SOPs put in place by those departments (Ford, 2020). An example of an SOP issues is the case of two college students who were arrested during protest events in Atlanta (Ford, 2020). A total of six officers were disciplined by the APD, two of those officers were terminated but later sued to be reinstated (Ford, 2020). They claimed that the city failed to comply with protocols requiring an investigation of an incident before terminating an officer (Ford, 2020). Further, they claimed that the city was quick to act due to the political climate surrounding police procedures (Ford, 2020).

Crime and public safety are important to any community, and the police exist to ensure that reductions in crime and enhanced public safety. Examining the influences of officer retention will provide departments with the information to respond to issues of crime and public safety. Defunding police departments takes funding away from quality training practices within a department (Zaru & Simpson, 2020). Officers need to be confident in their training as well as trusted to use their training in the line of duty. Without funding for training, officers will continue to lose confidence. For officers to obtain self-efficacy or the ability to do their jobs, quality training needs to happen first.

The current research will examine officer proactivity and behavior in relationship to department satisfaction and training received during academy and field training programs. The training an officer receives could promote officer proactivity and strengthen officer self-efficacy. Similarly, the satisfaction and shared values an officer has in a department could also promote officer proactivity. This study will examine six hypotheses:

H1: There will be a statistically significant relationship between positive views of agency values and officer proactivity.

H2: There will be a statistically significant relationship between agency energy and officer proactivity.

H3: There will be a statistically significant relationship between academy training preparation and officer proactivity.

H4: There will be a statistically significant relationship between field training preparation and officer proactivity.

H5: There will be a statistically significant relationship between race and officer proactivity.

H6: There will be a statistically significant relationship between gender and officer proactivity.

CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW

Impact of Policing on Crime

The literature and empirical studies of the impact of police upon crime is extensive (Wilson, 1968; Boydstun, 1975; Wilson & Boland, 1978; Wilson & Boland, 1981; Wilson & Kelling, 1982; Pate et al., 1985, Sherman, 1986; Sherman, 1992; Vollaard & Hamed, 2012). These studies examine not only the number of active police, but also at police patrol activity and engagement. Two types of police behavior were identified to distinguish police behavior: aggressive and passive (Wilson & Boland, 1978). Aggressive police behavior does not indicate that the officer was harsh or mean to the public it refers to capitalizing on public interactions, interventions, and observations. Wilson (1968) conducted a study where he denoted aggressive police behavior as the “legalistic” style of policing. A passive strategy is when an officer seldom stops vehicles that commit moving violations and infrequently stops a suspicious person for questioning. These strategies have played a major part in the controversy of the effect police have on crime. Wilson & Boland (1978; 1981) and Wilson & Kelling (1982) presented that aggressive police practices contributed to lower crime rates. The same findings were also seen in studies conducted by Wilson (1968) and Sherman (1986) where it was seen that departments that capitalize on the number of observations and interactions in the community showed a decrease in crime rates.

Evidence can be seen in several studies that the number of police effects property crime but has no effect on violent crimes (Levitt, 1997, 2002; Corman & Mocan, 2000, 2005; Klick & Tabarrok, 2005; Lin, 2009). This effect can be easily explained when you look specifically at the offender and the crime being committed. Property crimes are

crimes of opportunity that require a great deal of thought and planning, whereas violent crimes are crimes of spontaneity and are more impacted by the emotions of the offender (Marvel & Moody, 1996). Violent crimes are rarely premeditated by the offender thus does not take in consideration of police presence. Thieves, however, are presumed to put more thought and planning into their actions which makes them more vulnerable to the presence of police (Marvel & Moody, 1996). DiTella and Schargrotsky (2004) describes property crime as car theft and how it is impacted more by police presence than violent crimes. Cars that are parked in a parking lot or in a driveway gives would-be criminals a chance to “stake-out” the area, gathering information before they commit the crime. The correlation between crime and police presence occurs for two reasons. Higher police presence rises the likelihood that a crime will be observed. At the same time, the more staff inside the police department increases the likelihood that citizens’ reports will be statistically reported (Vollaard & Hamed, 2012). During the 1970s to 1990s, the increase in police numbers occurred mostly in dispatch, record keeping, and crime reporting services. Increase in police numbers impacted the number of reported crimes more than it did crime itself (O’Brien, 1996). Vollaard & Hamen (2012) found in their study that a one percent increase in police numbers per capita resulted in a one to two percent decrease in property and violent crimes. This provides empirical evidence that increasing the number of police directly effects the crime rates.

Impacts of Proactive Policing Strategies

Empirical questions concerning how police control crime have brought about the terms reactive and proactive policing (Sherman, 1992; Reiss & Burdua, 1967). Police that are proactive with their actions is described to be more self-initiated, officer will select

their own targets. Police actions that are controlled by a specific demand of a citizen are described as reactive policing. With reactive policing, the police permit citizens to select the targets. Most police patrol is of the reactive nature, however there is an increase in proactive police strategies (Reiss & Burdua, 1967). Each police department varies in proactive strategies when it comes to public encounters (Wilson & Boland, 1978; Sampson & Cohen, 1988).

Aggressive and proactive police strategies are seen as signs of police activity, therefore can be used to decrease the crime rate. Critics of aggressive and proactive police strategies argue that these styles of policing do not solve more crimes (Jacob & Rich, 1981; Chilton, 1982; Decker & Kohfeld, 1985), however the presence of these strategies are more of a way to communicate the punishment to potential criminals. Cook (1980) debated that with increased police presence, potential criminals are less likely to commit a crime due to the quick police response time, higher chance that police will show up as the crime is in progress, and the higher probability of arrest. Police field experiments have provided evidence that supports the reduction of crime by proactive policing strategies. Boydston (1975) conducted the San Diego Field Interrogation Experiment where he found that the decrease in aggressive field interrogations where officers would stop suspicious people caused a rise in crime rates. Most notably was a study conducted by the Police Foundation in Newark, NJ and Houston, TX which involved a group of officers that were specially trained for this experiment (Pate et al., 1985; Sherman, 1986). This group conducted various tasks associated with aggressive field interrogations as well as proactive contact with citizens on the streets. This study

found that just like the San Diego experiment, crime was reduced when this type of policing strategy was implemented (Wilson & Kelling, 1982).

Specific Programs Utilized by Police to Target Criminal Behavior

Every year police contact close to forty-four million people in America (Hyland et al., 2015). Citizens experience police contact through interrogative police stops, known as stop and frisk. Stop and frisks are traced back to *Terry v. Ohio* (1968), which gave police the authority to stop and frisk an individual when they had probable cause that the individual has been, is, or will be involved in criminal behavior (Kramer & Remster, 2018). New York City in the late 1990s began to utilize stop and frisk strategies in response to an unparalleled crime wave. The police used this strategy as a proactive response to the rising crime within the city. It was believed that initiating contact with citizens would increase police presence and ultimately decrease crime. From 2006 to 2012, police in New York City conducted over 500,000 stops every year (Kramer & Remster, 2018). In this attempt to control crime, another issue developed in the form of racial discrimination, which forced the police in New York City to cut back on their interrogative stops.

Patrol is the most common form of crime deterrence and is considered the largest function of the police department (Bayley, 1992). Police patrol is amassed with officers responding to emergency calls of service and crime. According to Kelling et. al. (1974), police patrol is associated with the visible presence of the police in a community. This visible presence can either be in the form of foot patrols or marked motorized patrols. From this explanation of patrol, presence can be considered the main component of police patrol. Research has been conducted on the effect of police foot patrols and crime

rates, specifically the impacts on robbery (Jones & Tilley, 2004) and on violent crimes (Ratcliffe et al., 2011). Foot patrols allow for a face-to-face interaction between police and the public as well as the building of relationships. From these relationships comes the greater chance of information being shared to the police to help fight crime in these foot patrol areas (Andresen & Hodgkinson, 2018).

In the United States, there are two significant studies conducted on the effects of foot patrols on crime. The Newark Foot Patrol Experiment (Kelling et al., 1981) found that foot patrols did not influence crime but did show very influential on the public perception of crime. The Flint Foot Patrol Experiment, however, found a substantial decrease in crime. This program showed almost forty-three and half percent decrease in the number of service calls as well as close to a nine percent decrease in crime altogether (Trojanowicz, 1982). In North Vancouver, British Columbia, a study evaluated a foot patrol program which found a significant effect on property crime such as mischief and commercial burglaries. This study also found that not only did crime decrease in increased foot patrols areas, but also in surrounding areas (Andresen & Lau, 2014; Andresen & Malleson, 2014). Increased foot patrols were used in high crime areas of Philadelphia (Ratcliffe et al., 2011), resulting in a significant decrease in violent crimes in the areas of increased foot patrols.

Crime rates in the 1990s fell at an unprecedented rate, both violent and property crimes were decreasing across the United States. New York City was at the center of this crime control phenomenon, which was becoming known by experts, as the New York “miracle” (Lazzati & Menichini, 2016). New York City police, during this time, was enacting several different crime reducing strategies of a proactive nature. Along with stop

and frisk strategies, New York City police were initiating a strategy known as “hot spot policing”. Crime analysts would utilize crime mapping to study and visualize crime patterns across geographic locations. These maps specify that crimes were not distributed evenly across these geographic areas. These crime maps indicated that clusters of crime typically occur in specific locations which are called hot spots (Lazzati & Menichini, 2016). Cities like New York City noticed these crime patterns and devised a strategy to battle the crime rate in these areas by allocating police resources to these hot spot locations where crimes are highly concentrated. Experts believe that the utilization of hot spot policing is the reason for the drastic decrease in crime in New York City (Lazzati & Menishini, 2016).

Most police strategies that are used focus on the person that is committing the crime. Hot spots policing, also known as place-based policing, focuses more on the place where crime is being committed. Experiments of hot spots policing like the one done in Minneapolis (Sherman & Weisburd, 1995), worked to increase the level of patrol in high crime areas of street blocks. Officers in these high crime areas were not told specifically what to do or how to handle situations, they were just told to increase the police presence. In the end, the study found that there was a significant decrease in crime and disorder. Another study that focused on increasing police presence in high crime areas was conducted in Sacramento, CA with the Sacramento Police Department (Telep et al., 2014). This study utilized random fifteen-minute stops by officers to increase the police presence, this way the presence was done in an unpredictable order. This method capitalized on the deterrent effects of the police presence. The findings with this study showed significantly fewer service calls and crime incidents (Telep et al., 2014).

A substantial part of the research on crime reducing police programs focus on enforcement-oriented programs (Braga, 2001). Sherman and Weisburd (1995) conducted the Minneapolis Hot Spots Patrol Program that was intended to challenge the results of the Kansas City Preventative Patrol Experiment in 1973 that concluded that police patrol had no effect on crime rates. The study found that increased patrol presence impacted crime at thirteen percent, however it did significantly impact more serious crimes. It also found that the longer the presence in those hot spot areas, the crime rate would lower even more (Avdija, 2008). The Jersey City Drug Markets Analysis Program conducted by Weisburd and Green (1995), also focused on the increase of police patrols in the high drug crime areas. Specifically, this program focused on problem-orienting policing to lower drug crimes as well as the moral-related crimes of prostitution and gambling. The results depicted a decrease in public disorder calls, drug-related events, and the moral-related crimes. Most notably, the number of narcotic calls decreased with very small amounts of narcotic displacements in the surrounding areas of the hot spots (Weisburd & Green, 1995).

Violent crimes such as murder, rape, and aggravated assaults are difficult to regulate since characteristically they are sheltered from all police interventions. These types of crimes are committed in such settings that are intimate, that have few people involved, and stem from circumstances that develop quickly that police are unable to antedate or intercede in the events (Moore, 1980). Police have used several techniques to assist in the anticipation of violent crimes such as “stop-and-frisk” to locate weapons. Moore (1980) examined types of strategies used by police to combat against weapons charges and violent crimes. These types of strategies utilized both reactive and proactive

strategies. The reactive strategies that were examined involved both initial and follow-up investigations in response to a crime that has occurred. The proactive strategies examined centered around surveillance and undercover operations of weapons violations (Moore, 1980). Initial results of the examination through a regression model found that police proactivity is an important factor for weapons arrests (Moore, 1980). Police proactivity continued to emerge as a significant coefficient as different specifications and different combinations of the model were manipulated. Moore (1980) concluded that reactive patrol accounted for most of the weapon arrest, however, if a department switched to a more proactive approach, then weapons arrests would increase.

Impact of Community Policing on Public Perception of Police

The interest of community policing deals with the recognition that strategies of a traditional nature have failed to solve the major issues of society (Liou & Savage, 1996). Community policing is more of a philosophy rather than a specific tactic, that is designed to reduce crime and the fear of crime as well as social disorder (Trojanowicz & Carter, 1988). This philosophy has a goal to reduce fear among citizens, increase citizen satisfaction with police, and to address any problems of the community (Riechers & Roberg, 1990). Peak et al. (1992) explains that the main principle for community policing is to build the community, strengthen community trust, and increase community cooperation with police.

There are many forms of community policing and different tactics that are used to implement these tactics. These many forms are due to the focus of reducing crime instead of reducing fear, citizen satisfaction and problem solving (Riechers & Roberg, 1990). There have been very few studies that have looked at the impact community policing has

on the public perception of the police. An intercity examination of citizen satisfaction with various government services found that blacks were less satisfied with some of the services than whites (Campbell & Schuman, 1972). Decker (1981) conducted an examination of individual-level and contextual-level variables to determine the attitudes towards police. He found that on an individual-level, blacks and youths have a more negative attitude towards the police. However, when he looked at the concept of neighborhood, certain neighborhoods had an overall negative attitude towards police. Decker (1981) concluded that attitudes towards police are a product of social structure therefore, no single police program can produce a positive attitude towards police. The Reno Police Department used a community opinion survey to evaluate its Community Oriented Policing (COP) program (Peak et al., 1992). The survey results indicated that there was an immense improvement in public perception. The public viewed the department in a positive manner based on the department's image, performance of the police, the quality of police contacts with citizens, and the overall safety of the city (Peak et al., 1992). More research is needed to completely understand the impact that community policing has on public perception of the police.

A strategy that became popular among police departments was one of performance management. William Bratton (1998) put this strategy to use in a profound way that changed law enforcement. Bratton (1998) served as the chief executive of the Boston Police Department, New York Police Department, and Los Angeles Police Department. Bratton (1998) along with Jack Maple (1999) developed a process that was increasingly focused on tracking police activity, which is known today as COMPSTAT meetings. COMPSTAT meetings are computerized statistics meant to push for better policing and

ultimately less crime (Sherman, 2013). The process used area commanders to channel information for strategic initiatives and on occasion, those commanders were arrested for manipulating crime statistics. Despite these arrests, the system has been seen as operating with integrity (Sherman, 2013). This system began operating at the New York Police Department in 1994 and still in operation with vast possibilities for expansion to more improved indicators and performance (Sherman, 2013).

Impact of Defunding the Police on Officer Retention and Self-Efficacy

There is little to no research on how eliminating police services impacts officer retention and officer self-efficacy. As seen thus far, most of the research is focused on the impacts of increasing police services and the impacts it has on crime. Research into the impacts of defunding police has the potential to emphasize the need for police. Defunding the police is not eliminating police services, it is focused on redirecting funds to other agencies and departments within a jurisdiction to help reduce crime. Research is needed to examine the impacts this has on how well police officers continue to perform their duties and how departments retain officers to perform those duties.

Behaviorists like Skinner (1984) suggested that environmental conditions could explain human functioning. Bandura (1986) however, introduced a more complex theory where the leading role in influencing behaviors is by personal factors. Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory theorizes that individuals' behaviors are determined not only by environmental factors, but by personal factors. Human functioning is described, according to Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory, by the reciprocal interactions of personal, environmental, and behavioral factors. Self-efficacy has been considered within the social cognitive theory framework as a personal factor that effects one's behavior and

environment. An example provided by Bandura (1986) states that a person's self-efficacy beliefs possibly could change the way the individual endures in difficult situations, or how much effort a person gives in a challenging situation. Police officer self-efficacy is a factor of this study because self-efficacy plays an important role on how police officers behave and interact with during their career responsibilities. Social cognitive theory describes beliefs as an intraindividual factors that are involved in how individuals will behave in various circumstances (Bandura, 1986). Efficacy beliefs are powerful predictors of behavior and the belief a person has in their own capabilities to carry out certain actions guides that person through situations and circumstances (Bandura, 1997). Bandura (1997) also presented how self-efficacy influences how much effort a person gives to a task, along with how much time a person spends persevering when faced with obstacles, and the stress experienced during situations (Bandura, 1997). It is important to understand officers' self-efficacy for the purpose of predicting officer behavior and motivations in challenging situations.

CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY

Given that proactive policing has had positive impacts on crime rates (Reiss & Burdua, 1967; Boydston, 1975; Wilson & Boland, 1978; Cook, 1980; Jacob & Rich, 1981; Chilton, 1982; Wilson & Kelling, 1982; Decker & Kohfeld, 1985; Pate et al., 1985; Sherman, 1986; Sampson & Cohen, 1988; Sherman, 1992), it seems reasonable to assume that improving aspects of police proactivity will have a generally positive impact in communities. It follows, then, that police agencies would benefit from determining the factors that impact proactivity within their respective departments. Programs that enhance (or improve) such factors could lead to an increase in proactivity among officers, thus improving crime rates and the overall social health of the community. More specifically, this project examines the relationship between levels of officer satisfaction with the agency and officer perceptions of police training, both academy and field, to better understand what impact those variables have on police proactivity. Six hypotheses guided this research:

H₁: There will be a statistically significant relationship between positive views of agency values and officer proactivity.

H₂: There will be a statistically significant relationship between agency energy and officer proactivity.

H₃: There will be a statistically significant relationship between academy training preparation and officer proactivity.

H₄: There will be a statistically significant relationship between field training preparation and officer proactivity.

H₅: There will be a statistically significant relationship between race and officer proactivity.

H₆: There will be a statistically significant relationship between gender and officer proactivity.

Research Design

This study utilized data from the Police Retention Career Perception Survey administered by Dr. Charles Scheer and Dr. Michael Rossler (unpublished results). Conducted in 2021, this survey addressed factors involved in police officer retention and officer perceptions of the law enforcement career. The goals of this survey were two-fold. One goal was to understand why officers choose to resign from their position within the department or leave the career of law enforcement. Another goal was to understand officers' perceptions of the law enforcement career and what influences those perceptions.

The Police Retention Career Perception Survey (unpublished results) was administered to 755 officers from eight police departments throughout the United States of different populations and demographics selected utilizing purposive sampling. Those departments included Biloxi Police Department in Biloxi, Mississippi, Smyrna Police Department in Smyrna, Georgia, Topeka Police Department in Topeka, Kansas, Vernon Hills Police Department in Vernon Hills, Illinois, Frederick Police Department in Frederick, Maryland, Thornton Police Department in Thornton, Colorado, Bryan Police Department in Bryan, Texas, and Portland Police Bureau in Portland, Oregon. A total of 665 officers completed the survey yielding a response rate of 88%. Except for respondents within specialized units, the survey was administered in-person during

police/agency briefings. Police (or agency) briefings are conducted at the beginning of a shift and prepares the officer for the duties during that shift. The method used to administer this survey was a face-to-face technique. The survey took approximately one hour to complete with some being completed in as little as thirty-five minutes.

An ex post facto research design was utilized to examine specific variables that may impact police proactivity. Cross-tabulation and chi-square tests for independence were used to assess variable relationships and test hypotheses. Tested variables were selected based on the foundational importance to the law enforcement career. Law enforcement officers must work for an accredited police agency and complete specific law enforcement training.

Variables of Interest

Officer Proactivity, the primary variable of interest, was measured by response to the statement: *I try to be proactive in my duties as a law enforcement officer*. Options were presented as a four-point Likert-type set (1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Disagree, 4 = Strongly Disagree).

The variable *Positive Department* included responses to the survey item that stated: "I feel positive about the values of this department." Agency values referred to the core values of the police agency: integrity, trust, accountability, transparency, fairness, respect, rule of law, and viability. Integrity is the acts of honesty demonstrated in every situation. Trust is the reliability and strength in each relationship within the department. Accountability is accepting responsibility for all decisions. Maintaining open and truthful communications defines transparency. Engaging in fair practices while creating equitable and just relationships is demonstrating fairness. Show respect by honoring the rights,

freedoms, views, and property of others. Upholding the rule of law, complying with both the spirit and intent of all laws and regulations. Viability is demonstrated through the creation of long-term value for all members of the community. Options were presented as a four-point Likert-type set.

The variable *Agency Energy* was measured utilizing the following survey item: “This agency cares about whether I am energized by my work.” Agency energy refers to the motivation and encouragement for officers to be energized by the work and duties performed in the career. Options were presented as a four-point Likert-type set.

Adequate training will produce safe, effective, and efficient officers (Pinizzotto et al., 2011). As such, survey items related to officer training, both in the academy and in the field are included. Because training is the foundation for a successful police career, responses to this item are included to better understand officer perceptions of training and how those perceptions relate to police proactivity.

The variable *Academy Prep* included officer responses to the following survey item: “My academy training prepared me for my duties in this career.” Academy training refers to the training received during an accredited police academy. Survey items did not specify a specific type or length of academy training, rather only overall officer perceptions of academy training were examined. Options were presented as a four-point Likert-type set.

The variable *Field Training Prep* included responses to the item: “My agency’s field training program prepared me for my career.” Agency field training refers to the training received within the agency’s training program. Field training is administered by police agencies for new officers employed by the agency to provide on-the-job training

while under the supervision of a senior officer. Field training provides the recruit with experience within the field and allows the new officer to adapt to the community with oversight. Options were presented as a four-point Likert-type set.

CHAPTER IV – RESULTS

The purpose of this study is to understand the role that both a police agency and police training, both academy and field training, has on officer proactivity levels. As indicated by the literature review in Chapter 2, police proactivity could impact crime rates and community perceptions of the police. Police proactivity could also build stronger community relationships with the police. The following section provides an overview of data analysis and hypothesis testing. First, descriptive statistics were generated to provide an overview of the sample, which included *Race, Gender, Police Proactivity, Positive Agency, Agency Energy, Academy Prep, and FTO Prep*. Each variable was then recoded into a dichotomous variable for data to be more easily interpreted. Lastly, several chi-square analyses were conducted to test hypotheses and to determine the associations among the variables.

Of the respondents in the sample, most of the respondents indicated that their race was White (82.5%, n = 531). Additional reported races within the sample were: Black or African American (5.7%, n = 37), Latino, Hispanic, or White of Hispanic Origin (6.1%, n = 41), Asian (2.8%, n = 18), Native Hawaiian or Pacifica Islander (0.5%, n = 3), First Nations/Native American/American Indian (0.6%, n = 4), and more than one race (1.6%, n = 10). There were more respondents that completed the survey that indicated they were male (82.6%, n = 551) than female (14.4%, n = 93).

As seen in Table 1, most officers (70.6%, n = 444) indicated they strongly agreed (20.2%, n = 127) or agreed (50.4%, n = 317) that they try to be proactive in their duties as a law enforcement officer. There were fewer officers (29.4%, n = 185) that indicated they strongly disagreed (8.7%, n = 55) or disagreed (20.7%, n = 130) with being proactive in

their duties as a law enforcement officer. In reference to an agency caring about whether an officer is energized by their work, most officers (61.0%, n = 394) revealed they either strongly disagreed (17.5%, n = 113) or disagreed (43.5%, n = 281) with this statement. Only 39% (n = 252) of officers indicated they strongly agreed (2.9%, n = 19) or agreed (36.1%, n = 233) that their agency cared about whether officers were energized by their work. When looking at how officers view department values, most respondents (72.1%, n = 467) either strongly agreed (17.3%, n = 112) or agreed (54.8%, n = 355) that they had a positive view of the values of their department. There were 28% (n = 181) of officers that indicated they either strongly disagreed (8.2%, n = 53) or disagreed (19.8%, n = 128) with viewing their departments values in a positive way.

Officer responses regarding perceptions of academy training revealed that more officers (69%, n = 447) either strongly agreed (13.4%, n = 87) or agreed (55.6%, n = 360) that their academy training prepared them for their career. Thirty-one percent (n = 201) of officers either strongly disagreed (8%, n = 52) or disagreed (23%, n = 149) that they were prepared for their career through their academy training. Similarly, most officers (88.1%, n = 570) suggested that they strongly agreed (21.9%, n = 142) or agreed (66.2%, n = 428) that their agency's field training program prepared them for their career. A modest number of officers (11.9%, n = 77) indicated they strongly disagreed (2.6%, n = 17) or disagreed (9.3%, n = 60) that they were prepared for their career by their agency's field training program. Each agency encounters similar but different situations which and officer will encounter. More favorable perceptions towards agency field training as opposed to academy training may be explained by temporal experiences or that they believe applying knowledge is the most valuable training given the nature of police work.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Police Proactivity	127 (20.2%)	317 (50.4%)	130 (20.7%)	55 (8.7%)
Agency Energy	19 (2.9%)	233 (36.1%)	281 (43.5%)	113 (17.5%)
Positive Agency	112 (17.3%)	355 (54.8%)	128 (19.8%)	53 (8.2%)
Academy Prep	87 (13.4%)	360 (55.6%)	149 (23.0%)	52 (8.0%)
FTO Prep	142 (21.9%)	428 (66.2%)	60 (9.3%)	17 (2.6%)

Note. Missing data includes Police Proactivity (n = 5), Agency Energy (n = 2), Positive Agency (n = 1), Academy Prep (n = 1), FTO Prep (n = 2), Gender (n = 24), and Race (n = 24).

Options for the variables Police Proactivity, Agency Energy, Positive Agency, Academy Prep, and FTO Prep were originally presented as a four-point Likert-type set (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree). To simplify these variables, each one was recoded into a dichotomous variable using SPSS v.28. Responses were recoded into two response groups, grouping responses recorded in the categories of Strongly Agree and Agree into the group labeled Agree and responses recorded in the categories of Strongly Disagree and Disagree into the group labeled Disagree. All missing data from the dataset was excluded from the analyses.

The survey also indicated a large categorical response for the demographic variable of race. Race is divided into seven individual categories that a respondent may choose from including: White, Black or African American, Latino, Hispanic or White of Hispanic

Origin, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, First Nations/Native American/American Indian, and more than one race. To simplify, Race was recoded into a dichotomous variable that included two categories: white and other. Responses that were recorded as any race other than white were categorized into the group labeled “other”.

Recoding into dichotomous variables provides appropriate group sizes for Chi-Square analysis. By decreasing the response groups down to two groups, group sizes are more manageable for testing. Additionally, dichotomous variables allow for data to be more easily interpreted and analyzed. This offers for a more clear and precise explanation of the data along with a clearer understanding of the data provided. Chi-square analysis was used to test the independence of the relationship between categorical variables.

A further explanation of the association between *Positive Agency* and *Officer Proactivity* is found in Table 2. According to this data, there is a statistically significant association between the variables being tested ($p < .001$). A substantial number of respondents indicated having a positive outlook on department values ($n = 455$). Expected values of the relationship between *Positive Agency* and *Police Proactivity*, as seen by the total percentages, were calculated at 70% agree and 30% disagree. Of these respondents that positively view their agency values, the observed values indicate 79.8% reported being proactive ($n = 363$) while only 20.2% reported being reactive ($n = 92$). Table 2 indicates a small number of respondents ($n = 173$) suggesting they do not have a positive outlook on department values. Of those respondents, 46.2% reported being proactive ($n = 80$) where 53.2% reported being reactive ($n = 93$). This supports that the significant relationship between *Positive Agency* and *Police Proactivity* does not occur by

chance. In comparison to the expected values, there is a significant difference of the respondents that do not positively view the department values. It could be determined that the more positive an officer views an agency's values, the more proactive that officer will be during their duties as a law enforcement officer.

Table 2

Association between Positive Agency and Officer Proactivity

		Police Proactivity		Total
		Disagree	Agree	
Positive Agency	Disagree	93 (53.8%)	80 (46.2%)	173
	Agree	92 (20.2%)	363 (79.8%)	455
Total		185 (29.5%)	443 (70.5%)	628

$\chi^2 = 67.84, p < .001$

Table 3 provides an examination demonstrating a statistically significant association between *Agency Energy* and *Officer Proactivity* ($p < .001$). Comparing the results to the expected values of 70% agree and 30% disagree, it is seen that the relationship between *Agency Energy* and *Officer Proactivity* does not occur by chance. Among the officers that believe an agency cares about the officer being energized by their work ($n = 244$), the observed values report a sizeable 85.2% reported being proactive ($n = 208$) and 14.8% that reported being reactive ($n = 36$). A considerable difference is reflected in contrast with the expected values. Most of the respondents indicated that they believed an agency did not care about the officer being energized by

their work (n = 383). Of these respondents, the observed values revealed that 61.1% reported being proactive (n = 234) with 38.9% reporting to be reactive (n = 149). This suggests that agencies that care about officers being energized by their work has a significant relationship on the proactivity levels of those officers.

Table 3

Association between Agency Energy and Officer Proactivity

		Police Proactivity		Total
		Disagree	Agree	
Agency Energy	Disagree	149 (38.9%)	234 (61.1%)	383
	Agree	36 (14.8%)	208 (85.2%)	244
Total		185 (29.5%)	442 (70.5%)	627

$$\chi^2 = 41.79, p < .001$$

As illustrated in Table 4, there is a significant association between *Academy Prep* and *Officer Proactivity* ($p < .001$). Of the respondents that indicated their academy training prepared them for their career (n = 434), the observed values revealed 74.9% reported that they try to be proactive with their duties (n = 325) and 25.1% indicated they did not try being proactive with their duties as a law enforcement officer (n = 109). This exemplifies a slight difference from the expected values. Most notably are the respondents that indicated that their academy training did not prepare them for their career (n = 194), the observed values suggested that 60.8% reported that they try to be proactive (n = 118) with 39.2% reported that they do not try to be proactive (n = 76).

These observed values illustrate a significant deviation from the expected values, providing empirical data on the importance of an officers' academy training. The officers that indicate higher preparation by academy training reveal that they try to be more proactive with their work duties. Concluding that there is a statistically significant association between officers that are prepared by academy training and their proactivity levels.

Table 4

Association between Academy Prop and Officer Proactivity

		Police Proactivity		
		Disagree	Agree	Total
Academy Prop	Disagree	76 (39.2%)	118 (60.8%)	194
	Agree	109 (25.1%)	325 (74.9%)	434
Total		185 (29.5%)	443 (70.5%)	628

$$\chi^2 = 12.754, p < .001$$

As seen in Table 5, there is no statistically significant association between *FTO Prep* and *Officer Proactivity* ($p = >.05$). Of the officers that believe their field training prepared them for police work ($n = 544$), the observed values suggested that 71.7% reported that they try to be proactive with their duties ($n = 397$) and 28.3% do not try to be proactive ($n = 157$). Interestingly, the observed values reflect the same as the expected values (70% agree and 30% disagree). Officers that indicated that their field training did not prepare them for their duties ($n = 73$), the observed value indicated that 61.6%

reported that they try to be proactive with their duties as a law enforcement officer (n = 45) and a remainder of 38.4% reported that they do not try to be proactive with their duties (n = 28). Once again, the observed values and the expected values are similar. The data indicates that an officer that is prepared by their agency’s field training program, or an officer that is not prepared by their agency’s field training program, has no association on whether that officer will be more proactive with their duties as a law enforcement officer.

Table 5

Association between FTO Prep and Officer Proactivity

		Police Proactivity		Total
		Disagree	Agree	
FTO Prep	Disagree	28 (38.4%)	45 (61.6%)	73
	Agree	157 (28.3%)	397 (71.7%)	554
Total		185 (29.5%)	442 (70.5%)	627

$$\chi^2 = 3.11, p > .05$$

Table 6 reflects results which indicate no statistically significant association between *Race* and *Police Proactivity* ($p > .05$). When examining the data on race, there are more white respondents in the study (n = 510) than any other race (n = 107). It is noted that 70.2% of white officers are reported as being proactive (n = 358) and 73.8% of all other races reported as being proactive (n = 79), with a difference of 3.6%. With observed values closely similar, this indicates that police race does not relate to an

officers' level of proactivity. Likewise, it is reported that 3.6% more white officers reported that they do not try to be proactive with their duties (29.8%, n = 152) than any other race (26.2%, n = 28). The observed values illustrate similar results for officers that do not try to be proactive. The officers' race does not have an association to an officer being reactive in their work duties. Regardless of the race of the respondent, more respondents reported as being proactive (n = 437) than those that reported as not being proactive (n = 180), resulting in 70.7% of all respondents reported as being proactive.

Table 6
Association between Race and Officer Proactivity

Race		Police Proactivity		Total
		Disagree	Agree	
White		152	358	510
		(29.8%)	(70.2%)	
Other		28	79	107
		(26.2%)	(73.8%)	
Total		180	437	543
		(29.2%)	(70.7%)	

$$\chi^2 = .566, p > .05$$

As illustrated in Table 7, there is no statistically significant association between *Gender* and *Police Proactivity* ($p > .05$). More males participate in the survey (n = 527) than females (n = 90). Results indicate that 71.5% of all males reported as being proactive (n = 377) along with 67.8% of all females reporting to be proactive (n = 61), with a slight difference of 3.7%. Similarly, percentages with male officers that do not try to be proactive (28.5%, n = 150) and female officers that do not try to be proactive

(32.2%, n = 29) had a similar difference of 3.7%. Officer gender, as compared to officer race, indicates similar percentages of male and female officers that try to be proactive with their duties as law enforcement officers. Officers that do not try to be proactive with their duties report similar percentages with both male and female officers that do not try to be proactive with their duties as law enforcement officers. This illustrates that officer gender does not relate to the proactivity level of the officer.

Table 7

Association between Gender and Officer Proactivity

		Police Proactivity		Total
		Disagree	Agree	
Gender	Male	150 (28.5%)	377 (71.5%)	527
	Female	29 (32.2%)	61 (67.8%)	90
Total		179 (29.0%)	438 (71.0%)	617

$$\chi^2 = .527, p > .05$$

CHAPTER V – DISCUSSION

Police departments conduct various functions to ensure public safety for the community in which they serve. Of those functions, patrol is the most viable and most common technique used for crime deterrence by police (Bayley, 1992). Several studies have indicated the importance of police proactivity in connection with the function of police patrols (Moore, 1980; Sherman & Weisburd, 1995; Weisburd & Green, 1995; Braga, 2001; Sherman, 2013). Reducing crime is a major focus for police officers and being proactive is a method that could reduce that crime (Moore, 1980).

Law enforcement policies and procedures focus on enforcement-oriented programs to reduce crimes (Braga, 2001). Of these programs, reactive and proactive enforcement are the two ways police respond to crime (Sherman, 1992; Reiss & Burdua, 1967). Reiss & Burdua (1967) conclude that most police work is reactive in nature. For example, police officers typically receive a call for assistance, or a call concerning a crime and respond accordingly. Interrogative police stops are just one technique utilized by proactive police officers. Providing the means for a police officer to be self-initiating where they select their own targets can create effective proactive officers. These officers will not simply wait for a crime to occur, or a call to come in, they will actively anticipate and engage to prevent crime from occurring (Moore, 1980).

Utilizing secondary data, this project sought to examine factors which may influence police proactivity. Several variables could influence proactivity like years of experience, age, and physical abilities; however, this study examines the two overall foundational variables that every officer must have to conduct the work duties effectively: training and perceptions of agency commitment to officers. Results from this

study provide a novel and informative view of the association among these factors and police proactivity. Police officers that view their department values in a positive manner are more likely to be proactive. Likewise, police officers that work for a department that motivates them to care about their work and to take pride in their work, are also more likely to be proactive. This study reveals that departmental culture and values have a significant influence on police proactivity. It is not simply a place of employment for a police officer, but is a team or family which works collaboratively, under difficult circumstances to serve and protect. The department is an important environmental factor which influences the level of self-efficacy among police officers (Skinner, 1984; Bandura, 1986). Strong department commitment to officers and perceived value by officers will strengthen officer self-efficacy and, in turn increase police proactivity.

Training is critical for police officers. Failure to obtain adequate training both in academy and through an agency could impact police officers on the job performance. Results of this study reveal a positive association of academy training among proactive police. In other words, when officers perceive to be prepared by academy training, they are more likely to be proactive with their duties as a law enforcement officer. Conversely, officers are less likely to be proactive when they feel under prepared by their academy training. Notably, field training does not appear to significantly influence police proactivity.

Law enforcement is comprised of male and female officers of all different races. It is a career that is as diverse and inclusive as any other career. Many police agencies have initiated programs focusing on creating a more diverse and inclusive department (Memphis Police Department, Long Beach Police Department, Los Angeles Police

Department, Miami Police Department, New Orleans Police Department). Programs like the 30x30 Initiative was started to increase the representation of women in police recruit classes to 30% by the year 2030 (Policing Project, 2021). This program references research that implies women officers use less force, less excessive force, have fewer complaints, perceived to be more honest and compassionate by the communities, and are more victim oriented (Policing Project, 2021). The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) identified the need for a more diverse police force. Witnesses before this task force expressed the need to hire officers that best represented the community in which they will be serving. It is believed by the research of the task force that an African American citizen would identify better with an African American officer, a Latino citizen would identify better with a Latino officer, and a White citizen would identify better with a White officer. With a more diverse agency, it is thought to decrease community complaints, decrease the use of force as well as excessive force, and create a more positive perception of police by the community.

This study, however, introduces a different perspective on police agencies focusing on being more diverse and inclusive. The goal of any police agency is to serve and protect the community. As discussed in Chapter 2, police patrol is the most popular technique used to meet this goal. Officers actively patrolling the communities and contacting community members have experienced a decrease in crime, citizen complaints, and number of arrests. As a result of this study, it is revealed that the race or gender of an officer does not have a significant association to officer proactivity. This indicates that hiring more female officers will not necessarily increase officer proactivity. At the same time, hiring officers that best represent the community they will be

patrolling, will not increase officer proactivity. Police agency hiring should not be focused on being more diverse and inclusive but focused on hiring the most qualified and well-trained individuals to effectively perform the duties of a police officer.

Implications

In law enforcement, there is a social identity that develops when a recruit graduates academy and joins the police ranks. The primary social identity for the individual is now a police actor trained to serve and protect the community. The natural identity that develops, however, involves the reliance on fellow law enforcement officers for survival in dangerous situations (Hood, 2015). When conflict arises, such as a police-involved shooting, two categories of belief about the event tends to emerge: individuals that believe the officer shot the individual while surrendering and individuals that believe the officer saw the individual as a lethal threat and utilized deadly force to neutralize the threat. This conflict often initiates a mental conflict among police officers forcing a decision to either protect the citizens that protest one of their own or protect the law enforcement officer who may have acted in compliance with a departmental policy. Hood (2015) examines this conflict when discussing the “us versus them” mentality. Hood (2015) explains that when law enforcement experiences a moral/ethical/professional like the one described earlier, they tend to look towards police leadership to guide them to the correct characterization.

This may explain why the officer satisfaction and positivity of the agency influences their level of proactivity. As seen from this study, when an officer possesses a positive view of the department values and agrees with those values, that officer is more apt to be proactive with their duties. A police agency that continuously practices and

implements their core values in every policy and procedure, creates an environment that is conducive with those values. This provides an officer with the confidence in knowing that they may perform their duties without fear of ridicule and scrutiny. Likewise, a police agency that cares about how energized an officer is about their work will produce more proactive officers. Law enforcement is like any other occupation whereas if the employee is energized about their job, the work performance will be more effective. Each officer must be excited about performing their duties as a law enforcement officer. They must be prepared and motivated to complete each task that may arise during their shift. Having a police agency that encourages that excitement, creates more proactive officers. A police agency that continuously motivates their officers to perform at their best and continuously prepares the officers for any task they may encounter, creates more proactive officers.

Law enforcement operates in a comparable way as any other occupation, in that, the employee must be satisfied with their employer to effectively perform their work duties. The way an employer treats the employee will influence the employees' performance. This is the same for how a police agency treats their police officers. Society has set the expectations for law enforcement at an unreachable high (Bratton, 1998) causing law enforcement to be viewed differently than other employees. However, law enforcement officers are just like any other employee. An officers' satisfaction with their agency impacts how effective they are with their work duties. To have more proactive officers, ones that are actively pursuing crime prevention, there must be support and encouragement from the police agency.

Every police officer must complete training before beginning their duties as a law enforcement officer. This training is designed to prepare the officer for the work duties they will encounter on the job. Sherman (2013) discusses the rise of evidence-based policing using the “triple T” strategy: targeting, testing, and tracking. With this method, law enforcement can target criminal behavior, test to ensure that the behavior does not increase crime and track the police behavior to ensure that the work is being done correctly according to departmental leadership instructions (Sherman, 2013). For police to follow the “triple T” strategy, there must be effective evidence-based training to support the strategy. This evidence-based policing method makes decisions based on “what works” in policing to develop the evidence-based training that prepares officers to eliminate the criminal behavior that is being targeted. Police recruits require more intense training to prepare them for what is to follow in their career. Training develops self-efficacy within law enforcement by reinforcing those personal factors that influence or build self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). As with the agency, strong personal factors will produce higher levels of self-efficacy which will, in turn, enhance police proactivity.

Preparation is key to having effective and proactive police officers. This preparation begins with the training received at the academy level. This study reveals that adequate and effective academy training creates more proactive officers. This type of training provides each officer a level of confidence and self-efficacy to perform their duties as a law enforcement officer. Without training of this nature, officers would constantly question their abilities and choose to handle a situation in a manner that could potentially harm the officer, or the citizen involved. As The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing (2015) suggests, police training needs to include more scenario-

based training sessions. This type of training puts the police officer in different situations that may be encountered but in a more controlled environment where mistakes can be made and addressed.

Each officer is a different person in respect to not only personality but race and gender as well. Many police departments are initiating programs to increase diversification and inclusion. These programs ensure that race and gender are equally representing the police department. The results of this study have empirically suggested that programs of this nature will not have an impact on police proactivity. This study proposes the implementing of more programs focused on agency satisfaction and training preparation across the board without concern for diversification or inclusion.

Hopefully, results from this project can not only add to the existing literature on police training, morale, and police proactivity, but also inform strategies to increase or enhance police proactivity among police leadership and administration. Utilization of evidence-based strategies within agencies can enhance administrative responses both internally and externally. Strategies which reinforce departmental commitment to and value of police officers appear to translate into meaningful outcomes for police agencies. As such, police administrators and managers can utilize internal strategies to produce effective external outcomes for the community in terms of public safety and crimes reductions. Society is in an age of police reform, the same type of reform that has been seen for decades. Police reform comes with the changing of society and with the patterns of criminal behavior. The results of this study provide empirical evidence that police reform should include internal, as well as external, strategies to effectively carry out the mission of law enforcement.

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