THE POLICE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS: TREATMENT OF HISPANICS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS BY THE POLICE

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A Thesis

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Abstract

of

THE POLICE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS: TREATMENT OF HISPANICS AND AFRICAN AMERICANS BY THE POLICE

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Crystal Lopez

This is a study of African American and Hispanic residents’ attitudes towards police within the context of the treatment they receive from police officials in their daily interactions. This study uses data from the Police- Public Contact Survey of 2005. Furthermore, the findings state that there is a correlation with the attitudes that minorities feel toward police because of the actions of police toward minorities.

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Chapter 1
INTRODUCTION

By now, we are all familiar with the story of the renowned black scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. Gates, arrested at his home on July 16, 2009 after reporting a break-in. Conversely, this true-life story is an example of the racial disparities that particularly men of color suffer in the United States. These are some of the following remarks expressed by Gates:

“Gates said he was "outraged" by the arrest, wants an apology from Crowley and would use the experience to help make a documentary about racial profiling in the United States.” "This isn't about me, this is about the vulnerability of black men in America," he said.” “He said the incident made him realize how vulnerable poor people and minorities are "to capricious forces like a rogue policeman, and this man clearly was a rogue policeman" (Associated Press 2009).

This and numerous other incidents have brought to light the vulnerability of minorities in the United States regardless of their social class or position in society. In reference to minority communities, I specifically speak about African American and Hispanic communities. I define a minority community as being comprised of a certain group, which has fewer votes than the larger majority group. In this case, African American and Hispanic groups are treated differently from the Caucasian group. Furthermore, both of these groups have little or no power compared to the majority Caucasian group. Only a few incidents are mentioned since there have been countless of incidents of police brutality. The first is the now infamous beating of Rodney King by
Los Angeles police officers. The second is the numerous accounts of police brutality by New York police officers for example, the instance when a NYPD officer was videotaped beating a man with his baton. In addition, the case of Oscar Grant, who was unarmed and was shot and killed by a transit officer in Oakland, California in 2009. More recently on January 5, 2010, a video showed two New York police officers violently beating a handcuffed man. For these reasons and various others, issues of race and police relations need further examination to give us a better understanding of the dynamics that occur between police departments and the minority communities they patrol.

The following study will therefore examine the variables that influence minorities’ views toward the police. The study will focus on the relationship of minority community attitudes toward police, because of the treatment they receive from police departments in their community. What are the attitudes toward police when minorities are stopped and searched by police? How do minorities feel when police act inappropriately? In addition, what are the attitudes toward police when minorities experience higher arrest rates and the use of excessive force? I will explore these questions by analyzing data from the Police-Public Contact Survey of 2005 to have better understand the dynamics that occurs between police departments and minority populations.

Furthermore, to understand the general questions stated above the study will answer the following questions more precisely: What is the relationship between the use of racial profiling by the police and attitudes about police? Is there a relationship between
the use of police brutality and attitudes toward the police? What is the relationship between policing techniques that police departments use and attitudes about police? What is the relationship between interactions with the community and attitudes toward the police? Is there a relationship between language and cultural barriers of minority residents and attitudes about police? In addition, what is the relationship between lack of minority police officers and attitudes about police?

In this study, I will be discussing a complex relationship that exists between the police and minority communities, with a specific focus on the Hispanic and African American communities. The following questions will be addressed: the extent to which racial profiling is used, reasons for traffic stops, whether the police requested a vehicle search, the outcome of the traffic stop, aspects of police brutality like the use of force in other face to face contacts with police, and police behavior during contacts.

Furthermore, studies like that of Holmes, Smith, Freng and Munoz (2008) demonstrate that minorities are more likely to suffer racial profiling and assault by police. The study will also include the recent community policing techniques such as zero-tolerance policing, targeted policing and the crime stoppers program, all these policing techniques that were set into effect by police departments in recent years. The study will address the views and opinions that citizens in minority communities hold about the police, and what role language and cultural differences play in those opinions about police. Furthermore, the lack of minority police officers patrolling these underserved communities might also be a factor for the attitudes that minorities hold about police.
In addition, since these are pressing issues that affect underserved communities I will also address policy implications such as how police departments can better serve communities. I will include possible solutions that both policy makers and police departments can implement to serve better minority communities. Minority populations are growing at a rapid rate and research shows that both African American and Hispanic residents are more likely to hold negative views about law enforcement (Weitzer and Tuch 1999). It would be in the best interest of both policy makers and the public that relations between minorities and police are improved. The improvement of this relationship would benefit both the communities and the police. The communities would benefit by helping reduce their own crime rates and making their neighborhoods safer. The police would also benefit from lower crime rates since they would have to use fewer resources to patrol those communities. Once their relationship improves, they would gain the trust of the community, which would benefit them in apprehending dangerous suspects and reducing crime levels. This negative perception stems from personal and negative experiences that minorities have endured with police officers (Stults and Baumer 2007).

Furthermore, the improvement of relations would help many of the neighborhoods that minorities reside in to lower crime rates and end the fear of becoming a victim by both criminals and the police (Cheurprakobkit 2000). It is crucial for policy makers and police departments to come up with successful techniques to patrol multi-ethnic and racial minorities and to understand their experiences of victimization and offenses (Phillips and Bowling 2003). Minority communities because of their socio
economic and historical barriers require special attention from policy makers and police departments in order for these communities to be successful in cooperating with police (Cheurprakobkit 2000). Additionally, in sociological literature, the focus in the past decades has been on the high crime and incarceration rates of minorities. On the other hand, there has been a lack of in-depth research on why minority attitudes toward police are so negative and confrontational.

It is of great importance for the criminal justice system to confront the fact that ethnic and racial minorities have had to endure hardships and injustice over the past five hundred years of captivity and colonization. This is true not only in the United States but also on an international level (Kent and Jacobs 2005). In acknowledging this, the criminal justice system can move toward making things fair and equitable to ethnic and racial minorities. Historically, the criminal justice system has forgotten and failed to take into account the racism, violence, and dominant structures of power that minorities have encountered in the United States (Kane 2003). Furthermore, global and national socio-economic inequalities that have plagued both Hispanic and African Americans are still widely present (Kane 2003). In addition, the enslavement of African Americans for hundreds of years and the colonization of Latin American countries has left a legacy of profound divide, oppression and discrimination (Phillips and Bowling 2003). While the iron shackles no longer bind the limbs of African American and Hispanic men and women, their communities remain under a different form of slavery that of economic and racial inequality.
Additionally, the complex relation of policing has long been a feature in American society and the notion of policing has become entrenched in the social fabric of American society. For example, federal, state, and local governments as well as private actors have historically engaged in discriminatory and oppressive practices to preserve discrimination, segregation and racial superiority (Bass 2001; Phillips and Bowling 2003).

The relationship between race and policing has a long history and has its roots in slavery (Bass 2001). Plantation owners were concerned with the monitoring of slaves and preventing them from escaping (Bass 2001). Therefore, through the creation of vagrancy and loitering laws in the south they were able to contain newly freed slaves (Bass 2001). In addition, the creation of Jim Crow laws and the rise of urban ghettos promoted and maintained social control and racial and ethnic segregation (Bass 2001). Furthermore, in contemporary times riots predominately in minority communities such as in Miami in 1980 and Los Angeles in 1992 have occurred and were mainly due to police actions (Lasley and Hooper 1998). Both of those riots followed the acquittals of the police officers who beat two men from minority communities. The riots were an expression of the discontent and negative views that minorities have toward the police (Brown and Benedict 2002).

Furthermore, stereotypes of both African American males and Hispanic males have contributed to the fear that whites have of minorities, particularly the fear of men of color. The evolutions of stereotypes of African American and Hispanic men have their origin in the early 19th century. The perceptions of criminality of minorities have indeed
influenced the relations of minorities and Anglos. In the mid-19th century, the media popularized the Mexican “bandido” who was portrayed as taking over Anglo land, their property and white women. Then the “violence prone macho alcoholic” joined it in the early 20th century. Additionally, the zoot suiter style of many young Mexican youth in the 1940s brought racial tension once again. By the 21st century, common stereotypes were set in place such as “gangbangers” “illegal alien drug smugglers”, and “illegal alien welfare queens”. These stereotypes are set in place whenever Anglo- Americans feel their hegemony is threatened - and in this case by Hispanics (Holmes et al 2008).

In addition, the numerous stereotypes popularized by the media of African American men and their violent prone lifestyles and personalities have also been a motive for Anglo- Americans to fear men of color (Holmes et al 2008). Moreover, in numerous amounts of research they have established that oppressed racial minorities are disproportionately targeted stopped, searched, arrested, incarcerated and are the victims of excessive and sometimes deadly force at the hands of law enforcement officers (Bass 2001, Holmes 2000, Macdonald and Stokes 2006). Both Latino and African American males are more likely to be arrested, incarcerated and be victims of excessive and/or deadly force by police officers than white males (Phillips and Bowling 2003). In addition, numerous accounts have surfaced of rampant police misconduct (Macdonald and Stokes 2006). For example, in Philadelphia and Los Angeles officers admitted to beating and coercing confessions from minorities, primarily African American and Hispanic suspected gang members and drug dealers, as well as fabricating evidence and perjuring themselves in more than 1,500 cases (Brown and Benedict 2002).
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the following chapter, I provide the literature that supports my argument about why minorities have certain attitudes toward police. Historically, minority communities have been the targets of police. Furthermore, I will explain further racial profiling, police brutality policing techniques, interaction with the community, language and cultural barriers, and the lack of minority police officer in police departments.

At the root of the so-called American dream is the idea of equal justice Particularly, in the criminal justice system. For most of the population and among dominant racial groups this idea holds true, however, minority populations disagree strongly (Kane 2003). For minority groups, historically the criminal justice system and its enforcers (law enforcement officers) have brutalized and marginalized their communities. Minority communities have had a long history with the criminal justice system. That system has treated them unfairly numerous times by oppressing and discriminating against them. (Holmes 2000). It is for those reasons that presently minority communities are distrustful and weary of the police and their tactics (Kane 2003).

Historically, the root of police patrolling can be linked to social control and the minority-group threat hypothesis, which has its origins in racial conflict theory (Kane 2003; King 2007) which states that police are used by the elite to control racial and ethnic minorities (Holmes et al 2008; Eitle, D’Alessio and Stolzenberg 2002). Conflict theory pays close attention to the power differentials that different groups face in our society and how conflict comes about in society whether through differences in race or class or
through competition for scarce resources. Furthermore, conflict theory states four primary assumptions. The first is competition among various groups in society; different groups compete for various things such as, natural resources, money, political power, educational and employment opportunities and so forth. The second assumption states that structural inequality exists in society and the powerful and knowledgeable groups maintain that structural inequality so that they are highly advantaged over less powerful groups. The third assumption is revolution, meaning that the only way that change can happen in a society is through revolution rather than adaptation and consensus. The fourth assumption is war, this assumption states that war can either unify or destroy societies and that politician’s use war for their self-interest to attain power (Cohn et al. 1991).

The use of conflict theory is to link various criminal justice institutions in the institutionalized and systematic oppression and discrimination of subordinate racial and ethnic groups (Weitzer and Tuch 1999). The use of large numbers of police by elites is a link to social status, specifically race, social class and economic standing (Kane 2003; Kent and Jacobs 2005). Predominantly, the elite of the state use the criminal justice system in its entirety to manage and contain the dangerous classes (usually refers to ethnic and racial minorities) and to maintain the current social structure (Holmes 2000). These so-called dangerous classes, scrutinized by elites as posing a threat to their socio-economic standing and to the fragile racial minority-majority, balance in the United States (Kane 2003). Furthermore, as the percentage of African American and Hispanic populations grows larger the state views them as a political, social and economic threat
(Eilte, D’Alessio and Stolzenberg 2002). The perception of threat is due to the presence of minorities and dissimilar cultural norms, this leads to an increase in crime control efforts (Holmes 2000). The elites view minority communities as being prone to criminality and are seen as a liability to the state. Furthermore, these elites have imposed certain police policies that have targeted mainly minorities such as; the drug war, and zero tolerance policing (Kane 2002). Ultimately, within conflict theory the use of the minority-group threat hypothesis states that relations between police and minority communities are the symbol of the deep social divide that is rooted in the social structure that separates the dominant groups from the minorities (Smith and Holmes 2003).

Through testing my hypothesis, I plan to show how conflict theory and the minority-group threat hypothesis developed to target minorities in disproportionate numbers and at a higher rate than whites.

Moreover, the minority-group threat hypothesis states that the state’s expenditure allocation for effective crime control has its foundation on the percentage of minority residents in a specific community. For example, the higher the number of minorities in a community the more police power will be in that specific area (Kane 2003). We must analyze the relationship of minority communities with the police departments that patrol them. In numerous studies conducted in different parts of the United States, minority residents give researchers a glimpse of their dislike for the police (Holmes 2000; Kane 2003; Torres and Vogel 2001). Minority residents in different communities tell of similar experiences with police (Kane 2003). For example, young African American and Hispanic males’ have reported they were stopped whether driving or walking as well as
being searched and questioned (Smith and Holmes 2003). Additionally, minority residents have experienced or witnessed police officers using excessive force (Kane 2002). Other disturbing reports tell of rampant police misconduct such as police officers planting evidence, fabricating crimes and working with different street gangs (Torres and Vogel 2001).

The police are an important resource in communities and it is crucial to understand the dynamics under which they operate and how their patrolling techniques affect the communities and the residents that live in those communities. A better understanding will help police departments develop more productive ways to patrol communities, which historically have been ignored (Parks et al. 1999).

It is for those reasons that this problem cannot go ignored because both police and minority communities are in distress by this hostility. Furthermore, through this study I will demonstrate how certain factors such as, reasons for traffic stops, whether police requested vehicle searches, outcomes of traffic stops, use of force during traffic stops, and use of force in other face-to-face contacts, police behavior during contacts have had an effect on how minorities perceive the police.

Although, the relation between police and minority communities can be explained through generational racism and oppression this problem still exists today in our society. In the following sections I will demonstrated how certain aspects of this relationship have affected communities of color and their attitudes about law enforcement.
Interactions with the Community

Additionally, many of the laws and policing techniques in place have further strained the relations between police and minority communities (Hagan, Shedd and Payne 2005). Since many of those laws and techniques have targeted and imprisoned mainly males of color minority communities are distrustful of police (Hagan et al. 2005; Sharp and Atherton 2007). They have seen police forces enter their neighborhoods and serve warrants or conduct gang sweeps searching for drugs, weapons and suspected gang members (Sharp and Atherton 2007). Many times, they have insulted people using racial/ethnic slurs, disrespecting their private life and cultural differences (Sharp and Atherton 2007). This has also affected children who have witnessed police arresting and/or using excessive force against their families (Hagan et al. 2005). Furthermore, in many instances due to the racialized stereotyping, name-calling, verbal and physical abuse that minorities experience with police they see them in a negative view (Britton 2000; Holmes 2000). Numerous studies show that minorities experience abusive language including racial slurs by police (Holmes 2000; Kane 2000; Sharp and Atherton 2007). They are also more likely to be interrogated when stopped (Holmes 2000).

Minorities have mostly negative views and opinions about the police (Holmes 2000). They distrust police, believe that they are racist, and discriminate against them (King 2007). African American and Hispanic groups hold the most negative opinions about police officers and police departments as a whole (Holmes 2000). They tend to help the least and report crimes the least compared to whites (Holmes 2000). When
compared to whites, minorities report having more negative experiences with law enforcement (Brown and Benedict 2002). The most salient predictors about attitudes toward police are both socio economic conditions in particular neighborhoods and race (Weitzer and Tuch 2004a). Furthermore, oppressed and disadvantaged minority communities have the least favorable views of law enforcement and have the worst relationship with police departments when compared to white middle class citizens (Weitzer and Tuch 2004a). An explanation for this is through examining the crime conditions that minority communities experience (Holmes 2000). Perceived and the real amount of serious crime, fear of being victimized and general fear of crime are some of the characteristics that minority residents hold (Weitzer and Tuch 2005). Additionally, since these neighborhoods have high crime rates their relations with police are usually those of negative encounters. When police tend to stereotype predominately males of color, act aggressive toward them, use verbal and physical abuse, conduct unjustifiable stops and searches, and other corrupt activities the larger community will dislike police and will distrust their efforts to combat crime (Sever 2001; Weitzer and Tuch 2004b). In addition, prevalent types of police corruption are evident today (Kane 2002). These types of activities range from police officers assisting and profiting from drug traffickers, larceny, burglary, robbery, conducting warrantless searches and seizures, perjury and falsifying statements, assaulting citizens both physically and verbally (Kutnjak 2005). With those acts committed by police officers, minority communities have a great deal of distrust and lack of confidence toward the police (Kane 2002).
One problem that police departments face patrolling minority communities is cultural and language differences especially in regards to Hispanic communities (Sanders 2000). African Americans because of their long history of discrimination and through generations of systematic oppression, conditions of inner city ghettos, geographical locations placed into, and socio economic conditions have become accustomed to distrust the police (Britton 2000). Law enforcement has been a means for whites to oppress African Americans through violence, and intimidation (Smith and Holmes 2003). Furthermore, because of generations of racism, racism is a part of police culture and in return, they have targeted and harassed African Americans. In return, African Americans have consequently become very distrustful of the police (Kane 2002). For example, the statistics are familiar but provide a glimpse of the harsh reality and the extent of the problem. African Americans comprise about 12% of the population (Britton 2000). With that said, statistics show they are approximately 13% of drug users, they are 38% of those arrested for drug offenses, note mainly possession and not intent to sell or distribution, and 59% of those convicted for drug offenses (Britton 2000). Nationally, one third of all African American men are under some form of criminal justice supervision. The disparity is the highest in Washington, D.C., where the numbers are close to 50% (Bass 2001).

On the other hand, Hispanics have a more complicated problem when it comes to cultural and language barriers. For those that have been here since colonization through generations they also have been the victims of racial oppression by whites (Bass 2001). Their relations with the police have been those of distrust like African Americans (Bass
Hispanics who have emigrated from various Latin American countries more recently, their problem lies in the fact that in most of the Latin American countries where they come from police and government corruption is rampant (Torres and Vogel 2001). Their views of police are very limited. In addition, they see police as being rude, illiterate, brutal and corrupt because of their previous experiences in their native countries (Torres and Vogel 2001). Another issue is the language. Most cannot speak English and are hesitant to cooperate with police (Torres and Vogel 2001). Moreover, because they are unfamiliar with the laws of the United States, the powers of police officers are afraid about their immigration status, and they are afraid of deportation to their native countries (Torres and Vogel 2001). Studies have shown that Hispanic groups when compared to whites tend to under report crimes (Torres and Vogel 2001). Furthermore, the under reporting of crimes can be linked to language barriers, other more complex reasons are cultural differences and not being familiar with the criminal justice process in the United States (Torres and Vogel 2001).

Lack of Minority Police Officers Patrolling

Since many of the issues discussed above are in a historical and generational context, the lack of minority police officers has its source in those terms. Unlike other government institutions and particularly other criminal justice institutions, citizens view local police departments on a daily basis because of their frequent interaction with the community (Parks et al 1999). If ethnic and racial groups do not see, their groups represented in that police force that patrols their communities they will be more dissatisfied with the police (Torres and Vogel 2001). This will translate into an outsider
syndrome where both police officers and minority residents feel an "us versus them" phenomenon (Alozie and Ramirez 1999). Minorities have been hesitant to become police officers because of the extent of racial discrimination and because they do not want to be viewed negatively in their communities (Torres and Vogel 2001). It is in the best interest that police departments place emphasis on diversification and equal representation of minorities that they patrol (Brown and Benedict 2002). Not only racial and ethnic diversification but also hiring more female officers, perhaps they can also bring useful insights to police departments (Alozie and Ramirez 1999; Smith and Holmes 2003). A counter argument is that even if minority police officers were hired their fellow police officers would pressure them against misconduct toward minorities exerted in the subculture of police and the expectations of their peers (Smith and Holmes 2003).

Racial Profiling

In recent years, racial profiling is one of the discretionary powers that police officers use to target racial and ethnic minorities. Racial profiling has become a prevalent practice for police officers to utilize when they are searching for gang members or drug dealers (Sharp and Atherton 2007). In the African American community it has been so prevalent that it is often referred to as “driving while black” (Weitzer and Tuch 2002).

Racial profiling has a link to the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (D.E.A) and their war on drugs (Bass 2001). This practice was limited for use in airports, then eventually expanded, and used in traffic stops and it has greatly affected the majority of African American and Hispanic communities (Bass 2001). In 1999, President Clinton condemned the use of racial profiling for identifying criminals and he directed law
enforcement agencies to collect data on the race and/or ethnicity of suspects stopped and interrogated (Weitzer and Tuch 2002).

Racial profiling is used for police officers to stop and search vehicles that might be transporting drugs and is also being used as an opportunity to stop, question and search young African American and Hispanic men who are walking alone or when in groups under no justifiable reason (Macdonald and Stokes 2006). Drug related profiles as well as gang member profiles primarily identify young men of color, the police with their discretionary power have used these profiles to stop and search young African American and Hispanic men (Bass 2001). It is of no surprise that both African American and Hispanics stopped were more likely than Caucasians to report that they had been ticketed, arrested, handcuffed, or searched by police (Sharp and Atherton 2007). They were also more likely to say that they experienced excessive force or threatened by the police (Sharp and Atherton 2007).

Criminal stereotyping of certain minority groups and especially of African American and Hispanic men as gang members and drug dealers has ultimately served to support and reinforce the practice of racial and ethnic profiling practices (Schuck 2004). Furthermore, research has proven that racial and ethnic profiling is not a reliable way to capture gang members, drug dealers and suspected criminals. However, despite the research the practice is still widely used (Goodey 2006). Based on the research on racial profiling I use the following hypothesis for my study.

Hypothesis 1: African American and Hispanic males are more likely to be stopped and searched over their white male counterparts.
Police Brutality

One of the most abusive practices of police authority is the use of excessive and sometimes deadly force. Not surprisingly compared to white, ethnic and racial minorities are more likely to be victims of excessive force at the hands of law enforcement (Schuck 2004). In the past years, numerous stories have arisen of police officers beating African Americans and Hispanics (Schuck 2004). Some of the beatings captured on camera, such as the Rodney King beating by Los Angeles police officers where they claimed that King was high on drugs and drunk and had attacked them and resisted arrest (Schuck 2004). In another instance the beating of two suspected immigrants by the Riverside County sheriffs’ department in California. The deputies violently beat and clubbed the two Mexican immigrants after a high-speed chase in a van with twenty-one immigrants in the van (Stults and Baumer 2007). Although the immigrants were unarmed and posed no threat to the officers they were repeatedly and severely beaten. Additionally, under the conflict and minority-group threat hypothesis research demonstrates that large numerous of police are used to control African American and Hispanic populations (Eitle et al. 2002). The research described above is examples of how police officers use excessive force against minorities (Lasley and Hooper 1998). Based on the research on police brutality I use the following hypothesis for my study.

Hypothesis 2: African American and Hispanic males are more likely to have experience the use of excessive force/ or verbal abuse over their white male counterparts.
Policing Techniques

Furthermore, innovative policing techniques are put in place to curb crime rates particularly in racially, ethnic segregated areas, and urban ghettos (Kent and Jacobs 2005). Some of these techniques have disproportionately targeted at minority communities and their residents (Kent and Jacobs 2005). Such an example is the drug war policies and drug courier profiles that were put in place by the United States Drug Enforcement Agency (D.E.A.). Some of these policies included, zero tolerance-policing, quality of life policing techniques, gang member profiles/databases, gang enhancement laws, and gang injunctions created by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) have all targeted mainly young African American and Hispanic males (Kent and Jacobs 2005).

Kent and Jacobs found that police disproportionately target minority communities. Under these policing techniques, numerous males of color have been incarcerated for drug or gang related activities (Kent and Jacobs 2005). For example, in Los Angeles County nearly either half of all young African American and Hispanic men have been identified as gang members or gang associated meaning that they can be photographed and their personal information collected and put into national and statewide gang databases (Kane 2002). Furthermore, they can become available to receive gang enhancement penalties for crimes ranging from five to ten years (Bass 2001).

The passage of the Crime Bill in 1994 ushered in a new era and national agenda of new and improved policing techniques putting forth innovative community policing (Hawdon and Ryan 2003). Community cooperation seems to be the biggest factor in police being successful in arresting suspected criminals and also improving crime and
neighborhood conditions (Sanders 2000). The cooperation of residents and business owners is crucial for community policing techniques to be successful especially in disadvantaged and minority communities (Hawdon and Ryan 2003).

It is crucial for police to have good relations with minority communities. The community policing techniques combined with the support and assistance of minority communities can have a positive impact on lowering crime rates in these communities and diffuse crimes before they occur or solve crimes more quickly and effectively when they do occur (Hawdon and Ryan 2003). Based on the research on policing techniques I use the following hypothesis for my study.

_Hypothesis 3: African American and Hispanic males are more likely to be arrested than white males._

Through historical and theoretical accounts, I have given a glimpse of the complex relations between police departments and the minority communities they patrol. This relationship is fluctuating and unpredictable. The relationship has various aspects that require immediate attention by police department chiefs and our criminal justice leaders. These issues must be addressed so that the relationships between police and minorities can continue to be improved.
Chapter 3
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

In this study, I analyze the relationship between minority communities and law enforcement. The following hypotheses are tested in the study.

*Hypothesis 1*: African American and Hispanic males are more likely to be stopped and searched over their white male counterparts.

*Hypothesis 2*: African American and Hispanic males are more likely to have experience the use of excessive force/ or verbal abuse over their white male counterparts.

*Hypothesis 3*: African American and Hispanic males are more likely to be arrested than white males.

Data

The data for this study are from the Police- Public Contact Survey of 2005, which is a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Census Bureau and the Inter-University Consortium conducted this survey for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). The survey collection was through a computer-assisted telephone interview (CATI), and by face-to-face interview that accounted for 37 percent and telephone interviews that accounted for 63 percent. The sample size for the NCVS was 80,237, however for the PPCS the sample was 14,757 individuals. The sample excluded about 20 percent of possible respondents because they were either not available for an interview, refused to participate or were non-English speakers. Proxy interviews made up 1,537 individuals were excluded because of physical or mental reasons. The sampling method used was a
stratified multistage cluster sample. The survey had an 80 percent response rate of individuals age 16 and over.

Methods and Measurement

In the study, the three hypotheses included in the literature chapter will be tested. The three hypotheses each had their own independent and dependent variables to show the relations among race, gender, and behavior or conducts in relation with law enforcement. I ran logistic and linear regression analyses to test the hypotheses.

The first dependent variables in the study is SEARCH this variable was measured by asking, “If police searched the vehicle/driver during traffic stop” with (1=yes), and (2=no). The variable SEARCH was re-coded into a dummy variable with the new variable called SEARCHR with (1 recoded to =1), and (else or 2 coded as =0). The second dependent variable is FRCTYP this variable was measured by asking, “what type of force used or threatened” with (0=not applicable), (1=actually used force), (2=threatened force), (3=shouted or cursed), and (9=type of force not reported). The variable of FRCTYP was re-coded into five categories with the new variable called FORCETYPE with (1= 4), (2=3), (3= 2), (9=1), and (else=0). For the variable of FRCTYP, a reverse coding was used. The third dependent variable is I24I25 this variable was measured by asking “police action during traffic stop” with ( 0=missing/ NA), (1=arrested) , (2=ticketed) , (3=written warning) , (4=verbal warning), and (5=no ticket/warning/ arrest). The variable of I24I25 was re-coded into the new variable of ACTION, with (5=1 no action), (3, 4=2 warning), (2=3 ticket), (1=4 arrest).
The first independent variable used in this study is SEX (V3) this variable was measured by asking the “sex of respondent” with (1=male) and (2=female). The variable of SEX (V3) was re-coded into a dummy variable of MALE with (1=1), and (else = 0).

The second independent variable is the study is RACE (V5V6) this variable was measured by asking the “race/ Hispanic origin of respondent” with (1= white non-Hispanic), (2= black non-Hispanic), (3= Hispanic), (4= other non-Hispanic), and (5= two or more races non-Hispanic). The variable of RACE (V5V6) was re-coded into two dummy variables for black respondents and Hispanic respondents, with white respondents omitted.

The first control variable used in this study is AGECAT6 this variable was measured by asking “age of respondent” with (16=16-19), (20=20-29), (30=30-39), (40=40-49), (50= 50-59), and (60= 60 or older). The second control variable used in the study is INCOME this variable was measured by asking “respondent’s income” with (1= less than $20,000 or na) (2= $20,000-$49,000) and (3=$50,000 or more).
Chapter 4

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In this section, I will be discussing and interpreting the results of the analysis run with data from the 2005 Police- Public Contact Survey against the following hypotheses.

Table 1 demonstrates the number of cases each variable had. The table also shows the mean and the standard deviation for the variables used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Number of Cases</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Searched by police (SEARCHR)</td>
<td>63943</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force used by police (FORCETYPE)</td>
<td>63943</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action taken by police (ACTION)</td>
<td>4597</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>.753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of respondent (MALE)</td>
<td>63943</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race of respondent (BLACK)</td>
<td>63943</td>
<td>.112</td>
<td>.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race of respondent (HISP.)</td>
<td>63943</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of respondent (AGECAT6)</td>
<td>63943</td>
<td>40.37</td>
<td>14.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income of respondent (INCOME)</td>
<td>63943</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 1: African American and Hispanic males are more likely to be stopped and searched over their white male counterparts.

My first hypothesis states that African American and Hispanic males are more likely to be stopped and searched than are white males. Data from Table 2 suggests that this is partially the case. The results show that the significant predictors of being stopped are race, sex and age. Males are more likely than females to be searched ($B= 1.87$), while black respondents are more likely to be searched than whites are ($B=.5$). Furthermore, for every one category decrease in age there is a .07 increased chance of being stopped and searched.

Table 2: Likelihood of Being Stopped by the Police, Logistic Regression Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standard Coefficient(B)</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.198</td>
<td>.011*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.189</td>
<td>.134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-.165</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Police-Public Contact Survey 2005

*Significant at the $p< .05$ level

**Significant at the $p< .001$ level
Hypothesis 2: African American and Hispanic males are more likely to have experiences with the use of excessive force/ or verbal abuse over their white male counterparts.

Table 3: Use of Force by the Police, Linear Regression Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standard Coefficient (B)</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.040</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>-.021</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Police-Public Contact Survey 2005

*Significant at the p< .05 level

**Significant at the p< .001 level

The second hypothesis states that African American and Hispanic males are more likely to have experienced the use of excessive force/ or verbal abuse by police officers than white males. Data from Table 3 suggests that this is partially the case. The results show that the highest significant predictors of experiencing excessive force are race, sex, age and income. Compared to females, males experience more use of force (B= 2.5). While African Americans are 2.4 times more likely to experience excessive force. Additionally, for every one unit decrease in age there is a 4.0 increased chance of experiencing excessive force. Furthermore, for every one unit decrease in income there is a 2.1 increased chance of experiencing excessive force. Therefore, the variables of male, black, age and income are significant at .001 levels.
Hypothesis 3: *African American and Hispanic males are more likely to be arrested than white males.*

Table 4: Severity of Action by Police, Linear Regression Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standard Coefficient (B)</th>
<th>Standard Error</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.022</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.093</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.013</td>
<td>.745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Police –Public Contact Survey 2005

*Significant at the p< .05 level

**Significant at the p< .001 level

The third hypothesis states that African American and Hispanic males are more likely to be arrested than white males. Data from Table 4 suggests that this is not the case. The only statistically significant relationship lies with males and age, which is valid at the .001 significance level. Males are 5.4 times more likely to be arrested than females. In addition, for every one unit decrease in age there is a 9.3 times likelihood of being arrested.
Chapter 5
CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Since the colonization of the United States by the Europeans, millions of people of color have been oppressed and discriminated against. Police have faced minorities of color with harassment and violence. Because of the long history of abuse by police, minorities have certain attitudes toward police and minorities of color do not get along with the police departments that patrol them. Furthermore, variables such as police brutality and racial profiling affect people’s attitude toward police. It is important to understand how and why these attitudes come about.

It is not surprisingly that the first variable of stopped and searched and black was statistically significant $p<.05$. The variables of age and male were also statistically significant at $p < .001$. Furthermore, correlations states that males are 1.87 times more likely than females to be searched, while black males are .5 times more likely to be searched than white males are. Furthermore, for every one year decrease in age there is a .07 chance of being stopped and searched. There are high correlations between stop and search practices by police and attitudes toward police.

The variable of excessive force was also not surprisingly statistically significant with $p<.001$. The results state the highest significance with being a male, black, age and income. Males are 2.5 times more likely than females to experience excessive force, while African Americans are 2.4 times more likely to experience excessive force. Additionally, while controlling for age and income for every one units decrease in age
there is a 4.0 times more likely in experiencing excessive force. Furthermore, for every one unit decrease in income there is a 2.1 times more likely to experience excessive force.

I was surprised that the variable of arrested was not statistically significant \( p > .05 \) within the variables of black and Hispanic. The only statistically significant relationship lies with males and age, which is valid at the \( p < .000 \) significance level. Males are 5.4 times more likely to be arrested than females. In addition, for every one unit decrease in age there is a 9.3 times likely hoof being arrested. The reason why I was surprised was that in my literature review I found that black and Hispanic males have very high numbers of arrested compared to white males.

After finishing my theses on “The Police and Community Relations: Hispanic and African American Attitudes toward the Police”. I have come to realize that there were advantages and disadvantages for my data set, which was the Police- Public Contact Survey of 2005. I think that the advantages of my data collection in some way outweigh the disadvantages. The first advantage is the fact that I got my data from a reputable and well-known source, the Police- Public Contact Survey of 2005 that is a supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). This survey is well known around the nation and is conducted regularly. The second advantage was that the data was collected already and so consequently, I saved time and money. I do not have to collect data. I just had to analyze the data in order to conduct my study.

The third advantage was that the sample was large enough, which was 14,757 individuals. The researchers were able to generalize to the population taking that small sample of respondents. The fifth advantage of my research was the response rate that was
available with the Police- Public Contact Survey. The survey had an 80% response rate, which is excellent.

In contrast, the disadvantages of my research design were that the Police- Public Contact Survey of 2005 did not contain all the variables that I would have wanted. Furthermore, some of the variables that it did contain were not measured according to the way I wanted and so I was not able to use them in my study. Another disadvantage was that the population of the survey was only adults 18 and over who spoke English. This is not an accurate picture of the United States and therefore, it is not very reflective of the whole population of the United States, which is multi-cultural. Furthermore, another disadvantage was that for some of the years the data was not available.

Lastly, I think that there should be extensive research on the subject of minority attitudes toward police. It would be wise to know what minority communities think about the police and the criminal justice policies set in place by our government that targets minority communities. Since it is such a controversial issue that has divided our country, it should be studied further. Perhaps more in depth studies will help law makers develop comprehensive criminal justice policies and reform the relations between the police and minority communities.

It is only fair that the issue of attitudes toward police by minorities is taken very seriously and that means doing further research in order to better understand people’s attitudes about police.
**Directions for Future Research**

Furthermore, overall data collection whether quantitative or qualitative needs a more correct and accurate collection process. Since this data is essential for policy makers, police departments and the general public to be informed and proceed with the proper steps to analyze and correct problems that exist between minority communities and police.

**Research Design and Methodological Issues**

After reading numerous amounts of research and studies that were mostly quantitative surveys in which they measured the relationship between minority attitudes about police and police behaviors. I found that there was a lack of qualitative data to support personal experience and similarities of feelings about police in neighborhoods throughout the United States. Although, there was a lack of qualitative data to analyze I thought that a quantitative approach was best to analyze this complex issue. Additionally since quantitative data has failed to capture the actual impact of discriminatory and oppressive practices used by police it remains the best option to analyze the research through. Only through a quantitative approach, we can gather quantifiable figures to measure the actual numerical figures involved in the relationship. I would suggest that, a lot more extensive amount of qualitative data is required that captures the quality and experiences whether negative or positive of minorities and police. By obtaining more qualitative research and adding, it to the area and using the already available quantitative data this topic would be complete.
Suggestions for Improvements

Realistically, minority communities and police relations will not resolve over night. Due to the long historical injustices, the relations between police and minorities will take a long time to improve. However, further actions are in need in for this improvement to happen sooner. It is essential for police departments to be accountable for their wrong doings to the communities where they serve.

One way to accomplish this is through citizen reviews of complaints and working together with chiefs of police departments (Smith and Holmes 2003). Furthermore, real community engagement has to be a priority for police departments. The community policing techniques can be very successful applied and used correctly to curb crime and improve relations with minority communities. To reduce police-minority conflict, efforts are required to hire more minority police officers including officers who speak another language other than English. Other initiatives must include public relation programs to improve police image in the communities, better training and education for police officers, intensive sensibility training, and regular meetings with the community (Torres and Vogel 2003; Weitzer and Tuch 2004b).

In addition, surveys can be a good tool to assess police performance and overall satisfaction of residents (Brown and Benedict 2002). Moreover, accountability methods including the monitoring of officers for wrongdoings as well as sanctions for those officers who engage in inappropriate behavior should be priorities for police departments (Weitzer and Tuch 2004a). The practices of racial profiling and the use of excessive and deadly force against minorities are racist police practices that require abolition
completely. Not only are they racist but they are a wasteful use of police’s limited resources that could be put somewhere else where it would benefit communities the most.
REFERENCES


