The Relationships among Law Enforcement Education Standards, Training, and Social Media Use

By

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Abstract

Criminal justice professionals and policy makers are continually looking at ways to improve the quality of police officers in the U.S. The purpose of this thesis is to identify and compare several managerial decisions law enforcement face such as education standards, annual community policing training, and social media use by police departments. Moreover, this thesis examined the influence these standards of practice have on each other with the hope of encouraging police department agencies to revisit their departmental policies with respect to community policing. This thesis involved a secondary analysis of a 2013 data set from the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) program. A total of 2,822 agencies were examined (N= 2,822). Results from the study revealed a strong, positive relationship between departments maintaining a higher education standard and utilizing forms of social media. Other relationships were tested; however results tended not supportive of the respective hypotheses. These findings are important and may be helpful in discussing the future for law enforcement standards, as well as allow agency administrators to use the results as a benchmark for comparison. Future research should involve examining other variables such as police performance, age, gender, race, and department region. These findings may provide insight on how departments compare to one another, as well as strengthen the argument for higher standards in police education and training.
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Chapter I

Introduction

The impact higher education has had on law enforcement officers has long been debated. The need for highly educated police officers gained popularity in the early 1900s when America began to shift to a new and more modern style of policing. This reform (led by August Vollmer) is known to many in law enforcement as the transition from the political era to the professional era of policing (Peak, 2009). As a result of Vollmer, key ideas involving basic police training and continuing police education are still an important part of law enforcement organizations today.

In a Gallup poll conducted in 2015 on public perception of police, 52 percent expressed “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in law enforcement, while 18 percent expressed very little or no confidence (Jones, 2015). According to the author, the 52 percent is the lowest rate in 22 years. There continues to be high profile cases intensifying the public’s feelings toward law enforcement use of force: Tamir Rice in Cleveland, OH, Michael Brown in Ferguson, MI, and Eric Garner in Staten Island, NY, all resulting in tragic endings with social outcry and public riotsing (Nash, 2015; Rembert, Watson, & Hill, 2015). With the perceived relationship between law enforcement and the public so fragile, police executives are looking for any way possible to improve our nation’s relationship with law enforcement (Salvatore, Markowitz, & Kelly, 2013).

Two areas that policy makers have focused on are community policing and police officer education. Community policing is not a new concept in the history of American policing. The philosophy behind community policing is a belief in a partnership between police and the public that strengthens relations and encourages cooperation (COPS,
Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) was created by the U.S. Department of Justice in 1994 with the goal of supporting community policing strategies for police agencies (COPS, 2017). Since its birth, more than $14 billion has been invested in the growth of community policing. As a result, innovative programs and financial assistance for hiring and retaining law enforcement officers is provided to various levels of law enforcement that promotes collaboration with the public and prevents crime.

Community policing departments have also seen social media as a valuable tool in police work. As technology rapidly advances, police departments must find ways to stay ahead of the curve while still maintaining its core principles of policing. For instance, as of December 2016, the social networking application Facebook reported more than 1.23 billion active users in the world, along with more than 160 million users in the United States alone (Socialbakers, 2016). With over 62 percent of U.S. adults getting their news from social media in 2016, it is not surprising social media has become a powerful way for police agencies to communicate with the public it serves (Clancy, 2016).

As for police officer education, the logic is simple; law enforcement agencies that recruit and hire highly educated candidates should result in higher quality police officers. Rydberg and Terrill (2015) find a significant positive relationship between an officer’s education level and instances of use of force. Furthermore, they also discovered evidence of educated officers showing greater problem solving skills, improved use of officer discretion, and higher job satisfaction. Despite positive support toward higher police education and criminal justice professionals, still only 1 percent of local police departments in the United States require a 4-year college degree (Hickman & Reaves,
That’s a gripping statistic for a nation that employs over 900,000 full-time sworn police officers.

No state in the U.S. presently has a mandated minimum education requirement for law enforcement officers. However, that does not mean agencies cannot set their own hiring standards. Additionally, incidents involving law enforcement and use of force have increasingly been a topic of interest that is tied to the discussion of police education and training for policy makers. The Cleveland Police Department for example has been the subject of investigations conducted by the Department of Justice on hiring practices, training standards, and excessive force (United States Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, 2014). The increased attention has led to heated discussion and creates an opportunity to explore the relationship between police officer education requirements and community policing services (Burns, 2010).

**Purpose of the Study**

Ways to improve our nation’s relationship between law enforcement and the public they serve is a critical topic. In fact, who wouldn’t want to see police officers and the communities they work in progressively coexist and work more positively together? Emphasis on higher education, improved training, better community relations, and minority recruitment are just some suggestions for polishing a stronger police force. With relations between law enforcement and the public more tenuous than ever, the importance of this topic carries great weight.

This study is oriented toward aiding law enforcement, and promoting future discussion by policy makers to rethink police department education and annual training.
requirements. Additionally, it is anticipated that this research will serve as a wake-up call to departments absent (or with limited) training involving community policing.

Charles B. Saunders Jr., author of *Upgrading the American police: education and training for better law enforcement*, states, “When a community experiences a crisis in law enforcement, the need for trained policemen is suddenly more apparent to everyone” (1970, p. 117). Many would agree Saunders’ statement applies directly to today regarding the relationship between law enforcement and the public. Unfortunately, the majority of police work is reactive. Better resources and improved technology has benefited police in ways that crime can sometimes be predicted, however on most occasions, police respond to reports of crime and incidents via calls for service. Despite this, policing does not have to be reactive. Better police officers can be recruited and trained with an emphasis on higher education and community police services.

The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals stated in 1973 that every police agency should, no later than:

- 1975, require as a condition of initial employment the completion of at least 2 years of college education.
- 1978, require as a condition of initial employment the completion of at least 3 years of college education
- 1982, require as a condition of initial employment the completion of at least 4 years of college education (Conser, 2005, p. 221).

A study published by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) in 1989 reported that 55 percent of all sampled police officers had completed at least two years of college education, compared to 15 percent in 1970 (Carter & Sapp, 1989, p. 153). Even
more recent, Polk and Armstrong (2001, p. 78) assert from research that “well over half of the officers in the United States now have some college-level education.”

This research is significant because it identifies several important variables for law enforcement agencies, namely education standards, annual training, and social media use and how they relate to each other. Policing is unique in that the profession is continually evolving. It is my hope that this research will be used in future studies by individuals wishing to challenge the way police departments are being managed.

**What is Community Policing?**

According to the U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (Scheider, 2008), community policing is defined as,

a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime (https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf).

Prior to the community policing era, the reform era of policing on law enforcement was from 1950-1970. Technology paved the way for new patrol tactics during the reform era. Foot patrol was forgotten, as patrol cars provided officers a quicker response time and a substantial increase in the area an officer could patrol. Radios and telephones became popular in the 1960s, and the police encouraged the use of emergency 9-1-1. Officers could be notified about calls for service and speak directly to supervisors from a distance. However, by the end of the 1960s mounting criticism directed towards policing began to take its toll. As police expert Chris Braiden states, police officers were expected to, “park their brains at the door of the stationhouse, and follow orders like a
robot” (Peak, 2009). Patrol officers were used as puppets, responding to calls, taking a report, and returning back to patrol. An officer’s efficiency was judged on how many reports they took, how many arrests were made, or how many miles were driven. The reform era of policing was successful and showed great strengths. Nonetheless, social changes and unintended consequences of police mistrust created concern. The result of this was the transition to a new era of policing in the 1970s.

The new technologies associated with the reform era of policing historically had unintended consequences. Patrol officers began to be isolated from the community. Instead of patrolling on foot and interacting with the community, officers patrolled in cars with their windows rolled up and only responded when called upon. For better relations with the community, police departments began creating foot patrol beats for officers in cities. The demand for foot patrol became so popular that citizens began voting for an increase in taxes to fund increased foot patrol for police officers (Kelling & Moore, 1988). The expected outcome meant citizen fear would be reduced, improved citizen satisfaction would be seen, and better relations between the police and the public would be maintained.

Professor Herman Goldstein recognized the success and introduced a problem-oriented approach to policing. Goldstein argued police organizations were too concerned with staffing and management of personnel (Weisburg, 2008). Organizations focus on managerial issues resulted in poor quality of policing and a lack of efficiency. What Goldstein recommended became the start of the community policing era. As the name implies, the community policing era was different from the reform era in that it attempted to connect the community with the police.
History of Police Education

A police officer receiving any type of formal education or training was an afterthought in the nineteenth century (Walker, 1978, p. 39). In fact, it was in the 1888 report of the Standing Committee on the Police which stated, “it is the common belief that any man who is of proper height and weight, and who has fair intelligence, and the physical ability to protect himself and to make arrests, is competent for police duties” (p. 39). Small progress was made in the professionalization of police in the late nineteenth century. The Cincinnati Police Department is recognized as the first professionalized police department. By 1887, all Cincinnati police officers were required to attend medical evaluations and physicals, workout, receive formal training, and dress in a uniform (p. 54). Compared to other police departments, this was truly advanced and unique for its time.

Few professions have changed so dramatically in the past 100 years as law enforcement. As strategies, mission statements, and technology change in law enforcement, one individual’s legacy will remain the same. Known as the “father of modern law enforcement”, August Vollmer is credited as the pioneer for the professionalism of law enforcement (Bond, 2014). Vollmer accepted a position many did not want in 1905 when he was elected Marshal for the City of Berkeley. This was when officers were known for their corruption and brutality. As a veteran from the Spanish-American war, Vollmer believed a police department should operate like a military bureaucracy. Credited for creating the “Code of Ethics” that police departments use today, Vollmer demanded high levels of honesty and strongly advocated for educated law enforcement officers (City of Berkley, 2015).
It was not unusual in the beginning of the law enforcement profession for a police officer to be issued a badge, a gun, and a club and be asked to “enforce the law” (Frost, 1959). Vollmer identified this as a glaring problem for law enforcement, making it a goal for change. It was in 1908 that Vollmer established the first formal training school for police officers. This created a ripple effect and soon other departments in New York City, Detroit, and Philadelphia followed suit (Roth, 2011). Vollmer compared a police officer to other professions, asserting lawyers, doctors, and teachers are educated and maintain a standard of proficiency in their expertise. History was made in 1916, when the UC Berkeley established the first School of Criminology, resulting in police officers from all over the West Coast attending college courses.

Arthur Woods is an important figure worthy of mention in the movement for trained and educated patrolman in America. In 1918, New York City police commissioner Arthur Woods stated, “the policeman is in a very real sense a judge” (Walker, 1978, p. 71). Woods stressed the importance of police officers being familiar with procedures of criminal law in addition to other areas studying human behavior. The progressive era of policing welcomed this belief. In 1903, Cleveland police started a program where captains would weekly conduct and test patrolman in state laws, city ordinances, and departmental regulations. It seemed to have success when in 1910 Cleveland officers organized the Forum Club (Walker, 1978). These officers met under their own initiative to study topics such as law, sociology, and other police-related subjects.

Noteworthy for the progression of police education is the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson spoke
following the authorization of funds for the creation of the Commission on Law
Enforcement and Administration of Justice. “The policeman is the frontline soldier in
our war against crime. We must give him modern training, organization, and equipment
if he is to succeed in saving our cities from the malignancy of crime”, so stated President
Johnson on September 22, 1965. The Commission was tasked with conducting an in-
depth assessment of the criminal justice system, including crimes committed, and the
effectiveness of the nation’s law enforcement. The commission identified education as a
significant recommendation, stating:

If educational standards are raised...they should have a significant positive long
term effect on community relations. Police personnel with two to four years of
college should have a better appreciation of people with different racial,
economic and cultural backgrounds or at least, should have the innate ability to
acquire such understanding. Studies support the proposition that well educated
persons are less prejudiced toward minority groups than the poorly educated.
(Winslow, 1968, p. 278)

The recommendations were heard, as Congress responded by increasing money
appropriated to the Law Enforcement Assistance Act (LEAA) from $7.2 million to $13.7
million (Woolley & Peters, 1966). With this funding, the Law Enforcement Education
Program (LEEP) was created which provided financial assistance and encouraged police
officers to further their education. The Act also provided millions of dollars in grant
funding to universities to create and improve law enforcement training programs.

As a result of millions of dollars in federal funding provided to universities and
colleges, police education courses and criminal justice studies began to be offered
academically. However this prompted a race to create programs as quickly as possible
with little concern for the quality of program offered. For example, from 1965 to 1970,
82 percent of the 237 police education programs in the U.S. were established in less than
a year of program planning (Sherman & National Advisory Commission on Higher Education for Police Officers, 1978). According to Gordon Misner, president of an association of police educators, the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, “the infusion of LEEP money has brought into being the greatest number of harlots the world has probably ever seen…An awful lot of hustlers, and some college presidents serving as pimps” (1978, p. 93). These courses were poorly designed, lacked resources, and had instructors not suitable to teach the curriculum they were teaching.

Minimum Hiring Requirements

Individuals must first meet certain requirements to be considered eligible to become a police officer. The autonomy of each state gives them the power to have their own requirements and standards for eligibility; however, standard requirements typically include being 21 years of age, being a U.S. citizen, and possessing no felony convictions. Despite the autonomy, most states closely follow the same hiring procedure and requirements. Prior to accepting a position as a police officer, applicants must complete a police training academy. The following are minimum requirements a candidate must meet to be a peace officer in Ohio (How to Become a Police Officer, 2017):

Nationality, Age, and Education

- Be a United States citizen.
  - Applicants denied citizenship are considered disqualified.
- Possess a high school diploma or GED equivalent.
- Be at least 21 years of age to accept a position as a peace officer.
- Possess a valid driver’s license.

Background Check
• Criminal history check
  o No felony convictions and limited misdemeanor convictions
• Driving history check
• Finger printing
• Polygraph examination

Completion of police academy

• Complete a set number of hours of training curriculum involving key subject matters such:
  o Criminal/constitutional law
  o Police procedures
  o Ethics training
  o Firearms skills
  o Defensive tactics
• Pass a written examination at the conclusion of the academy.
• Pass a standardized physical fitness test.
  o Ohio fitness standards include:
    ▪ 1 minute push-up test
    ▪ 1 minute sit-up test
    ▪ Timed 1.5 mile run

While being considered for employment, it is normal for agencies to make visits to an applicant’s family, friends, employers, and contact references to ensure truthfulness and moral character. Additionally, some agencies will choose to challenge an applicant’s critical thinking and ability to analyze a situation quickly by giving them a scenario and
asking them for their response. Important for the purpose of this study is the general hiring requirement of a high school education or GED.

Social Media Use in Law Enforcement

From Facebook to Twitter, and YouTube, social media is changing the way police agencies investigate and solve crimes (Kelly, 2012). By utilizing social media services, police departments can deliver real-time information to hundreds of subscribers with a click of a button. In addition, the communication works two-way, giving an opportunity for departments using social media to receive immediate feedback from followers. The results speak for themselves, for example, in 2011 when Kentucky State Police posted photos on social media of jewelry, a tattoo, and a facial composite of a 10 year old unidentified body. Thanks to information provided from followers and subscribers, investigators identified the deceased person (Highland, 2011). More and more agencies are utilizing social media. According to an International Association of Chiefs of Police Survey in 2015, 96.4 percent of agencies surveyed use social media in some capacity (IACP Center for Social Media, 2015). This is vastly different compared to just a couple years ago when police department communication involved flyers, town-hall meetings, and one-way email (Hanson, 2011).

It would make sense that social media and community policing go together. With an estimated 2.67 billion world-wide social media users by 2018, police departments are using every opportunity to show how officers are relatable (Statista, 2017). Individuals can find viral videos on social media providers such as YouTube and Facebook, showing officers posing with children, lip syncing music, and even playing a pick-up game of basketball with neighborhood kids. Additionally, agencies have taken to social media to
show safety tips and crime enforcement by asking for the public’s help in locating and identifying suspects, searching for missing persons, and posting impressive pictures of drug and gun seizures.
Chapter II

Literature Review

This chapter is divided into three sections surrounding the topic of education, policing and community relations, and social media in law enforcement. There is an exhaustive amount of information that exists on these topics and the goal of this chapter is to highlight prior research in these three areas.

Controversy on Higher Education

More often than not, empirical studies that evaluate police officer performance are divided into two categories: behavioral measures (e.g., arrest rates, citizen complaints, communication skills) and attitudinal measures (job satisfaction, motivation, etc.) (Vodicka, 1994). Reform movements in policing have placed an emphasis on having higher educated law enforcement, with the belief that having additional education actually makes for a better officer in the field (Conser, 2005). Compared to a high school educated police officer, a college educated officer should be better at the following: critical thinking, interacting and fostering relationships with the communities they serve, and displaying higher amounts of job satisfaction (Rydberg & Terrill, 2010; Vodicka, 1994).

In sum, it is argued that a college-educated officer has a broader comprehension of civil rights issues from legal, social, historical, and political perspectives. Moreover, these officers have a broader view of policing tasks and a greater professional ethos, thus their actions and decisions tend to be driven by conscience and values, consequently lessening the chance of erroneous decisions. If these arguments are valid, the logical conclusion is that the college-educated officer would be less likely to place the department in a liability situation (Carter & Sapp, 1989, p. 162).

Job Performance
Several studies suggest police officers with higher education have higher arrest rates (Bozza, 1973; Glasgow, Green & Knowles, 1973). In Bozza’s study, by examining the data from a California police department, he concluded younger officers with higher education levels make more arrests than officers who are older and possess less education. Similarly, Glasgow, Green, and Knowles (1973) support this claim with a study showing a significant difference between number of arrests and the educational attainment of a police officer. It is important to note in police departments that value and adopt a community policing approach in their department, arrest rates may not be a good indicator of positive job performance. Other police departments may value citizen complaints as a better measure of job performance. For example, Cohen and Chaiken (1972) found in a New York City police officer study the most powerful predictor of civilian complaints is education level. Research exists that suggests police officers with higher education are less likely to have citizen complaints filed against them (Paynich, 2009). Job performance for law enforcement may be measured on several different factors, including citizen complaints, diffusing situations without always making arrests, and communicating better with the public. Furthermore, Manis (2007) found the more educated a police officer is, the less likely he or she is to have complaints filed against them, compared to police officers with only a high school education.

Griffin (1980), however suggests from a study that examined management preference that supervisors do not rank job performance of patrol officers who have more college education higher than officers with less college education. Griffin found supervisors did not prefer a patrol officer with more college education any more than a patrol officer with less college education. However, supervisors did rank job performance
higher and prefer patrol officers with a combined amount of college credit hours and “on the job” practical experience than patrol officers with less of the combines expertise.

Additional literature from Wilson (1999) claims that police officer education beyond two years of college may actually have a negative effect on job performance. According to Wilson, a reluctance to perform instructed tasks, questioning of authority, and even an increased likelihood of hesitation to protect oneself in life-threatening situations, are indicators of problems with police officers that possess more advanced college education (college beyond two years). In a study examining higher educations impact on police use of force, Sherman and Blumberg (1981) failed to find any significant evidence that determined education level had an influence on likelihood of a police officer to fire his or her weapon.

Krimmel (1996) conducted a self-report study in 1996 that requested police officers to rate their own performance. The results overwhelmingly showed educated police officers rated themselves higher than police officers without college education in almost all (91 percent) performance indicator categories. Specifically, police officers with bachelor’s degrees rated themselves higher in their ability to utilize employee contacts and resources, knowledge of the law, preparedness for court, quality of work assignments, problem-solving ability, level of arrest analysis, level of confidence with supervisors, quality of written work, quality of oral presentations, self-image, arrest report quality, investigative report quality, and interpersonal relationships (p. 93). Hilal, Densley, & Zhao (2013) conducted a similar study, administering a survey to police officers in a Minnesota police department. Part of the survey posed questions regarding police officer beliefs on education requirements. Results from the survey significantly
showed police officers did not think a four-year degree requirement for initial hire was necessary.

Communication

The ability to understand the sociological and psychological make-up of the community in which a police officer works and the ability to adjust themselves accordingly is an important component for being an effective police officer (Roberg, 1978). Communication is a crucial part of police work. As a focal point for community policing oriented departments, superior communication skills can be the bridge for creating a strong partnership with the citizens it serves. Superior communication skills may be seen in the ability to deescalate a potentially dangerous situation, adjusting one’s tone and attitude depending on the situation presented, and submitting a quality written report that contains all pertinent information. According to Paynich, “because community problems are not always dealing with law violations, police officers must have a greater knowledge base from which they draw available solutions” (2009, p. 14). Furthermore, the structure and curriculum of college-based learning can be an impactful factor for superior communication skills both written through report writing and verbally through daily interaction with individuals.

Several relevant studies exist that support the claim that superior communication skills are learned from college education. Smith and Aamodt (1997) found through a study of examining supervisor’s evaluations on their subordinates that officers with two or more years of college education measured significantly higher in areas of communication, report writing, and public relation. Research from Scott (1986) shared similar results, recognizing college education, “although it doesn’t guarantee that the
recipient will have developed the skills and qualities needed to be a modern police professional, it does significantly improve the probability that the individual will have these skills and be able to put them into immediate use” (p. 20).

Additional studies exist linking the influence of education and communication by police officers, with respect to the frequency of “use of force” incidents. Chapman (2012) reported from a study involving minority communities, “education predicted less frequent force and lower levels of force use” (p. 421). Chapman continued, “better-educated police officers could rely on communication and problem-solving skills instead of force to defuse volatile criminal engagements” (p. 423). White and Escobar (2008) echo Chapman’s research, believing that writing and communication skills are enhanced in college, regardless of one’s field of study.

In fairness, other studies have been conducted that fail to find a positive relationship between a police officer’s education and his or her interaction with civilians during calls for service (Worden, 1990; Foley & Terrill, 2008). Worden found college graduated police officers to be improved problem-solvers, however at the cost of showing little empathy and being discourteous to members of the public. Similarly, Foley and Terrill focused a study on police interaction with victims, finding they, “were less likely to involve comforting behavior” (p. 192). These two studies conflict with research by Page (2008), which found college educated police officers were more attuned to social problems than less-educated police officers, resulting in better ability to show empathy and compassion.

Attitude/ Professionalism
Because the very nature of police work involves being routinely exposed to situations that elicit roller coaster like emotions, it is not surprising for police officers to develop cynicism. For police departments, this can create a breeding ground for disorder amongst a police department where the profession is often taught through personal experience (Behrend, 1980). Poor attitude and cynicism can also have powerful consequences with the public. Bayley (1986) believes the daily routine of disturbances, traffic stops, and typical calls for service can be impacted by a police officer’s attitude. From a survey conducted by Telep (2010), police officers holding a bachelor’s degree were statistically less likely to exhibit authoritative attitudes directed at citizens, compared to their counterparts without a bachelor’s degree.

Part of a police department’s hiring procedure includes intensive testing, including psychological screening, in order to reduce the number of abusive police officers on the street. Despite these efforts, “it’s unrealistic to say we are going to have any one test that will eradicate this problem – though we have to try” (Barnhill, 1991). Studies suggest college education can directly impact the belief and supportive attitude for abuse of power held by police officers (Telep, 2010). Through a study of 118 patrol officers from Lincoln, Nebraska, Roberg (1978) concluded that higher educated officers were less dogmatic and had better job performance due to a more positive attitude. Furthermore, research from Weisburd, Greenspan, Hamilton, Williams, & Bryant (2000) found officers believe training and education is an effective method for reducing police abuse. Skeptics of this research point out that open-mindedness does not make a police officer incapable of abusing power or authority, however it may lay the groundwork for
the willingness of an individual to follow departmental rules, policies, regulations, and be more tolerant toward others (Rokeach, 1954).

Vodicka (1994) describes in his study that educated officers are more likely to possess well-developed communication skills, racial and ethnic awareness, and “promote a professional demeanor” that enhances “the likelihood of the agency’s success in these endeavors” (1994, p. 93). Other research supports this; Shernock (1992) concluded through a survey of 177 police officers in 11 New York State police departments that educational level was a determining factor in the value of ethical conduct for an organization.

Research also exists showing no relationship and even a negative impact between police officer education and attitude. Weiner (1976) for example, performed a sociological study of police officers with higher education and found intellectually oriented officers are less likely to change their professional attitudes toward racial/ethnic minorities. Furthermore, data from Regoli (1976) supports this claim, which indicated the higher educated patrolmen tested for the highest mean on police cynicism scores.

**Job Satisfaction**

The impact job satisfaction can have on any workplace is significant. Employers can see performance levels, absenteeism, and most importantly job turnover as primary predictors of job satisfaction (Locke, 1976). Dantzker (1992) observed that education positively influences an officers’ job satisfaction. However, this relationship was only for an officer’s initial five years of work experience. Following their initial five years, a curvilinear relationship showing the higher the education level of an officer, the more his or her job satisfaction decreased as they put years on the job. Dantzker (1992) explained
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that as a police officer matures in his or her career, a realization sets in between what college-educated officers are capable of accomplishing and what they actually do accomplish.

Mixed results were found from independent studies in Oakland, California and Detroit, Michigan by Buzawa (1984) and Buzawa, Austin, and Bannon (1994):

The role of education as a predictor of higher levels of job satisfaction was not clearly demonstrated in the earlier study. Higher levels of education were found to be predictive of increased job satisfaction in one department – Oakland, California. On the other hand, education had virtually no effect on job satisfaction among Detroit officers (Buzawa, Austin, & Bannon, 1994, 53).

Research also exists that contradicts the perceived benefits of having higher educated police officers with respect to their job satisfaction. Rydberg and Terrill (2010) found, “those with a bachelor’s degree or higher are significantly less satisfied with their job and have less favorable attitudes toward top management (p. 60). Hudzik (1978) and Lofkowitz (1974) hold similar findings in their research. Hudzik (1978) noted college educated officers held less favorable opinions of the organization they worked for. Lofkowitz (1974) echoed Hudzik’s (1978) findings; however, the study concluded officers, particularly with a master’s degree, showcased the lowest levels of positive attitudes toward their jobs.

Some scholars argue college-educated police officers may display higher amounts of job dissatisfaction due to the feeling of not being able to adequately use their skill set. Research by Trojanowicz and Nicholson (1976) found higher educated officers preferred more challenging assignments, less regulations, and more autonomy from their supervisors. When they were not challenged and encouraged to set goals, higher amounts of job dissatisfaction resulted. The solution to build satisfaction for departments with
more educated officers was to assign more challenging tasks, provide feedback, and encourage autonomy in decision making (Trojanowicz and Nicholson, 1976). In a more recent study, Balci (2011) found higher education was related to higher job expectations. Balci explained this as higher educated police officers expecting more from themselves and their jobs. Hence, lower job satisfaction will occur if these expectations are not met. This was not the case compared to lower educated police officers and job expectations.

Promotion

Research linking higher education and promotional opportunities in law enforcement has been explored. It is believed college educated individuals are more capable of utilizing better study habits and achieving higher test scores (Truxillo, Bennett, Collins, 1998). The perceived benefits from having a college background are certainly relatable to job promotion. Truxillo, Bennett, and Collins (1998) explored this and found positive statistical relationships between a supervisor’s on-the-job knowledge level and their college education level. Whetstone (2000) reinforced previous research, claiming a candidate’s test score on the written portion for the promotional process correlates positively with educational achievement. Polk and Armstrong (2001) also found the time required to achieve a promotion and assignment into a specialized position was significantly reduced for individuals with a college education.

Truxillo, Bennett, and Collins (1998) conceived college education and a supervisory position go hand in hand. From their research, they concluded that an individual’s motivation for educational achievement is a promising sign for that same individual to be motivated for promotional achievement. Scholars have also found the largest motivational factor for obtaining a college degree is the significant difference in
earning potential between those holding a bachelor’s degree and those holding a master’s degree in a supervisory level (Carlan, 1999).

**Community Policing**

*Implementing Community Policing*

According to the U.S. Department of Justice Community Oriented Policing Services (Sheider, 2008), community policing is defined as,

> a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime (https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf).

The implementation of a community policing mindset into a community is no easy task. Police agencies that have already fractured relationships with the public are immensely disadvantaged and make for skepticism and mistrust among its citizens (Song, 1988). Police agencies must balance what the community demands and what is an acceptable level of police enforcement. Skolnick and Bayley (1988) identified this as a problem, explaining how behavior may be tolerated in one neighborhood, but not acceptable in another. An example of this may be an increased enforcement of speeding in certain jurisdictions. Some may see the enforcement as beneficial and a way to maintain public safety, while others may complain it is unnecessary and an inconvenience to the public. Law enforcement agencies put themselves in a difficult situation when asking for community input and feedback, essentially leaving an open invitation for scrutiny, as well as community members who see themselves as experts on crime control.
Prior to the community era of policing, researchers have identified the political era and the professional era as significant periods in American policing (Kelling and Moore, 1988). The political era (1840-1930) viewed policing during this period as a way to gain power, resources, and authority from political figures. Consequently, these political leaders expected favors in return. A political candidate would promise prestigious positions and rewards in return for votes. Many of these opportunities were police jobs stemming from the same neighborhood or ethnic background they campaigned in. No standards or requirements existed for police officers like they do today. This meant police were accepting bribes and using scare tactics and power to persuade individuals to vote for certain candidates. Police officers also aided certain criminals in exchange for illegal items or information (Kelling & Moore, 1988).

On the other hand, the police were directly in contact with neighborhoods and the public. Foot patrol began in cities where officers could respond and resolve calls for service as they arose. Technology was very rudimentary, but as the era progressed, call boxes were invented. This enabled officers and supervisors to communicate directly from great lengths. Since police officers were commonly linked to political figures, services were provided to the public such as soup kitchens, lodging, and attempts to find employment.

As for the professional era (1930-1980), the goal was to eliminate the corrupt political ties to policing. During his address to the International Association of Chiefs of Police in 1919, August Vollmer stated the following:

An effort ought to be made to obtain men who are capable, honest, active in mind and body, industrious, cool headed, well educated, experienced in dealing with people, able to solve difficult problems quickly, and prompt to act on decisions
formed on the basis of practical common sense and sound judgment (Fisher, 2008).

The professional era demanded integrity, higher standards of recruitment and hiring, a new organizational structure, and improved management techniques. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) can be credited as the blueprint for the reform era’s model of policing. Reform included a stricter hierarchical pyramid of control. Officers enforced the law and made arrests. The basis of authority was the letter of the law, as opposed to political authority in the past. Difficulties for the reform era of policing began in the late 1960s. As police expert Chris Braiden states, police officers were expected to “park their brains at the door of the stationhouse, and follow orders like a robot” (Peak & Barthe, 2009). Patrol officers were used as puppets, responding to calls, taking a report, and returning to patrol. Officers’ efficiency was judged on how many reports they took, how many arrests were made, or how many miles were driven. Eventually this prompted a new attitude in policing, leading to the community era.

Kelling and Moore (1988) maintain reform in each era has always experienced change in two primary ways: the reorientation of police strategies and activities and the reordering of the priorities of police core functions. Despite their work, limited research has been done on measuring the reordering of core functions in a police department as a result of reform into community policing. Consequently, three studies were conducted to monitor the influence community policing has had on changing the police core functions in the 1990s. The first two studies collected and measured data from 281 police agencies between 1990 and 1996, revealing no change in police core functions during that time (Zhao, Lovrich, & Robinson, 2001; Zhao & Thurman, 1997). Zhao, He, and Lovrich (2003) followed with a third study in 2000, surveying the same agencies and measuring
their changes in police core functions. The findings indicated the core functional priorities of the police departments measured no change. Police core functions did not noticeably change from a community policing oriented department. Institutional theory, “a loosely coupled relationship between organizations and their respective environments”, was offered as an explanation by Zhao, He, and Lovrich. In addition the authors suggested, “when local crime rates increase, police agencies pay less attention to the provision of services and to order maintenance than to crime fighting” (p. 751). The result of this is the direct opposite of a community policing focus.

Police officers must be open to the idea of community policing. The demands of community policing require police officers to be “creative and innovative”, while also possessing “certain skills, including problem conceptualization, synthesis and analysis of information, action plans, program evaluation, and communication of evaluation results and policy implications” (Riechers & Roberg, 1990, p. 111). These demands are vastly different from the reasons individuals give for wanting to enter into a career in law enforcement in the first place (Parsons, 1996). Reichers and Roberg (1990) additionally placed responsibility on supervisors to support and encourage the concept of community policing by its front-line workers. According to Cardarelli, McDevitt, and Baum (1996), transitioning to a community policing philosophy is an evolving process; when departments rush this process, it results in strictly a new title with no teeth, while officers continue to operate in the same manor they have before.

In order to measure the attitude of officers’ belief in the community policing model, Rosenberg, Sigler, and Lewis (1999) conducted a survey of the Racine Police Department in Wisconsin. Findings from the study revealed patrol officers actually have
a more favorable overall attitude toward community policing than supervisory staff. The authors suggest a possible explanation is because “community policing supports a decentralized command structure, including fewer supervisors, so it is not surprising that supervisors did not relish a potential loss of authority” (p. 577). Another study performed by Rosenberg, Sigler, and Lewis (2008) examined police officer attitude toward community policing over a 19-month period in Racine, Wisconsin. Data revealed the attitudes of patrol officers and investigators were less favorable toward community policing concepts, programming, decentralization of substations, and the community policing unit than senior command staff and even sergeants. Additional findings indicated a strained relationship between patrol officers and supervisors.

Assessing Community Policing

Normal variables for measuring police services likely would involve number of arrests, response times, and crime rates. The birth of the Uniform Crime Reports in the 1930s enabled accurate tracking of this data and even the ability to compare numbers across multiple jurisdictions. Unfortunately, the vague concept of community policing has made measuring the effectiveness of community policing problematic and difficult to evaluate. According to authors Reisig and Kane (2014), a complexing issue in evaluating community policing is its loose and flexible concept. For some, an inquiry on the effectiveness of community policing can be evaluated through visits with upper management and patrol level officers to receive feedback and views on the areas they patrol. Another indication would be a noticeable difference in the community’s willingness to participate and contribute to crime reduction programs. Community members may be more comfortable providing valuable information to police officers. For
example, Flint, Michigan observed a 43 percent decrease in emergency 9-1-1 calls during an experiment with their Foot Patrol Program from 1979 to 1982 (Trojanowicz, 1986).

Research supports increased contact with citizens can improve police-community relations. Gill and colleagues (2014) conducted a systematic review study that identified the effects community-oriented policing has on crime, disorder, fear, citizen satisfaction, and police legitimacy. Their method included a thorough search of relevant studies using keywords that met their criteria. Of the categories measured, citizen satisfaction measured in 23 of the 65 comparisons with an improvement of 78.3 percent. Additionally, results indicated residents interacting with community-oriented police officers were more likely to perceive fair treatment, respect, and police legitimacy. Literature by Xu (2005) and Zhao, Scheider, and Thurman (2002) strengthen this research, finding “citizens’ perceptions of police commitment to their community are significantly linked to less fear” (p. 171). Zhao, Scheider, and Thurman concluded following a review of 26 projects on police fear between 1973 and 2000 that programs which implemented their community policing approach produced significant drops in residents’ fear of crime. Findings also revealed citizens’ fear and perceived life quality are significant predictors of citizen satisfaction with the police (Xu, 2005).

Chappell (2006) produced a study which compared the academy performance of police recruits trained under a traditional academy curriculum to the performance of recruits trained under a community policing curriculum. The study used two curricula from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) for data collection. In 2004, the FDLE went through a training curriculum change where it transitioned from a traditional academy approach, to a community-oriented policing approach. The most
notable differences included scenario training, focus on problem-solving, and a new state certification exam. This new training program was called the Curriculum Maintenance System (CMS). Their research observed data on 300 academy police recruits, 155 traditional recruits and 145 recruits that went through the CMS curriculum. The method of their research observed the impact of the CMS training on recruit performance. An interesting variable they recorded was the education of recruits.

Results from Chappell’s study proved interesting. Recruit education was a strong predictor in CMS training for obtaining a higher academy score. On the contrary, increased education for a recruit in a traditional academy training setting did not indicate a higher performance or score during his or her academy. Chappell concluded by stating, “CMS curriculum rewards a more educated recruit compared to the traditional curriculum, which is in line with the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) philosophy” (p. 52).

To measure the effectiveness community policing has in reducing urban violence, MacDonald (2002) conducted a study that analyzed 164 cities in the United States and the relationships of robbery and homicide rate to community policing variables. Findings from the study confirmed previous research claiming community policing is not a strong influence on violent crime, and instead a focus on proactive policing as an effective method of controlling violent crime (Sampson & Cohen, 1988). MacDonald echoed sentiments from Goldstein (1990), who pointed out that simply adopting a community policing plan and thinking the work is done is not enough.

**Social Media and Law Enforcement**
Advances in technology, increased use of the Internet, and a society where practically every individual has a cell phone with video capability has rewarded organizations with communication tools where the public does not have to rely exclusively on content from media organizations (Braunstein, 2007). According to Lauri Stevens, principal consultant for the LAwS Communications which assists law enforcement in the implementation of interactive media technologies:

Social media tools offer police departments a way to listen to their citizens and hear what is being said about the department, crime, the quality of life, and events. They also offer the department the ability to shape the conversation. With a well-planned strategy for using social media tools, departments can actually increase control of their reputation. (The Police Chief, 2010)

This was not always the case. Prior to the explosion of social media, police agencies were left to the mercy of news providers and their choice of what was communicated to local communities. Depending on who you ask, the relationship between news media personnel and the police can be characterized as tense. Several researchers maintain that police agencies and the media can engage in a mutually beneficial relationship, where the media is provided with quick, reliable sources of crime information, and in return the media provides the public with a positive image of law enforcement (Ericson, Baranek, & Chan, 1987; Fishman, 1981). Other researchers do not agree however, stating the news media often portrays the men and women in law enforcement negatively. For example, Surette (1998) notes how the media is inclined to accept crime information that is news worthy, while still portraying the police as ineffective and incompetent. The use of social media by police departments to foster and enhance relationships with their communities has helped agencies balance this and positively impacted the way law enforcement is viewed today.
According to Payne (2012) police departments must use three steps to effectively utilize social media:

- Engagement
- Intelligence
- Investigation

A major factor in the effectiveness of community policing is the ability for the police to engage with community members. Social media presents police departments with the opportunity to engage with the public at any time and from any distance. Intelligence is a product of engagement. The digital age has brought a large difference in intelligence gathering from the traditional age due to how quickly and accurately intelligence can be gathered (Altunbas, 2013). The investigation of crime by law enforcement is becoming faster than ever thanks to social media. Due to tips from the community, police are able to follow leads, conduct investigations, and even make arrests on crimes committed (Payne, 2012). The flipside of this also means the offenders may be aware of crimes being investigated against them and act quickly to dispose of evidence or prevent apprehension. Police agencies must scramble to act quickly in processing information given by community members regarding crimes being investigated so that swift action can be taken.

As more and more police agencies begin utilizing social media, it is clear the benefits it may have for both police agencies and the communities they serve. According to Nancy Kolb, senior program manager for the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Center for Social Media, “the exponential growth and popularity of social media and its effectiveness at communicating with a community is helping law
enforcement departments across the U.S. to redefine what community policing is” (Basu, 2012). Others agree with Kolb, such as Braunstein (2007) who argues major change in law enforcement is being driven by three phenomena: the introduction of community policing, the evolving economics of the media industry, and the explosion of communications and information technology (p. 44). Additionally, the flexibility in social media use gives police departments the opportunity to do more than just inform the public. From a crime fighting goal, social media helps by gathering intelligence on crimes, providing real-time information on safety issues, sharing knowledge with other police agencies, and promoting online community policing (Crump, 2011).

One added benefit of social media is the capability of police departments to be in 24/7 direct contact with the community it serves. A 2015 social media survey from the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) found 83.5 percent of the agencies surveyed said the benefits of social media in its agency has helped improve police-community relationships in their jurisdiction (IACP Center for Social Media, 2013). The success comes from police departments being able to reach out to the masses of hundreds and even thousands of social media users all at once. It’s a two-way street; in return, those social media users and community members are fully capable of communicating back to the police department. The majority of these social media services are essentially free, easy to use, and fast, making it an ideal strategy for building community relations.

Research exists that indicates the public’s perception on law enforcement is heavily influenced by the media (Surette, 1998). Unfortunately, research that assesses the effectiveness police departments may have in using social media to connect with the community is severely lacking. This motivated researchers Kilburn and Krieger (2014) to
conduct a content analysis of law enforcement agency websites to determine whether they were utilizing the internet to foster communication with their communities. Results were positive, revealing all 50 of the agencies analyzed hosted a website, 72 percent of the departments maintained a Facebook account, and 60 percent had a Twitter account. In looking at the way departments connected with the public through their social media, 66 percent had an annual report on their website, 22 percent displayed a code of ethics, and a procedures manual was available on 20 percent of the websites (Kilburn & Krieger, 2014).

Research suggests that not all organizations in any job industry utilize social media in the same fashion (Mergel, 2013). According to Mergel, organizations may use three different strategies when using social media. The ‘push strategy’ is when social media is used by organizations to broadcast mass amounts of media out to its users (Mergel, 2013). No interaction exists between either parties when using the push strategy. The second strategy is the ‘pull strategy’. Explained as a one-way channel of communication when organizations use social media to attract users and encourage information provided to them, citizens provide information through the social media channels they subscribe to, however most of the time the organizations do not respond. The third strategy is the ‘networking strategy’. This strategy focuses on back and forth interaction between the agency and its constituents through networking and interactive engagement. We are starting to see police organizations use the networking strategy more and more as they get familiar with the tools and learning curve of social media.

In sum, social media use is still a new tool police agencies are familiarizing themselves with. In a survey administered at an International Association of Chiefs of
Police conference, one third of the public safety executives attending prioritized social media management as the number one digital priority departments are facing today (Doyle, 2016). Despite social media management being identified as most important, 44 percent of the respondents from the survey rated their agency as being “fair” in their ability to effectively utilize social media to its full potential. Top-line managers in police agencies are recognizing the importance of social media as a tool; however it is a learning process just like anything else to really draw from its potential.
Data History and Collection

To complete my research, a data set completed by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) in part with the Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) program was utilized. Since 1987, LEMAS has collected data from over 3,000 general purpose state and local law enforcement agencies in the United States. Data collected includes agency responsibilities, hiring practices, personnel figures, officer salaries, education and training requirements, computers and information systems, and community policing activities. The data set used for this study was a 2013 survey administered to 3,336 general purpose state and local law enforcement agencies including 2,353 local police departments, 933 sheriffs’ officers, and the 50 primary state law enforcement agencies. Agencies serving special jurisdictions (such as schools, airports, or parks), or with special enforcement responsibilities (such as conservation laws or alcohol laws), were considered out of scope for the survey. Agencies employing 100 or more sworn personnel were included via self-reporting, while smaller agencies were stratified based on number of officers employed (United States Department of Justice, 2013).

The initial 3,336 agency sized sample frame used for the 2013 LEMAS survey was from the 2008 BJS Census of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies (CSLLEA). Since the 2008 CSLLEA survey, it was discovered 26 of the departments surveyed has since closed from the 2008 test date. These departments were required to be dropped from the sample. Additionally, 29 of the agencies did not receive the survey
because of inaccurate contact information. Of the 3,272 agencies that received the 80-item questionnaire, a total of 2,822 agencies responded for a response rate of 86 percent. The breakdown for the response rate was as follows: 2,059 local police departments, 717 sheriffs’ offices, and 46 state law enforcement agencies (United States Department of Justice, 2013).

**Research Hypotheses**

Police departments, policy makers, and the mainstream media are continually discussing ways to train and improve the quality of law enforcement officers. At the end of the day the two solutions that always find their way to the top of the list are higher education and better community relations. Despite this, when accounting for the number of law enforcement agencies in America that explicitly requires a four-year degree for eligibility as a police officer, the number is less than 1 percent (Hickman & Reaves, 2006). Continued violence in America and the growing fragmented relationship between law enforcement and the public makes this a research worthy topic. Moreover, police administrators and chiefs of police may wish to view this study as a progress report to see where their department stands when compared to others. The research conducted contained four hypotheses that test the relationship between several department variables. The variables chosen pertain to department information such as education requirements, in-service community policing training, utilization of social media, and department size. Specifically, the four hypotheses tested are as follows:

1. Police agencies requiring a high school diploma for new hires as a minimum level of education will be less likely to maintain some form of social media than agencies requiring at least some form of higher education for new hires.
2. Police agencies that use social media with their respective communities will be more likely to require annual community policing training than agencies that do not use social media.

3. Police agencies that require annual community policing training will be larger in size than departments that do not require community policing training.

4. Police agencies requiring a high school diploma for new hires as a minimum level of education will be less likely to have community policing training than agencies requiring at least some form of higher education for new hires.

**Variables for Analysis**

The dependent variable for my analysis was the agencies minimum education requirement for newly sworn personnel. My research design also consisted of two major independent variables. The first asks if the agency sampled maintained any form of social media and if so, what kind. The second asks the proportion of the agencies full-time sworn personnel that received at least 8 hours of community policing training annually. Lastly, a control variable I used was the number of paid sworn personnel working in each individual agency.

To meet the vision of my study, some of my variables were transformed. The agency minimum education requirement variable was transformed so that it was split between agencies that require high school education or less and agencies that require some form of post-secondary education for their officers. Additionally, the social media variable was transformed so that the sum of agencies that use social media and how
many forms of social media they use could be measured. These adjustments were necessary for the strategy of my study.

Additionally, community policing was defined for the research and in the codebook glossary as:

a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues, such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime (https://ric-zai-inc.com/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf).

A1. As of January 1, 2013, how many PAID SWORN personnel worked in your agency?

E2. During the 12-month period ending December 31, 2012, what proportion of FULL-TIME SWORN PERSONNEL received at least 8 HOURS of training on COMMUNITY POLICING issues (e.g., problem solving, SARA, and community partnerships)?

1) All
2) Half or more
3) Less than half
4) None
5) Not applicable

F.14. Does your agency use any of the electronic SOCIAL MEDIA listed below? (yes or no)

a. Twitter
b. Facebook, Google+, or similar service
c. Blogs
LAW ENFORCEMENT STANDARDS

d. YouTube or similar video sharing service

e. Mass communication/notification system (e.g., Nixle)

f. Other, please specify: __________________

C6. As of January 1, 2013, what was your agency’s minimum EDUCATION REQUIREMENT for SWORN NEW HIRES?

1) No minimum requirement

2) High school diploma or equivalent (e.g., GED)

3) Some college but no degree

4) Associate’s Degree or equivalent

5) Bachelor’s Degree or equivalent

6) Other requirement, please specify: ______________

Analytic Strategy

I conducted my secondary analysis using a computer program licensed by International Business Machines Corporation (IBM). The software program is called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences SPSS version 20.0 and provides capabilities to analyze sampled data using a variety of methods. Prior to the analysis, it was necessary to recode several variables to enable testing.

My analysis was conducted in two stages. Stage one included running descriptive statistics on my dependent and independent variables listed above. These variables were examined using frequencies and percentages and presented in table form. The second stage tested my hypotheses by performing independent t-tests, where the
mean scores and the differences of my variables were examined. The next chapter presents the findings from my study.
Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings relative to each hypothesis. The results are divided into two sections. Phase 1 contains a survey overview which provides a descriptive profile of the sample. Following the survey overview, phase 2 includes the testing of variables to possibly provide support for my hypotheses.

Phase 1 – Survey Overview

The first stage of the analysis accounts for the frequency and percent for the variables of education, community policing training, and agency use of social media (see Table 1). For education required, 468 (16.8%) agencies required their officers to have more than a high school education, compared to 2314 (83.2%) agencies that only required a high school degree. For agencies that require annual community policing training, 870 (33.6%) respondents identified as having required annual community policing training and 1716 (66.4%) respondents identified not having such a requirement. Table 1 also illustrates agency use of social media, revealing Facebook (57.9%) as the most popular form of social media used by police agencies. The other major social media service, Twitter, reported much lower with 781 (28.1%) agencies stating they use it. The smallest form of social media used by agencies was blogs (8.0%).

A profile describing social media use by department is provided in table 2. The table examines if a department agency uses a form of social media, and if so, how many forms of social media are they using. For example, there are 754 (27.1%) agencies that report using zero forms of social media. Meanwhile, there are 87 (3.1%) agencies that report using every listed form of social media (Facebook, mass communication, Twitter,
and blogs). The strongest percentage is for 839 (30.1%) agencies that report using two forms of social media. Agencies used a mean average of 1.4 forms of social media as well.

Table 3 provides a descriptive profile for the variable of agency’s total number of full-time sworn personnel. New York City Police Department was the largest agency, accounting for 34,454 sworn personnel. Several agencies also identified as having 0 full-time sworn personnel. This could possibly be due to a number of agencies being staffed with part-time officers. A sum of 463,224 full-time sworn personnel was sampled from the 2,826 agencies. To account for outliers, the median was used to identify 39.0 officers as the average total number of sworn full-time personnel.

Table 1: Descriptive Profile of Entire Sample, N= 2,826

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College required (more than high school)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>2314</td>
<td>83.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requires community policing training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>33.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>1716</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains social media (Facebook)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>1612</td>
<td>57.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>1173</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains social media (mass communication)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>1252</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>1533</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains social media (Twitter)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>782</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>71.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Maintains social media (blogs)

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>2561</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Descriptive Profile Detailing How Many Forms of Social Media Agencies Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of Social Media Dev.</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>St. Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of ways</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>839</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2785</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Descriptive Profile for Agency’s Total Number of Full-Time Sworn Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sworn Full-Time Department Personnel Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stage 2
Stage 2 of the analysis represents a comparative look at variables in order to test my hypotheses. This was accomplished by testing my independent variables with my dependent variables. Variables in the analysis include agency education requirement, use of social media, mandated community policing training, and agency size.

**Hypothesis 1**

Police agencies requiring a high school diploma for new hires as a minimum level of education will be less likely to maintain some form of social media than agencies requiring at least some form of higher education for new hires.

An independent T-test was conducted to compare the means of the variables involved in hypothesis 1. The variables compared were agency education requirements to the mean score of agencies that use social media. As presented in Table 4, agencies with higher education requirements (465) have a higher mean score of 1.617, than agencies with lower education requirements (2287) and have a mean score of 1.334. This indicates departments with an education requirement more than high school are more likely to use social media than departments without an education requirement. The P-value indicates the probability that this occurred by chance is less than < .000 making this statistically significant.

**Table 4: Comparison of Education Required and Social Media Use**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Required</th>
<th>Social Media Use</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>&lt; .000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>2287</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>2752</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 2

Police agencies that use social media with their respective communities will be more likely to require annual community policing training than agencies that do not use social media.

An independent T-test was conducted to compare the means of the variables involved in hypothesis 2. The variables compared were agency training requirements to the mean score of agencies that use social media. As presented in Table 5, agencies with community policing training requirements (861) had a higher mean score of 1.425, than agencies that have lower education requirements (1710) and a mean score of 1.381. The mean scores from this indicates agencies that require community policing training are more likely to use social media than agencies with no community policing requirements, however this cannot be said confidently due to the P-value indicating < .355.

Table 5: Comparison of Training Required and Social Media Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Required</th>
<th>Social Media Use</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>861</td>
<td>.355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>1710</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>2571</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 3

Police agencies that require annual community policing training will be larger in size than agencies that do not require community policing training.

An independent T-test was conducted to compare the means of the variables involved in hypothesis 3. The variables compared were agency training requirements to
the mean score agency personnel size. As presented in Table 6, agencies with community policing training requirements (870) had a higher mean score of 133.11, than agencies without community policing training requirements (1716) and a mean score of 164.24. The mean scores from this indicates agencies that require community policing training are smaller in personnel size than departments that do not have community policing training requirements, however this cannot be said confidently due to the P-value indicating < .202.

Table 6: Comparison of Training Required and Agency Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Training Required</th>
<th>Agency Size (#)</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>.202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>1716</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2586</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis 4

Police agencies requiring a high school diploma for new hires as a minimum level of education will be less likely to have community policing training than agencies requiring at least some form of higher education for new hires.

An independent T-test was conducted to compare the means of the variables involved in hypothesis 4. The variables compared were agency training requirements to the mean score of agencies education requirements. As presented in Table 7, agencies with higher education requirements (432) had a lower mean score of .3009, compared to agencies that have lower education requirements (2129) and a mean score of .3434. The mean scores from this indicates 30% of the agencies that require higher education
require community policing as well, while 34% of the agencies that do not have a higher education requirement, require community policing training. The P-value indicates these results are not statistically significant (< .089) and cannot be said confidently.

Table 7: Comparison of Education Required and Training Required

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Required</th>
<th>Training Required</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 = Yes</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>.089</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = No</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>2129</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overview

The data sampled was obtained from a survey conducted in 2013 by the LEMAS program, which focused on law enforcement agency hiring practices, personnel, education and training requirements, and community policing activities. Several variables were chosen as part of a secondary analysis in order to compare the relationship between them. The variables selected for testing were the following: officer education requirements, community policing training requirements, social media use, and agency personnel size. Descriptive statistics (Tables 1-3) provided a survey overview of the sample. This study contained four hypotheses that were tested using independent T-tests to investigate means scores and statistical significance (Tables 4-7). Hypothesis 1 revealed statistically significant findings supporting police agencies that maintain an education requirement more than high school are more likely to use social media than departments without an education requirement. Hypothesis 2 was supported, finding
agencies that require community policing training are more likely to use social media than agencies with no community policing requirements; however the relationship was not statistically significant. Test results did not support hypothesis 3, revealing that agencies requiring community policing training tend to actually be smaller in personnel size than departments that do not have community policing training requirements. These findings showed a weak correlation. Finally, hypothesis 4 was not statistically significant and not supported, revealing 30% of the agencies that require higher education, require community policing as well, while 34% of the agencies that do not have a higher education requirement, require community policing training.
Summary of Major Findings

This thesis focused on examining police agencies in the way they recruit and manage their personnel with respect to education standards, community policing, and the use of social media in particular. The literature has revealed the value of a police officer obtaining and possessing an education past the high school level, as well as the positive connection it can have with community relations (Smith & Aamodt, 1997; Smith, 1986; Foley & Terrill, 2008). Unfortunately, literature has also revealed the unreasonably low number of agencies that actively recruit and require higher educated candidates (Hickman & Reaves, 2006). The purpose of this thesis was to shed greater light and examine police agencies strategies involving education, training, and social media utilization. The structure of this research was launched on already existing data. The four following hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. Police agencies requiring a high school diploma for new hires as a minimum level of education will be less likely to maintain some form of social media than agencies requiring at least some form of higher education for new hires.

2. Police agencies that use social media with their respective communities will be more likely to require annual community policing training than agencies that do not use social media.

3. Police agencies that require annual community policing training will be larger in size than agencies that do not require community policing training.
4. Police agencies requiring a high school diploma for new hires as a minimum level of education will be less likely to have community policing training than agencies requiring at least some form of higher education for new hires.

Hypothesis 1 resulted in a statistically significant finding between a department’s education requirement for its officers and use of social media that supported my hypothesis. The results showed police agencies that maintain an education requirement more than high school are more likely to use social media than departments without such an educational requirement. Unfortunately, hypothesis 2, 3, and 4 did not find a statistically significant relationship between the predictor variable and the dependent variable. Despite this, some data was provided that may prove beneficial for future research. The prediction of hypothesis 2 was supported, as results showed agencies that require community policing training are more likely to use social media than agencies with no community policing requirements. Hypothesis 3 was not supported, with indication that agencies requiring community policing training tend to actually be smaller in personnel size than departments that do not have community policing training requirements. Lastly, hypothesis 4 was not supported, finding 30% of the agencies that require higher education, require community policing as well, while 34% of the agencies that do not have a higher education requirement, require community policing training.

Contributions

The results from this study are extremely beneficial and relevant to the future of criminal justice policy. Several contributions stand out that are worth mentioning. First, as the number of young adults who attend college following high school continues to grow, our nation’s police officers should follow suit. Though the contributions to this
ideology may only be a drop in the bucket, the continued effort and research toward this idea should not go unnoticed. Furthermore, as the majority of studies on police officer education examine how performance is affected by education, this study was conducted differently. This study directly looked into police department policies and compared the relationship of police officer education with several different variables.

This study also contributes by relating to MacDonald’s study on police departments community policing approach. MacDonald determined that many departments claim to adopt a community minded approach to policing, when they actually do the opposite (2002). One of the purposes of this study was to identify how much police departments were really requiring annual community policing training. Results from this study may benefit department administrators and policy makers.

Additionally, the diverse findings reveal how far off departments are to achieving a professional standard of practice. The recent 2013 data used from the LEMAS survey combined with these findings may also provide aid to police administrators and supervisors of their respective agencies to serve as a benchmark for progress and comparisons against other agencies. This study could encourage departments to revisit their recruiting and hiring standards, or even begin using social media to communicate with their communities.

This study may also make a difference in the way police officers are mandated annually for in-service training. For instance, all police officers in the state of Massachusetts are annually required to meet a state-wide training standard. This training includes topics such as legal updates, domestic violence, and defensive tactics (Mass.gov,
However, what is not mandated is community policing training. Community policing training is often offered as a continued professional training course, however these courses cost departments money to send officers. Findings from this study and future research may help strengthen the argument for requiring community policing training.

Limitations

Before recommending steps for future research, it is important to acknowledge limitations from this study. One critique that comes to mind is that the study could have included more variables. Many factors such as police performance, age, gender, race, and region were not taken into consideration. It is important to note this study draws conclusions about groups (departments) based on data from the individual level (Loney & Nagelkerke, 2014). This is termed as individualistic fallacy and fails to consider variables I mentioned above. Furthermore, because this was secondary data, I sacrificed control over how the data set was structured. For future research, it would be interesting to see these factors included as they could contribute in future research significantly.

Another limitation worth considering is my lack of control over the quality of the data. One of the issues with using data from the LEMAS program is that the data collected undergoes limited quality checks to ensure validity of the responses. While using secondary data for my analysis was advantageous in saving time and accessibility, its accuracy may be in question. For example, Maguire et al. (1998) identified discrepancies in the reported number of sworn officers between the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), the Law Enforcement Directory Survey, and LEMAS survey data. In
addition, Langworthy (2002) found contradictory figures in numerous agencies reported response rates for calls of service. This creates quality concerns in the accuracy of the data I tested, since one of my variables involved the number of sworn personnel.

Although the LEMAS survey has been administered periodically since 1987, the survey and dataset analyzed comes from a 2013 report, but the data were actually collected in 2012. Future researchers may want to undertake more recent data on education and training requirements. A final limitation worth considering is that the findings are made to generalize based on large sized agencies. The LEMAS sampling frame is geared toward “large” sized agencies with more than 100 officers. Only a limited number of smaller sized agencies are sampled from strata based, making a large number left out and the inclusion of small-sized agencies more difficult to test. This means agencies included in the survey such as New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles could jeopardize the accuracy of my results. The survey also fails to take into consideration different regions and communities where the background of police personnel employed may be quite different.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

There are several recommendations for future research. An important question to consider for future research is what really defines “better policing”? Depending whom you ask, better policing is to be measured by the number of arrests an officer makes (Glaskow et al, 1973), while others may argue that better quality is proof through measuring the number of use of force incidents and number of officer complaints (Cohen & Chaiken, 1972; Manis, 2007). Perhaps all of these are performance measures that
identify the quality of policing; however until this is decided upon, it may be difficult to form a concrete argument supporting higher education.

A second recommendation is to take this research a step further. The LEMAS data set provides demographic information such as age, gender, race, etc. A future study that included these factors would provide additional insight on how police departments compare to one another. It would also be interesting to include geographical region as an additional factor to explore the varying education of police officers based on location.

Another suggestion for future study is to include regression as a form of analysis. Testing regression would allow me to use my independent variable to predict the outcome of my dependent variable. This would actually assist me in seeing directly how the independent variables relate to my dependent variable.

Recommendations for the future may also include the suggestion of not using secondary analysis. Although time saving and easily accessible, the use of a secondary data set may not have fully matched the vision of my study. A recommendation for the future would be to create my own data set through a survey or questionnaire. One angle that researchers may wish to explore is the opinion of officers themselves on the idea of requiring higher education. It would be interesting to see what patrol officers think, should departments begin raising their education recruitment and hiring standards. A survey asking the officer his/her opinion that includes the variables that were examined in this study would be interesting, as well as valuable for the future of progressive law enforcement to see.
Lastly, it has been mentioned how important it is for police agencies to continue to build positive relations with the communities they serve. Social media gives police departments and its administrators the unique ability to reach out to community members without a distance barrier because technology is a relatively new tool in the 21st century. For policing, there are essentially few studies testing its effectiveness on community relations. A study evaluating its effectiveness at improving relations with the community is something that could encourage more police departments to begin adopting it as a strategy.

A consensus doesn’t exist that supports the idea that a police officer with a college degree will perform better than a non-degree counterpart. Many criminal justice professionals argue being a police officer is a craft profession that requires “street smart” as opposed to “book smart”. Additionally, police administrators worry requiring a degree would discriminate against minority candidates and jeopardize relations with minority neighborhoods. However, it is evident through research that possessing a college degree can enhance an officer in skills such as writing, communication, and problem-solving. Further research must be conducted to promote forward-thinking and strengthen the argument for positively linking educated officers with community policing relations.
References


http://www.collegedata.com/cs/content/content_payarticle_tmpl.jhtml?articleId=10064


Bureau of Justice Statistics.


doi:10.1080/02732170802053621


https://cimarkpayne.wordpress.com/


March 15, 2017

Dr. Christopher Bellas, Principal Investigator
Mr. John McIntyre, Co-investigator
Department of Criminal Justice & Forensic Sciences
UNIVERSITY

RE:  HSRC PROTOCOL NUMBER: 140-2017
     TITLE:  Law Enforcement Agencies and the Influential Relationship between Education Standards, Training and Social Media Use

Dear Dr. Bellas and Mr. McIntyre:

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed the abovementioned protocol and determined that it is exempt from full committee review based on a DHHS Category 4 exemption.

Any changes in your research activity should be promptly reported to the Institutional Review Board and may not be initiated without IRB approval except where necessary to eliminate hazard to human subjects. Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects should also be promptly reported to the IRB.

The IRB would like to extend its best wishes to you in the conduct of this study.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael Hripko
Associate Vice President for Research
Authorized Institutional Official

MAH:cc
c:  Attorney Patricia Wagner, Chair
     Department of Criminal Justice & Forensic Sciences