

“NO JUSTICE, NO PEACE”: Institutional Culture of Policing & Effects on Minority Groups in Canada

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Abstract

The institutional culture of policing and the use of controversial policing practices has largely contributed to the divide that exists between minority populations and the police in Canada. Surveys and data measuring the public's perception of policing in Canada have demonstrated that there is a gap between minority populations and their confidence in the abilities of the policing agencies which serve and protect them. This research paper identifies how the institutional culture of policing and the continued use of controversial policing practices contributes to the tension that exists between these two groups. Specifically, it examines three controversial policing practices: predictive policing, street-checks and starlight tours and discusses how these practices further the mistrust and lack of faith that minority groups experience in interacting with Canadian policing institutions. Using a descriptive analysis of purposively selected literature, the results of this research suggest that the institutional culture of policing continues to perpetuate the use of these controversial policing practices through a unified, in-group solidarity mentality. These practices shape public perceptions of the police and contribute to the divide between minority populations and the police. Research results suggest that in order to improve the relationship between the public and the police, changes must be made internally at an institutional level. This includes integrating social services into law enforcement, reevaluating the use of controversial policing practices and addressing the "blue code of silence" that exists within policing agencies.

Dedications and Acknowledgements

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Land Acknowledgment

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Institutional Culture of Policing & Effects on Minority Groups in Canada

Police violence towards racial minority groups is an international social justice and human rights issue. Unified responses to condemning police brutality have taken the form of protests, riots and rallies, echoing the powerful words- “No Justice, No Peace”. Recent calls to defund the police across both the United States and Canada has ignited an increased demand from the public, urging law enforcement officers to be introspective within their agencies and to take responsibility for racial attitudes and prejudices. Police forces globally are being urged by the public to make a conscious effort to improve relations between the police and minority groups. Policing practices are being scrutinized for being controversial, igniting and amplifying negative public and political perceptions of the police. Excessive use of force, racial profiling, cultural divisions and institutional policing cultures are now being examined to fully understand the relationship between the public and the police. Minority populations are being recognized as disproportionately overrepresented as victims of police brutality. Due to the documentation of this conflict and the instantaneous ability to share them, global concern has risen regarding the exchanges between law enforcement officers and minority groups within Canada.

The accessibility of social media has allowed for widespread coverage on news, current events and injustices on a global scale. Platforms such as Twitter, Facebook and Instagram permit the sharing of information effortlessly, in real time. Social media has become a vital tool for mass sharing information that is not covered by other forms of mass media. As examined by Weitzer and Tuch’s study (2004), media exposure of police abuse plays a critical role in increasing the public’s beliefs surrounding the frequency of police misconduct. Policing practices including predictive policing, street checks and starlight tours have been criticized in the past. Social media has allowed the detrimental effects of these practices to be more widely

acknowledged. The use of controversial policing practices has been identified in previous literature. However, a gap in literature exists regarding the relationship between specific, controversial practices and the impact they have on minority groups, which warrants further research. In addition to this, the culture of policing has been identified as a key factor in perpetuating misconduct within agencies, although the impact on minority groups needs further consideration and review.

It is clear that a divide already exists between minority groups and the police due to a plethora of reasons. It is important to examine how these controversial policing practices, coupled with the culture of policing, contributes to this divide. Literature regarding police misconduct towards the Indigenous population in Canada is well explored; however, research on specific controversial policing practices and their effects on minority groups is sparse.

Research Question & Methodology

The following research seeks to discern how Canadian police forces' continued use of controversial policing practices contributes to the divide between minority groups and the police. This project utilizes a descriptive analysis design to examine controversial policing practices and the culture of policing within Canadian police forces. The descriptive analysis uses a purposive selection approach, where journal articles and academic literature are selected based on their relevance and critically examined to discuss these controversial practices and their effects on minority populations. This study began with a systemic literature review to develop a framework and understanding of specific controversial policing practices and the culture of policing. Using general keywords: "minority", "policing culture", "controversial practices", "Canadian policing", peer reviewed studies, media articles and statistics were selected for a well-rounded review of the literature. This search was further refined by using terms such as "visible minority",

“starlight tours”, “street checks” and “blue code of silence” to capture more focused literature on these topics. The literature was then analyzed based on common themes and categories which formulated the framework of this research paper.

This analysis examines how the use of these controversial policing practices impacts the relationship between minority populations and the police. It also explores the culture of policing and identifies how this environment contributes to the endorsement and continued use of these policing practices. This research paper specifically addresses the following question: How does the institutional culture of policing and the use of controversial policing practices contribute to the divide between minority populations and the police in Canada?

Universal Foundations of Policing

Modern policing was established in 1829, nearly 200 years ago by Sir Robert Peel. Peel formulated nine principles as a guiding force for law enforcement in the Metropolitan area, which continue to form the current framework of professional policing in Canada (Parent & Parent, 2018). These nine policing principles are premised on the following:

1. To prevent crime and disorder, as an alternative to their repression by military force and severity of legal punishment.
2. To recognise always that the power of the police to fulfil their functions and duties is dependent on public approval of their existence, actions and behaviour and on their ability to secure and maintain public respect.
3. To recognise always that to secure and maintain the respect and approval of the public means also the securing of the willing co-operation of the public in the task of securing observance of laws.

4. To recognise always that the extent to which the co-operation of the public can be secured diminishes proportionately the necessity of the use of physical force and compulsion for achieving police objectives.
5. To seek and preserve public favour, not by pandering to public opinion; but by constantly demonstrating absolutely impartial service to law, in complete independence of policy, and without regard to the justice or injustice of the substance of individual laws, by ready offering of individual service and friendship to all members of the public without regard to their wealth or social standing, by ready exercise of courtesy and friendly good humour; and by ready offering of individual sacrifice in protecting and preserving life.
6. To use physical force only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient to obtain public co-operation to an extent necessary to secure observance of law or to restore order, and to use only the minimum degree of physical force which is necessary on any particular occasion for achieving a police objective.
7. To maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.
8. To recognise always the need for strict adherence to police-executive functions, and to refrain from even seeming to usurp the powers of the judiciary of avenging individuals or the State, and of authoritatively judging guilt and punishing the guilty.
9. To recognise always that the test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them. (Government of the United Kingdom, 2012)

For the purpose of this research, special attention is drawn to principle two, four, six and seven. Principle two states that the ability of the police to perform their duties is reliant on public approval of police actions (Government of the United Kingdom, 2012). Public approval of police actions has proven to be subjective depending on which members of the public are participating. In 2019, data was collected from the General Social Survey (GSS) on Canadians' safety to measure Canadian's perceptions of police efficacy. Through this data collection, it was found that less than one in five Canadians felt that local police were approachable, adequate at enforcing laws, ensuring public safety, treating people fairly, promptly responding to calls and supplying information to the public regarding crime prevention (Ibrahim, 2020). In addition to this, it was reported that Canadians that reported having physical, mental or cognitive disabilities were less likely to report having confidence in Canadian police (Ibrahim, 2020). This survey also indicated that seventy percent of First Nations, Inuit or Metis people did not have a great deal of confidence in the police (Ibrahim, 2020). The GSS also concluded that Canadians that are a part of a visible minority group were significantly less likely to report having confidence in Canadian police (Ibrahim, 2020). As outlined in Peel's principles, "the power of the police to fulfil their functions and duties is dependent on public approval of their existence" (Government of the United Kingdom, 2012, para. 3). Positive perceptions of the police are critical in measuring police efficacy, ensuring lower levels of criminality and enhancing public safety. Through this data collection, it is evident that there is a divide between the public and the police which must be acknowledged and addressed.

Principle four and six outline the necessary guidelines for deploying excessive use of force. Principle four suggests that the more cooperative the public is, the less police officers will need to use excessive force. Principle six outlines that only after persuasion, advice and warning

will an officer use excessive force (Government of the United Kingdom, 2012). This is outlined in several policing protocols nationally. However, Canada's documentation of police involved shootings remains inconsistent across jurisdictions. Unlike the United States of America, where there is extensive literature outlining the use of lethal force by the police, there are limited available sources that uniformly examine excessive use of force across all jurisdictions in Canada. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) has implemented a new deadly force database, which attempts to unify the reporting of police officer inflicted deaths across Canada. However, it does not address in-custody deaths, self-inflicted injuries or deaths and accidental police-caused deaths (Singh, 2020). Shockingly, the database reveals 30 deaths resulting from lethal force in first half of 2020, which accounts for the full-year average of police inflicted deaths over the past ten years (Singh, 2020). It also reveals that Indigenous people comprise only 4.21% of the population, but represent 16% of lethal force victims in Canada (Singh, 2020). Additionally, Black people comprise approximately 2.92% of the population but represent 8.63% of victims of lethal force in Canada (Singh, 2020). This database is useful in providing insight regarding the intersectionality between race and the use of lethal force. CBC researchers were unable to confirm the race of victims in a quarter of the cases that were analyzed, suggesting that these numbers are conservative.

The exclusion of in-custody deaths and accidental police-caused deaths in the CBC database yields insufficient data and inconsistent definitions regarding the use of force nationally (Bennell, 2018). A literature review conducted by Carmichael and Kent (2015) utilizes an archival data approach by compiling newspaper articles that examine police shootings in Canada from 1996-2010. This research specifically examines police shootings as a form of lethal force, as this demonstrates a clear intention of killing citizens (Carmichael & Kent, 2015). The results

of this study showed that cities with increased visible minorities, immigrants and/or Indigenous populations have higher rates of police involved shootings (Carmichael & Kent, 2015). It was also found that the “presence of ethnic minorities increases major group fears about these groups and such fears result in devastating consequences in the form of lethal police action” (Carmichael & Kent, 2015, p. 15). This is consistent with the minority threat hypothesis which will be further examined and defined subsequently in this research paper. The findings of this study demonstrate a strong correlation between an increase in excessive use of force with minority group members. It also suggests that the perceived Black-White dichotomous divide demonstrated in the United States of America is simplistic and excludes other minority groups (Carmichael & Kent, 2015). Within Canada, this is particularly relevant, as the Indigenous population and other ethnic minority groups are also disproportionately impacted by lethal assaults at the hands of the police.

It is important to highlight the limitations to principle seven, which emphasizes that the police are the public, and the public are the police. This critical Peelian principle becomes especially important when examining the divide between members of minority groups and the police. In the presence of a divide where there is a power exchange, Peel’s seventh principle is rendered obsolete. The theory of representative bureaucracy describes the need for diversity within police agencies globally. This theory has been defined with slight variations between the existing definitions. Bradbury and Kellough (2008) explain that “the theory of representative bureaucracy suggests that diversity within the public workforce, especially in terms of characteristics such as race and ethnicity will help to ensure that the interests of diverse groups are represented in policy formulation and implementation processes” (p. 697). Scholars have brought forth the argument that individuals are socialized by the institutions and organizations

that they are employed by, and therefore, adopt behaviors that are consistent with the institutional goals (Thompson, 1976). In 2016, members of visible minority groups represented more than one-fifth of Canada's population, where only 8% of police officers belonged to a visible minority group (Conor, Robson & Marcellus, 2019). As explored by Thompson (1976), it becomes increasingly difficult to ensure the interests of diverse populations when institutions are unrepresentative of the populations they serve. The discussion of employment barriers and discriminatory hiring practices will be further elaborated in the review of *Institutional Policing Culture* later in this research paper.

When examining and contextualizing these principles, it is clear that they remain applicable to modern day Canadian policing. While the importance of principle two, four, six and seven are highlighted based on specific impact on minority populations, all nine principles are applicable, relevant and noteworthy. These principles are foundational in the construction and implementation of core values among policing agencies and as a result, must be acknowledged as key factors when addressing the shortcomings of policing institutions in Canada.

Historical Overview of Policing in Canada

The divide that exists between Canadian law enforcement and minority groups is rooted in a long history of mistreatment. In particular, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) played an instrumental role in enforcing social control and the barbaric treatment of Indigenous people. The RCMP were the primary enforcers of measures outlined in the *Indian Act*, which cultivated issues of mistrust and trauma for Indigenous communities (LeBeuf, 2011). This involved participating in the arresting, imprisonment and abuse of Indigenous people who engaged in traditional aspects of their culture, language or beliefs (LeBeuf, 2011). In 2011, a

report entitled “The Role of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police during the Indian Residential School system” was released by the RCMP. This report confirmed that the RCMP played a major role in facilitating the Sixties Scoop, which involved inhumanely removing children from their homes to be placed in residential schools (LeBeuf, 2011). The report also highlights how RCMP officers became consumed with their positions of authority, going above and beyond the traditional scope of their role to enforce the law (LeBeuf, 2011). In the early 1990’s, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs sent a list of potential cases of abuse within the residential schools to be investigated by the RCMP. The cases were reviewed by the RCMP, in which it was determined that “corporal punishment was a common occurrence and no police investigation was deemed necessary” and “..if there in fact was an offence present, it would have been handled as a summary conviction offence at the time it happened or been viewed as a reasonable form of punishment” (LeBeuf, 2011, p. 50). This is demonstrative of a historic lack of protection for vulnerable populations, low accountability of policing conduct and undermining of punishable offences. This power differential and blatant disregard rooted in racial discrimination has had detrimental effects on the relationship between Canadian law enforcement and the Indigenous community, which remains present today. The divide between law enforcement and the Indigenous population is further demonstrated when the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in prisons is examined. Despite being stigmatized as a primarily offender-based population in Canada, Indigenous people are more likely to be victims of crime.

As reported by Statistics Canada (2019), the rate of violent victimization among Indigenous people is more than double that of non-Indigenous people. It was also reported that in 2017, Indigenous adults accounted for 30% of admissions into provincial custody and 29% of admissions into federal custody, while only representing 4% of the population (Statistics Canada,

2019). These statistics are not specific to the adult Indigenous population, as it has also been reported that in 2017, Indigenous youth (aged 12-17) comprised 43% of admissions to correctional services while only representing about 8% of the Canadian youth population (Statistics Canada, 2019). While the Indigenous population is among the most vulnerable, they are largely stigmatized as a primarily offender-based population.

The prolonged mistreatment of a group in all stages of the criminal justice system is not exclusive to the Indigenous population. Research has determined that there is a disproportionate amount of police encounters with the Black community when adjusted for population in Canada. Due to the inconsistent documentation and statistical information available regarding the use of force by police in Canada, a secondary research study of newspaper articles by Pedicelli (1998) is useful in understanding this. Pedicelli's study examines newspaper coverage on police killings in Montreal and Toronto. It was found that nearly half of the police killings between 1994 and 1997 involved Black individuals, despite this group accounting for only 5% of the population in each city at the time. The study reports a common justification for the excessive use of force being that the victims of these killings are more 'prone' to criminality (Pedicelli, 1998). This belief attests to the bias and racist attitudes that exist within law enforcement agencies. Regarding an individual or an area as being 'prone' to criminality is the basis of predictive policing. The concept of predictive policing will be explored in depth in subsequent sections of this research, but must be regarded as a practice that has harmed predominately visible minorities, with special attention to Black people in Canada. When using the predictive policing model, law enforcement agencies delegate resources and increase police presence in "hot-spot" areas where they believe crime is more likely to ensue (Doerner, 1997). While this may be effective in reducing crime, this potentially leads to a racialized form of policing. The intention

of predictive policing is to be proactive in crime reduction by providing policing agencies with information regarding high-risk areas (Kutnowski, 2017). An increase in law enforcement presence poses several issues when deployed in neighborhoods with a predominantly visible minority population. This frequently leads to a disproportionate amount of violence towards minority groups at the hands of law enforcement.

Institutional Policing Culture

“The actual requirement of maintaining social order under the principle of legality places an unceasing burden on the police as a social institution” (Skolnick, 1966, p. 9). Maintaining social order while balancing legality, coping with ethical dilemmas and enduring public scrutiny presents multiple challenges for law enforcement. Ensuring that social order is maintained by law enforcement while upholding the integrity of the legal process is one of the primary reasons that policing agencies establish core values to conduct their practices. As defined by Tyler and Jackson (2013), core values are the shared beliefs and values of a given society and should remain consistent between both police agencies and the community. Often, the public equivocates the assessment of policing credibility to the level of integrity demonstrated on duty. Integrity is one of the core values of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), along with honesty, professionalism, compassion, accountability and respect (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2019). Integrity is conventionally defined as upholding morality, strong principals and righteousness. Conversely, it is defined by the RCMP as “acting consistently with our other core values upholding the ethical and social norms of the RCMP”, which is a problematic definition when the ‘social norms’ of Canadian policing agencies are critically examined (Royal Canadian Mounted Police, 2019, para. 2). The adherence to the above core values influence the manner in which police officers use their professional discretion when executing policing duties.

Discretion is defined within this context as “the ability of a law enforcement officer to make decisions under certain circumstances, whenever the limits of power leave them to make a choice” (Parent & Parent, 2018, p. 74). Discretion is an abstract component in the application of the law and cannot be measured nor examined in its full extent. It is obvious that police discretion is necessary on a day-to-day basis and relies largely on the individualistic values of the officer. These individual values coupled with professional core values inform the decision-making processes, which can pose ethical dilemmas. As examined by Tyler (2012), the use of discretion allows law enforcement to adapt to “unique or changing situations” by allowing the application of “different justice rules, or by creating hybrid approaches to justice” (p. 364). Parent & Parent (2018) elaborate that “under one set of circumstances an individual may be arrested and charged with an offence, yet under the identical set of circumstances, an individual may be sent a warning” (p. 74). This is where bias, prejudice and racism impact the investigative processes within Canada. Law enforcement must recognize the above factors that impact their decision making to ensure objectivity during all circumstances (Pollock, 2014).

When examining the factors that may influence one’s discretion, gender must be regarded as a factor in the decision making. Policing in Canada is a heavily male dominated profession, with male police officers accounting for nearly 78% of officers nationally (Conor et al., 2019). In 2018, Statistics Canada reported 14,943 female officers, accounting for only 22% of police officers nationally (Conor et al., 2019). This disproportionate gender representation has been prevalent since the first data collection measuring gender in Canadian law enforcement dating back to 1986. In 1986, female officers accounted for only 4% of police officers nationally and while there has been a steady increase in female officers, this remains a heavily male-dominated profession (Conor et al., 2019). Male policing culture was examined in the early 1960’s, where

the theme of masculinity, with specific attention towards the act of proving one's masculinity, was explored (Wilson, 1968). Early research by Wilson (1968) proposed that policing culture is a mirrored reflection of the individual values and beliefs of those who mainly comprise the police force- the male working class. The physical and mental strain that law enforcement officers face on a day-to-day basis is of extreme nature, where conditions are hostile and adaptation to these conditions are not only taught, but expected. Due to this, normative masculine behavior is thriving in policing institutions which can be attributed to a masculinity contest culture (Workman-Stark, 2018). A masculinity contest culture includes the following characteristics: showing no weakness, exemplifying strength and stamina, putting work first and understanding the dog-eat-dog competition within the workplace (Berdahl, Cooper, Glick, Livingston, & Williams, 2018). This masculinity contest culture can promote a risk to the public when officers are responding to situations that test their masculinity, which may lead to responding with excessive use of force (Workman-Stark, 2018). Berdahl et al. (2018) suggest the stereotypes that derive from masculinity include hegemonic masculinity, assertiveness, independence and cut-throat competition. These stereotypes of masculinity intersect with the masculinity contest culture, where aggression and strong in-group/outgroup loyalty can perpetuate misconduct and the use of excessive force.

Much of the research conducted by Wilson (1968) is also compatible with the idea of a masculinity contest culture and suggests that the working class largely views violence as a legitimate deterrence due to a deeply engrained masculinity complex. Although this research is outdated, recent research has used this premise to argue that increasing the number of women in policing would aid in combatting the “traditionally male-dominated, aggressive subculture” of policing (Carmichael & Kent, 2015, p. 4). As policing continues to be a male dominated

profession, cohesion and in-group solidarity among male officers is continuing to thrive in Canadian policing institutions.

In-group solidarity is a primary institutional flaw that exists within policing agencies. Protecting other officers by adhering to an ‘us versus them’ mentality is referred to as the *blue wall* or *blue code of silence* (Parent & Parent, 2018). The blue wall perpetuates a “division between police and non-police” and the extent of the solidarity “depends on the individual personality of the officer” (Parent & Parent, 2018, p. 132). This is in direct contradiction to Sir Robert Peel’s seventh principle, which emphatically states that the “police, at all times, should maintain a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and the public are the police” (Government of the United Kingdom, 2012, para. 8). While group solidarity is beneficial in fostering a unified and connected workplace, it can be of extreme detriment when police officers become blind to the misconduct of their counterparts. Law enforcement officers that adhere to this “blue code of silence” may refuse to report misconduct, omit knowledge about a situation or provide false testimonies in order to honor their loyalty (Skolnick, 2005). This is in direct violation of the core values of integrity and honesty in Canadian policing. Although there appears to be a conscious effort in establishing these professional core values, the institutional cultural values are heavily influential and often set a precedence. Racist practices in policing agencies have often been brushed off as a few ‘bad apples’, suggesting that these incidents are isolated and individualistic (Tator, Henry, Smith & Brown, 2006). As explained by Tator et al. (2006), the “bad apple” belief denies the racism as a set of “institutional practices and patterned cultural behaviors that collectively support and reinforce racially different systemic outcomes” (p. 17). It is clear that this is not the result of a few bad apples, but rather a bad orchard. A cyclical pattern emerges when both policing agencies

and citizens adopt “us-versus-them” mindset in their own right. This makes it difficult to mend the gap between the police and the public. Additionally, this mentality can counteract any community engagement initiatives, culturally sensitive training programs and general progressive steps taken by policing agencies to improve relations with minority groups. If institutional flaws-such as the blue code of silence and in-group solidarity-continue to exist, the gap between minority populations and the police will continue to grow.

Another factor that contributes to the polarization between the police and the public is the lack of diversification within Canadian police forces. The hiring practices of policing agencies across Canada have been called into question as police forces are unrepresentative of the diversity in the populations which they serve. This presents challenges, such as minority groups experiencing limited trust towards police due to feeling unrepresented within their respective policing agency. In 2018, it was reported that visible minorities accounted for 22% of the Canadian population, but only accounted for 8% of police officers (Conor et al., 2019). There are current barriers that exist that hinder minority groups from being represented by Canadian policing institutions. As explored by Sampson and Bartusch (1999), these barriers include-but are not limited-to regressive recruiting practices, negative perceptions of the police and an unwelcoming policing culture. Hong (2015) suggests that previous experiences with police in areas where minority groups have emigrated from may have been corrupt. This corruption may influence minority group perceptions of working for policing institutions in Canada.

In a study conducted by Rigaux and Cunningham (2020), members of East Indian, Chinese, Filipino and Black communities who have had experience with Canadian policing agencies were interviewed. This research was conducted to understand minority group hiring practices in Canada. Interviewees were given an opportunity to share their personal opinions and

experiences regarding the policing culture in Canada. Their participants held that “the police culture of making inappropriate jokes and having to develop thick skin still existed”, suggesting that the predominantly white, male atmosphere still dominates the workplace (Rigaux & Cunningham, 2020, p. 9). Participants also shared specific instances where they have experienced insensitivity and discrimination in the workplace. Police officer remarks such as “you are messing our bright and white reputation” and “I am going to have my own opinions and diversity training is not going to change it” were shared by participants and further demonstrate the hiring perceptions held by many police officers within policing agencies (Rigaux & Cunningham, 2020, p. 10). This study also examines the experiences that participants have had with the hiring practices in specific. One of the primary concerns of participants includes the inadequate culturally sensitive training, which is observed to focus more towards the Indigenous community and is unrepresentative of other visible minority groups. Participants shared a joint frustration with a difficulty in navigating the recruitment process, polygraph questions that seemed specific to race (i.e. gang participation), and overall fear of applying to policing agencies (Rigaux & Cunningham, 2020). These barriers deter minority group members from applying to policing agencies and contribute to the overall disconnect that minority groups experiences towards the police.

Conflict Theory & Life Chances Theory

Conflict theory suggests that laws and the enforcement of laws are utilized by the dominant groups to constrain and minimize threats to their interests by those in minority groups within a given society (Snipes, Maguire & Wang, 2019). Conflict theory can be applied at both an individual or aggregate level, where it is suggested that individually, minority groups will be investigated and arrested at higher rates, independent of the severity of their offence (Snipes et

al., 2019). When addressing how conflict theory interacts at the aggregate level, this can be explained by the minority threat theory which is grounded in the conflict theorist beliefs.

Minority threat theory-derived from conflict theory- suggests that individuals from dissimilar, marginalized or historically disadvantaged cultures pose a perceived threat to the political and social order maintained by the majority (Snipes et al., 2020). As a result, minority groups will experience an increase in overbearing social control efforts. Overbearing social control efforts may consist of over policing, random carding, racial profiling or any policing method which is specifically directed towards members of a minority group. The application of this theory relies on the assumption that areas with a higher minority population will experience higher levels of social control efforts. Although this theory has been extensively applied to examine the racial divide in the United States of America to addresses the African-American population, this theory supports the findings of Carmichael and Kent's study (2015) which addresses the Canadian policing of other minority groups as well. In the above study, it was found that there was a positive and statistically significant relationship between the number of minority members in a population and the number of police shootings that occur within that area. The study's findings also suggest that the "presence of ethnic minorities increases majority group fears about these groups and such fears result in devastating consequences in the form of lethal police action" (Carmichael & Kent, 2015, p. 15). The group fears that the majority group experiences can be explained by the minority threat theory, where there is a perceived threat to political and social order, resulting in a racially biased policing response. It follows that the minority threat theory can influence policing behaviors when there is a perceived threat to the social control maintained by the majority group.

Life chances theory, developed and studied by Max Weber, is relevant when examining the high police presence in low socio-economic areas. Life chances refer to the “chances an individual has for sharing in the socially created economic or cultural ‘goods’ that typically exist in any given society” (Breen, 2005, p. 41). Weber suggests that a ‘class-situation’ involves a shared opportunity of procuring goods, gaining employment or any given position in life and finding inner satisfaction (Weber, 1978). In other words, Weber suggests that individuals that comprise their respective classes experience the same ‘life chances’, and those in different classes experience different ‘life-chances’.

Webber singles out specific characteristics in order to determine what differentiates certain classes from others. These specific characteristics include: chances for goods consumption, production, status opportunities, and the ability to reach an inner satisfaction (Anikin, Lezhnina, Mareeva & Tikhonova, 2017). The central component of life chances theory involves differentiating between positive and negative privileges, which aids in determining an individual’s class and dominance in a given society (Wright, 1997). Positively privileged class members are seen as the agents of power and domination, and their ‘life-chances’ are largely unrestricted (Wright, 1997). Webber finds that high levels of education is a predominant positive privilege, as education provides an opportunity for wealth and income stability, although many times it requires income stability in order to be pursued (Anikin et. al, 2017). Negative privileges, on the other hand, refer to factors such as financial hardships, debt, poverty and low education levels (Anikin et. al, 2017). According to Weber, individuals in this class usually have low status in the occupational hierarchy, therefore, an individual’s life-chances are positively correlated with one’s socioeconomic status (Weber, 1978). This theory can be applied to

statistical findings that correlate the spatial distribution of crime with socio-economic status within a given area.

The 2006 Census and police-reported crime data from the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting Survey (UCR2) examines the spatial distribution of violent crime in Toronto (Charron, 2009). The findings of this data reports that violent crime in Toronto is most concentrated in areas where residents earned the lowest individual income. It also found that, on average, in the northern areas of Toronto- where residents earn a higher income- the violent crime rate was much lower than average (Charron, 2009). Life-chances theory suggests that an individual with negative class privileges does not have the same life-chances- including access to education, wealth, stability, status and inner satisfaction- as an individual with positive privileges. As outlined by Robinson (2009), there is a significantly higher police presence in disadvantaged and racialized neighborhoods that experience negative class privileges. These areas are considered crime “hot spots”, many of which are populated with minority groups and those with low socioeconomic status (Robinson, 2009). The citizens of these disadvantaged areas do not experience the same life-chances and opportunities for success as other areas. The solution to this issue should be geared towards addressing the criminological factors that prevent minority groups from experiencing positive privileges. This includes barriers to employment, housing and education. An increased police presence in these areas is a form of predictive policing, which has been heavily scrutinized for its role in further disadvantaging minority populations.

Controversial Canadian Policing Practices and Effects on Minority Groups

There are many policing practices that remain controversial in the public eye. The following section will focus specifically on predictive policing, street checks and starlight tours

as primary controversial policing practices and their potential contribution to the divide between minority groups and police forces.

Predictive and Algorithmic Policing

The predictive policing model strives to implement strategic and well-informed decisions on where to allocate policing resources based on previously collected statistics. This involves analyzing historic patterns and information to help predict which geographical areas are more likely to be criminal hot-spots (Meijer & Wessels, 2019). A primary concern of predictive policing is that the model is data driven instead of theory driven, which emphasizes correlated variables and does not consider causality (Andrejevic, 2017). In other words, predictive policing recognizes the correlation between neighborhoods with high minority populations and crime, or low-socioeconomic status and crime, but does not address the underlying criminological factors that explain this correlation. As suggested by Meijer and Wessels (2019), predictive policing can result in stigmatizing individuals and groups, and works to create discriminatory algorithms. When theoretical explanations are applied to the predictive policing model, it is suggested that this form of policing can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy. Becker's labelling theory does an exceptional job of explaining this phenomenon. Labelling theory suggests that deviance is not the act that the individual commits, but rather a consequence of the rules and sanctions of being labelled as an offender (Becker, 1963). Becker (1963) explains that these individuals are regarded as 'outsiders' by society, which affects the extent in which they conform to these labels and deviate from pro-social behavior. It follows that the stigmatization of specific geographical areas can lead to increased criminality within these areas if they have been labelled as such, as conformity to these labels is a natural response. Policing agencies must be cognizant of the ways in which predictive policing methods disproportionately impact and stigmatize minority groups.

Algorithmic policing falls within the umbrella of predictive policing, but involves a further technological development that “is designed to enable law enforcement agencies to either automate surveillance or to draw inferences through the use of mass data processing in the hopes of predicting potential criminal activity” (Robertson, Khoo & Song, 2020, p.12). While the intention of this method is to reduce crime and maintain safety, any predictive policing method poses a potential threat to civil liberties and risks the perpetuation of racial discrimination and profiling. In an investigation conducted by Robertson et al. (2020), a human rights analysis of algorithmic policing is explored in depth. This study outlines the implications for the Right to Equality and Freedom from Discrimination protected under the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982). Section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* states:

(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability. (*Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Part I of the *Constitution Act*, 1982, being Schedule B to the *Canada Act 1982* (U.K.), 1982, c11 s 15)

Roberston et al. (2020) suggest that there is no neutral application of algorithmic policing because this method disproportionately disadvantages the equality rights of minority groups and violates section 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. This study also suggests that the historical and social context of systemic discrimination has already impacted available data and statistics involving arrests and criminal records, and therefore should not be relied on (Roberston et al., 2020). Currently, there is a relatively limited public use of algorithmic policing in Canada, although it has been increasing in use and popularity among policing agencies as a progressing form of predictive policing.

In a study conducted by Correll, Park, Judd & Wittenbrink (2002) to understand the effects of stereotypes on police behavior, participants were required to complete a “shoot/don’t shoot” video game. The objective of the video game was to “shoot” suspects carrying a weapon and “not shoot” suspects carrying everyday items to measure error-levels in intense circumstances. The suspect target appeared as either a White or Black male, holding either a gun or a non-weaponized item. The results of this study found that “shooter bias” exists, as participants mistakenly shot unarmed Black suspects more often than the White suspects (Correll et al., 2002). This shooter bias can be attributed to media portrayals of Black men that prime the stereotype that Black people are inherently more criminal. This becomes especially important when predominantly Black neighborhoods are being over policed, as these areas are more likely to fall victim to police shootings than predominantly White neighborhoods. Although this study has not been replicated with police officer participants, research conducted in 2007 confirms that officers working in crime hot-spots with racial minority residents show an increase in “shooter bias” in their reaction times (Correll, Park, Judd, Wittenbrink, Sadler, & Keese, 2007). It is clear that this bias has detrimental effects on minority groups and is more likely to ensue when these neighborhoods are being predictively policed as criminal “hot-spots”. Kahn and Davies (2017) suggest that labelling racialized neighborhoods as ‘high crime areas’ will further these stereotypes that racial minority groups should be feared. This inevitably will lead to an increase in bias decision making when policing these areas and will have heavy implications when this bias interplays with the use of lethal force (Kahn & Davies, 2017).

While predictive policing is widely acknowledged for its strengths in preventing crime, the implications that this policing method poses towards minority groups must be addressed. As suggested by Correll et al. (2007), shooter bias affects the way officers react in high stress

situations. This race-based shooter bias results in disproportionately high amounts of misconduct, violence and lethal force towards minority group members. When law enforcement stigmatizes an area as a crime hot-spot, an increase in negative stereotypes, police violence and excessive use of force ensues. This policing model poses a threat to civil liberties and in some cases, can result in a violation of section 15 of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*- the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination. Using the predictive policing model in minority dominant neighborhoods can be detrimental to the already severed relationship between minority groups and police.

Street Checks

It is important to give a uniform definition to the terms “street checks” and “random carding” as they have been defined in various ways based on differing perspectives. For the purpose of this research paper, these terms will be defined in reference to their citations in the case *R. v. K(A.)* (2014). In *R. v. K(A)*, “carding” is defined as a practice which “involves stopping citizens, whether there is an offense being committed or not, and recording the contact and personal information about the citizen” (*R. v. K*, 2014). This definition is objective, applicable within the legal context and is comprised of three major components: an officer stops an individual, the individual provides personal information to the officer and the information is recorded, regardless of whether or not an offence is being committed (Abbot, 2017). Although many stakeholders have used the terms “carding” and “street checks” interchangeably, it is important to note that carding has been banned in many Canadian cities. Street-checking has been redefined to provide clarity between the two.

Street checks differ from carding, in that street checks may now “only be conducted if there are clear grounds that it may further an investigation or prevent crime, disorder and

victimization” (Edmonton Police Services, 2020, para. 1). The subject of a street check is not under detention and is under no obligation to provide information to the questioning officers unless there is a legal requirement (Edmonton Police Services, 2020). In the past, both street checks and random carding practices have allowed police officers to stop and question an individual without having the grounds to detain or arrest them. These practices were heavily criticized as they allow officers the discretionary power to decide which individuals are required to identify themselves. While many argue that this is an effective tool for officers to ensure safety in the area, this practice has made citizens feel racially profiled and over policed (CBC News, 2015). Although this practice is intended to aid in policing specific geographical areas with higher crime rates, it has been asserted by many that street checks and random carding are discriminatory in nature.

It is inevitable that this practice has resulted in scrutiny within the public eye, as it begs the following question-What constitutes one individual being stopped and carded while another individual is not? Clive Weighill, previously the Saskatoon Chief of Police, argues that street checks aid in solving and preventing crime. He states that this practice “deters crime and helps people be accountable for what they're doing in the evening” (CBC News, 2015, para. 3). It is important to note that the Saskatoon Police use street-checking more than other large Canadian cities, including as Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal (CBC News, 2015).

Despite the recent banning of carding practices in many Canadian cities, the continued detriment that street checks have had on minority groups remains. Ubaka Ogbogu, an associate law professor at the University of Alberta, critiques the banning of carding and not street checks. Ogbogu states, “I fail to see the difference in carding versus street checks. I don't see how you can have street checks without police incorporating an element of carding into it” (Johnston,

2020, para. 13). He further explains how these practices promote discrimination and racism through the following statement: "As a Black man, if I said to them 'I can't give you that [identification] because the minister of justice said I shouldn't give you that,' that puts my life in danger..." (Johnston, 2020, para. 17). When considering perspectives on the matter, it becomes evident that street checks and carding practices are a detriment to visible minority groups in particular. As expressed by Weitzer and Tuch (2002), racial profiling and street checks affect how minority groups perceive procedural justice and law enforcement. When officers stop to question members of a racialized minority group, much of the time, the individual is left to infer the underlying reason for their stop (Weitzer & Tuch, 2002). Despite random carding practices being "banned", when approaching members of a racial minority group-especially those who have immigrated from other areas- there may be a lack of understanding regarding the law and their individual rights. This allows minority groups to be further targeted by these practices, regardless of them being unlawful. This perpetuates the mistrust that minority groups feel toward the police in Canada.

There is a lack of clarity regarding the appropriate application of street checks in Canada. While this practice remains controversial, it is clear that street-checking endorses the use of racial profiling and disproportionately impacts members of minority groups. This affects the way minority group members perceive procedural justice and the discretionary power of the police. Currently, police forces are largely unrepresentative of the minority groups they serve, allowing discriminatory attitudes to cultivate in law enforcement institutions. Police discretion is highly individualistic and depends on the prejudices that the police officer holds. This is detrimental to minority group members as they are often the targets of stereotypes, stigmatism and racism, and

are more likely to be subjected to this prejudice. The use of this policing practice, as a result, contributes to the existing divide between minority populations and the police.

Starlight Tours

A starlight tour is a policing practice in which law enforcement officers transport individuals- most often Indigenous people- to the outskirts of their city and abandon them in unreasonably harsh weather conditions. There is a widely held belief that these are isolated incidents that do not reflect institutional policing practices or beliefs. However, the Human Rights Watch notes that the first reporting of a starlight tour occurred as early as 1976- nearly 45 years ago (Submission to the Government of Canada, 2016). This suggests that the use of starlight tours is not new and is an institutional practice. The number of starlight tour-related injuries and deaths is unknown. The case of Neil Stonechild below is a clear example of a starlight practice resulting in death.

The following information was extrapolated from the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Matters Relating to the Death of Neil Stonechild by Mr. Justice David H. Wright (2004). On November 29th 1990, Stonechild's deceased body was discovered by two construction workers. His body was completely frozen and found in a remotely-located field. When investigating Stonechild's death, it was discovered that he was last seen on November 25th 1990, when police were called to respond to a disorderly conduct complaint. His friend, Jason Roy, recalls seeing Neil in the back of a police car on the evening that he was last seen. Roy told investigators that he saw Stonechild in the car, calling for help while covered in blood. As a result, allegations began to emerge suggesting that the two police officers who responded to the call were responsible for driving Stonechild to a remote area of the city and abandoning him. This allegation was not taken seriously and the Saskatoon Police Services determined that there

was no evidence of foul play, despite the family of Stonechild feeling that his death was not being investigated properly. However, during the Stonechild investigation, multiple other complaints about the Saskatoon Police Services driving Indigenous individuals to the outskirts of Saskatoon emerged, which prompted further investigation of the matter. The Commission of Inquiry acknowledges that “the investigation was superficial at best and was concluded prematurely” and “the Saskatoon Police Service acknowledged the serious deficiencies in the investigation” (Wright, 2004, p. 205). Regardless of the acknowledged shortcomings, sadly no charges were laid in the case of Stonechild. The lack of knowledge surrounding starlight tours is not only alarming, but suggests that there is a suppression of public information that is circulating regarding the matter.

The lack of literature examining starlight tours and their effects on the Indigenous population is intentionally limited. In 2016, the Wikipedia page defining starlight tours and examining cases where it has been used was deleted by the Saskatoon Police Service (Zakreski, 2016). When university student Addison Herman saw the entry was deleted, he was able to track the internet protocol (IP) address of the individual who removed it, which traced back to the Saskatoon Police Service (Zakreski, 2016). This further establishes the need for an increase in public education regarding these practices and a higher level of accountability for police officers. The removal of information relating to the practice of starlight tours is an example of in-group solidarity taking precedence over moral conduct. Despite attempts to bury this information, the case of Stonechild remains a key reminder of a devastating and barbaric act at the hands of the police.

This practice is not limited to Saskatoon. Starlight tours are occurring across Canada with one commonality- the victims are all Indigenous (APTN National News, 2010). Elizabeth

Comack, professor at the University of Manitoba, suggests that many starlight tour cases are left unreported due to a fear of reporting police misconduct. Comack also acknowledges that “there is a definite divide between the police and the Aboriginal communities” (APTN National News, 2010, 1:03). Starlight tours are becoming common and normalized across Canada, while unfortunately, police are not being held responsible for their unethical actions (APTN National News, 2010). Starlight tours rarely result in police officer accountability and conviction, perpetuating the belief that Indigenous lives are not valued and dispensable. The continued use of this practice is severely damaging to the relationship between Indigenous people and the police and must be denounced. In order to prove community relations with the police, minority groups must feel protected under the law, not antagonized and threatened by it.

Social Consequences

On May 15, 2020, a white police officer knelt on the neck of 46-year-old African American George Floyd for eight minutes, killing him. His death led to protests and riots in both the United States of America and Canada. Streets were swarmed with people chanting “No Justice, No Peace” in response to the ongoing police brutality in the United States. This incident took social media by a storm and calls to defund the police have continued to rise across North America. Public perceptions of law enforcement have morphed into a vastly divided, political debacle. There is a common misconception that the notion of ‘defunding the police’ proposes an absolute dismantling of police forces. The reason why this notion is so widely debated is due to the multiple, inconsistent definitions of what defunding the police would involve. For the purposes of this research, it is important to define the notion of defunding the police within this context. The most appropriate and widely used definition of defunding the police is defined as the “reallocation of policing costs toward mental health, addiction treatment and social

services while reframing the role of the police themselves- particularly in Black and Indigenous communities” (Boynton, 2020, para. 2). The consequences that follow the continued perpetuation of police misconduct is a reduction of public trust for law enforcement. Several protests, riots and rallies have taken place across North America advocating for a reallocation of policing funds towards other public safety initiatives.

Conceptually, the idea of defunding police forces is not new. However, due to a recent surge in public opinions to defund the police, many Canadian police forces have examined their budgets and have concluded that reallocating funds will not be possible. The primary resistance to a reallocation of funds comes from Canadian policing agencies that have seen astronomical funding increases recently, in which police officer salaries have made up a large portion of the police budget (Cardoso & Hayes, 2020). In 2018-2019, the operating expenditure for Canadian police services amounted to roughly \$15.7 billion dollars (Conor et al., 2019). In a study conducted by The Globe and Mail (2020), it was found that spending on police services in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario have been growing at a faster rate than other municipal services, including investments in social services. This growth gap was the largest in Alberta, demonstrating an extreme disparity between increases in police service spending versus social service spending (Cardoso & Hayes, 2020). It was also found that between 2009-2018, police spending in the three provinces grew 42% overall, largely to support wage increases, salaries and pensions (Cardoso & Hayes, 2020). According to Winnipeg’s salary disclosure list, the best paid public servant in 2019 was the Chief of Police, who received a larger annual salary than the Mayor (Cardoso & Hayes, 2020). In Vancouver, British Columbia, the policing budget is \$340 million dollars annually,

in which the Vancouver Police Board could not agree to a one percent reallocation proposed by city council (Dawson, 2020).

The disparity between social service spending and police service spending attests to a gap that currently exists within Canadian policing- the role for social work. Promoting funding and increasing the role of social work within police forces would work to support the relations between minority groups and the police and would result in a less intimidating experience for minority groups. As suggested by Giwa (2018), having a non-uniformed social worker on police teams would aid in diffusing crisis and low risk situations where an armed police officer is not necessary. This would appear less intimidating to minority groups who have had historic and continual disproportionate encounters with the police, many of which have been negative. Police social workers would support law enforcement by identifying community problems and solutions, bridging the gap between vulnerable populations and the police and overall, igniting change to systemic issues and reforming public perceptions of the police. These social workers would be placed to understand and represent the needs of racialized minority groups, and would work to mediate mistrust between minority groups and the police (Giwa, 2020). Social workers and police officers can collaborate to offer more responsive community services which would result in healthier communities and lead to a reduction in crime rates.

Recent Measures & Moving Forward

Bias, racial prejudice and institutional flaws in the policing sector contribute to the divide between minority populations and the police. The Government of Ontario defines systemic racism as:

Organizational culture, policies, directives, practices or procedures that exclude, displace or marginalize some racialized groups or create unfair barriers for them to access valuable benefits and opportunities. This is often the result of institutional biases in organizational culture, policies, directives, practices and procedures that may appear neutral but have the effect of privileging some groups and disadvantaging others (Government of Ontario Glossary, 2017, para. 57).

Systemic racism must be addressed at both an institutional and community level. Some recent measures have been taken by Canadian law enforcement agencies to address their role in contributing to systemic bias and racism.

In 2020, the Calgary Police responded to an independent review entitled “Use of Force in the Calgary Police Services”, which was commissioned to address an increase in police shootings, with a goal of making recommendations on policies and procedures in the future. The response concluded that focusing on training and critical thinking skills to reduce the situations that cause officers to use excessive force is a primary goal of the Calgary Police Service (Rak & Guenette, 2020). The report also suggests that there needs to be a more “earnest attempt at collaboration between agencies within law enforcement and the health system, to address gaps related to police encounters with persons in crisis” (Rak & Guenette, 2020, p. 2). The Calgary Police Service also released a response to racism, where they outlined that the police are not the appropriate first responders for mental health crisis and police resources should be reallocated to focus on community safety, social services and violence interruption (The Calgary Police Service, 2020). The response also acknowledges that policing procedures need to be changed in order to remove any form of racial profiling or harassment, along with a call for public access to racially based officer-misconduct reports (The Calgary Police Service, 2020) This report was

released in September of 2020, meaning the implementation of these measures are still underway. It is unclear how these measures will be implemented without a funding increase or reallocation. More recently, the Calgary Police Services' Anti-Racism Action Committee has been formed to address and identify systemic barriers in accessing police programs and services.

In addition to efforts being made by municipal police, the Government of Canada has released Building a Foundation for Change, a national anti-racism strategy. This strategy has pledged a \$30 million-dollar investment into community based projects from 2019-2022 to address racism and discrimination (Government of Canada, 2019). This involves reducing barriers to employment and training within the workplace, working to create a new public narrative and promoting intervention programs for youth at risk (Government of Canada, 2019). This strategy also aims to address hate crimes towards minority groups. Disappointingly, this anti-racism strategy does not address community relations with police and law enforcement's role in racism.

While these measures to address racism are beneficial, simply acknowledging the problem is not enough. In order to move forward to repair the relationship between racial minority groups and the police, controversial policing practices will require an ongoing reevaluation by enforcement agencies. In addition to this, the institutional culture of policing in Canada needs to be further examined and reformed to foster a healthier workplace to serve and protect minority groups.

Findings & Limitations

This research project was conducted to understand how the culture of policing and the use of controversial policing practices has contributed to the divide between minority populations and the police. After reviewing available literature that addresses the historical

context of policing and the current application of policing practices, this study finds that the institutional culture of policing perpetuates the use of controversial policing practices and misconduct. The unified, in-group solidarity mentality that exists within policing agencies in Canada reinforces an “us versus them” mentality and contributes to the divide and lack of trust between minority populations and the police. The masculinity work culture and blue code of silence within agencies allows for repetitive misconduct and omissions of truth. These findings suggest that there is a role for social services in policing agencies and in order to improve this divide. Changes must be made at an institutional and systemic level to address the culture of policing and how it contributes to excusing misconduct and perpetuating racial bias. In addition to this, the hiring practices and attitudes of policing agencies must be addressed, as members of minority groups continue to be marginalized and impacted.

Theoretical explanations such as minority threat theory, life-chances theory and labelling theory address the hardships that are specific to minority groups which influence how these groups are policed. It is evident through this research that minority groups are over-policed and under protected by law enforcement. Concentration of law enforcement resources in areas that are primarily minority populated leads to discrimination and bias when prematurely predicting which offenders will commit crimes. The social consequences for excusing police misconduct are increasing and agencies are being held more accountable for their actions.

The primary limitation to the generalization of these results is the presence of researcher bias. Researcher bias may influence the literature selection process. The data and statistical evidence used to support this research is reliable, accurate and well researched. The theories included in this research were selected based on relevancy and contextual application. However, the literature selected compliments the findings of the study and other literature exists that may

contradict these findings. For example, the theoretical applications used in this study are subjective and may be explained by alternative theories which oppose the views expressed in this study.

Descriptive analysis research designs can be limiting in that they are not casual and cannot explain a relationship in which one variable causes the other. There are many reasons why a divide between the police and minority groups may exist outside of controversial practices and the institutional culture of policing. Intentionally, this research was conducted to examine the effects of these practices on minority groups and does not seek to explain a causal relationship. A descriptive analysis can be limiting when discussing specific cases of police misconduct as “case reports and case-series refer to a solitary patient or to only a few cases, who may represent a chance occurrence. Hence, conclusions based on these run the risk of being non-representative, and potentially unreliable” (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019, p. 36).

Conclusion

It is clear that there is a need to improve relations between minority populations and police in Canada. This has been identified through the survey results, interviews with minority group members and examining available literature. This research was conducted to identify how the continued use of controversial policing practices and the culture of policing contributes to this divide.

Modern day policing is structured around Sir Robert Peel’s nine principles, of which special attention is drawn to principle two, four, six and seven (Parent & Parent, 2018). Principle two discusses the importance of public approval when police perform their duties. Principle four suggests that public cooperation will lead to less excessive force by police. Principle six outlines that only after persuasion, advice and warning will an officer use excessive force. Principle seven

emphasizes that the police are the public, and the public are the police. These principles guide modern day policing, however, there are several instances where police actions have not adhered to them.

When examining the mistrust that minority groups have towards police, the historical context of policing must be considered, with special attention to members of Black and Indigenous communities. The historical barbaric treatment of Indigenous people has resulted in a violation of trust towards policing agencies that serve Indigenous populations. Studies have demonstrated a disproportionate use of force on Black and Indigenous people, which demonstrates the systemic bias and racism that currently exists within the Canadian criminal justice system (Carmicheal, 2015; LeBeuf, 2011; Pedicelli, 1998; Singh, 2020).

Conflict theory and life chances theory can be used to explain this divide, including the strained relationship between minority populations and limited opportunities for success. Due to the multiple barriers that exist for minority groups to have adequate 'life-chances', these individuals may experience lower socio-economic status, and may live in areas that are being over policed and under serviced. This contributes to an overrepresentation of minority groups in prison, with special attention to Black and Indigenous populations. The institutional culture of policing, more specifically, the blue code of silence which is unanimously understood by law enforcement agencies, further perpetuates police officer misconduct.

The use of controversial policing practices including predictive policing, street checks and starlight tours contribute to this divide and lack of trust between minority groups and the police. Predictive policing stigmatizes members of a specific community and can result in over-policing and racial profiling. Although the use of street checks is declining, clarity on the appropriate use of this practice warrants further investigation. Those subjected to a street check

may be unaware of their rights, which can affect minority populations in particular due to language barriers or unfamiliarity with the law. Starlight tours rarely result in police officer convictions and further establish the systemic racism and bias towards the Indigenous community. These controversial policing practices contribute to the mistrust that exists between minority groups and the Canadian police.

Measures have been taken by policing agencies in Canada to address systemic bias, racism and their effects on minority populations. While this is a step in the right direction, hiring practices of policing agencies and the institutional culture of policing must be addressed to stop the perpetuation of misconduct and intolerant behavior. Public education on these matters must be increased to ensure that ignorance is not a factor in perpetuating racist views.

Social consequences including riots, looting and protesting have resulted as a response to the police brutality in the United States of America and Canada. Defunding the police has been a topic of debate recently and a reallocation of resources to other safety initiatives has been proposed in many agencies. Although several agencies feel that reallocation is not possible, there *is* a role for social work in law enforcement. Due to inadequate training on mitigating mental health crises, a reallocation of resources may work to mend the gap between minority groups in crises and the police. The culture of policing must be addressed and repaired at an institutional level in order to further positive relationships between minority groups and the police. Excessive use of force must be heavily punished and scrutinized by the law to deter repeat behavior. Police officers must be held accountable by the legal system in Canada, as they are not above the law. Police brutality must be condemned, addressed, punished and reformed at all levels- individually, institutionally, politically and globally. Until then, citizens of the world will rightfully continue to chant- “No Justice, No Peace”.

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