

# THE RECEPTIVITY OF POLICE TO RESEARCH: AN EXAMINATION OF OFFICER SURVEY DATA FROM TWO AGENCIES

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April 8, 2013



# Introduction

- To what extent do officers understand and apply evidence-based policing?
- Survey allows for comparisons within and across departments
- Results from the receptivity survey in the Sacramento, CA Police Department (SPD) and the Richmond, VA Police Department (RPD)

# Lum & Telep Receptivity Survey

~15 minute survey in 5 sections:

- I. Knowledge Base
- II. Perception/View of Science
- III. View of Innovation, New Ideas, and Outsiders
- IV. Higher Education and Policing
- V. Personal Information

# SPD and RPD Characteristics

Characteristic	SPD Survey	SPD Dept.	RPD Survey	RPD Dept.
<b>Total Respondents</b>	523 Sworn	676 Sworn	359 Sworn (74.2%) 58 Civilian (12.0%) 67 Unknown (13.8%)	730 Sworn (76.0%)  231 Civilian (24.0%)
<b>Male</b>	79.3%	81.2%	67.8%	70.9%
<b>White/Caucasian</b>	58.1%	75.3%	51.7%	55.9%
<b>Rank = Patrol</b>	85.3%	60.0%	52.3%	61.6%
<b>Bachelor's Degree</b>	65.4%	N/A	38.6%	N/A
<b>Average Years of Experience</b>	14.17 (SD = 8.01)	N/A	11.19 (SD = 7.19)	N/A

# Knowledge Base

- Low levels of familiarity with the term “evidence-based policing”
  - ▣ 24.9% of officers in SPD had heard of the term
  - ▣ 29.8% of respondents in RPD had heard of it
- Wide range of responses in open-ended question on defining “evidence-based policing”

# Use of Research Resources

“In the last SIX months, from which of the following journals or magazines have you read an article or feature?”

Source	SPD		RPD	
	n	%	n	%
<b>None of the Above</b>	402	76.9	302	62.4
Other	73	14.0	50	10.3
<i>FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin</i>	32	6.1	76	15.7
<i>The Police Chief</i>	18	3.4	78	16.1
<i>Criminology and Public Policy</i>	5	1.0	4	0.8
<i>Police Quarterly</i>	4	0.8	13	2.7
<i>Criminology</i>	4	0.8	10	2.1
<i>The Criminologist</i>	4	0.8	6	1.2
<i>Justice Quarterly</i>	4	0.8	3	0.6

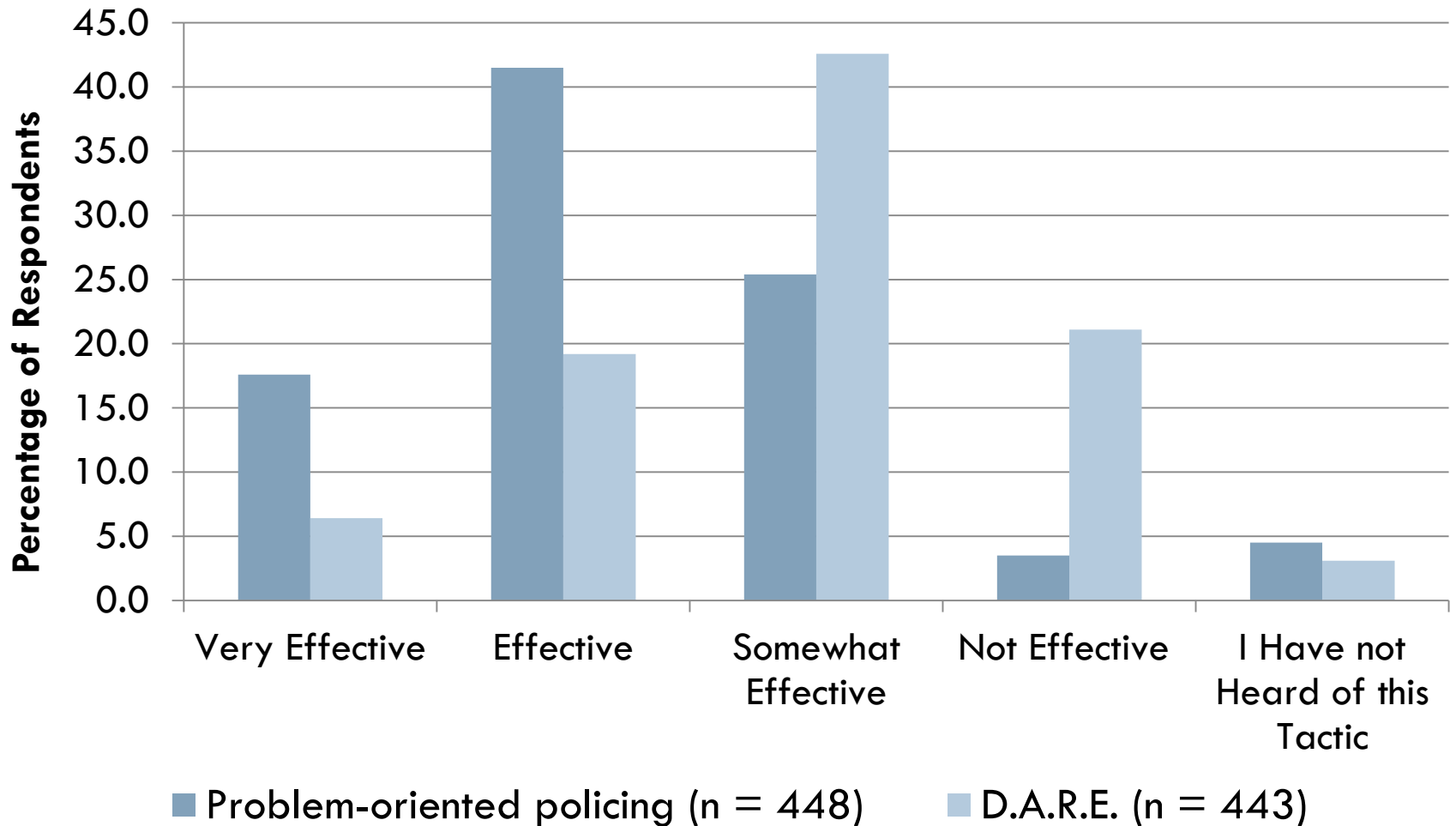
# Use of Research Resources

“In the last SIX months, have you read any formal or written information provided by the following orgs. specifically about the effectiveness of particular tactics or strategies?”

Source	SPD		RPD	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Your Own Police Agency</b>	241	46.1	224	46.3
<b>None of the Above</b>	236	45.1	186	38.4
Other	38	7.3	25	5.2
COPS Office	22	4.2	38	7.9
IACP	20	3.8	49	10.1
A university	13	2.5	28	5.8
Police Foundation	10	1.9	17	3.5
Police Executive Research Forum	9	1.7	17	3.5
National Institute of Justice	9	1.7	35	7.2
Bureau of Justice Assistance	8	1.5	21	4.3
Bureau of Justice Statistics	5	1.0	23	4.8
Office of Justice Programs	3	0.6	10	2.1
A library database	1	0.2	11	2.3

# Do Police Know What Works?

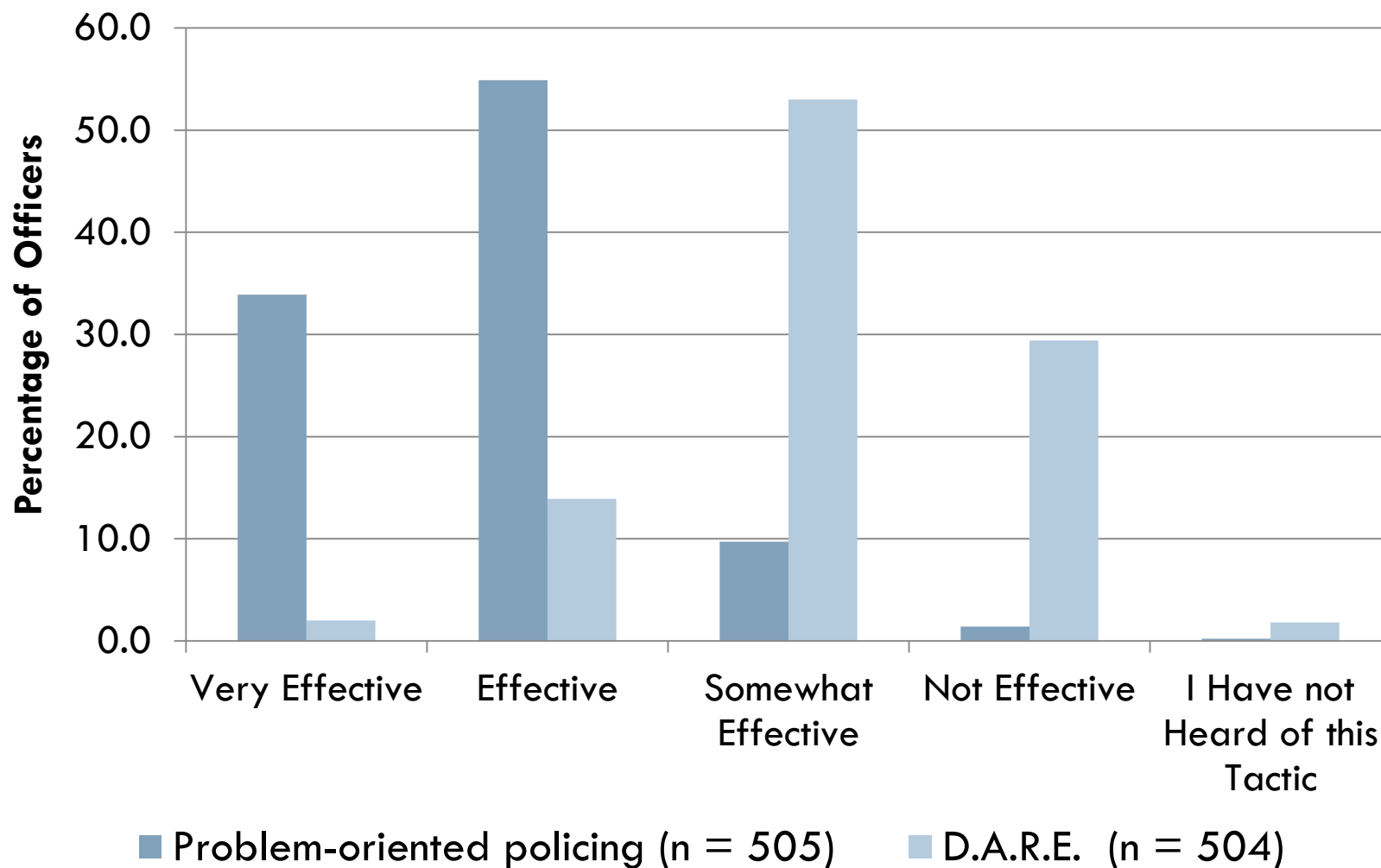
## “The Good” in RPD





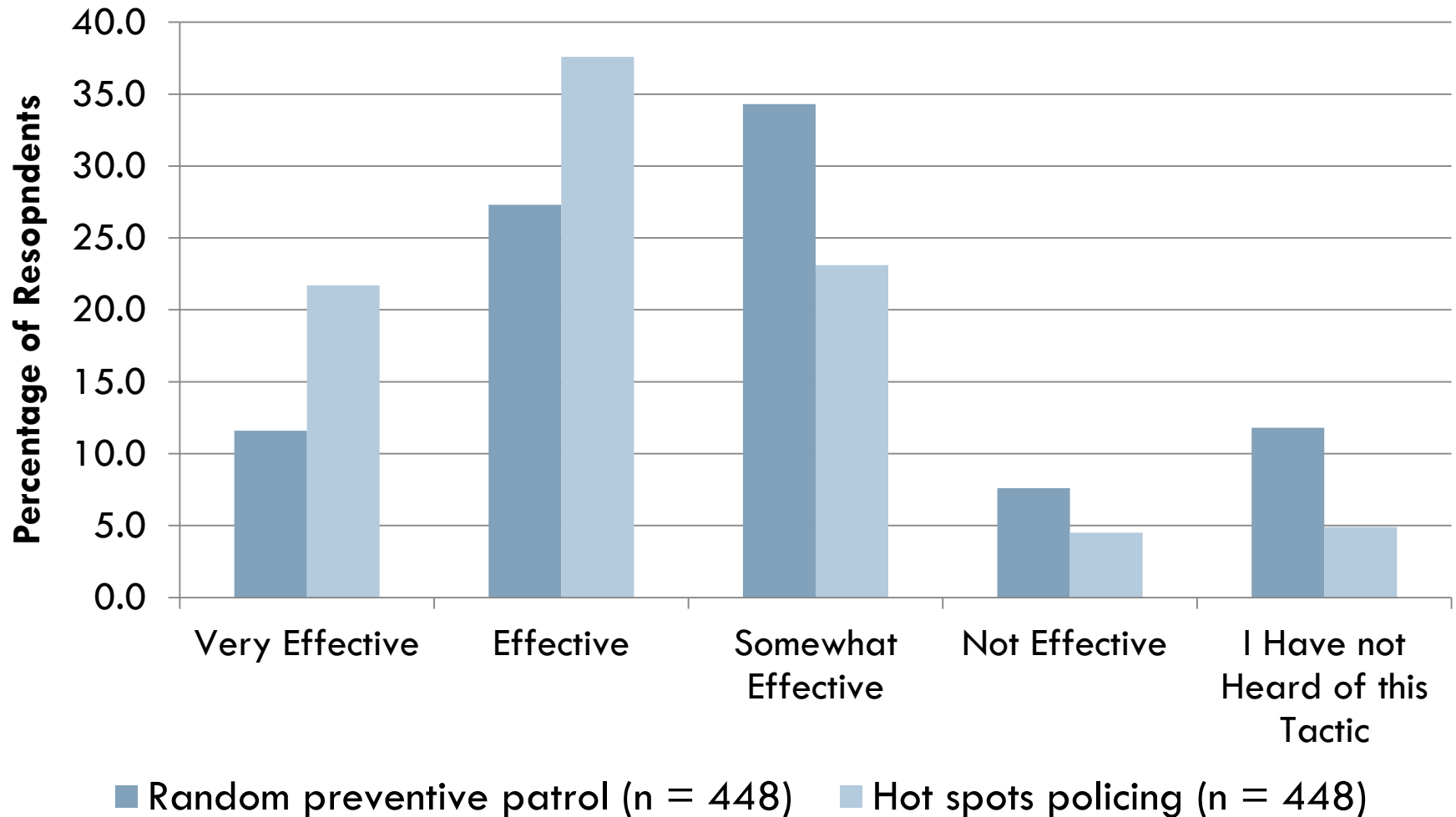
# Do Police Know What Works?

## “The Good” in SPD



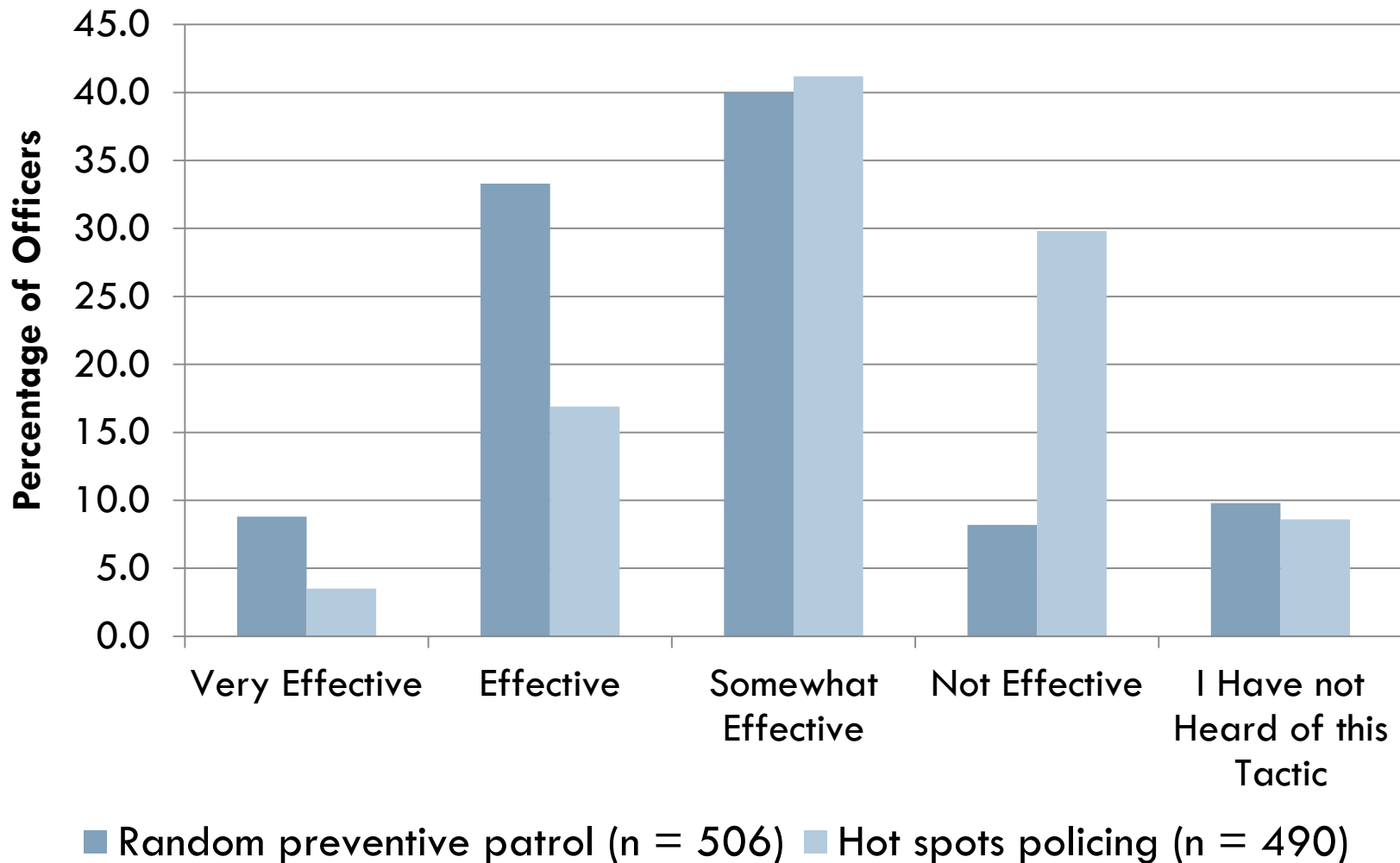
# Do Police Know What Works?

## “The Not As Good” in RPD

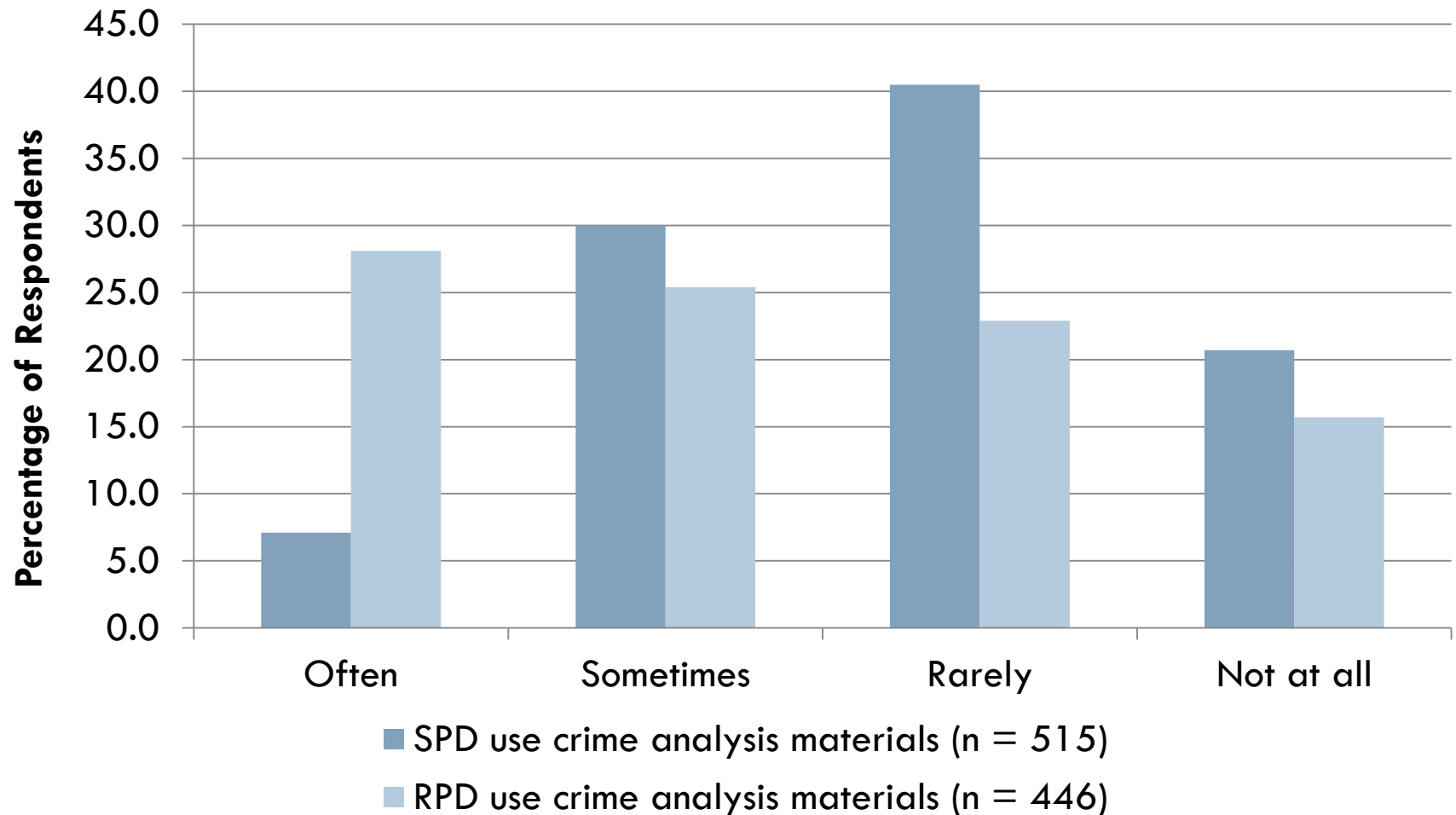


# Do Police Know What Works?

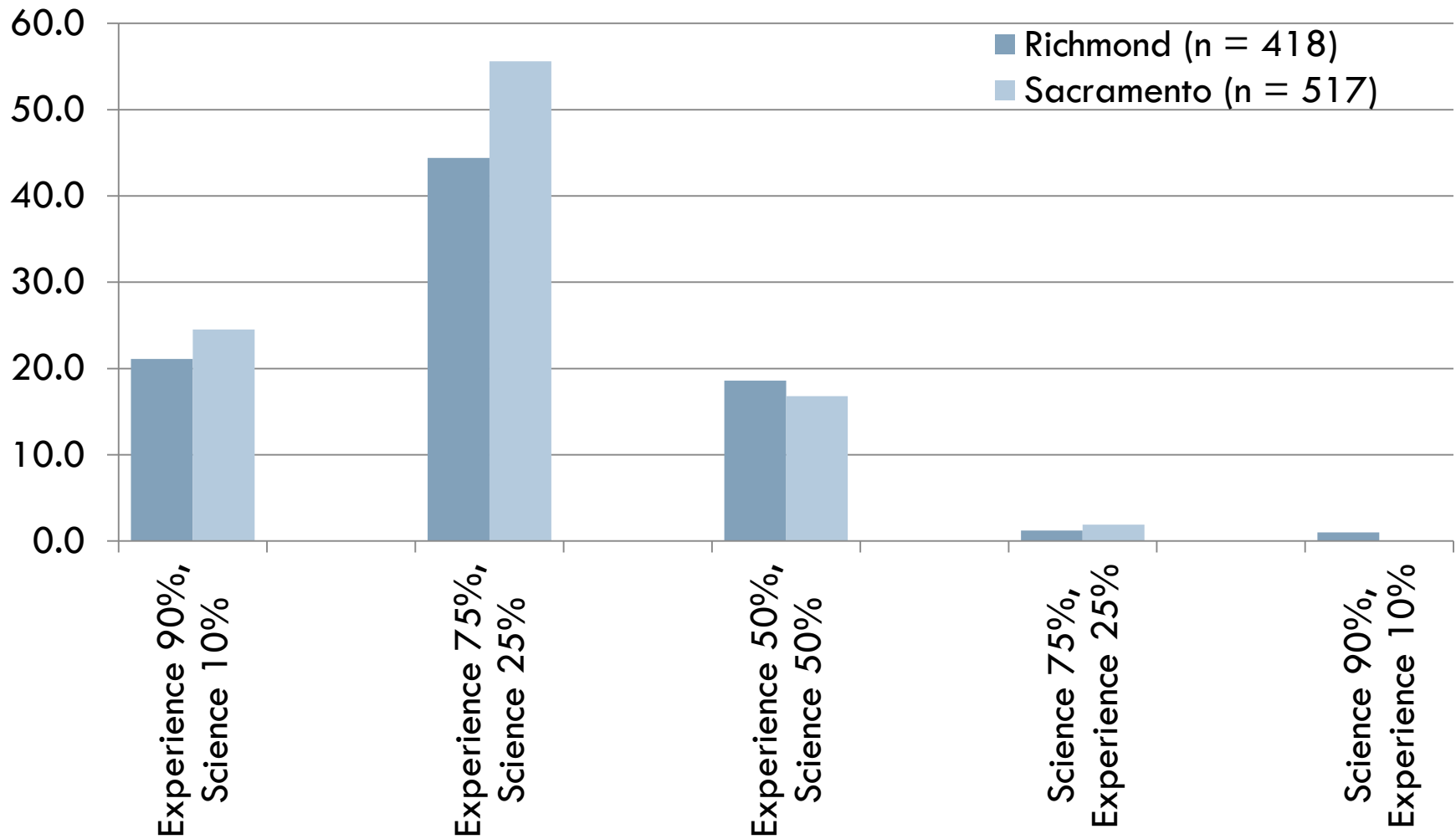
## “The Ugly” in SPD



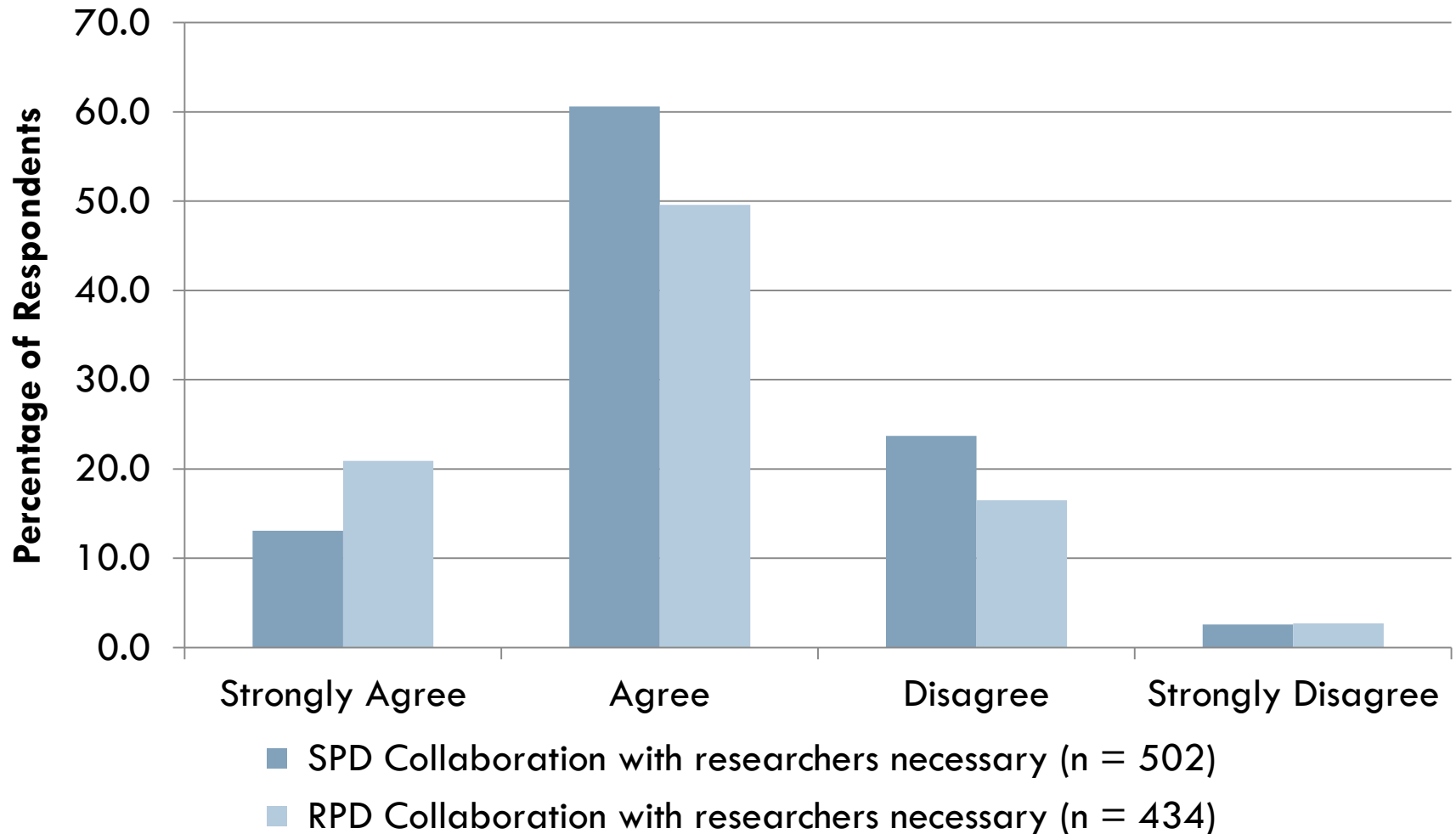
# Use of Crime Analysis Materials



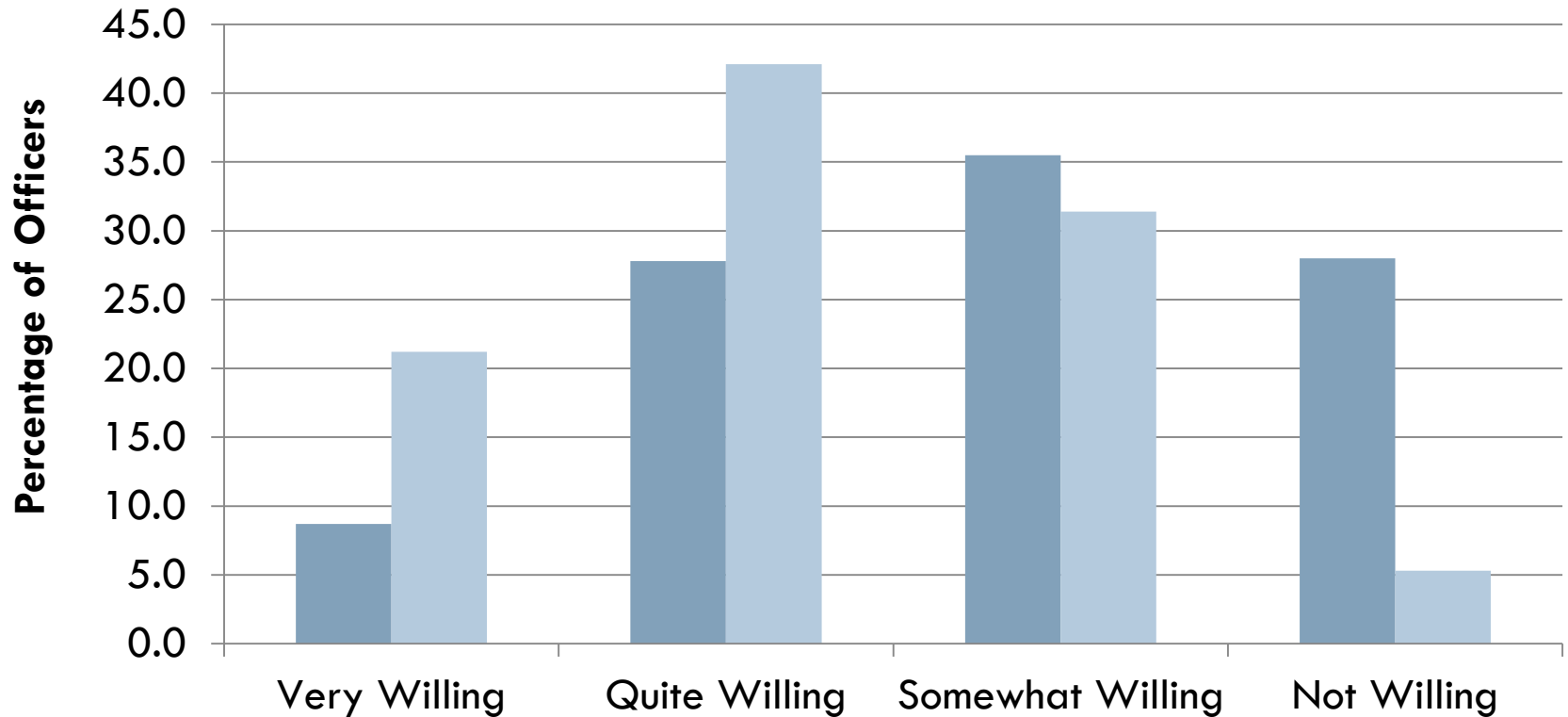
# Science/Experience in Decision Making



# Views of Outsiders and Collaboration

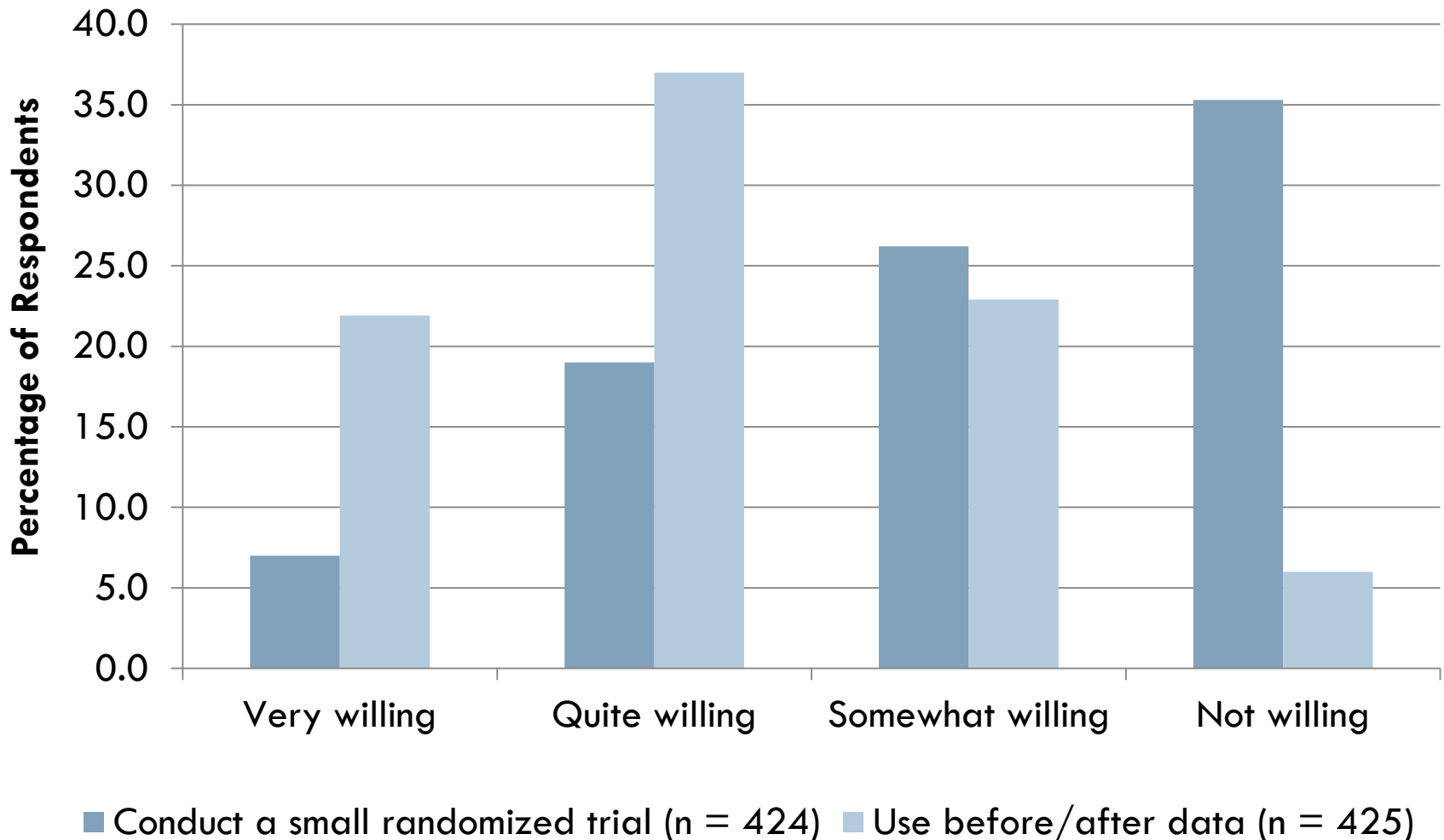


# Views on Conducting Research in SPD



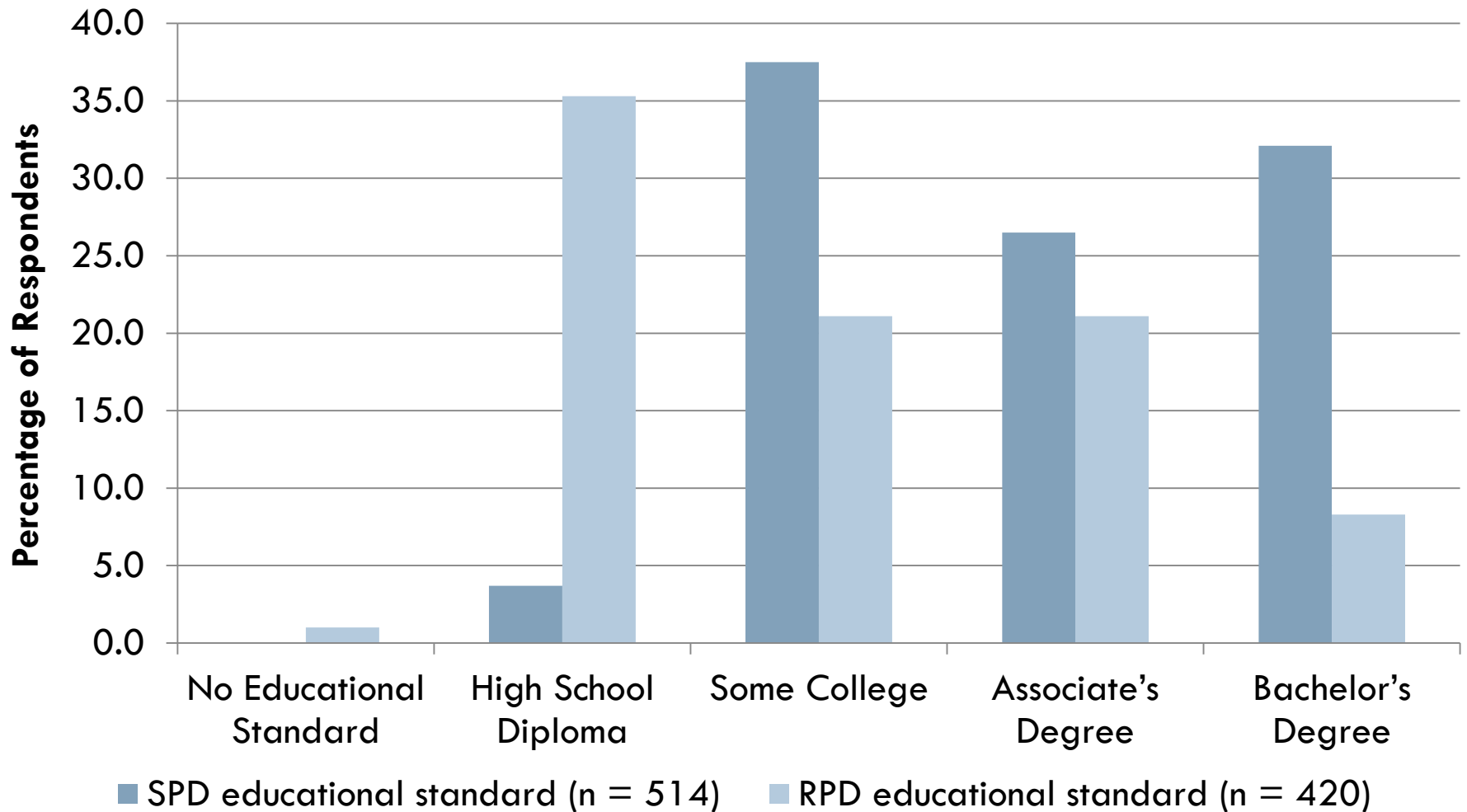
■ Conduct a small randomized trial (n=515) ■ Use before/after data (n=513)

# Views on Conducting Research in RPD





# Views on Minimum Education



# Differences by Characteristics

- Few significant differences emerge across demographic/departmental characteristics:
  - ▣ In both agencies, better educated officers more likely to say higher education is important for policing and that minimum education standards should be higher
  - ▣ In RPD (but not SPD), more educated respondents more willing to try some evaluation methods
  - ▣ Female respondents in both agencies more likely to say science should play a greater role in day-to-day decisions
  - ▣ RPD civilians more likely to say science should play a greater role in day-to-day decisions and less likely to agree new ideas from commanders are just a fad

# Summary and Comparison

## SPD and RPD vs. pilot agency in California

Question	Sacramento	Richmond	Pilot
Heard of evidence-based policing	25%	30%	80%
“None of the above” knowledge sources	77%	62%	46%
Hot spots policing very effective/effective	20%	59%	74%
Use materials from crime analysis often/sometimes	37%	54%	56%
Information from research very/somewhat useful	71%	45%	76%
Willing to try new tactics (strongly agreed/ agreed)	94%	87%	96%
Collaboration with researchers is necessary (strongly agreed/ agreed)	74%	71%	90%

# More Information

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Lum, C., Telep, C. W., Koper, C., & Grieco, J. (2012).  
Receptivity to research in policing. *Justice Research and Policy*,  
14(1), 61–95.

Receptivity survey: Visit “Matrix Demonstration Project” at  
<http://www.cebcop.org>