

# **POLICE RECEPTIVITY TO RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE-BASED POLICING: EXAMINING VARIABILITY WITHIN AND ACROSS AGENCIES**

Cody W. Telep

CEBCP-Police Foundation Joint Symposium

August 17, 2015

# Introduction

2

- Survey of police employee receptivity to research and evidence-based policing in four departments
  
- Survey allows for comparisons within and across departments
  - ▣ Do demographic, experience, and job-related characteristics affect receptivity?
  - ▣ Do differences emerge across departments?

# Lum & Telep receptivity survey

3

Survey sections (survey online at [cebc.org/matrix-demo](https://cebc.org/matrix-demo)):

- I. Research resources and knowledge base
- II. Perception/view of science
- III. Views on innovation and conducting research
- IV. Higher education and policing
- V. Personal information

# Outcomes

4

1. Heard of evidence-based policing (EBP)
2. Knowledge of the evidence base
  - ▣ Hot spots /problem-oriented policing are effective
  - ▣ Random patrol/rapid response to 911 calls are less effective
3. Science (vs. experience) should guide at least 50% of day to day decision making
4. Willingness to do research scale
  - ▣ 8 questions ( $\alpha = .798$ ) on evaluation and collaboration
5. A bachelor's degree should be required for new recruits

# Agency characteristics

5

- Sacramento, CA Police Department
    - ▣ 523 sworn respondents (about 77% of officers)
  
  - Richmond, VA Police Department
    - ▣ 343 sworn and civilian respondents (about 36% of employees)
  
  - Roanoke County, VA Police Department
    - ▣ 94 sworn and civilian respondents (about 60% of employees)
  
  - Reno, NV Police Department
    - ▣ 147 sworn and civilian respondents (about 52% of employees)
- 
- 1,107 total respondents

# Predictor variables

Experience/View Vars.	Mean (SD)
Read academic pub.	.03
Read practitioner pub.	.27
No effectiveness docs.	.42
Attended conference	.14
Effectiveness training	.13
Never heard of strategy	.76
Research useful	.61
Collaboration necessary	.78
Higher edu. importance	3.26 (1.19)

Personal/Work Vars.	Mean (SD)
Bachelor's degree	.57
Master's degree	.09
Sworn	.94
Supervisor	.22
Patrol officer	.68
Years of experience	12.16 (7.59)
Male	.81
White	.81

# Results

7

- All personal/work variables and most experience/view variables in each model
- Department dummy variables included in each model (Sacramento PD is reference group)
  
- Displaying statistically significant individual-level and departmental variables for each outcome
  - ▣ All variables shown:  $p < .05$
  - ▣ Variables marked with \* are  $p < .01$

# Heard of evidence-based policing

8

- Dependent variable (DV): Respondent had ever heard of evidence-based policing (28% had)

Variable	Odds ratio (SE)
Read academic pub.	2.41 (.43)
Read practitioner pub.	1.64* (.19)
Attended a conference	1.57 (.23)
Never heard of a strategy	.53* (.20)
Master's degree	2.62* (.31)
Supervisor	1.68* (.22)
Roanoke County PD	2.80 (.29)

# Views on effective strategies

9

- DV: Said hot spots/POP both at least somewhat effective (48% said this)

Variable	Odds ratio (SE)
Read a practitioner pub.	.65 (.18)
Read no effectiveness docs.	.64* (.16)
Heard of EBP	1.96* (.18)
Patrol officer	.69 (.21)
Richmond PD	2.88* (.20)
Reno PD	3.32* (.30)
Roanoke County PD	4.50* (.26)

# Views on less effective strategies

10

- DV: Said random preventive patrol/rapid response both somewhat effective or ineffective (22% said this)

Variable	Odds ratio (SE)
Read a practitioner pub.	1.47 (.20)
Read no effectiveness docs	1.59 (.19)
Attended a conference	2.30* (.23)
Master's degree	2.05 (.34)
Male	2.03* (.27)
Reno PD	2.02* (.27)

# Willingness to conduct research

11

- DV: Scale about willingness to test the effectiveness of tactics (Range 8-32; Mean = 19.02; SD = 4.54)

Variable	B (SE)
Heard of EBP	1.21* (.34)
Research useful	1.57* (.33)
Collaboration needed	1.87* (.37)
Patrol officer	-1.32* (.41)
Reno PD	1.31* (.49)
Roanoke County PD	1.38* (.56)

# Experience vs. scientific research

12

- DV: Science (vs. experience) should guide at least half of day to day decision making (21% said this)
- Includes:
  - ▣ 50% experience/50% research
  - ▣ 25% experience/75% research
  - ▣ 10% experience/90% research

Variable	Odds ratio (SE)
Read practitioner pub	1.61 (.20)
Hadn't heard of a tactic	1.65 (.24)
Heard of EBP	1.60 (.20)
Find research useful	2.91* (.22)

# Views on minimum education

13

- DV: Minimum educational standard for new recruits should be a bachelor's degree (20% said this)

Variable	Odds ratio (SE)
Bachelor's degree	5.73 (.38)
Master's degree	12.17 (.49)
Education importance	2.44 (.12)
Richmond PD	.33* (.31)
Reno PD	.17* (.57)
Roanoke County PD	.12* (.56)

# Summary of findings

14

- Departmental context matters for many questions
  - ▣ 1+ departmental variable significant in 5 of 6 models
- Experience/view variables have some impact
  - ▣ Increasing officer exposure and awareness through publications, conferences, and advanced education has benefits
- Individual/job characteristics are less consistent predictors
  - ▣ Patrol officers seem somewhat less receptive

# Future research

15

- Continue to expand our sample of agencies and look at change over time
- Look more closely at what might be explaining variation across departments
  - ▣ What departmental strategies are increasing receptivity?
- Further explore influence of individual characteristics
  - ▣ How can exposure to materials best influence officer views?
  - ▣ How do we increase patrol officer receptivity to research?

# Thank you

16

Cody W. Telep

School of Criminology and Criminal Justice

Arizona State University

[cody.telep@asu.edu](mailto:cody.telep@asu.edu)

