The Effects of Race on Relationships with the Police: A Survey of African American and Latino Youths in Chicago

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Abstract: *Race is one of the most powerful variables explaining public attitudes toward the police. The majority of studies on race and perceptions of the police have explored differences between African Americans and Whites. The emphasis of previous research on black-white comparisons has left unanswered many questions about minority group differences in attitudes toward the police, especially differences between Latinos and African Americans. The present study explored whether the police-related views of African American and Latino students differ. We compared African American and Latino youths on their attitudes, feelings, and behavioral intentions toward the police. Our independent measures included prosocial values, commitment to school, and contact with the police. We found several similarities between Latino and African American students on the dependent measures. We discuss the implications of our findings for police practices.*

Keywords: Police Relations; Youths; Minorities and Police; Trust in Police; Vicarious Experiences

Race is one of the most powerful variables explaining public attitudes toward the police (Skogan 2006). The majority of studies on race and perceptions of the police have explored differences between African Americans and Whites, concluding generally that African Americans are less satisfied with the police than are Whites (Browning, Cullen, Cao, Kopache, and Stevenson 1994; Ho and McKean 2004). The emphasis of previous research on black-white comparisons has left unanswered many questions about differences in minority group attitudes toward the police, especially differences between Latinos and African Americans (Martinez 2007). For example, do Latinos and African Americans have similar views of the police? Do minority groups have different perceptions about whether the police care about their neighborhoods?

Are Latino and African American youths similarly stopped and treated disrespectfully by the police? In the current study, we pose these and other questions to a sample of minority students in Chicago's Public School System.

Recent population estimates show that Latinos are now the largest and fastest-growing minority group in the United States (Schaefer 2006). The Latino population in Chicago has been soaring since 2000 (Little 2007). Although considered a heterogeneous population, most Chicago Latinos have their roots in either Mexico or Puerto Rico. According to Schaefer (2006), Latinos differ from one another in their immigration experiences and cultural identities. Although they are brought together by a common language and shared media outlets (e.g., cable TV stations), most Latinos eschew panethnicity or solidarity

among ethnic subgroups, preferring instead to be characterized as Mexican American, Cuban, or Puerto Rican. However, the members of these different Latino ethnic groups appear to have quite similar views about the police (Skogan and Steiner 2004).

Evidence suggests that African Americans and Latinos harbor different attitudes and perceptions regarding the police. For example, Skogan and Hartnett (1997) found that awareness of, participation in, and support for Chicago's community policing initiative, Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), were considerably lower among Latinos, as a whole, than among African Americans. Non-English-speaking Latinos in Chicago had particularly unfavorable views of the police and rarely communicated with the police. Skogan and Steiner (2004) also found that although Spanish-speaking residents live in the city's most troublesome communities with high rates of crime and disorder, they are the least likely group to initiate contact with the police. Walker, Spohn, and DeLone (2000) suggested that non-English-speaking Latinos are reluctant to communicate with the police because of the language barrier. Others fear that calling the police will trigger investigations of the immigration status of community residents.

On the one hand, African Americans and Latinos have historically had little in common other than membership in a subordinate class (Schaefer 2006). On the other hand, while African Americans and Latinos in Chicago have competed against each other for jobs and housing, social scientists and political pundits have observed that they have basic mutual interests that include fear of crime, safety in their neighborhoods, and the way they are treated by police officers (Skogan and Hartnett 1997). In the present study, we investigate whether direct contacts with the police affect young minorities' views of officers on key dependent measures.

Peterson and Krivo (2005) highlighted the relative absence of Latinos from criminological and criminal justice research and how this absence limits our understanding of the sources of racial and ethnic disparities in violent crime and criminal justice processing and our knowledge of broader racial and ethnic differences in residents' views of and relationships with police officers (Rosenbaum, Schuck, Costello, Hawkins, and Ring 2005). As Hagen, Shedd, and Payne (2005:384) noted, "While police attention to African American youth is frequent and therefore familiar (Anderson, 1999; Young, 2004), little is known about how Latino youth respond to their experiences with the police—perhaps in part because their experiences with the police are assumed to be less common."

The tremendous growth of the Latino population in the United States has changed the face of communities and has revealed as "obsolete" and simplistic police studies of race that focus on only black-white comparisons (Martinez 2007:57). In response to Martinez 's (2007:62) persuasive

recommendation to include Latinos in future "research on police treatment," the present investigation compared African American and Latino youths' feelings, attitudes, and behavioral intentions toward the police.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING RACE

In terms of citizens' attitudes toward the police, race is perhaps the most studied of all personal characteristics, by itself and in interaction with other variables (e.g., age, gender, previous victimization) (Hurst 2007). Skogan (2006:101) maintained that, "All research on American's [sic] views of the police begins with race." Twenty independent studies, between the late 1960s and the 1970s, showed that African Americans had less favorable attitudes toward the police than did Whites (Peek, Lowe, and Alston 1981). For example, in an early study on the effects of race on perceptions of the police, Smith and Hawkins (1973) reported that African Americans of all ages had unfavorable attitudes toward the police whereas among Whites, older people had more favorable attitudes toward the police than younger people. We cite only a small sample of more recent studies in this vast literature.

African Americans are more likely than members of other racial groups to be victims of crime. They are also more likely to have negative contacts with the police, to be stopped disproportionately by the police, and to report incidents of police harassment and mistreatment (Anderson 1990, 1999; Erez 1984; Schafer, Huebner, and Bynum 2003; Tuch and Weitzer 1997). Skogan (2006) found that 70 percent of young African American males in Chicago reported being stopped by the police, compared to an average of only 20 percent of the total number of residents in the city.

Hagan, Shedd, and Payne (2005) found that African American students in Chicago were more likely than Latino or White students to have encounters with the police, while Latinos were more likely to respond negatively to these encounters than were other youths. Hagan et al. (2005) suggested that adolescent minorities' perceptions of "criminal injustice" and their hostility toward the police are fueled by their lack of attachment to school and their being subjected to frequent and unprovoked police stops. The authors decried the paucity of research on Latinos' responses to police contacts (see also Brown 2004; Martinez 2007).

In New York City, Tyler (2005) investigated two forms of trust in the police: institutional and motive-based. Institutional trust was measured by survey items such as, "I trust the leaders of the NYPD to make decisions that are good for everyone in the city" and "People's basic rights are well protected by the police." Motive-based trust was measured by survey items such as, "The police give honest explanations for their actions to people" and "The police consider the views of the people involved when deciding what to do." Tyler found that African Americans expressed

less trust in the police than either Latinos or Whites on both forms of trust. All respondents rated the police slightly lower on institutional trust than on motive-based trust. Tyler concluded that a police officer's display of fairness in the exercise of duty was the most important factor in citizens' trust in the police.

In a national survey of the determinants of satisfaction with the police, Weitzer and Tuch (1999) reported that African American men were significantly less satisfied with the police than were African American women. The perception of personal safety in the neighborhood affected residents' satisfaction with the police. Those who resided in communities in which crime was a minor problem were more satisfied with the police than were those who resided in communities in which crime was a serious problem. Sampson and Bartusch (1998) reported that neighborhood disorder and concentrated poverty account largely for racial differences in satisfaction with the police.

Ho and McKean (2004) studied the relationship between residents and the police in North Carolina, concluding that race was the most important predictor of confidence in the police. African American residents were less likely to report confidence in police officers than were White residents. In addition, the risk of being a past or recent crime victim diminished residents' confidence in the police. Moreover, Hurst, Frank, and Browning (2000) reported that African American teenagers were more negative than White teenagers in their assessments of the police after street encounters even though their respective ratings of police treatment during those encounters were similar. A survey of ninth- and tenth-graders in Chicago found that both Latino and African American students believed that they were more likely than White students to be unfairly stopped and questioned by the police (Consortium on Chicago School Research 2002).

Rosenbaum, Schuck, Costello, Hawkins, and Ring (2005) indicated that vicarious experiences with the police in Chicago were significantly related to attitudes toward the police. Their findings suggested differences in how various racial and ethnic groups process their personal histories or past experiences with the police. The study found that African Americans were more likely to be affected by their indirect or vicarious experiences with the police than were members of other racial groups. Similarly, Weitzer and Tuch (2005) found that vicarious experiences with officers were correlated with lower approval ratings of the police among African Americans and Whites but not among Latinos. The researchers also argued that the mass media affect attitudes toward the police—particularly among African Americans, who are prominently featured in news stories about police officers' abuse of citizens.

Carter (1985) found that Latinos' perceptions of the police and expectations about future encounters with officers become more unfavorable with increasing contact between residents and officers. Hagan et al. (2005)

speculated that a similar deterioration in views of the police is less likely to occur among African Americans because police harassment has become an "experience of the expected" (p. 384).

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING YOUTHS

Age is another prime predictor of attitudes toward the police (Skogan 2006). Negative, age-related perceptions of the police are associated with different factors. For example, contacts between juveniles and officers typically occur under contentious or adversarial conditions (e.g., being stopped, frisked, or arrested); young males are responsible for committing a significant proportion of crimes and are the most common targets of law enforcement interest (Skogan 2006). Anti-police sentiments can also be an expression of young people's need for freedom and autonomy. In contrast, older residents are more likely to initiate contacts with the police and to be interested in safety and security issues (Reisig and Correia 1997).

In general, young people have unfavorable attitudes toward the police; they express little confidence in officers and rate them poorly on measures of competency, trust, and overall performance (Adams 1996; Borrero 2001; Decker 1981). Early and more recent studies indicate that negative encounters with the police lead to negative perceptions of officers (Friedman et al. 2004; Wellford 1973). Abusive incidents involving police officers and young people are grossly under-reported (Adams 1996). In interviews with mostly Latino and African American youths living in poor neighborhoods in Hartford, Connecticut, Borrero (2001) recorded hundreds of allegations of police misconduct against juveniles, including physical abuse, verbal harassment, threats, and violent attacks. Not surprisingly, the victims of excessive police force, who are disproportionately young minority males, have the most negative perceptions of the police (e.g., Ben-Ali 1992; Flanagan and Vaughn 1996).

Such encounters lay the foundation for longstanding hostility between the police and neighborhood residents. As adolescents become adults, they remain suspicious and distrustful of the police, decreasing the likelihood that they will report crimes and participate in community anticrime initiatives (Stoutland 2001). Hence, the study of young people's views of the police is critical as criminal justice-related beliefs, such as views of law enforcement officers, emerge and crystallize during middle adolescence and persist into adulthood (Bobo and Johnson 2004; Flanagan and Sherrod 1998; Niemi and Hepburn 1995).

PRESENT STUDY

The present study explored whether the police-related views of African American and Latino students differ with

respect to three major predictive factors. First, based on research showing that commitment to school can affect adolescents' views of the police (Agnew 2005; Levy 2001; Nihart, Lersch, Sellers, and Mieczkowski 2005), we measured youths' attitudes toward school and their teachers. Relying on tenets of social control theory (Hirschi 1969), we hypothesized that students who hold more positive views of school will express more favorable views of the police. Second, based on research showing that the adoption of prosocial values can affect adolescents' proclivities toward delinquent and criminal behaviors and, by extension, their views of the police (Kee, Sim, Teoh, Tian, and Ng 2003), we measured youths' endorsement of conventional beliefs. We hypothesize that juveniles who possess more conventional beliefs would express more favorable views of the police (Hirschi 1969). Third, based on research showing that police treatment of youths during street encounters can affect young people's views of the police (Friedman et al. 2004; Hurst and Frank 2000), we measured youths' experiences after they had been stopped by police officers. We hypothesized that students who had no contact with the police or who were treated respectfully during field contacts would express more favorable views of the police. Thus, demeaning treatment by officers would elicit distrust while fair treatment (or no experience of being stopped) would do the opposite (Tyler 2004).

We used three complementary dependent measures on which we compared African American and Latino youths. We asked them if they thought that the police cared about their neighborhoods. We also asked them whether they respected the police. Finally, we asked them if they would be inclined to help police officers who were in need of assistance. Because of the scarcity of research on racial differences in perceptions of the police among youths, we ventured no specific hypotheses about how Latino and African American adolescents would differ on these measures.

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection and Sample

Survey data for this study were obtained from students who were enrolled in 18 Chicago Public Schools in May 2000. Approval for this project was received from the Board of Education's Legal Department, which was highly concerned with maintaining student's confidentiality. Therefore, student surveys were anonymous and information was not collected on the characteristics of the individual schools. All survey data from the schools were aggregated. At each of the 18 high schools, research staff distributed surveys during advising periods that the school had reserved for standardized test administration.

The data were collected during regular school hours in accordance with each high school principal's directions. The questionnaire consisted of 131 items in open- and

closed-ended response formats. The survey used several rating scales and explored numerous content domains: demographic characteristics, students' perceptions of the police, personal experiences with the police, and attitudes toward school and other social institutions. (For a more detailed description of the survey, see Friedman et al. 2004.)

A total of 943 students were asked to complete the questionnaire. The average completion time was 25 minutes. The completion rate for the survey was 94 percent (n = 891). A total of 47 surveys were incomplete or unusable, and five students refused to participate in the study. Nearly half of the students were freshmen, and 41 percent were juniors. The mean and median age of the students was 16 years. Approximately 55 percent of the respondents were African American, 28 percent were Latino, 7 percent were White, and 3 percent were Asian. Based on 2008 data from the Chicago Public Schools, 8 percent of Chicago's public high school students are white, and 86 percent are African American or Latino— percentages that closely match the racial composition of the current respondents < http://www.catalyst-chicago.org/guides/index.php?id=17>. The sample consisted of more females (55%) than males (46%). After we excluded all of the students who were neither Latino nor African American, a total of 732 respondents remained in our sample. Two-thirds of the youths in the sample were African American (n = 490) and one-third were Latino (n = 242).

Variables

Dependent variables. Three items were used to assess students' views of the police; all three were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The three measures were combined initially into one dependent variable or scale. However, the reliability coefficient of the scale was low, which suggested that the questions tapped into distinct aspects of students' reactions toward the police: their perceptions, feelings, and behavioral intentions.

The first dependent variable was measured by asking students if they believed that the police cared about what was good for their neighborhood (their perceptions). Higher values on this measure indicated that students believed that the police care about their neighborhoods whereas lower values indicated that students believed that the police did not care. The second dependent variable was measured by asking students whether they respected the police (their feelings). Higher values on this measure indicated that students respected the police whereas lower values indicated that students did not. The third dependent variable was measured by asking respondents whether they would assist a police officer in need of help (their behavioral intentions). Higher values on this measure

indicated a willingness to assist officers whereas lower values indicated an unwillingness to help them.

Attitudes toward school and teachers. School is a primary vehicle for transmitting conventional values to students on a considerable breadth of issues, including appropriate deference toward authority figures, such as the police. Teachers are the agents of socialization who communicate those values in and out of the classroom. Hence, we included in the survey two items that measured students' attitudes toward school and teachers. The first item asked students whether they liked school. A five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," was used to measure students' responses to this question. Higher values indicated that students liked school whereas lower values indicated that students did not like school.

The second item asked students whether they cared about what their teachers thought of them. This variable was measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Higher values indicated that students cared about their teachers' opinions of them whereas lower values indicated that students did not care about their teachers' opinions about them. Students who claim to like school and care what teachers think of them should be more attached to conventional values (or socially bonded) than those who claim to not like school or care what their teachers think of them. Hence, the former would have a greater commitment to prosocial activities and better relationships with authority figures than the latter (Hirschi 1969).

Prosocial beliefs. Two questions using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," measured students' thoughts about delinquent behavior. The first question asked students whether they believed that taking things without permission was acceptable. The second question asked them if they believed that delinquent behavior is harmful. The polarity of these questions was reversed so that higher scores on either of these measures indicated prosocial values whereas lower scores on either of these measures indicated pro-delinquent values.

Experiences with the police. A few studies have found that treatment by the police (respect versus disrespect) was an important predictor of juveniles' attitude toward the police (e.g., Friedman et al. 2004). In the present investigation, students' experiences with the police were measured by using a set of dummy variables. The dummy variables differentiated students not stopped by the police, students stopped and respected by the police, and students stopped and disrespected by the police. Students who were stopped and respected by the police were used as the comparison group for the analyses.

The variables used for not being stopped, being stopped and respected, or being stopped and disrespected by the police were generated from questions that followed a skip pattern in the survey instrument. Students were asked if the police had ever stopped them. Students were then asked whether they were respected or not during the stop. Ignoring the skip pattern in the survey would have introduced incidental selection bias into the model. Incidental selection bias is a methodological artifact that occurs when data are dropped from an analysis in an artificial (incidental to the method) instead of a random (non-artifactual) process.

Students who had not been stopped would have been excluded from the analysis through the incidental selection process. These students might be different from students who had been stopped on characteristics related to the study's outcomes; the not-stopped students would have been missed in the analysis unless they were captured by the survey structure and coding of the data. As mentioned above, dummy variables were created to prevent incidental selection bias and ensure that the entire sample of students (stopped and not stopped by the police) was included in the analyses.

The data were reviewed for inconsistencies in participants' responses and for coding errors that resulted from the survey's skip pattern. For example, some participants responded that they had not been stopped by the police but then indicated that they had been respected or disrespected by the police. Other variations in responses also created inconsistencies. A review of the data identified 37 cases (4%) with inconsistent responses, which were dropped from the analyses.

Control and selection variables. Gender was included in the analyses to control for gender-based differences in students' attitudes toward the police, which were reported in Friedman et al. (2004). Race was used as a selection criterion to determine if the analytic models produced different results for African Americans and Latinos. Table 1 presents the survey items and summary statistics for each of the study's variables.

Table 1. Summary Statistics of Regression Variables

Name	Description/Question	Category	Min	Max	Mean	SD	N
Independent Variables							
Like School	Question: "I like School"	African American [a]	1	5	3.5	1.2	446
		Latino [b]	1	5	3.4	1.1	225
Teachers	Question: " I care what my teachers think of me"	African American [a]	1	5	3.2	1.3	445
		Latino [b]	1	5	3.3	1.2	225
Stealing "not" OK	Question: "It's ok to take things that do not belong to you" [Reversed polarity to measure prosocial values]	African American [a]	1	5	3.7	1.5	445
		Latino [b]	1	5	3.5	1.4	223
Delinquency "not" OK	Question: " Most acts people call delinquent don't really hurt anyone" [Reversed polarity to measure prosocial values]	African American [a]	1	5	3.3	1.0	435
		Latino [b]	1	5	3.2	1.0	226
Experience	Dummy Variables:	African American [a]					
	i. Not stopped	i	0	1	.4	.5	453
	ii. Stopped and Respected (comparison group)	ii	0	1	.2	.4	463
	iii. Stopped and not respected	iii	0	1	.4	.5	463
		Latino [b]					
		i	0	1	.4	.5	235
		ii	0	1	.2	.4	237
		iii	0	1	.3	.5	237
Control Variable							
Gender	Dichotomous variable measuring respondent sex. Male = 1; Female = 0.	African American [a]	0	1	.4	.5	461
		Latino [b]	0	1	.5	.5	237
Dependent Variables							
Care	Question: "Police really care what is good for my neighborhood"	African American [a]	1	5	2.6	1.0	451
		Latino [b]	1	5	2.7	1.0	230
Respect	Question: "I respect the police"	African American [a]	1	5	3.5	1.0	449
		Latino [b]	1	5	3.7	1.1	228
Assist	Question: "I would assist a police officer if he/she needed help"	African American [a]	1	5	2.8	1.2	448
		Latino [b]	1	5	3.1	1.1	228

Note: Figures are rounded. a. Selected for African Americans b. Selected for Latinos

Analyses

Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis (SPSS 14.0 for Windows) was used to estimate several models that compared African American and Latino students. The variance in each of the dependent measures was sufficient enough to obviate the use of ordinal regression analyses; that is, responses were not heavily concentrated in any one category of any of the dependent measures. OLS regression analysis was also selected for its ease of presentation and interpretation.

The data for African American and Latino students were analyzed in two separate regression models for two reasons: first, to simplify the description of the results on race (the interpretation of interaction terms can be a bit complicated) and second, to diminish the likelihood of multicollinearity. The separate-model approach to test the effects of race could have compromised the robustness of the findings because the number of cases of Latino students was smaller than the number of cases of African American students. Nonetheless, the number of cases available for each analysis was adequate.

Model 1 (African American students) and Model 2 (Latino students) are presented in Table 3 and examined youths' perceptions about whether the police cared about what is good for their neighborhoods. Model 3 (African American students) and Model 4 (Latino students) are presented in Table 4 and examined youths' respect for the police. Model 5 (African American students) and Model 6

(Latino students) explored youths' intentions to assist a police officer in need and are presented in Table 4. All models included the same set of predictor variables.

A cross-coefficient analysis was used to examine differences between the models for African Americans and Latinos. In order to ascertain if any differences in slopes between the models were true differences, a cross-coefficient z-test was computed using t he following equation for the analysis (Paternoster, Brame, Mazerolle, and Piquero 1998):

$$z = \frac{b_1 - b_2}{\sqrt{SEb_1^2 + SEb_2^2}}$$

The equation determines whether observed differences in slopes between sub-samples are statistically significant by generating a z-statistic that tests the null hypothesis that the regression coefficients in the two equations are equal (Paternoster et al. 1998). If the coefficients of the equations are equal, then the variables have similar slopes and predictive power. The significance level used for the cross-coefficient tests was $p = .10$.

FINDINGS

Description of Study Variables

Roughly 50 percent of Latino and African American students agreed or strongly agreed that "they like school." African Americans (23%) were more likely to strongly agree with the statement than were Latinos (14%).

Approximately half (48%) of Latinos and 43 percent of African Americans also agreed or strongly agreed that "they care about what their teacher thinks of them." N early 25 percent of African Americans and 29 percent of Latinos agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that "it is not wrong to take things that do not belong to you." Roughly 20 percent of African American and Latino students agreed or strongly agreed that "things they call delinquent do not hurt anyone." In addition, a slightly higher percentage of African American students (60%)

than Latino students (55%) reported being stopped by the police. Roughly 62 percent of African Americans and 60 percent of Latinos reported that the police disrespected them during the encounter (See Table 2). In the Chicago Consortium Study of Chicago Public School students in the ninth and tenth grades, 50 percent each of African Americans and Latinos youths reported that the police had stopped them in the past year (Consortium on Chicago School Research 2002).

Table 2. Descriptive Analyses of Study Variables

Variables		Strongly Agree No. (%)	Agree No. (%)	Neutral No. (%)	Disagree No. (%)	Strongly Disagree No. (%)
Independent Variables						
"I care what my teachers think of me"	AA	87 (19.0)	108 (23.6)	128 (28.0)	67 (14.7)	67 (14.7)
	Latino	42 (18.5)	68 (30.0)	67 (29.5)	24 (10.6)	26 (11.5)
"I like school"	AA	104 (22.8)	142 (31.1)	130 (28.4)	40 (8.8)	41 (9.0)
	Latino	32 (14.1)	83 (36.6)	75 (33.0)	20 (8.8)	17 (7.5)
"It is not wrong to take things"	AA	62 (13.4)	53 (11.5)	49 (10.6)	78 (16.9)	220 (47.6)
	Latino	27 (12.1)	37 (16.5)	32 (14.3)	47 (21.0)	81 (36.2)
"Delinquency does not hurt anyone"	AA	22 (4.8)	62 (13.7)	202 (44.5)	114 (25.1)	54 (11.9)
	Latino	10 (4.4)	37 (16.2)	101 (44.1)	53 (23.1)	28 (12.2)
		Yes No. (%)	No No. (%)			
"Have you ever been stopped by the police?"	AA	285 (59.5)	194 (40.5)			
	Latino	131 (54.6)	109 (45.4)			
"Were you treated with respect when you were stopped?"	AA	109 (38.4)	175 (61.6)			
	Latino	131 (54.6)	109 (45.4)			
Sex (Male = 1)[a]	AA	210 (43.1)	277 (56.9)			
	Latino	124 (51.2)	118 (48.8)			
		Strongly Agree No. (%)	Agree No. (%)	Neutral No. (%)	Disagree No. (%)	Strongly Disagree No. (%)
Dependent Variables						
"If a police officer needed help..."	AA	30 (6.6)	99 (21.7)	165 (36.1)	83 (18.2)	80 (17.5)
	Latino	21 (9.3)	70 (30.8)	83 (36.6)	29 (12.8)	24 (10.6)
"I respect the police"	AA	82 (17.9)	141 (30.9)	170 (37.2)	28 (6.1)	36 (7.9)
	Latino	53 (23.3)	92 (40.5)	56 (24.7)	10 (4.4)	16 (7.0)
"Police really care..."	AA	13 (2.8)	55 (12.0)	201 (44.0)	108 (23.6)	80 (17.5)
	Latino	5 (2.2)	34 (15.0)	118 (52.0)	44 (19.4)	26 (11.5)

[a] 56.9 % of African American students are females; 48.8 % of Latino youth are females.

Descriptive analyses of the three dependent variables (i.e., "Police care about my neighborhood," "I respect the police," and "I would assist an officer who needed help") showed that respondents had mixed views of the police. Approximately 50 percent of African Americans and 64 percent of Latinos agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "I respect the police." However, only 15 percent of African Americans and 17 percent of Latinos agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, "The police really care about what is good for my neighborhood." Finally, 40 percent of Latinos but only 28 percent of African Americans responded affirmatively to the statement, "If a police officer needed help, I would be willing to assist him or her." Hence, African Americans' overall views of the police were more negative than Latinos' views.

Police Care about My Neighborhood (Models 1 and 2)

The results of Models 1 (African Americans) and 2 (Latinos) showed that students' experience with the police was significantly related to the study's first outcome variable. Specifically, for both African Americans and Latinos, being stopped and treated disrespectfully by officers negatively affected their perceptions of whether the police care about their neighborhoods ($b = -.59$ for African Americans; $b = -.51$ for Latinos). Being stopped by the police, per se, was not a significant predictor of this outcome for either group; how youths were treated when stopped mattered more than merely being stopped. Students' perceptions of their teachers and school, and their prosocial beliefs also were statistically non-significant. The results from the cross-coefficient tests supported the regression results and showed no difference in the slopes of the models for African Americans and Latinos.

Table 3. *Regression Equations Examining Students Perception of Police Caring*

Predictor Variables	African American		Latinos	
	b	Beta	b	Beta
Like School	.055	.048	.169	.147
Teachers	.099	.099	.236	.230
Stealing not OK	-.065	-.069	-.042	-.048
Delinquency not OK	.094	.092	.104	.111
Not stopped[b]	.044	.020	-.125	-.063
Stopped and disrespected[a]	-.590**	-.249	-.510*	-.245
Stopped and respected[ab]	---	---	---	---
Control:				
Gender[c]	.179	.079	.284	.144
Constant	2.19***	---	1.59***	---
F-test	2.93**		4.13***	
R²	.089		.245	
N	218		97	

Note: b is the unstandardized coefficient; Beta is the standardized coefficient.
Figures are rounded.
a. Coded as 1 = (yes); 0 = (no)
b. Comparison group
c. Coded as 1 = (male); 0 = (female)
*p ≤ .05 **p ≤ .01 ***p ≤ .001

Respect for the Police (Models 3 and 4)

The model for African American youths (Model 3) demonstrated that respondents who cared what their teachers thought of them had more positive feelings toward police officers than those who cared little or not at all. This finding also applied to Latino respondents (Model 4). Hence, in Model 3 (African Americans) and Model 4 (Latinos), an association was found between respecting the police and students' caring about their teachers' opinions of them. Students who cared about their teachers' opinions were more likely to respect the police than those who did not (*b* = .32 for African Americans, *b* = .46 for Latinos).

Table 4. *Regression Equations Examining Students Perception of Respect for the Police*

Predictor Variables	African American		Latinos	
	b	Beta	b	Beta
Like School	.038	.031	.056	.042
Teachers	.324***	.303	.457***	.384
Stealing not OK	.017	.017	.137	.135
Delinquency not OK	.008	.007	.191*	.176
Not stopped[b]	-.105	-.045	.307	.133
Stopped and disrespected[a]	-.770***	-.305	-.252	-.105
Stopped and respected[a]	---	---	---	---
Control:				
Gender[c]	-.142	-.059	-.075	-.033
Constant	2.800***	---	1.310**	---
F-test	7.110***		10.590***	
R²	.192		.454	
N	217		97	

Note: b is the unstandardized coefficient; Beta is the standardized coefficient.
Figures are rounded.
a. Coded as 1 = (yes); 0 = (no)
b. Comparison group
c. Coded as 1 = (male); 0 = (female)
*p ≤ .05 **p ≤ .01 ***p ≤ .001

The results in Model 3 also indicated that African Americans who had been stopped and disrespected expressed more negative feelings toward the police than those who were stopped and respected, showing again the importance of police treatment during street encounters (*b* = - .77). African American students who were disrespected were significantly less likely to claim that they respected the police than were those who were respected. Being stopped and disrespected by the police was a slightly stronger predictor of African American juveniles' respect for the police than caring about their teachers' opinions of them. However, African Americans also were more likely

than Latinos to report that the police had physically mistreated them. Thus, the difference between the two groups might be linked to the intensity of alleged police abuse. Parenthetically, several students claimed that police officers hit and pushed them, pulled a gun on them, and made them lie face down on the ground. Examples of verbal abuse by police officers included being ridiculed, humiliated, called names, and asked inappropriate questions.

Unlike the model for African American youths, Latino students' experiences with the police had no significant effect on their respect for the police. Therefore, in Model 4 (Latinos), no significant relationship was found between police treatment and students' respect for the police. Thus, Latino and African American youths differed on the measure of respect for the police. The model for Latinos (Model 4) also differed from the model for African Americans (Model 3) on another variable. Specifically, Latinos who thought that delinquent acts were harmful were more likely to respect the police ($b = .19$); African American students were not.

The cross-coefficient analysis supported the differences between Models 3 and 4. The z-test of different slopes in the African American and Latino models for the delinquency variable was statistically significant ($p = .06$).

The z-test that examined the difference between African American and Latino students on being disrespected by the police was also statistically significant ($p = .05$). These results are consistent with the differences between African American and Latino students that were found in the regression models for experience with the police.

Assisting the Police (Models 5 and 6)

For African American and Latino youths, being pro-school was related to their expressed intentions to aid officers in need of help. The results also suggested that being disrespected by the police negatively affected both African Americans' and Latinos' willingness to assist the police ($b = -72$ for African Americans; $b = -.57$ for Latinos). In addition, caring about teachers' opinions of them was related positively to the willingness of students in both groups to assist the police ($b = .22$ for African Americans, $b = .37$ for Latinos). The models for African Americans and Latinos differed from each other on the delinquent values variable. Among African Americans, the results showed that believing that delinquency is harmful was negatively related to whether students would assist the police ($b = -.18$) . For Latinos, the belief that stealing was wrong was positively associated with the expressed willingness to assist police officers.

Table 5. Regression Equations Examining Students Willingness to Assist the Police

Predictor Variables	African American		Latinos	
	b	Beta	b	Beta
Like School	.114	.089	.027	.020
Teachers	.219**	.193	.367*	.299
Stealing not OK	.003	.003	.198*	.189
Delinquency not OK	-.181*	-.157	.138	.124
Not stopped[b]	-.330	-.132	-.185	-.077
Stopped and disrespected[a]	-.719***	-.268	-.574*	-.231
Stopped and respected[a]	---	---	---	---
Control:				
Gender[c]	-.222	-.086	.206	.087
Constant	2.990***	---	1.127*	---
F-test	4.820***		5.109***	
R²	.137		.287	
N	220		97	

Note: b is the unstandardized coefficient; Beta is the standardized coefficient.
Figures are rounded.
a. Coded as 1 = (yes); 0 = (no)
b. Comparison group
c. Coded as 1 = (male); 0 = (female)
*$p \le .05$ **$p \le .01$ ***$p \le .001$

The cross-coefficient z results supported the differences found in the regression analyses for Models 5 and 6. The z-tests of the differences between African American and Latino youths on believing that stealing is wrong and on willingness to assist officers were statistically significant ($p = .05$). The difference between the models on the belief that delinquency is harmful and its

association with a willingness to assist officers was also supported by the cross-coefficient analysis ($p = .01$).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Several similarities were found between Latino and African American students on the dependent measures.

Both African Americans and Latinos who had been stopped and disrespected by the police were less willing to assist them and less likely to believe that the police care about their neighborhoods. Moreover, both Latinos and African Americans who indicated that they cared what their teachers thought of them were more likely to report that they would assist the police and that they respected the police, compared to students who cared less about what their teachers thought of them.

A notable distinction was found between African American and Latino respondents on the delinquent-values variable. Although the beta was not as robust as others in the analyses, Latinos who disapproved of delinquent acts were more likely to respect the police than those who did not. This variable failed to reach statistical significance for African Americans. However, the findings showed that African Americans who believed delinquency was acceptable were more likely to report that they would assist an officer in need of help. This variable did not reach statistical significance for Latinos. Furthermore, being stopped and disrespected was statistically significant only in predicting African American students' respect for the police. No difference was found between Latinos who were stopped and disrespected and those who were stopped and respected on this outcome variable.

Unlike previous studies, contact with the police, by itself, had no negative effects on attitudes, feelings, or behavioral intentions (Sced 2004). However, police treatment during encounters was the most important factor associated with the dependent measures. Among African Americans, police disrespect was strongly related to all three outcome variables, suggesting that adverse contact between police officers and such youths might have an additive rather than a habituating effect on juveniles' reactions to the police (Hagan et al. 2005). This result is germane to the findings of Sunshine and Tyler (2003) who noted that the police can aggressively fight crime and cultivate constructive relationships with community residents only if officers are perceived as legitimate authorities. Community residents will be more inclined to cooperate with the police if they have been treated with fairness and respect. Law enforcement officers' emphasis on process issues or procedural justice can have a positive effect on all racial and ethnic groups.

As a number of other studies have demonstrated, process matters. Residents care as much or more about the nature and tenor of police encounters as they do about the outcomes of those encounters (Tyler 2004). Police officers hold all the power in interactions with juveniles and generally view them with suspicion and disdain (Skogan 2006). Such negative presuppositions promote disrespect toward juveniles, which can have lasting, pernicious effects on police-community relations. In accordance with the principles of asymmetry, negative experiences with the police weigh more heavily in the development of police-

related attitudes and perceptions than positive experiences do (Skogan 2006).

Because of the inchoate nature of young people's views of the police, their perceptions are still amenable to change in response to vicarious and direct experiences with police officers (Brunson 2007; Hurst and Frank 2000). Officers should therefore be trained, using realistic scenarios (simulations), in effective techniques for defusing volatile situations with juveniles. Also useful might be open forums for young people and officers that encourage a mutual airing and resolution of grievances (Friedman et al. 2004). The Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS) lends itself to such interactions through beat meetings, which are an integral component of Chicago's community policing program. Adolescents of color should have numerous opportunities for favorable interactions with the police to balance the contentious and adversarial experiences that they have with officers during typical street encounters (Dean 1980).

The relationship between caring about teachers and having more favorable perceptions of the police might simply reflect generally positive sentiments toward authority figures. Students who are closer to their teachers might be more likely to view police officers similarly, as helpful and caring adults. Unlike their African American counterparts, Latino students remained respectful of the police even in the face of police disrespectfulness, which might suggest cultural differences between the two groups in terms of deference toward adults in positions of authority. For example, the offering of respect (respeto) toward authority figures is a deeply-rooted value in most Latino households, and it could explain why disrespected Latino juveniles remained respectful toward the police, unlike their African American counterparts (Understanding Bilingual and Monolingual Latino Consumers n.d.).

Among Latino students, prosocial views made youths more favorably inclined toward police officers, whereas among African American students, pro-delinquency views did. By their endorsement of an antisocial statement, African Americans might be recognizing the challenge of policing in high-crime neighborhoods in which antisocial attitudes are more common among younger residents. However, this inconsistency defies ready explanation and might be an artifact of the sample or the measure.

Study Limitations

Contextual or environmental variables can be an important component of research on police-community relations. Nonetheless, the current study was unable to explore the influence of social ecology on juveniles' attitudes toward the police (i.e., neighborhood-level variables), which is an obvious shortcoming of this investigation. As several researchers have observed, neighborhood-level variables can have considerable explanatory power. For example, ecological factors, such as social disorganization or community disorder (e.g,

graffiti, vagrancy, drugs, loitering, vandalism, noise, crime), could spawn mistrust and fear of the police (Ross and Joon Jang 2000). Styles of policing in different neighborhoods—another contextual variable—are also critical to research on youth-police relations. Officers' maltreatment of residents or excessive applications of their legal authority have been linked to the order maintenance policing approach, which is applied in varying degrees in Chicago communities (Skogan and Hartnett 1997). "[This] approach privileges the law abider who cares for his home, his lawn, and his children, and the neighborhood merchant. It frowns on the unattached adult and the kids hanging out on corners" (Harcourt 2001:127).

Negative officer perceptions about the communities they patrol can significantly affect the outcome of interactions with young people. For example, in a Canadian study, Schulenberg (2003) found that social disorganization and urban growth affected police behavior toward residents. Regrettably, the current study could not shed light on the impact of the juveniles' neighborhoods on their attitudes toward the police.

The present sample consisted of youths enrolled in public high schools and failed to include dropouts. In addition, juveniles who were enrolled in private or parochial schools were not surveyed. These youngsters might have qualitatively different experiences with and attitudes toward the police, compared to the respondents in the current study. Future researchers should directly observe police-youth interactions in order to assess the validity of the students' reported experiences with officers. Similarly, future researchers should examine police officers' experiences with Chicago's young people from the standpoint of officers who interact frequently with the city's youths.

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