



Policing Newcomers in Small and Medium
Sized Cities in Ontario: Policy, Training and Practice

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Executive Summary

The original goals of this research project were to examine:

- How police services in small and medium sized cities in Ontario understand the challenges and opportunities newcomers pose for policing in their respective communities;
- The extent to which newcomer issues, including perceptions and experiences of racism, have been incorporated into the policies and mission statements of police service organizations, and into training that police services provide their staff;
- The possible discrepancies between policies and training in place to deal with newcomers and the degree to which policy and diversity officers within the police forces believe the policies and training to be effective.

Based on the analysis of mission statements and interviews with police services members in Kingston, Hamilton, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Waterloo Region, and Windsor, we find that police organizations are recognizing the need to modify their services to better serve diverse populations. As such, police organizations have begun to incorporate programs, strategies, and goals which address diversity related to immigration within their policy frameworks.

From an operational point of view, police services members report confronting a variety of challenges associated with providing police services to newcomers. Some of the central challenges that police report encountering are: language barriers, the establishment of trust, and the development within newcomer communities of a better understanding of the nature of police services, and police organizations in Canada.

In an effort to develop strategies to attend to these challenges, police services establish diversity training programs whose complexity and intensity reflect the magnitude and diversity of the surrounding immigrant population. At the same time, there are limits to what more formal training can provide. On-the-job training and experiences continue to be an important avenue by which police officers informally learn how to provide effective services to newcomers.

Introduction

Canada has one of the highest rates of immigration compared to other developed nations. In 2010 alone, Canada admitted 280,636 permanent residents as a part of its nation-building project (CIC, 2011). While immigration policy remains within federal jurisdiction, the realities of settlement are contextualized locally, within cities. Small and medium sized cities in Ontario, through their Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) Councils, are in the midst of formulating strategies and plans to more effectively recruit and retain immigrants. How police forces understand the increasing diversity of the communities they provide services to is one part of the process of making these LIP strategies successful. In this report, we detail and discuss our findings on interactions involving police services and immigrant newcomers in selected small and medium sized cities in Ontario. Extending over a period of approximately thirteen months, the project was initially designed to focus on the following components:

- How police services in small and medium sized cities in Ontario understand the challenges and opportunities newcomers pose for policing in their respective communities;
- The extent to which newcomer issues, including perceptions and experiences of racism, have been incorporated into the policies and mission statements of police service organizations, and into training that police services provide their staff;
- The possible discrepancies between policies and training in place to deal with newcomers and the degree to which policy and diversity officers within the police forces believe the policies and training to be effective.

As is not a-typical in inductive based research, aspects of the research problem we considered significant when drafting the initial proposal proved to be of lesser importance while, by contrast, components we unintentionally overlooked proved to be both relevant and significant.

This report is organized as follows. We begin by outlining and summarizing the mission statements of several police services we visited, particularly as they connect with issues of diversity. Not surprisingly, the feature shared by these statements is a clear commitment to upholding the ideals of diversity, diversity training for officers and other staff, and providing services that are professional yet sensitive to community needs. We then examine a number of practical challenges that newcomers pose for policing in light of the ideals contained in the mission statements, and practical measures taken by police services to meet the challenges of effective, professional, and equitable policing. We then attend to reflections offered both by police and diversity officers in the services on the benefits of diversity training and constraints within policing that curtail and limit police interactions with newcomers in their respective cities. Finally, we summarize the findings and offer some recommendations for policing newcomers as

suggested by the data. But first, some brief background on the qualitative/ethnographic nature of the project and the range of data we managed to collect.

Background

The data for this report were gathered over a thirteen month period (between March 1, 2010 and March 31, 2011) and consisted of unstructured interviews with police officers of various ranks and positions of responsibility in various police services on Ontario. More specifically, the police services we visited, and from which our respondents came included Hamilton, Windsor, Ottawa, London, Kitchener, Kingston, and Thunder Bay. Our introduction to police services across the province was facilitated by a senior police officer in Hamilton who, with the consent of the Chief, mailed a letter to police services we targeted endorsing the proposed research and requested cooperation. Without exception the police services complied. In this manner, access to our targeted population was readily secured. We visited the above-mentioned sites for either one or two days each and, generally, requested to meet with 6 officers who we either met singly or in groups of two or more. Although police management was ultimately involved in the selection of the respondents, in conversation with the contacts in the respective services we specified the kinds of persons we wished to meet. As much of our interest centred on the practical experiences of officers in their encounters with immigrant newcomers, we considered it preferable to meet with middle and lower-ranking officers rather than senior ones whose contact with the population of interest was more limited. In total, we interviewed 46 persons, the majority of whom were male (35 males; 11 females). While the vast majority were white, the sample included ten minority officers. Each of the officers with whom we spoke was informed directly of our research interests, and each was asked for permission to record the conversation. Approval was granted in each case, and the recorded interviews were eventually transcribed in full. In the absence of a formal interview guide, the conversations proceeded very informally. Nonetheless, while the conversations' content and structure were varied, they were unified by the underlying themes noted above.

Mission Statements

As newcomers begin to integrate into the Canadian society, they pose both challenges and opportunities for municipally administered services such as policing. Police organizations address the needs of newcomers by simultaneously performing law enforcement duties while adopting culturally appropriate practices. Such culturally appropriate practices have become ingrained within the policy framework of police organizations. To examine the ways in which police organizations have addressed issues of diversity we review the most recent business plans and annual reports made available by 2nd and 3rd tier cities in Ontario. More specifically, we

examine the ways in which newcomers' needs have been integrated into **a)** the mission, vision, and value statements, **b)** the future objectives and goals, and **c)** implemented through diversity projects and initiatives by police organizations.

Visions, and Values

The Police Services Act of 2001 requires all police organizations in Ontario to "...prepare a business plan for its police force at least once every three years" (PSA, 2001, O. Reg. 3/99, s. 30, 1). The act also requires administrative bodies within police organizations to produce an annual report on the activities of the previous fiscal year (PSA, 2001, O. Reg. 3/99, s. 31). While the business plan outlines the future objectives of the police force, the annual report provides an overview of past performance indicators and the results of such objectives. Together, the two documents provide a thorough account of the ways in which police organizations strategically coordinate efforts, monitor needs assessments, report crime statistics and create goals to provide effective police services. Furthermore, the business plans and annual reports aim to demonstrate the transparent and accessible features of police services in Ontario.

After carefully reviewing the business plans and annual reports of the Hamilton, Windsor, Ottawa, London, Kitchener, Kingston and Thunder Bay police services, we found that all of the aforementioned organizations were guided by core principles laid out in their mission, vision, and value statements. It is important to note that all of the police organizations placed great emphasis in the role of communities. This shared understanding of communities and community partnerships in law enforcement were highlighted in every mission, vision, and value statement. In their 2010 to 2012 business plan, the Hamilton Police Services aimed to "...serve and protect in partnership with [their] communities" (HPS, 2010, pp. 1) whereas the Thunder Bay Police Services aimed to "...work together with [their] communities and within [their organization] to achieve mutual goals, making use of diverse knowledge, skills and abilities" (TBPS, 2008, pp. 4). The role of teamwork and community partnerships was also highlighted by the Waterloo Regional Police Services. The WRPS aimed to "... deliver professional and ethical service through shared and open dialogue internally with [their] members and collectively with [their] diverse community in order to build mutual satisfaction and trust" (WRPS, 2009, pp. 7). The WRPS recognized that their "...collective capacity is rooted in individual strength... [and the organization aimed to] create an inclusive and diverse place of employment" (WRPS, 2009, pp. 7). The importance of community partnerships and teamwork are also evident in the Ottawa Police Services' 2010 to 2012 business plan. The organization has grounded its values in "...respect for diversity in [their] community and [the] workplace...[as well as] teamwork in working cooperatively and collaboratively with the community" (OPS, 2010, pp. 5). Similarly, the London and Kingston Police Services pride themselves with a vision of success which recognizes that "...[their] strength stems from [their] community partnerships with all sectors of the community" (LPS, 2009, pp. 3) and they "...consult with the public and its representative agencies as a regular feature of service to the community" (KPS, 2008, pp. 19).

In reviewing mission, vision, and value statements we can see the police services' commitments towards diversity, inclusion, and community engagement. All of the police service organizations studied, emphasize the vital role that community partnerships take in influencing policing policies and services. Ultimately the mission, vision, and value statements play a pivotal role in shaping police operations and service delivery. By including community partnerships, acknowledging diversity, and the importance of inclusive workplaces into their mission, vision and value statements, police organizations are able to respond to the needs of communities.

Objectives and Goals

While the annual reports highlight previous accomplishments, the business plans lay out the organizational structure of service delivery for oncoming years. By producing an overarching multiyear business plan, police service organizations are able to better strategize, create performance goals and objectives. The business plans are also able to highlight organizational priorities and ways in which such objectives will be met. In reviewing current business plans it is clear that police organizations aim to integrate issues pertaining to diversity and inclusion into the projected goals and objectives of the organizations.

In 2010 the HPS proposed four strategic goals which would guide the future action plan of the organization. The goals included **a)** public safety enforcement, **b)** community problem solving, **c)** resource management, and **d)** communication (HPS, 2010, pp. 4). In addressing the goal of community problem solving, the HPS proposed to "...enhance problem solving abilities through improved communication with [their] communities...[and] to disseminate information in the top four languages used in [their] community" (HPS, 2010, pp. 6). Resource management consisted of goals such as "... [consolidating] existing and future diversity management initiatives into a formalized strategy that creates an inclusive work environment" (HPS, 2010, pp. 7). To meet this goal, the HPS aims to "...review and update recruiting, retention and promotional processes for all positions [in 2010], develop appropriate measures... [and assess] progress towards creating an inclusive work environment" (HPS, 2010, pp. 7). To communication objectives, the HPS proposes to increase one-on-one communication with communities by "... [increasing] visibility and interactive, face-to-face communication between HPS members...and community members" as well as "... [develop] and implement communication strategies that are targeted and specific to individual diverse communities and external partners" (HPS, 2010, pp. 8). Three out of the four goals outlined in the 2010 to 2012 HPS business plan addressed issues pertaining to diversity within and outside of the police force.

The LPS 2010 to 2012 business plan contained a total of six expansive goals with specific objectives. The LPS suggested that effective human resource management included the effective recruitment and retention of diverse applicants through diversity outreach initiatives and events (LPS, 2010, pp. 12). Furthermore, the LPS aimed to "... [enhance] employees' understanding and appreciation towards diversity within the workplace and community" (LPS, 2010, pp. 12). The organization also sought to "...promote diversity training opportunities for all

employees, develop and implement incentives/recognition for employee achievements related to diversity, [and] promote events and other initiatives that celebrate diversity” (LPS, 2010, pp. 12). The TBPS concurred, and aimed to provide diversity training to current police officers while also “... [developing] recruiting practices designed to attract applicants who are representative of the diverse community” (TBPS, 2010, pp. 24). Creating a police force which is representative of the communities they serve was a commitment expressed also by the WPS, the KPS, and the OPS. The WPS business plan explains that “...the [WPS] is committed to aggressively [promote] the service as an employment option to all cultural members of the community” (WPS, 2010, pp. 12). Similar to the goals and objectives of the HPS, the KPS aims to work closely with community partners to enforce the law. Their business plan explains that

“[there] is a growing recognition that these [diverse] groups are able to provide leadership in the assessment of local needs, and the Kingston Police seek to work closely with representatives of existing associations to develop guidelines to assist new neighbourhood groups getting started” (KPS, 2010, pp. 23).

In forging strong community partnerships, the WPS aims to “[partner] with schools, business, community, and faith-based groups to build crime prevention and personal safety programs” (WPS, 2010, pp. 22). All of the police organizations studied advocated for the greater inclusion of diversity training programs for current staff and officers. The OPS described investing in its staff as being able to “... [develop] training and development standards... [by reviewing and revising] organizational training material to ensure its currency and that it is reflective of diversity, ethics, and service excellence” (OPS, 2010, pp. 11). The WPS is also committed to promoting diversity and develop inclusion in the workplace by “...educating all members in respect to understanding the importance of multi-culturalism and its impact on day to day policing” (WPS, 2010, pp. 12).

Fostering teamwork and collaboration with community partners, engaging in internal diversity training with staff, and recruiting police officers to create a representative police force were three components found in most police organizations’ policy frameworks and business plans. By engraining issues pertaining to diversity within their organizational framework, police service organizations have established benchmarks and sophisticated performance indicators to measure the outcomes. Furthermore, such initiatives encourage the implementation of these goals through all levels of operation.

Diversity Projects and Initiatives

The third mechanism used to address and acknowledge the changing needs of diverse communities is the creation of diversity specific projects and initiatives. The business plans and annual reports reviewed suggest that police organizations employ the use of special programs to further operationalize their commitments to diversity and inclusion of newcomer communities. The TBPS business plan refers to the two year Diversity in Policing Project which has been

“...designed to foster positive communication and interaction with [their] multicultural community...the [program] is designed to enhance service delivery” (TBPS, 2010, pp. 7). The Diversity in Policing Project engages the active collaboration of community partners to enhance service delivery (TBPS, 2010, pp. 7).

While the TBPS aimed to address diversity in the form of a formal program, other police organizations employed the use of subprojects. The HPS has acknowledged the obstacles posed by language barriers and has made its business and annual plan available in languages such as French, Urdu, Spanish, and Arabic (HPS, 2010). Meanwhile, police organizations including the LPS and WPS mobilized outreach initiatives by attending ethno-cultural celebrations and creating issue specific committees. The LPS cultivated its relationships with diverse communities by providing “...presentations to new immigrants at schools, places of worship, and ESL classrooms” (LPS, 2010, pp. 14). The LPS reported that approximately 2200 individuals attended the outreach presentations and information sessions (LPS, 2010, pp. 14). The WPS also engaged in subprojects by creating internal committees which are responsible for creating initiatives to address the inclusion of diverse populations (WPS, 2010). Police organizations such as the OPS often employed the use of community partners to provide joint training initiatives, assisted in mobilizing community organizations, and carried out extensive surveys to address issues of diversity (OPS, 2010, pp. 14).

Whether such policy frameworks are considered effective by members of diverse ethno-cultural communities and police officers will be explored in later parts of the report.

Encountering Different Languages

One of the most significant challenges that was consistently identified by police officers with whom we spoke were the existence of language barriers between a largely English speaking police force and newcomer communities who were less than fluent in English. Many studies of minorities’ integration into mainstream culture have emphasized the importance of language acquisition (see Simmons, 2010). In the absence of some measure of fluency in the dominant group’s language, the possibilities for misunderstanding and suspicion are increased, posing a barrier to effective integration. While members of minorities might elect to insulate themselves and believe they have little need for language proficiency (Shaffir,), minorities encountered by the police officers in the cities we visited do not maintain this view. However, owing to their recent arrival, numbers have failed, as yet, to develop proficient English language skills. When responding to a call, the existence of limited English language on the part of some newcomers seriously impedes the police officers ability to define the situation at hand immediately. Note the following two examples:

Biggest issue I’ve dealt with is ... language barriers. I mean that is a pretty big issue when you get a call and you know somebody is hurt and you see them lying on the ground and ... they say: ‘I can’t speak English.’ And the victim can’t speak

English and you're trying to sort things out from what you see, and by the time you get a translator around ... it's difficult.

Sometimes we deal with people who don't speak English, or English is not their first language, so there is that communication barrier.... There have been times when people have been arrested and you can't even ... advise them of their rights to counsel.... because they don't have an understanding. And there is also a duty on us to satisfy in court. If a matter goes to court, we have to explain to the person that I arrested, even though they don't speak English well enough.... That's certainly a hurdle and challenge for us that I have seen.

Faced with the problem, police services rely on solutions that, while ameliorative in the short run are usually but a stop-gap measure. They not only become aware of the range of languages spoken by members of the service to whom they can turn for guidance and assistance, but most services also enlist the assistance of professional translation services. When asked how these translation services are provided, one officer explains:

We have someone who will come out. We have a list of people who speak and read different languages. If an officer anywhere in our service needs that list, they can phone our communications centre. They have access to the list, and they would phone one of the volunteer interpreters.... So one of the interpreters would come out and do the translation. We also subscribe to something called Language Line. If we cannot get an interpreter out, then we would dial into whatever language and we would have a person on the phone sort of interpreting between the officer and the person....

But it was also noted that in some circumstances, it is neither efficient nor practical to make use of such services and as a result, police need to sometimes use bystanders or relatives who speak the same language of the offender or victim to provide on-the-spot translation:

If you stop them and there happens to be four or five people together you know one person can say, oh this is what they are saying.... And a lot of times, you just got to make it work, with gestures

As the above quote emphasizes, depending on the circumstances, beat officers need to make do with whatever verbal and non-verbal techniques they can muster: "I was just dealing with a man today... and there was a big language barrier and you just, by I guess more or less speaking to them. It was tough but you have to, it's just the two of you and it's the worst case scenario when you cannot get your point across."

From the perspective of the police, one of the long-term consequences of the inability to communicate effectively impacts adversely on the cultivation of trust, an ingredient believed essential to effective policing. An officer reflects:

You have to try to get them to trust you. If they don't trust you, then they're not going to talk to you, and if they don't talk to you, how can you do your work?

As we discuss later in this report, the cultivation of trust in police among newcomers is one of the most significant long-term challenges that police services face that they face.

Trust and the Challenges of Cultural Differences

While the language barrier is a serious issue, another significant barrier to the provision of effective police services addressed by the police is the distinctive cultures to which newcomers remain committed, effectively creating a chasm between themselves and newcomers. Many of our conversations around this issues focused specifically on the role that cultural difference play in the creation of barriers to trust in police in Canada. For the most part, police targeted the increasing immigration flow from Muslim-based societies and their need to become familiar with cultural practices that newcomers use to frame their daily activities and world view:

I remember when I started my career, going to a domestic. And it was a Middle Eastern family. It was a domestic assault. We suspected that the husband was abusing the wife, but the wife did not want to cooperate with us, and the children didn't want to cooperate with us. And part of the culture was that the male was the head of the household, and that was socially acceptable in their culture. At least that was the sense that we got from this family.... What we saw was that we had obstacles ...convincing the victim. We had to get through to the wife that it is no OK what your husband is doing to you. We don't accept this is Canada. There's help for you, there's things you can do. And she wouldn't, she just wouldn't. That's an example of something I remember dealing with vividly.

At the same time, however, Muslims were not the only community that police officers noted the existence of cultural differences as a barrier to effective policing. In another case, a police officer noted that sometimes, newcomers misunderstand the workings of Canadian immigration policy, and that this misunderstanding affects how willing newcomers are to have police involved in family related disputes.

Once I spoke to an Indian family where the male was abusing his wife. And the wife was under the impression that should he go to jail, she would loose the house and have to go back to India. And there would be shame associated with that ... and also their honour among their family.... It's a common theme in a few different ethnicities that come ... and people from different parts of India will have different values, and that takes a while to wrap your head around

The complexity of culture is also underscored by recognition that generational differences within the community may shape relations with the police. As an officer explains:

... you'll see that the young generation in schools gets assimilated, not assimilated, but they kind of begin to learn the culture a lot quicker than ... the parents who may not adapt as quickly and then that creates some tension at times in families. So, let's say, you're dealing, for instance, I'll use a Muslim community potential, where someone has an arranged marriage back home and then through the culture and lifestyle here in North America, I would say typically the daughter may not want to proceed.... Well, traditionally, that's not the kind of issue that policing in North America has been dealing with. And so, we need to assess the risk to the young woman: Is this potentially going to become an honour killing? What are the safety concerns? How can we address the parental concerns that this situation is causing? Because our role is not just about enforcement, our role is about preventing crises as well.

Strained relations between newcomers and police are exacerbated further when newcomers' experiences with, and perceptions of, police in their home countries have been overwhelmingly negative. This concern was repeatedly emphasized by police in our sample, and was mentioned as a barrier to the cultivation of trust in police in Canada. In some of our interviews, police identified generic newcomer communities as having these kinds of trust issues, while in other cases, officers identified specific communities that displayed such trust in police related issues. In terms of generic trust issues, one officer explained:

Well, let's say, you're from a marginalized community. And you're dealing with police officers, or if you're in states where the police is a tool of the state and there are individuals that go missing and the police seem to be brutal, vicious, corrupt ... and you arrive in Canada with some of those perceptions and no one really talks to the police in that community. This makes it a little bit difficult to deal with things....

Another officer underscores this point this way:

So if somebody had come in from an area where the police had gone into their house, beaten his dad up, or beaten his brother or rape one of the women in the house, and then the police with a uniform coming into the house, there's a flashback.... So their reaction is going to be misinterpreted as 'what are they trying to hide?' Meanwhile they're dealing with their own trauma and don't know how to react to the police.

Several newcomer communities, including those from Latin America and China were specifically mentioned as communities with whom police had particular challenges in cultivating trust:

Their police is very different than our policing, and they're afraid of their police.... I've seen where, you know, an Asian person from China is very

intimidated.... Policing is different. You don't have to answer to anybody over there.

The literature on immigrant integration has long recognized that newcomers do not simply forget about their past experiences in their home countries and embark on a path of uninterrupted assimilation or integration into Canadian society (see Satzewich and Wong, 2006). Rather, their past experiences cannot but weigh heavily on the efforts to recreate their lives in this country. As one officer recognizes, negative experiences are not left behind or forgotten but carry over to everyday perceptions of police work as a credible and favourable occupational career choice:

I remember when my wife was just visiting back to Jordan. So they would ask her, 'What does your husband do?' And she came back and she said: 'That was really intriguing because I've never kind of thought about it.' She would say, 'He's working with the Ottawa police,' and they would go silent. So the idea of working for the police has not, within the old culture, been yet explored because the police has always been an oppressive force.

While analytically separable, cultural differences, perceptions of the police, and establishing a trustworthy relationship are dynamically cumulative, impacting decisively on the performance of police work. Two excerpts from the data tellingly make this point:

It's all sort of linked. You cannot have one without the other. The issues are interconnected. Because there is a language barrier and cultural differences, there is, perhaps, a lack of trust. And you are dealing with perceptions that you don't understand either. For example, I don't know what it's like to live in India, or what it's like to be a police officer there. You're dealing with those issues because people have certain perceptions of police officers.... You really are dealing with trust. I mean it's all unknown unless you happen to share the same cultural background.

So it's kind of like a cluster when you can't understand and, ... you know, you have someone that can't speak English very well. Another thing is that subcultures are very afraid of the police.... In their country, their police is just very heavy-fisted and corrupt. So then they have a hard time speaking to us. They're scared, they're afraid of the police. There is no trust that they show to the police because of their cultural background and experiences with police.

Many of our conversations with police focused on the issue of trust, and as is clear from the above, police consistently connect the lack of trust between newcomers and police to the newcomers themselves, and either the cultures they came to Canada with or from previous

experiences with police in their countries of origin. Few officers admitted to the possibility that the lack of trust between newcomers and police in Canada might stem from the newcomers feeling that they are targets of unfair treatment or of racism and discrimination by police.

Remarks an officer:

I think those things now, are probably used my for convenience by people who want to use it as a soap box. The Jesse Jacksons or Al Sharptons. The incidents now ... or probably the frequency is a lot less than 10 or 15 years ago. Now it's, all I got so I'm jumping on the band-box and make it a big scene."

In response to a question about whether police officers get accused of racism, one officer explains:

You know what, you do, but it dies because it is a non-issue. It dies so fast and now the Ontario Police Review Directorate [OPRD] ... came in last October, all over Ontario it's the civilian clearing place for complaints. So to ensure that police are not sweeping complaints under the rug now it goes to the civilian commission in Toronto. So someone walks into the door and wants to complain about me calling them something, or being nasty to them or doing anything, it goes to Toronto, they classify it and decide if it is worth investigating.... Anyway, what I am getting at here is that since they came into being the amount of frivolous complaints that we could have to normally deal with—so I got a ticket and I didn't like the way he talked to me or 'I got a ticket and ... it was because I was Black.' This has gone down drastically since the OPRD came into being.... Because they are being screened by an independent body that says that is not a complaint worth pursuing. The amount of times that you will get that 'racism' dies very quickly because chances are it was not a very genuine complaint to begin with.

Not unlike our previous study on racial profiling and policing (Satzewich and Shaffir, 2009), in this project we also found that some police officers dismiss the allegation that they treat racialized and immigrant communities poorly. As one officer explained, "When I think of racial profiling ... I really think it is an urban legend that doesn't exist. Profiling itself is ineffective, so why would you try to profile someone based on race alone?" This officer went on to explain how the allegation of racism and racial profiling surfaces:

Kids, there is a lot of talk, there is pop culture, in social media, there is a lot of discussion about how police are always bringing down visible minorities, rap singers sing about it, a lot of kids emulate it, some of these kids are involved in street gangs, that's where a lot of that is coming from. Whether it is true or not, I am going to tell you that it is not, but because they believe it to be true, therefore

it may create the belief, and may create negative interaction with the police. Even guys who have never had interaction with the police, may still believe it to be true. 'cause what they have seen on television, what they have heard on social media.

In other cases, officers underplay, and minimize the significance of the perception that the community thinks that racism exists within policing:

Yea... we've had a couple of cases of the Human Rights Commission in Ontario, where that's what people have said that's the way they felt, the way they felt they were treated, so I would expect that there's people in the community that do feel as though they've been treated unfairly and think of some officers as being racist. That's the whole issue around the whole racial profiling. We talk about it, what are we doing, so its out there. But is it a general sentiment in our community? I don't think it is.

Recruitment

Despite the fact that cultural differences are defined as one of the chief barriers to cultivating trust in police within newcomer communities, from a different perspective, as several respondents noted, the presence of new immigrants from diverse cultures offers an opportunity to be seized: newcomers constitute a critical application pool from which the goal of an ethnically diverse service might be achieved. In other words, if the older generation cannot allay its negative perceptions of police and policing, the younger generation, schooled in Canada and exposed to Canadian culture, might, in theory, be enticed to select police work as an occupational career. To that end, as we shall see, police services throughout the province organize activities intended to foster favourable relations with ethnic communities in their environs.

The importance of cultivating ethnically diverse recruits to policing, while essential, is not, however, without its hardships. An officer explains the challenge this way:

Our police force, in my opinion, the Canadian policing system is the best in the world.... We have much to improve on but we're very good compared to anyone else. So we have this wonderful forest that represents policing. Its got deep roots, it's big, it's strong. And now we're kind of saying, "You know what? The forest is good but it's not serving everyone. I need some different trees in the forest that we can sort of use in many different ways." So now you have to plant a seed and try to grow some new trees. And it's pretty darn hard to grow a new species of tree in a forest full of big, strong, deeply-rooted trees. Right? And so now I think

the key is whatever seed you plant ... the first seeds you plant, they are the key. They are the absolutely vital key.

In this officer's view, the first seed, metaphorically speaking, represents the initial members of an ethnic community to join the police service who, owing to their neophyte status, will inevitably come under intense scrutiny from their police peers. The officer continues:

... this is why the first seed you put down has to be a good seed. It comes back down to my theory. If you have a good seed, then there's nothing people can attack about that seed. Because as soon as you put that first seed in the ground, everyone's going to start looking at that seed and going, 'What's he or she going to become?' and 'They're not like the other trees and they don't belong in the forest.' If the seed is strong enough, it'll survive. It'll endure the pressures, it'll endure the wind, because there's competition for soil, there's competition for sunlight.... Make no mistake about it. They're gonna get it. They're gonna get it from the community side, they're gonna get it from the policing side. And they have to be strong enough to take everything, and be intelligent enough to rise above it....

The Role of Diversity Training

Police almost universally noted the value of training when it comes to dealing with diverse communities. All new recruits to police forces in Ontario receive thirteen weeks of training at the Ontario Police College in Aylmer, Ontario. A not insignificant portion of the total training that is provided in Aylmer deals with diversity related issues, whether that diversity stems from sexual preference, immigration, or the history of racialized communities in Canada. In service training is conducted routinely by police services. Some of the training, particularly the use of firearms, is mandatory. Other forms of training, such as diversity training, broadly defined, are introduced into regular cycles.

Some training was looked upon more favourably and as more effective than other forms of training. Police value training that involves learning about the cultures where people come from. As one police officer explained: "It's nice to learn other cultures so you can make people feel more welcome. If you have a good understanding of their beliefs, their culture, their traditions, then when we are talking with them you can be more empathetic." A officer explains:

... we went to classes where we brought in members of those communities and, for instance, we brought in a person from a culture where the wife would keep her head covered. They came and explained why it was important for them to keep their head covered. Why a Sikh man, why it is important for him to not be standing in public and have his head cover removed, versus the police's right to search you upon arrest. So you have to be aware of cultural sensitivity. This is not just some guy saying that 'you are not taking my baseball cap off'. This guy

has a religious cultural reason for which that turban needs to be on his head. So before that type of class, I wasn't aware of that whole, how important it was to him. So in that case now, if I was to have to arrest somebody in front of his building, with a turban, I would probably bring him into this lobby of this building where he is more in private and conduct the search because of respecting his culture.

Other officers noted the importance of training, not just for the purposes of interacting with their communities in more sensitive and effective ways. Several officers noted that culturally based training was also important from an intelligence point of view, providing police with an understanding of symbols or cues that might denote involvement with criminal activities within immigrant communities that might otherwise go undetected:

I think it is important that we have to know our people, we have to know who is the community so we cannot only become sensitive to some of the nuances, but develop relationships which can be of great assistance in supplying information, intelligence that will lead to good stuff. I am quite certain that in a community like ours, there are some people that are very bad people that will end up doing bad stuff elsewhere in the world or even here. If we don't understand some of the things we are dealing with, then maybe we are not tapping into some of the resources that could help people elsewhere... It would be good if we sort of had an idea of what we are looking at when we see it. Whether it is a person's tattoos or their clothing or their ..., and this is what I was referring to when I mentioned profiling, things like banners. Let's talk terrorism I guess. I mean this is the sort of thing that ..., I mean it would be good if we had that sort of idea in our mind, you know, what to look for.

Another officer makes a similar point:

I think there is a lot of stuff going on in the world in general if we have folks here from some war torn areas in the world, like Somalia, as we mentioned earlier. Could be that we could deal with individuals that know where fugitives are, and be harbouring or individuals that know of other people who are harbouring fugitives from wherever. Or wanted by, you know, by people in what have you. I am certain that things are going on, so if we are able to in a smart way communicate with people, then perhaps they will want to communicate with us, and not see us a hindrance.

The effectiveness of the training also depends on who is providing the training and the delivery:

It depends on who's delivering it. I have had a lot of experience with First Nations since I lived up north for a short period of time. The person who delivered the

First Nations training recently, did a great job, I actually learned something and took something away from it. It really gave you a sense of some of the history of the First nations have gone through as a result of our European ancestors.... As for ... the faith based stuff. Probably less effective, partially since I was already familiar with it, as I learned on the job. It's also delivery.

Another officer agrees, noting that bringing in community based experts who are willing and interested in working with police to build knowledge about a group's historical experiences, and 'where they are coming from', or intercultural communication skills:

I would think that the more effective is to have someone from that community come in and speak about it. And it's almost like their attitude, reflects or how they communicate that to us as well. I mean it's always that it's an approach where they want to work with us, that is fantastic, because most of us want to do the same thing.

The same officer makes a special point of noting what kinds of training she saw as less useful and effective:

But it's from the approach that, it's finger pointing, where you shall do this, then obviously I think that nothing useful will come of that. I know that in the past they have shared some videos for some of our training days. I mean they are okay. I think training day, a lot of people don't want to be there and when they put a video in everybody kind of goes to sleep. I don't think that's very useful. I would say overall, to have someone come in from that community or group, whoever it is, and just come in and talk and share an experience which they had. It makes in more real.

Another officer, however, called into question the entire value of diversity training on the grounds that she has a job to enforce the laws of Canada, and that her own personal safety needs to come before cultural or religious sensitivity.

We're trained in diversity training, especially religions and they train us as much as they possibly can, but I mean, it is what it is, right? We still have a job to do and I mean there are some cultures where women are not supposed to be touched. Well, sorry, I'm going to search you if I'm going to arrest you or if you have a weapon. I think my safety comes first then religion comes second I'm sorry. There's a reason why I'm searching you, there's a valid reason, and we are allowed. We're mandated. We've had a few complaints where Arab women have been stripped, searched, and that's against their religion. No one can touch the, but what can you do? It is what it is.

Several officers also noted the limitation of training in the sense that many of skills, techniques and approaches to dealing with members of diverse communities come from experience and from one's colleagues. Much of what is learned is not teachable in a classroom type of setting. One new officer, who recently completed the training at the Ontario Police College, noted that:

The training, it gives you an idea but it does not scrape the surface. When you are training, you know it's training and you know that it's acting and that it's in a controlled environment. Where here you talk to someone, and you think that it's normal as if you and I are talking, but I don't know if this person is thinking that 'I'm just waiting for her to look the other way'. We can be having a normal conversation but when we get to that trust issue ... that is where I found out that they tell a lot about experiencing it but the training is not.... I guess there is no real way to train for reality that way, you know?

The same officer continued by explaining that while the book and scenarios- based training is useful, it can never fully prepare an officer for working the street:

The book stuff is dead on, obviously, but yea, the acting or doing the scenarios and stuff.... I mean yea, it is good and gets you to that mind set but once you get out there and you start to deal with these people who are really looking to get away from you and really hoping that you don't run them, then it's a different ball game.

Another officer makes a similar point. While not discounting the value of formal training, what one learns in the course of doing the work is just as, or even more, effective:

Yea, training is a great thing, no question about it, it is very hard to put programs in place that deal with all the issues that come up in dealing with people for sure. A great benefit is experiences. You know trial and error, just minimizing one's mistakes as you go along.

Yet another officer speaks to the importance of learning from experiences on the street:

I honestly don't think you can train for it. You just have to police it. You can give me all the training in the world with a certain culture, but until you actually go there and see, oh, this culture can't touch a dog. You're trained to be understanding, but what training can you give me from someone who comes from Somalia. How can you be trained in how they react to policing, or the way police treats them there opposed to here. I personally don't think you can be trained until you deal with issues. I have a district, so I know how people in my district are because, I mean I deal with them over and over again. This guy's going to fight me, or this guy's going to cooperate. You know, I am sure there are probably

better answers, but realistically in my eyes, you can go to China, you can go to another culture. You can read a thousand books and it doesn't mean anything in my eyes. You can go there and take your shoes off, and you read about it. But it doesn't mean anything until you do it, you know what I mean?

Officers often note that colleagues of diverse backgrounds play an even bigger part in training than formal classes. As suggested by one officer:

And the culture, you can teach it as much as you want by books and, you know, PowerPoint and stuff like that.... If I'm an officer and I'm sitting beside an officer from a Vietnamese background, that's my biggest education. When you and I go on a beat together, that's really the bulk of the education that I'm going to get.

Officers face the challenge of balancing an appreciation of cultural constraints impacting on recent arrivals, on one hand, without compromising their safety and work-related responsibilities, on the other. Officers from three different services explain:

We're trained in diversity training ... respecting religions, and they train us as much as they possibly can but I mean ... it is what it is, right? We still have a job to do. I mean there are some cultures where women are not supposed to be touched Well sorry, I'm going to search you if I'm going to arrest you.... My safety first, and then religion comes second. I'm sorry, there's a reason why I'm searching you... and there's a valid reason ... and we're allowed. We're mandated. We've had a few complaints where ... Arab women have been strip-searched and that's against their religion. No one can touch them, but what can you do? It is what it is.

... in certain cultures males will not speak to female officers. Well, we say that you will have to because this is how the law grants authority to police officers. Police officers are not male or female, they're just police officers. So we have to take that into consideration. So if I am at a scene as a supervisor, and I have a male from that culture that doesn't wish to speak to a female officer..... Of course, I will try to accommodate that. But if there are no other officers then, of course, he needs to be talking to the female officers. You have to balance that.

You get an animal complaints from a female in the Islamic community. You know, a dog on the loose has come up and touched her leg. You know, my world says, 'Big deal, did he bite you, was it threatening?' Her world says, 'I've just been defiled.' ... These are things you run into, or have to deal with constantly.... You have to judge. I have to be sensitive to what you're saying and still deal with the reality of the law that wraps around. You are not physically harmed. You have to respect their opinion but still do your job as it is written.

At the same time, figuring out the line separating unfamiliar cultural practices from suspicious behaviour that is indicative of criminal involvement can be a challenge:

I find that a lot of times you will be talking to a male of a different culture, and they will not look at you and that is ... because eye contact is something that is stressed. That is, someone is not making eye contact, something is going on. So, all of a sudden you have a male who will not look at you and you find out later that it's a sign of respect where they are from. So you got to remember that is it a sign of respect or is it 'something is going on?' So there is that consideration as well.

Conclusion

Police organizations are recognizing the need to modify their services to better serve diverse populations. The organizations understand that the demographic changes will persist. As explained by one senior officer in a medium sized city, immigration 'is coming to a theater near you.' As such, police organizations have begun to incorporate programs, strategies, and goals which address diversity within their policy frameworks. After reviewing publicly available business plans and annual reports, we have found that police organizations in Ontario are making progress in developing inclusive policies. Such policies aim to address diversity and inclusion of newcomer populations within the workplace as well as externally. By examining the ways in which diversity issues have been integrated into the mission, vision, and value statements, the future objectives and goals, and the creation of diversity projects, it is clear that the policy frameworks provide overarching frameworks to guide service provision.

Some forces, however are further along than others in terms of recognizing both the challenges and opportunities that immigration poses for the provision of police services. While the provision of professional police services for the diverse communities that are present in all of the cities is a stated value of all of the services we studied, a representative of one of the larger communities with a large and growing newcomer population probably put the matter best as to why police forces, from an administrative and self-interested point of view, should care about immigration. Defining police services as another employer that will likely face labour shortages in the future, one senior officer explained that

I think if I'm approaching a police service, I would approach this from a business case. ... Right now, the population in Ottawa, over 50 percent is done through immigration. And that's true for many of the Canadian cities. So in terms of labour, the shortages in labour as it stands now—with the baby boomers who are going to be retiring, you're gonna have a need for people to be coming. It will no longer be the luxury of applying and you have fifty people to choose from. You probably will have a hard time attracting enough people to apply. And I think if they don't do the work right now and change their recruitment strategies to

address these issues, they would have some really major issues in terms of recruiting the right people, qualified people.

From an operational point of view and in light of the responsibilities with which they are charged, police necessarily come into contact with new immigrants. This report has focused on some of the challenges that such encounters entail. Ordinarily, these encompass matters relating to language barriers, establishment of trust, and an introduction to foreign cultural norms. To attend to these challenges, police services establish diversity training programs whose complexity and intensity reflect the magnitude and diversity of the surrounding immigrant population.

Police emphasize both the merits and shortcomings of diversity training. Their main value lies in their contribution to meeting the challenges of the workplace and enhancing their professionalism. In comparison with others in the public sector attending to the presence of immigrant newcomers, police believe that the magnitude of their preparedness is unparalleled. A senior officer reflects:

...when it comes to the diversity issues, the policing community ... is light years ahead of the medical sector, the educational sector, probably the university sector, in terms of how we're wrestling with it ... and trying to get as good a handle as we can on how to deal with it. ... We're not perfect and we make mistakes, ... but I would like to think that we, for the most part, take that all very seriously and deal with it effectively. Do we always? No, we don't. Should we? Absolutely. It's just like anything else. You make a mistake, what's that saying? You fuck up, you fess up, and you buck up. And you take the thing and you hit it head on and you learn from it....

If police services are to reflect, however closely or crudely, the ethnic and religious populations in their midst, it is mainly through activities and practices connected with diversity training from which a potential recruitment pool will be identified.

Recommendations

Police services organizations need to undertake more outreach to specific newcomer communities who come to Canada with understandings of policing that are different from the ways that police organizations in Canada function.

To the degree that sensitivity to matters of diversity are highly valued by police services, the value should be reflected in criteria considered for promotion within the force.

As police officers place value on diversity training to enhance the professionalism they bring to their work, it is important to respect the distinction officers draw between awarenesses for discussion in the classroom setting and awarenesses that come into play in an actual crisis.

While diversity training is valued, and programs enjoy merit among the officers, programs fail to meet their fullest potential when it is assumed, often unwittingly, that police practices, especially encounters with minorities and recent immigrants, reflect an underlying measure of insensitivity and deficiency on the part of police to matters of multiculturalism, and that the programs are aimed to curb and contain racialized tendencies prevalent among police officers.

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