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Citizens' Perceptions of 'The Police'

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by

Ralph Jones

**Center for the Study of Crime, Delinquency and Corrections
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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ABSTRACT

The police cannot perform their duties effectively unless they have the cooperation of the people they serve. The purpose of this study was to determine what influences have the greatest effect on the Carbondale citizens' perceptions of the police and police services. It was reasoned that the discovery of the more powerful influences effecting public's perception of the police could lead to a better working relationship between the public and the police. Three hypotheses were proposed to include the following: neighborhood influences would have the most influence on citizens' perceptions of the police, the effects of race would be moderated by the introduction of contextual variables, negative police contacts would have significant influence on perceptions of the police while positive contacts would not have a corresponding positive influence. Police contact influences were determined to have the most influence on perceptions of the police in this study. Neighborhood influences were not significant influences of perceptions of the police, but the introduction of police contact influences and neighborhood influences did moderate the effects of race. The Carbondale police department should first implement training and policy procedures to ensure that officers make certain that citizens they come into contact with are treated fairly and receive an adequate explanation of what has occurred and of what to expect. The Carbondale police department should explore the possibilities of implementing a Community Oriented Policing model to increase neighborhood social control and neighborhood integration.

INTRODUCTION

Southern Illinois University Carbondale has a reputation for looting and rioting associated with Halloween. The University administrators and city officials addressed this situation by sending students home on the week of Halloween and temporarily suspending city liquor licenses. Alcohol-related incidents including substantial property damage continued resulting in elevated use of force and arrests by the police. Outcry from local business owners resulted in a change of University policy; students no longer were sent home for Halloween. A general feeling of discontent with the police continued though, and on April 22, 2001, conflict once again sparked when officers responded to a student off-campus party. The confrontation escalated resulting in the police using force to make an arrest. The incident generated considerable controversy and resulted in the city directed the Carbondale Police and Fire Commission to investigate alleged misconduct by the Carbondale police. The Police and Fire Commission found that the Carbondale police acted properly, but the negative perception of the police might have been alleviated prior to the altercation if steps had been taken to determine a way in which police services could be improved to better satisfy the citizens of Carbondale. One way to determine public sentiment is through opinion surveys.

Surveys conducted in other locations with different demographic variables have evaluated citizens' perceptions of the police. This study will determine what factors influence citizens' perceptions of the police for the people living in the city of Carbondale. The conclusions made from this manuscript will result in recommendations for improved citizen-police relations.

A review of literature will indicate that a positive perception of the police by the people in the community is necessary in a society where cooperation with the police is voluntary. Variables that have been used to predict positive perceptions of the police by the citizens in previous studies will be examined, including: age, race, income, gender, political orientation, victimization, neighborhood context, education, and length of residency.

The methods section will describe how the survey questions were prepared, who administered the questions, how the sample was chosen and how the data analyses were conducted. This will be followed by a results and discussion section that will present the findings of this survey. Recommendations for improving citizen-police relationships will be made. This will be followed by a discussion of the generalizability of the data.

The objective of this study is to determine what predictors best estimate how the citizens of Carbondale perceive their police department and the services the police provide. In addition the objective of this study includes the identification of potential policy strategies for local law enforcement to improve their reputation within the community.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The functions of the law include, but are not limited to, a way to organize society, a system to protect the interests of the state, a system to protect the citizens of a society and a way to maintain order (Schmallegger, 1999). Three predominant sociological theories regarding the formation of laws are the Consensus Theory, Pluralistic Theory and Conflict Theory (Schmallegger, 1999). Consensus Theory states that society is formed around the ideal that most people agree on what is right and what is wrong. Consensus Theory says laws are formed as a result of the collective will of the people and the law represents a social conscience. Pluralistic

Theorists believe that society is very complex; too diverse, complex and conflict-ridden to realistically reach a consensus on anything. Pluralistic Theorists do however believe that the law can be used to resolve disputes. Thus Pluralistic Theory sees the law as a dispute resolution tool rather than a consensus of common values. Conflict Theory views conflict as a fundamental characteristic of society that can never be fully resolved. This theory holds that the best society can hope for is that the formal societal agencies will coerce those who are powerless to conform to the laws established by those in power. The law is used as a tool to enable the power-elite to maintain their superior position and to accumulate more wealth and political power (Schmallegger, 1999). Regardless of the theory behind the formation of the laws, the laws apply to everyone. The enforcement arms of government, the police, deal with violators of the law. They (the police) are often the first official response to violations of law. In the enforcement of criminal law the police serve as observers and recorders of fact concerning unlawful incidents, and they bring the alleged law-breakers before the courts to answer for their crime(s). The police also maintain order in society and perform service functions such as opening cars for people who lock their keys in the car, assisting motorists in changing a flat or escorting a funeral procession.

To perform their functions, the police must interact with the citizens and basically get people to stop, alter or begin a specific behavior. The easiest course of action occurs if citizens voluntarily comply with police directions. They are less willing to comply though, if they are not satisfied with how the police are serving them (Gallagher et al., 2001; Jesilow, Meyer and Namazzi, 1995). Mastrofski (1988) uses the terms consent and consensus to make basically the same observation as Gallagher et al. (2001) and Jesilow et al. (1995). Citizen consensus is not necessary for the police to effectively carry out their duties, but rather citizen consent is

necessary (Mastrofski, 1988). The citizen gives his consent when he understands and accepts the process. The police facilitate the citizen's understanding by explaining what they (the police) are doing and why. Although consensus regarding the substance of a policy may not exist, consent to allow the process laid out by the policy can exist (Mastrofski, 1988). In other words, the citizen may not agree with his fellow citizens concerning the guiding policy of the government (consensus), but he can give his permission to the police to perform their duties (consent). In effect, the people must be satisfied with, and willing to cooperate with the police before the police can effectively perform their duties (Schafer, Huebner and Bynum, 2003). And as noted by Gallagher et al. (2001), as a citizen's perception of the police increases, so does his willingness to cooperate with the wishes of the police.

Another reason positive perceptions and the proceeding cooperation are important, is the consequence of over-use of coercion. If the public is not satisfied with the police, and refuses to cooperate with them, the only option left to the police to maintain order and enforce their directions is coercive use of force. And, there are simply not enough police on duty to contain and control large-scale violent protests. By the time civilian law enforcement has lost control, vast damage has usually been done due to civil unrest and rioting (Jesilow et al., 1995). If the people refuse to cooperate, criminal investigations are crippled because even people who are victims of crime may not trust the police and may not aid the police during the investigation of a crime (Jesilow et al., 1995). Overuse of coercive tactics by the police to secure compliance and enforce order can also lead to moral depletion, danger to the police, alienated communities, and a long-term inability to establish and maintain order (Mastrofski, 1988). Everyone can benefit from fair, consistent treatment by the police (Mastrofski, 1988).

To gain voluntary citizen cooperation with the police, researchers must determine what the public wants or needs from the police and relay this information to the police so that modifications in police policy and services provided can be made. The services provided by the police encompass any and all duties and activities an officer may engage in on a daily basis in the service of the community. These activities could include answering calls for service from people in the community, insuring public order, routine patrol, investigating crimes, interviewing victims and suspects of crime, first response to emergencies, and traffic stops. In pursuit of that end, researchers have often surveyed the public to identify public perceptions.

The early studies examined public perceptions of the police in the context of racial discrimination. Contemporary efforts to determine public perceptions of the police have examined demographic, police contact, and neighborhood context variables. One way for a department to maximize its image with the public would be to identify characteristics of the public that predict perceptions of the police and make policy and service adjustments to take advantage of those characteristics. The predictors of public perceptions of the Carbondale Police and police services will be identified through a study conducted by the Southern Illinois University at Carbondale Center for the Study of Crime and Delinquency. The data for the study were gathered with a questionnaire administered to two hundred twenty-four residents of Carbondale during the summer of 2003.

The findings of this study will be important because we live in a nation of finite resources. Any efforts that bring about the more efficient operation of a societal function are worthwhile. Resources presently used by the police to maintain order and quell minor civil disturbances and protests might better be used to investigate crimes or prevent fatalities through

more vigorous traffic enforcement. Higher levels of perceptions of the police could also lead to a more harmonious society. Although people protest numerous things that are unrelated to the police, some protests are related to police actions. One such protest that was very costly was the protest following the acquittal of the police officers accused of using excessive force to arrest Rodney King.

The following review of the literature will first examine the dependent variable in this study, citizen perceptions of the police. The study will then discuss the ten independent variables analyzed in this study: race, socioeconomic status (income), length of residency (time), victimization, political orientation, age, education, gender, police contact and neighborhood context (social control and integration).

The dependent variable in this study is the citizens' perception of the police. As previously noted, for the police to operate effectively, the cooperation of the public is paramount. The most efficient way to gain the cooperation of the people is to endeavor to keep their perceptions of the police positive. Traditionally, the police have maintained an overall positive perception by the public (Cao, Frank and Cullen, 1996). In a meta-analysis of national citizen survey data, Gallagher et al. (2001) determined that since the 1960s, a majority of American adults held an overall positive view of the police. The levels of adults indicating a positive perception of the police varied between 51 percent and 81 percent depending when the survey was conducted and what was being measured (Gallagher et al., 2001). If the predictors of citizens' perceptions of the police could be discovered, policy could be formed to best take advantage of those predictors, ensure that the peoples' perception of the police was positive and thus would cooperate with the police.

In order to discern the perceptions of the people toward the police, Brandl et al. (1994), Brandl et al. (1997), Kusow et al. (1997), and Schafer et al. (2003) asked how satisfied the respondents were with some aspect of the police. Cao et al. (1996) asked about confidence in the police with a 5-item measure. The respondents were asked if they agree or disagree “that the police were responsive, cared about the neighborhood’s safety, maintained order and were able to protect the residents against crime (Cao et al., 1996, pg. 6).” Although Cao et al. (1996) labels the concept “confidence,” the answers could mirror the resident’s perception of the police. These researchers, Brandl et al. (1994), Brandl et al. (1997), Cao et al. (1996), Kusow et al. (1997) and Schafer et al. (2003) sought to determine citizen perceptions of the police by asking respondents to rate their level of agreement or satisfaction regarding questions or statements about one or more dimension of policing.

Brandl et al. (1997) explored the question of whether the different question foci and referents regarding citizen attitudes toward, or perceptions of, the police cause the respondents to access different cognitive cues when answering the questions. In other words, did questions that varied in focus (“quality of service and performance...to assess police capabilities in dealing with specific conditions...to evaluate the equity of police actions [Brandl et al., 1997, pg. 473]” and referent [“the police as an institution...the local police...the police in the two or three blocks around your home (Brandl et al., 1997, pg. 473)”] elicit different perceptions of the police from a respondent? Were the many studies focused on the police and the peoples’ attitudes toward the police generally measuring the same things (Brandl et al., 1997)?

For example, studies often referred to the police in three different ways: the police as an institution, the police in the community and the police that patrol immediately around the

respondent's residence. The survey questions that refer to the police as an institution could cause a respondent to consider their perceptions of the police in general. Survey questions that ask about the police in a community or in the immediate neighborhood may make the respondent consider actual contacts he/she has had with the police and the actions of specific peace officers (Brandl et al., 1997).

The data Brandl et al. (1997) used to examine this question was from a large study on Community Oriented Policing conducted in Cincinnati. The overall study measured 5 areas of interest: awareness of community policing efforts in the city, neighborhood organizations, perceptions of quality of life, fear of crime, and perceptions of the police. Brandl et al. (1997) were particularly interested in the last area of interest, perceptions of the police. Each respondent was asked the following two questions, which varied the focus of the question.

“How satisfied are you with the job the police are doing controlling the street sale and use of illegal drugs in your neighborhood? and,
How satisfied are you with the job the police are doing in your neighborhood to prevent crime? (Brandl et al., 1997, p. 475)”

Then one of the following questions, which varied the referent of the question, was directed to a respondent in one of three randomly selected sub-groups.

“In general, how satisfied are you with the police in your community?
In general, how satisfied are you with the police in your neighborhood?
In general, how satisfied are you with the police?
(Brandl et al., 1997, p. 475)”

The available responses for all 5 of the items were, “very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, very dissatisfied (Brandl et al., 1997, p. 475).” Brandl et al. (1997) found that the level of satisfaction reported was not statistically different across the range of the five questions. The findings suggested that regardless of the focus or reference of the question, the respondents referred to a general ideology when they responded to a question regarding perceptions of the police.

In a similar study, Brandl, Frank, Worden, and Bynum (1994) examined the correlation between the respondents’ specific and global attitudes toward the police. The survey asked about four types of contact with the police to measure specific attitudes. The four items are:

- “1. when requesting information (“How satisfied were you with how the police handled the problem?),
2. when requesting assistance (“How satisfied were you with how the police handled the problem?),
3. when stopped and questioned (“How satisfied were you with the way you were treated?), and 4. when victimized (“How satisfied were you with the police in their handling of the incident?”) (Brandl et al., 1994, p 125).”

Global attitudes were measured with the following item, “In general, how satisfied are you with the police (Brandl et al., 1994, p. 124)?” For the global item and the 4 specific items the response options were identical, “Were you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied (Brandl et al., 1994, p. 125)?” A comparison revealed that a respondent’s global attitude toward the police tended to have a stronger effect on his specific attitude than the person’s specific attitude had on his global attitude. Although the net effect of

the global on the specific was stronger, none of the differences of means were significant. Statistically, there was no difference in the global attitudes and specific attitudes of the respondents (Brandl et al., 1994). The findings of this study support the findings of the Brandl et al. (1997) study. The findings of Brandl et al. (1994, 1997) indicate that the focus and referent of survey questions asking about perceptions of the police may not result in differing perceptions. The findings indicate that when asked about perceptions of the police respondents tend to refer their overall attitudes toward the police to respond to the question.

When considering independent variables, the next section of the literature review will discuss the predictors of citizens' perceptions of the police. The following predictors, Social Control, Integration, race, socioeconomic status (income), perceptions of voluntary contact, dissatisfaction with voluntary contact, perceptions of involuntary contact, dissatisfaction after victimization, own or rent residence, SIU student status, education, victim of a crime, political orientation, age, education, gender, police contact and collective efficacy (neighborhood context) will be used in this study's analysis phase.

Race

Many studies have identified race as a demographic variable that is a significant predictor of public perceptions of the police. African Americans have consistently indicated they are less satisfied with the police than other racial groups (Brown and Benedict, 2002; Reisig and Parks, 2000; Weitzer and Tuch, 1999). When comparing African Americans and White of similar educational levels, African Americans were more critical of the police (Weitzer and Tuch, 1999). Thomas and Hyman (1977) and Decker (1981) noted that race was the most influential determinant of citizen perceptions of the police.

Race was also significant in a study by Webb and Marshall (1995). African Americans were significantly less likely to view the police positively than were Hispanics or Whites (Webb & Marshall, 1995). Scaglione and Condon (1980) came to a different conclusion; race had no significant effect on citizen attitudes toward the police.

Hurst, Frank, and Browning (2000) observed that in a 9-item attitudinal query, African American juveniles were less satisfied with police services than White juveniles. Asking about specific police actions as opposed to asking about general impressions yielded different results. In a seven-item attitudinal query that asked about specific police action during a contact, the African American and White juveniles' satisfaction levels were not statistically different on six of the items. One specific police action item that asked about being stopped by the police while in a car revealed a statistically significant difference between African Americans and Whites (Chi Square statistic $p < 0.045$ - African American youth had a less satisfied attitude). The authors suggest these observed differences in the African American and White overall attitudinal scores (which were not present in the specific behavior attitudinal scores) may indicate that the general cultural dissatisfaction with police services (unfair treatment and unequal enforcement) within the African American adult community is also present in the African American juvenile community (Hurst et al., 2000). Hurst et al. (2000) note that although the pattern of attitudes toward the police was different between White and African American youth, race was not a significant predictor (Significance level = 0.95) of attitude when age, gender, school, victimization, and neighborhood context were controlled for in statistical models.

Several other studies have indicated that when neighborhood context is controlled (multivariate regressions), racial differences in perceptions of the police were not significant

(Chermak et al., 2001; Gallagher et al., 2001; Hurst & Frank, 2000; Schafer et al., 2003). When contextual variables were controlled for, the significance of race disappeared in a study conducted by Cao et al. (1996). Neighborhood context could include such notions as informal control, integration or socio-economic status. Informal control refers to the notion that neighbors will do their part to ensure order and fight crime. Integration refers to the degree that the neighborhood is a close-knit community wherein you can depend on and trust your neighbor. Socio-economic status refers to the perceived income level of the residents in the neighborhood (i.e., a lower-class, middle-class or upper-class neighborhood).

Attitudes of different racial groups are influenced by neighborhood characteristics (context). Gallagher et al.'s (2001) meta-analysis of national surveys observed that across most indicators non-Whites indicated poorer perceptions of the police than did Whites, but, controlling for neighborhood economic disadvantage eliminated those differences in perception (Gallagher et al., 2001). Weitzer (2000) noted that neighborhood socio-economic class influences the way African American residents perceived the police. African American residents of lower-class economic neighborhoods tended to view the police less favorably than African American residents of middle-class neighborhoods. It would appear that neighborhood context does influence of effect race in the prediction of citizen perceptions of the police (Weitzer, 2000).

Black (1970) noted that complaints from White-collar (socio-economic middle-class) complainants were given more consideration than complaints from blue-collar (socio-economic lower-class). Marenin (1983) and Thomas and Hyman (1977) observed that citizens with relatively high incomes had more positive perceptions of the police than citizens with lower incomes. Gallagher et al. (2001) reported that poorer people and people from lower socio-

economic classes usually were less satisfied with the police than wealthier Americans. Gallagher et al. (2001) also concluded that the effects of the citizen's neighborhood might have more influence on perceptions of the police than socio-economic status. Weitzer (2000) noted that class inequality is more influential in predicting citizens' perceptions of the police than race. In Weitzer's study, three neighborhoods were examined. The African American middle class neighborhood perceptions of the police more closely mirrored the perceptions of the middle class White neighborhood than of the lower class African American neighborhood. In the case of Weitzer's (2000) study, social inequality was clearly a stronger predictor of citizens' perceptions of the police than race. Scaglione and Condon (1980) also noted that income has no significant affect on citizen attitudes toward the police.

The length of residency in a community was correlated with positive attitudes toward the police (Marenin, 1983). The author suggests that the longer one lives in a neighborhood, the more of an investment he has in the neighborhood, and the more he will have to lose if the police fail (for lack of support) to protect his property. Jesilow et al. (1995) hypothesized that people might leave their neighborhood because they were displeased with the police services. However, the findings of Jesilow et al. (1995) indicate that length of residency was not a determinant of citizens' perceptions of the police. It appears that Jesilow et al. (1995) was examining residential location through a different lens than Marenin (1983). Marenin (1983) examined reasons people would want to stay in their present location, and why that would lead them to support the police, while Jesilow et al. (1995) started with the notion that because people were displeased with the police they would choose to leave.

People who have been previously victimized are less satisfied with the police than people who have not been the victims of a crime (Kusow, Wilson, & Martin, 1997). It is possible that people who have been victimized blame the police for their misfortune. They may believe that had the police been “doing their job” the criminal would not have been loose, free to victimize them or someone else. Thomas and Hyman (1977) noted that while fear of victimization was a significant determinant of citizens’ perceptions of the police, actual victimization was not.

A conservative, law-and-order, political ideology is correlated with positive evaluations of the police. Persons who react negatively to the uses of the law did not tend to evaluate the police as positively (Marenin, 1983). Cao et al. (1996) came to a different conclusion than Marenin (1983), and found that a conservative ideology was not a predictor of citizens’ perceptions of the police.

Studies indicated that younger citizens were less satisfied with the police than older citizens (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Correia et al., 1996; Decker, 1981; Jesilow et al., 1995; Kusow, Wilson & Martin, 1997; Marenin, 1983; Reisig & Parks, 2000; Thomas & Hyman, 1977; Thurman & Reisig, 1996). Schafer et al. (2003) found that age was a significant determinant of satisfaction in 8 of the 12 predictive models with older citizens expressing higher levels of satisfaction than younger citizens. In the Global and Traditional concepts of policing, age was significant when demographic variables alone were used as predictors, but as contextual variables were added to the regression the effects of age diminished. In the Community Policing concept, age was a significant determinant in all predictive models (Schafer et al., 2003). In a counter point, Scaglione and Condon (1980) found that age was not a determinant of citizen attitudes toward the police. Webb and Marshall (1995) observed that younger people were less

likely than older people to view aggressive patrol practices as positive. Correia et al. (1996) proposed two possible explanations: Younger people value their freedom more than older people, whereas older people value security more than younger people. Another possible explanation was younger people (18 – 25) commit a disproportionate amount of crimes. As a result, this demographic group is the recipient of the majority of law enforcement activities of the police.

Higher education levels were correlated with positive perceptions of the police (Correia et al., 1996; Thomas & Hyman, 1977). Jesilow et al. (1995) observed that more education was correlated with more positive perceptions of the police, but less education was not indicative of more negative perceptions. In addition, more education was correlated with increased requests for police services (Jesilow et al., 1995). Webb and Marshall (1995) noted that less educated people were less likely than their more educated counterparts to support aggressive patrol practices. Weitzer and Tuch (1999) found that the more educated people become, regardless of race, the more critical (less satisfied) they become of the police. Schafer et al. (2003) found the influence of education on satisfaction to be inconsistent. Education was significant in only 2 of the 12 predictive models and had opposite the hypothesized influence (Schafer et al., 2003).

Given that males commit the majority of crimes, and thus have the majority of negative contacts with the police (Decker, 1981), it would seem that men might have lower perceptions of the police in general than women. But, that has not been the case. The predictive ability of gender on perceptions of the police has been inconsistent. Jesilow et al. (1995), Kusow et al. (1997) and Marenin (1983) found that gender has no significance in predicting citizen attitudes toward the police. In their study of citizen attitudes toward the State Police, Correia et al. (1996)

consistently found that males had higher perceptions of the State Police than females. However, Cao et al. (1996), observed that females expressed a higher level of confidence in the police than males. Thomas and Hyman (1977) observed that gender was a significant determinant of citizen perceptions of the police. Schafer et al. (2003) found that gender was a significant determinant of satisfaction in 11 of 12 predictive models, with females expressing more positive perceptions of the police than males.

Demographic characteristics can serve as predictors of perceptions of the police, but they are weaker predictors than police contact influences (Schafer et al., 2003). Scaglione and Condon (1980) concluded that contact with a police officer in an official capacity was the strongest determinant of citizen attitudes toward the police. Police contacts can be grouped into two types, voluntary and involuntary (Decker, 1981; Schafer et al., 2003). Examples of voluntary contacts could include reporting a crime to the police or asking the police for assistance in a matter that does not directly pertain to a violation of the law. Involuntary contacts could include being stopped for a traffic violation or being detained or arrested as a suspect in a criminal offense. When citizens have an encounter with the police that is perceived as negative, the citizen perception of the police will decrease (Benedict & Brown, 2002; Gallagher et al., 2001; Schafer et al., 2003; Thurman & Reisig, 1996), but positive contacts do not correspondingly raise perceptions of the police (Schafer et al., 2003; Thurman & Reisig, 1996) except when the Community-Oriented Policing (COP) model of policing is used (Peak, 1992; Schafer et al., 2003). It should be noted that the most common reason for involuntary police contact is for traffic violations. The officer's perceived behavior was the primary factor when a citizen's perceptions of the police were formed (Correia et al., 1996).

Actual citizen police interaction is rare. Most Americans had no contact with the police in the preceding twelve months (Gallagher et al., 2001). Therefore, opinions are oftentimes formed using secondhand information, often termed vicarious misconduct. Vicarious misconduct was the strongest predictor of juvenile attitudes toward the police, stronger even than actual victimization (Hurst & Frank, 2000; Hurst, Frank, & Browning, 2000).

One of the more recent approaches regarding attitudes toward the police has been the influence of neighborhood. Kusow et al. (1997) demonstrated that neighborhood location affected perceptions of the police. Jesilow et al. (1995) found that citizens' attitudes toward the police were more influenced by how they felt about their neighborhood than by demographic predictors.

Two studies have described the effects of neighborhood influences (Cao et al., 1996; Schafer et al., 2003) on citizens' satisfaction with the police. Generally, the questions used to describe the neighborhood concerned the interactions of the residents to obtain a level of cohesiveness. Feelings of security within the neighborhood combined with the degree of orderliness were predictors of citizen confidence (Cao et al., 1996). Similar to the study described within, Schafer et al. (2003) operationalized neighborhood context influences with 5 variables: quality of life, major crime, community culture, neighborhood assessment, and personal crime rate. These descriptors were found to be applicable in all three police service models (Global police services, traditional police services and COP services).

Morenoff et al. (2001) and Sampson et al. (1997) both utilized the concepts of social control and cohesion to define and measure collective efficacy. Collective efficacy is inversely correlated with violent crime and interpersonal violence (Sampson et al., 1997, Morenoff et al.,

2001). Collective efficacy helped improve neighborhoods, and perception of collective efficacy led to a decrease in fear of crime (Gibson et al., 2002). How people feel about their own neighborhood is the most influential variable in predicting citizens' perceptions of the police (Jesilow et al., 1995).

Collective efficacy can be conceptualized as a characteristic of neighborhoods. Therefore, since the concepts of social control and cohesion can be used to measure collective efficacy, social control and cohesion could also be used as measures of neighborhood characteristics. In addition, Morenoff et al. (2001) and Sampson et al. (1997) have demonstrated how to measure collective efficacy, and that collective efficacy is a significant predictor of crime levels. Plus, Gibson et al. (2002) concluded that collective efficacy led people to feel better about their neighborhood, which is one of the strongest predictors of citizen perceptions of the police (Jesilow et al., 1995). Therefore, it is logical to predict that social control and cohesion can be used to reflect some dimension of a neighborhood characteristic, and the resulting measure can be used to predict citizen perceptions of the police.

The preceding literature review has discussed the dependent variable that is the focus of this study, citizen perceptions of the police. The discussion noted the significance of positive citizen perceptions of the police, as it (positive perception) is necessary for the police to gain the voluntary cooperation of the citizenry. Additionally, the operationalizations of citizen perceptions of the police were examined. Researchers have sought to determine respondents' perceptions of the police largely through asking the respondents to indicate how satisfied/dissatisfied they were, or agree/disagree, with questions or statements about different dimensions, or focus, of policing. Brandl et al. (1997) concluded that the varying referents and

foci of the questions probably did not significantly alter a person's perceptions of the police. Despite the three referents of policing asked about, and the different dimensions of policing focused on, the respondents relied on culturally gained preconceived attitudes toward the police. Therefore, the responses across various surveys using the common predictor variables should be consistent as long as the dependent variables are conceptually related.

This literature review has also examined ten predictors of citizen perceptions of the police previously identified by other researchers. The independent variables were race, age, gender, length of residence, victimization, income, education, political orientation, police contact and neighborhood characteristics.

The next section of this research will discuss in detail the background of this study, the methods used to construct and administer the survey instrument, the variables and how each was operationalized and measured and the statistical technique used to analyze the data collected.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this project will be a subset of a larger survey conducted over a two semester period. The survey will be directed by Drs. William Wells and Jody Sundt at Southern Illinois University Carbondale as part of the Administration of Justice 2002 Research Methods class (AJ 510 A and B - a two part/two semester graduate studies course). The larger study will be named the Service Learning Project and will be approved by the Human Subjects Committee. A copy of the survey is attached as Appendix A. The methodology section will discuss the background of the study, the mechanics of how the study will be carried out, the weaknesses/limitations of the study design, the variables included in the study with the operationalization of the variables, and the hypothesis statements.

On April 22, 2001 an incident occurred in the city of Carbondale, Illinois wherein the Carbondale Police Department was called to the scene of a large gathering of younger people (juveniles and younger adults). A confrontation occurred between a young African American male and the Carbondale Police. After a brief physical altercation and a chase, the young African American male was arrested. The crowd, comprised largely of African Americans, and the arrestee alleged the police used excessive force in the apprehension and subsequent arrest. The incident received a large amount of press and generated much controversy between the minority citizens of Carbondale and the Carbondale Police, and resulted in an investigation by the city. The investigation ultimately found that the Carbondale Police Department acted appropriately. This finding served to further outrage the minority population in Carbondale. The continued unrest led the city council to propose the formation of a Human Relations Commission to address the mistreatment of Carbondale citizens. The Carbondale City Council proposed the Human Relations Commission process citizen complaints against the Carbondale Police, city government, businesses in Carbondale and landlords.

The ultimate purpose of the Service Learning Project was to provide the city council of Carbondale with valid feedback concerning citizen and police attitudes related to the Human Relations Commission. The feedback was to come from four groups: members of the general public, the police (Carbondale Police Department [CPD] and the Southern Illinois University Police Department [SIUPD]), members of the Carbondale business community and members of the Carbondale city government. To accomplish this overarching objective, Dr. Wells and Dr. Sundt proposed several sub-objectives. First, the class was broken up into five groups, then the graduate students, under the guidance of Drs. Wells, Sundt and Dr. Schafer, were to develop

three survey instruments: telephone interview/questionnaire for members of the general public; a self-administered written questionnaire for the line officers of CPD and SIUPD; and intensive interview instruments for CPD and SIUPD supervisors, selected Carbondale business owners, and selected city government officials. After the community survey instrument was developed a representative sample was chosen from the general public. Samples were also selected from the other groups interviewed, but since this thesis used only the data collected from the general public survey, that is the only collection method that will be discussed.

A representative sample was chosen from the general public using the residential phone directory. The sample was a systematic random sample. A random starting place was chosen in the residential phone directory, and then every 10th entry after that was chosen for the sample. The design of the study was cross-sectional. After the sample was chosen, Drs. Wells and Sundt trained SIUC students in the proper telephone interview techniques. After the initial training sessions, each interviewer then ran several pre-tests of the survey by interviewing friends and relatives using the survey instrument. The training of the interviewers and the pre-testing of the survey instrument took place at the end of the 2003 spring semester at SIUC.

The actual interviews began in June of 2003. The call times/days were Mondays through Fridays between 6:30 pm and 8:30 pm, and Saturday and Sunday between 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm. As each telephone number was tried the interviewer recorded the proper response on a call log sheet. Each telephone number had a call log sheet. There were nine possible entries for each attempted call. The possibilities were: 1-no answer, 2-not home, 3-answering machine, 4-will return call, 5-refused survey, 6-interview completed, 7-partially completed, 8-wrong number, business, etc., 9-disconnected. The date and time of each attempt on the selected phone number

was recorded on the log sheet. The attempts at contact for each number continued until: the interview was completed, or partially completed; the respondent refused to participate; the number was disconnected or was a business; or, ten (10) attempts had been made. When contact with a respondent was made, the interviewer read a scripted introduction and an attempt was made to get the respondent to complete the interview.

The initial goal was 300 or more completed interviews. After the initial sample of 500 numbers was exhausted, the goal had not been reached. Therefore, another systematic random sample consisting of 300 numbers was selected. The second sample selected did not yield the desired 300+ completed surveys, so a third sample systematic random sample of 200 numbers was taken. Upon exhausting the third systematic random sample, the goal of 300+ completed interviews had not yet been achieved, but due to time constraints Dr. Wells and Dr. Schafer decided to end the survey phase of the study. The final completed interview count was two hundred and twenty four (224). The total number of phone numbers in all the systematic random samples was one thousand (1000).

There are several advantages to a telephone survey. Two of the advantages are time and money (Babbie, 1998). Mailed surveys require postage and face-to-face surveys require transportation. The telephone surveys require minimal financial support if the interviewer uses his home phone to make local calls. Regardless of where a letter/survey is mailed there are postage costs involved. Phone surveys that are strictly local cost nothing in most cases. In the matter of time, driving to each residence and making follow-up visits requires considerably more time than simply dialing a number. Another advantage is the interviewers can dress more casually than if they were doing face-to-face interviews (Babbie, 1998). The phone interview

also allows the interviewer greater control over data collection. Several interviewers can operate in one common area at the same time, and be in touch with each other and supervisory personnel if any questions or problems should arise. This advantage may not be available if you are out by yourself conducting face-to-face interviews (Babbie, 1998). And finally, using the telephone interview can alleviate safety concerns. Both the interviewer and respondent are safer during phone interviews when compared to face-to-face interviews. The respondents may also feel more comfortable talking to a stranger over the phone rather than inviting a stranger into their home (Babbie, 1998).

The cross-sectional study design yields a static observation of the citizenry polled. Opinions may differ over time or in relation to current events. Therefore, variables that are time-order dependent are difficult or impossible to determine (Bachman and Schutt, 2001). Another problem with telephone surveys is selection bias; the survey automatically excludes people who do not have a phone or an unlisted number. In addition, companies fraudulently identify themselves as interviewers conducting opinion surveys when they are really conducting a sales campaign over the telephone. Such fake surveys are designed to keep the caller on the line long enough to get some of the sales pitch delivered (Babbie, 1998). People can and do hang up on solicitors, and this is also a problem for legitimate research. People who initially agree to see you, or let you in their home for a face-to-face interview have a much more difficult time getting you to leave during the interview. On the other hand, if a person tires of talking to you on the phone they can easily make up an excuse to hang up (Babbie, 1998). Finally, the advent of telephone answering machines has made it difficult to get a respondent on the line. In 1988,

twenty to twenty-five percent of homes had an answering machine in them, and half of those homes used the answering machine to screen their calls (Babbie, 1998).

The telephone survey was started in the summer of 2003. A substantial portion of the Carbondale population is students who live in the area only during the fall and spring semesters. Many students go home during the summer months, so the student population may be under represented. In addition, most of the respondents were either older adults or younger adults (respondents had to be at least 18 years old), so the middle age group of Carbondale citizens appears to be under represented as well.

The community of Carbondale is a medium sized community, and the results from this study may not be generalizable to smaller cities, larger urban areas or other medium-sized communities. Based upon the review of the prior literature, the following hypotheses can be made: The independent variable, neighborhood characteristics, will be the strongest predictor of citizens' perceptions of the police when compared to the other independent variables: demographics (race, income, age, victimization, education, political orientation, gender or length of residency) and police contact; the effects of race will be diminished when additional predictors are added to the regression models; dissatisfaction with police conduct subsequent to a contact, regardless of the reason for the contact (voluntary or involuntary), will be a significant predictor of citizen perceptions of the police. Positive perceptions of police conduct subsequent to a contact, regardless of the reason for the contact (voluntary or involuntary), will not affect perceptions of the police.

Data for the independent variables will be used to calculate means and standard deviations for the survey population. Similarly, the data will be used in regression equations to estimate populations that support the police.

Multivariate linear regressions of the models will be tested using SPSS software to determine the proportion of the variance in the dependent *variable* (*citizen perceptions of the police*) for each of the independent variables (race, gender, income, age, education, political orientation, SIU student status, victimization, neighborhood context, victimization, police contact and neighborhood characteristics).

The descriptive statistics for all variables are located in Table 1. The interviewers did not verbally tell the respondent that “refuse” and “don’t know” categories were included in the possible options while administering the survey, however, if the respondent indicated he did not know, or he refused to answer, the interviewer was able to record the response as such. “Don’t know” responses were recoded to reflect a value of 2.5 in all relevant variables. Two variables were also reverse coded so that the higher valued responses would correspond with positive perceptions of the police and the lower valued responses corresponded with the negative perceptions of the police.

Table 1.

Descriptive statistics

Measure	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Range
Demographics					
Age (natural log)	3.5982	0.40752	2.89	4.47	-----
Male	0.41	0.494	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Income	3.93	2.44	1.00	8.00	1.00 to 8.00
Education	2.1810	0.54255	1.00	3.00	1.00 to 3.00
SIU Student	0.3036	0.46083	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Own-rent	0.5313	0.50014	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Political orientation	4.89	2.033	1.00	9.00	1.00 to 9.00
White	0.7679	0.42315	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Crime victim	0.12	0.330	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Police contact					
Satisfied voluntary	0.1875	0.39119	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Dissatisfied voluntary	0.0580	0.23433	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Satisfied involuntary	0.0840	0.27245	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Dissatisfied involuntary	0.0446	0.20698	0.00	1.00	0.00 to 1.00
Neighborhood Context					
Social Control	14.16	3.11	6.00	20.00	5.00 to 20.00
Integration	14.30	2.33	7.00	20.00	5.00 to 20.00
Outcome Measures					
Global	2.98	0.800	1.00	4.00	1.00 to 4.00
Relationship	7.46	1.65	3.00	12.00	3.00 to 12.00
Demeanor	6.33	1.51	2.00	8.00	2.00 to 8.00

This study sought to examine the connection between demographic, police contact, and neighborhood characteristic influences in relationship to citizen perceptions of the police. In particular, citizen perception of the police as it varied by neighborhood characteristics, contact with the police and individual demographic characteristics was tested. An initial factor analysis identified 6 items (eigenvalue = 3.758, factor loadings > 0.718) that were all related to the

concept that is the focus of this study: *citizen perceptions of the Carbondale police*. Further analysis revealed that the six items represented differing dimensions of *perceptions of the police*: overall perceptions of the police (*global satisfaction*), the perceived relationship of the Carbondale police with the community of Carbondale (*relationship*), and the perceived demeanor of the Carbondale police when dealing with the Carbondale community (*demeanor*).

Global satisfaction was measured with one item, reported in Table 2. The survey item, question 11, and possible responses are reported in Table 2. A large majority (79.5%) indicated they were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the Carbondale Police. The item contained a response category of “refuse,” (1 respondent answered “refuse”) but the respondents were not told that. The item was not recoded because it was not clear whether the respondent refused or didn’t answer the question for some other reason such as not having an opinion. There were 219 responses with 5 missing responses (224 Respondents).

Table 2.

*Global satisfaction frequencies**

		Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Valid	Very dissatisfied	16	7.1	7.3
	Somewhat dissatisfied	24	10.7	18.3
	Somewhat satisfied	127	56.7	76.3
	Very satisfied	51	22.8	99.5
	Refuse	1	0.4	100.0
	Missing	5	2.2	

* Original wording was, “In general, how satisfied are you with the Carbondale police?”

This study's demeanor dimension utilizes items that were incorporated in both the Webb and Marshall (1995) and the Thurman and Reisig (1996) studies. Webb and Marshall (1995) utilized an eight-item officer demeanor scale as one of the dimensions to measure the outcome variable of citizens' attitudes toward the police. Thurman and Reisig (1996) used a six-item scale that contained, in part, items addressing officer courtesy and officer fairness to assess citizens' attitudes toward the police. Demeanor in the Carbondale study was measured using a two-item scale score. The summed scale score (eigenvalue = 1.754, factor loadings > 0.937) was based on responses to questions about the Carbondale Police Department's perceived demeanor (politeness and fairness) when dealing with people in the respondent's neighborhood. The original values for question 13 included a category that was worded, "some are some aren't." The respondents were not given that category as a possible response, but if they were unsure, or responded with that phrase the interviewer was able to record it as such. There was also a "refuse" response that was not revealed to the respondent, and was recorded by the interviewer if the respondent refused to answer. The "some are some aren't" was recoded as "don't know," with a value of 2.5 (mean value). The "refuse" values were recoded as missing. The items, survey questions 12 and 13, possible responses, and response frequencies are reported in Table 3.

Table 3.

*Demeanor frequencies**

	Responses	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Question 12	Very impolite	10	4.5	5.0
	Somewhat impolite	17	7.6	13.4
	Somewhat polite	93	41.5	59.7
	Very polite	81	36.2	100.0
	Missing	23		
Question 13	Very unfair	10	4.5	5.1
	Somewhat unfair	17	7.6	13.6
	Don't know	5	2.2	16.2
	Somewhat fair	100	44.6	66.7
	Very fair	66	29.5	100
	Missing	26		

***Question 12** original wording was, “*In general, how polite are the Carbondale police when dealing with people in your neighborhood?*”

***Question 13** original wording was, “*In general, how fair are the Carbondale police when dealing with people in your neighborhood?*”

Relationship was measured using a three-item scale score. The summed scale score (eigenvalue = 2.136, factor loadings > 0.838) was based on responses to questions about perceptions of the Carbondale Police Department’s relationship with aspects of the community of Carbondale. Possible responses included “don’t know” and “refuse” categories. The respondents were not given the “don’t know” and “refuse” options, but if they indicated either response the interviewers recorded it. “Don’t know” value was recoded to 2.5 (mean value) and “refuse” was recoded to missing. The values for the responses on questions 10-A and 10-C were then reverse coded in order to correspond higher value responses with positive perceptions of the police and lower value responses with negative perceptions of the police. The items, survey

question 10, statements A, B and C, possible responses, and response frequencies are reported in Table 4.

Table 4.

*Relationship frequencies**

Statements	Response categories	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
10-A	Strongly disagree	20	8.9	9.1
	Disagree	105	46.9	56.8
	Don't know	28	12.5	69.5
	Agree	51	22.8	92.7
	Strongly agree	16	7.1	100.0
	Missing	4		
10-B	Strongly disagree	19	8.5	8.6
	Disagree	67	29.9	38.9
	Don't know	52	23.2	62.4
	Agree	80	35.7	98.6
	Strongly agree	3	1.3	100.0
	Missing	3		
10-C	Strongly disagree	5	2.2	2.3
	Disagree	62	27.7	30.5
	Don't know	59	26.3	57.3
	Agree	77	34.4	92.3
	Strongly agree	17	7.6	100.0
	Missing	4		

***Question 10** original wording of was, “Next, I would like to change our focus somewhat and ask you a few questions about your views on the relationship between the police and the Carbondale community. For all of these questions, please refer to the Carbondale police and not the SIU Campus Police, the state police or the Jackson County sheriffs.”

*Original wording of **statement 10-A** was, “The Carbondale police department has a poor relationship with the community of Carbondale.”

*Original wording of **statement 10-B** was, “The Carbondale police department has a good relationship with the SIU students.”

*Original wording of **statement 10-C** was, “*The Carbondale police department has a poor relationship with minorities in Carbondale.*”

Based on their prominence in prior research, several demographic variables were included in the model. The studies of Brandl (1997), Brown and Benedict (2002), Cao et al. (1996), Chermak et al. (2001), Correia et al. (1996), Decker (1981), Frank et al. (1996), Gallagher et al. (2001), Gibson et al. (2002), Hennigan et al. (2002), Hurst et al. (2000), Hurst and Frank (2000), Jesilow et al. (1995), Kusow et al. (1997), Marenin (1983), Peak (1992), Reisig and Parks (2000), Scaglione and Condon (1980), Schafer et al. (2003), Thomas and Hyman (1977) and Webb and Marshall (1995) have all utilized demographic variables in their analysis. This study used the following *demographic variables* in the model: *race, age, gender, income, crime victim status, education* and *political orientation*. Dummy variables were constructed as measures of *demographic* influence including *race, victim status* and *SIU student* status.

Survey question 27 dealt with race and asked, “What race or ethnicity do you consider yourself?” The possible responses were Black/African American, White/Caucasian, Hispanic, Asian and Other (specified by the respondent). A dummy variable, *white* was constructed by recoding *race*. *Race* value 2 (White, Caucasian) was recoded as “1,” all other values were coded as zero (white as the reference category). Although it is ideal to differentiate members of diverse minority groups, the majority of the sample population was White. Whites comprised 78.9% of the sample, African Americans 11%, Asian 4.1%, Hispanic 1.8%, and the remaining 4.1 ~ 4.2% were categorized as refused/other. Due to the small sample size (224 Respondents) differentiation between the various non-White groups was not made in this study. Cao et al. (1996), Correia et al. (1996) and Schafer et al. (2003) also dichotomized race into White and

non-White because of low minority/non-White representation in the sample. The frequencies for race are contained in Table 5.

Table 5.

Race frequencies

Race response categories	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Black	24	10.7	11.0
White	172	76.8	89.9
Hispanic	4	1.8	91.7
Asian	9	4.0	95.9
Other	7	3.1	99.1
Refuse	2	0.9	100
Total	224	100	

Age was measured as a continuous variable. The respondents had to be at least 18 years of age to participate and were asked if they were 18 or older at the beginning of the survey. Question 25 on the survey asked specifically, “What is your age?” The raw data mean was 39.71 years old. There were 217 respondents that replied, with 7 refused/missing. The distribution of *age* was bi-modal and slightly skewed so the natural log was taken to normalize the distribution. The aggregate frequencies for *age* are contained in Table 6.

Table 6.

Age frequencies

Categories	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
18 – 25	55	24.6	25.3
26 – 35	50	22.3	48.4
36 – 45	37	16.5	65.4
46 – 55	41	18.3	84.3
56 – 65	14	6.3	90.8
66 – 75	12	5.4	96.3
76 – 87	8	3.6	100.0
Missing	7		

Gender was recorded as a dummy variable (Male as the reference category). There were 90 males (40.2%) and 127 females (56.7%) that responded with 7 missing/refused. The interviewer determined the gender of the respondent after speaking with them briefly at the start of the survey.

Income was the focus of Question 29 on the survey. The respondent was asked, “Finally, which of the following categories best represents your total household income last year?” The most reported category in the raw data was 10,000-19,000 with 43 respondents. The next three were very close: Less than 10,000 with 33 respondents, 69,000 or more with 32 respondents and 20,000-29,000 with 30 respondents. A total of 199 respondents replied, 22 refused and 3 were missing. The frequencies for income are reported in Table 7.

Table 7.

Income frequencies

	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Less than \$10,000	33	14.7	16.6
\$10,000 to \$19,000	43	19.2	38.2
\$20,000 to \$29,000	30	13.4	53.3
\$30,000 to \$39,000	24	10.7	65.3
\$40,000 to \$49,000	10	4.5	70.4
\$50,000 to \$59,000	17	7.6	78.9
\$60,000 to \$69,000	10	4.5	83.9
\$69,000 or more	32	14.3	100
Total	199		
Missing	25		

Victimization was the focus of question 17 which asked, “During the last 6 months, have you been the victim of a crime?” Victimization was recorded as a dummy variable “crime victim” and “not a crime victim” (crime victim as the reference category) with 27 respondents (12.1%) reporting victimization and 192 respondents (85.7%) reporting no victimization. There were 5 missing cases.

Political conservatism was measured on a continuum with possible numerical scores ranging from 1 to 9. Question 28 on the survey was, “What about your political orientation? Think about a scale going from 1 to 9, with 1 meaning extremely liberal and 9 meaning extremely conservative. How would you rate your own political views?” Out of 219 responses the most frequently chosen (61 times) was 5. The distribution of political views of this sample was normal. The frequencies for political conservatism are contained in Table 8.

Table 8.

Political Conservatism

Orientation continuum	Responses	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Extremely liberal	1	14	6.3	6.4
	2	14	6.3	12.8
	3	27	12.1	25.1
	4	29	12.9	38.4
Moderate	5	61	27.2	66.2
	6	26	11.6	78.1
	7	25	11.2	89.5
	8	11	4.9	94.5
Extremely conservative	9	12	5.4	100
	Total	219	97.8	
	Missing	5	2.2	
	Total	224		

Education level was the focus of question 26, which asked, “What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?” The possible responses were 8 categories: 8th grade or less (1), 9th grade – 11th grades (2), High School graduate or GED (3), Some College but no degree (4), Associate’s degree (5), Bachelor’s degree (6), Master’s degree (7) and Professional or Doctorate’s degree (8). The most frequently reported category (76 respondents) was “Bachelor’s degree.” The next most frequently reported category (47 Respondents) was “some college but no degree” followed by the third most frequently reported (38 Respondents) “Master’s degree.” A total of 223 respondents provided a response with 3 cases missing. Income was recoded into the following values: Categories 1 (8th grade or less), 2 (9th grade – 11th grade) and 3 (High School graduate or GED) were recoded as “1,” categories

4 (Some College but no degree), 5 (Associate’s degree) and 6 (Bachelor’s degree) were recoded as “2” and categories 7 (Master’s degree) and 8 (Professional or Doctorate’s degree) were recoded as “3.” The most frequently reported category in the recoded *education* variable was “2,” a combination of the original categories 4, 5 and 6. The frequencies for *education* are contained in Table 9.

Table 9.

Education frequencies

Original categories	Recoded response values	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
8th grade or less 9th grade – 11th grade High School or GED	1	19	7.1	7.2
Some College Associate’s Bachelor’s	2	149	67.4	74.7
Master’s Professional or Doctorate	3	56	25.3	100.0
	Missing	3		
	Total	224		

Previous studies have established the importance of accounting for any direct *contact(s)* the citizens have had with the police. Specifically, when a citizen has an encounter with the police that is perceived as negative, the citizen’s perception of the police will decrease (Benedict & Brown, 2002; Gallagher et al., 2001; Schafer et al., 2003; Thurman & Reisig, 1996), but positive contacts do not correspondingly improve the citizen’s perception (Schafer et al., 2003;

Thurman & Reisig, 1996). Correia et al. (1996) noted that several other important studies had found that the reason for the contact (voluntary vs involuntary) could influence a citizen's perception of the police. Thus, the responses on two survey questions that asked about the respondent's perceptions of police behavior as a result of contact were used to construct four dummy variables. The dummy variables were constructed to isolate and more closely examine four dimensions of police contacts: satisfied with voluntary contact, dissatisfied with voluntary contact, satisfied with involuntary contact and dissatisfied with involuntary contact.

Question 15 asked about voluntary *contact* with the police: "During the last 6 months (since about Christmas of last year), have you requested assistance or information from the Carbondale police?" If the respondent answered "no," he was skipped to question 16. If the subject indicated "yes," he was asked question 15A: "How satisfied were you with the way you were treated? Were you very satisfied (4), somewhat satisfied (3), somewhat dissatisfied (2), or very dissatisfied (1)?" People reporting satisfaction were coded "1" on voluntary satisfaction, all others were coded as zero. People reporting dissatisfaction were coded as "1" on voluntary dissatisfaction, and all others were coded as zero.

Question 16 asked about involuntary *contact* with the police: "During the last 6 months, have you been stopped by a police officer in the Carbondale area?" If the respondent answered "no," he was skipped to question 17. If the subject indicated "yes," he was asked question 16A: "How satisfied were you with the way you were treated? Were you very satisfied (4), somewhat satisfied (3), somewhat dissatisfied (2), or very dissatisfied (1)?" People reporting satisfaction were coded 1 on involuntary satisfaction, all others were coded as zero. People reporting dissatisfaction were coded as 1 on involuntary dissatisfaction, and all others were coded as zero.

The frequency statistics indicate that 42 respondents reported they were satisfied with a voluntary stop, 13 respondents reported they were dissatisfied with a voluntary stop, 18 respondents reported they were satisfied with an involuntary stop and 10 respondents indicated dissatisfaction with an involuntary stop.

The most recent avenue of research into influences on citizens' perceptions of the police has been the effect of neighborhood characteristics (Schafer et al., 2003). This study separates neighborhood characteristics into two categories: social control and integration. Two measures were constructed to represent social control and integration. This study's measure for social control is a replication of the measure used by Morenoff et al. (2001) and Sampson et al. (1997) to measure "shared expectations of social control" (pg. 526). The measure that represents social control is called social control and is operationalized using a 5-item summed scale score (eigenvalue = 2.834, factor loadings > 0.717). Possible responses included "don't know" and "refuse" categories. The respondents were not given the "don't know" and "refuse" options, but if they indicated either response the interviewers recorded it. "Don't know" value was recoded to 2.5 (mean value) and "refuse" was recoded to missing. The items, survey question 21, statements A, B, C, D and E, possible responses, and response frequencies are reported in Table 10.

The measure that represents integration is called *integration* and is operationalized using a 5-item summed scale (eigenvalue = 2.804 factor loadings > 0.710). The survey item used to construct *integration* is question 22. This study's measure for *integration* is a replication of the measure used by Morenoff et al. (2001) and Sampson et al. (1997) to measure "Social cohesion/trust"(pg. 526). The values for the responses on questions 22-B and 22-E were then

reverse coded in order to correspond higher value responses with positive perceptions of the police and lower value responses with negative perceptions of the police. The items, survey question 22, statements A, B, C, D and E, possible responses, and response frequencies are reported in Table 11.

Sampson et al. (1997) referred to his two measures as “collective efficacy (pg. 920),” but there has been considerable disagreement on what the concept of collective efficacy represents, and that debate is beyond the scope of this paper. Therefore, this paper refers to the *social control* and *integration measures* collectively as *neighborhood characteristics*. Previous research (Morenoff et al., 2001; Sampson et al., 1997, and Schafer et al., 2003) has demonstrated that the introduction of neighborhood characteristics will have a significant effect on regression models that estimate how people perceive the police. This study is incorporating *neighborhood characteristics* to ascertain if the previously observed effects on *citizen’ perceptions of police services* is present in Carbondale.

Table 12 contains data that compares Carbondale demographic information collected for the Human Resources Commission (HRC) survey with U.S. Census 2000 demographic data for Carbondale. The demographic characteristics compared are race, gender and housing. Two large differences are obvious: African Americans are underrepresented in the HRC survey sample; The HRC survey sampled almost double the percentage of respondents who own homes according to the U.S. Census. Both of these discrepancies could be the result of when the survey was conducted. The survey was conducted during the summer months, a time when the student population in Carbondale drops because large portions of the students go home.

Table 10.

*Social Control frequencies**

Items	Responses	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Question 21-A	Very unlikely	37	16.5	16.8
	Unlikely	69	30.8	48.2
	Don't know	10	4.5	52.7
	Likely	59	26.3	79.5
	Very likely	45	20.1	100.0
	Missing	4		
Question 21-B	Very unlikely	11	4.9	5.0
	Unlikely	34	15.2	20.5
	Don't know	8	3.6	24.1
	Likely	81	36.2	60.9
	Very likely	86	20.1	100.0
	Missing	4		
Question 21-C	Very unlikely	15	6.7	6.8
	Unlikely	80	35.7	43.2
	Don't know	13	5.8	49.1
	Likely	88	39.3	89.1
	Very likely	24	10.7	100.0
	Missing	4		
Question 21-D	Very unlikely	6	2.7	2.7
	Unlikely	28	12.5	15.5
	Don't know	10	4.5	20.1
	Likely	112	50.0	71.2
	Very likely	63	28.1	100.0
	Missing	5		
Question 21-E	Very unlikely	8	3.6	3.6
	Unlikely	50	22.3	26.2
	Don't know	22	9.8	36.2
	Likely	99	44.2	81.0
	Very likely	63	28.1	100.0
	Missing	3		

*Q21 original wording was, "Would you say that it is very likely, likely, unlikely or very unlikely that your neighbors could be counted on to intervene if ..."

*Q21-A original wording was, "Children were skipping school and hanging out on a street corner?"

*Q21-B original wording was, "How likely is it that your neighbors could be counted on to intervene if children were spray-painting graffiti on a local building?"

*Q21-C original wording was, "If children were showing disrespect to an adult?"

*Q21-D original wording was, "If a fight broke out in front of their house."

*Q21-E original wording was, "If the fire station closest to their home was threatened with budget cuts."

Table 11.

*Integration frequencies**

Items	Responses	Frequency	%	Cumulative %
Question 22-A	Strongly disagree	2	0.9	0.9
	Disagree	27	12.1	13.1
	Don't know	2	0.9	14.0
	Agree	139	62.1	76.9
	Strongly agree	51	22.8	100.0
	Missing	3		
Question 22-B	Strongly agree	6	2.7	2.7
	Agree	79	35.3	38.5
	Don't know	7	3.1	41.6
	Disagree	108	48.2	90.5
	Strongly disagree	21	9.4	100.0
	Missing	3		
Question 22-C	Strongly disagree	9	4.0	4.1
	Disagree	106	47.3	52.0
	Don't know	6	2.7	54.8
	Agree	82	36.6	91.9
	Strongly agree	18	8.0	100.0
	Missing	3		
Question 22-D	Strongly disagree	3	1.3	1.4
	Disagree	35	15.6	17.2
	Don't know	7	3.1	20.4
	Agree	141	62.9	84.2
	Strongly agree	35	15.6	100.0
	Missing	3		
Question 22-E	Agree	16	7.1	7.2
	Don't know	6	2.7	10.0
	Disagree	162	72.3	83.3
	Strongly disagree	37	16.5	100.0
	Missing	3		

*Q22 original wording was, "Now I am going to read you a few more statements about your neighborhood and I would like you to tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with each statement. Okay?"

*Q22-A original wording was, "People around here are willing to help their neighbors."

*Q22-B original wording was, "People in this neighborhood do not share the same values."

*Q22-C original wording was, "This is a close-knit neighborhood."

*Q22-D original wording was, "People in this neighborhood can be trusted."

*Q22-E original wording was, "People in this neighborhood generally don't get along with each other."

Table 12.

HRC Carbondale Demographic data compared with U.S. Census 2000 demographic data for Carbondale.

Demographic Measure	HRC % Carbondale	2000 Census % Carbondale
Race	76.8%	66.1%
White	10.7%	23.1%
Black/AA	1.8%	3.0%
Hispanic	4.0%	6.7%
Asian	6.7%	1.1%
Other/Missing		
Gender	40.2%	51.5%
Male	56.7%	48.5%
Female	3.1%	-----
Missing		
Housing	53.1%	64.9%
Rent	45.1%	26.1%
Own	1.3%	9.0%
Missing		

FINDINGS

The statistical technique used to analyze the data collected in this study is examined. Then, several interesting bivariate relationships are compared utilizing Chi-square statistical analyses. Though not the focus of this study, this bivariate analysis will illustrate a problem early studies of perceptions of the police had. Some early studies examined the effects of just one variable, often race, on citizens' perceptions of the police, and obtained results suggesting race was a significant predictor of citizen perceptions of the police. Race is still thought to be a predictor of citizens' perceptions of the police (Brown and Benedict, 2002; Reisig and Parks, 2000; Weitzer and Tuch, 1999). However, contemporary research has shown that when contextual variables are controlled for, the effects of race are diminished (Schafer et al., 2003). The comparison of this study's bivariate relationships to the multivariate relationships will illustrate that point with race and other independent variables as well. When all the demographic variables are regressed on the outcome measures, the one-on-one relationships present in the bivariate analyses are altered. When contact and neighborhood effects are controlled for, the demographic effects, not just race, are further moderated. Therefore, after the bivariate analyses, to conclude chapter IV, an analysis of the influence of the independent variables on the outcome measures, global satisfaction, demeanor and relationship are presented.

This study utilized ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, the traditional statistical procedure employed when analyzing data regarding citizen satisfaction with the police (Schafer et al., 2003). Ordinary least squares regression was used due to the advantages inherent in the technique; it is a very powerful statistical tool, it is very effective for making predictions about

relationships between variables, and it is flexible enough to examine two or more variables in the same model.

Before proceeding to the primary analysis of the data, some interesting preliminary findings are discussed. Chi-square testing is used to determine if any bivariate relationships exist between the independent variables and the dependent variables used in this research to measure perceptions of the police. The independent variables that were tested for relationships to the dependent variables were gender, race, SIU student, own-rent, social control and integration. Chi-square testing could not be conducted on some of the variables using their current values. Observed cell values in the Chi-square testing that drop below five observations cause cell depletion, and threaten the validity of the results. Before the testing was conducted, five dummy variables were constructed using two independent variables (social control and integration) and the dependent variables (global satisfaction, demeanor and relationship).

Social control is constructed using a 5-item scale score (see chapter 3), and the range of values is 6 to 20. A dummy variable, *socntrl2*, was constructed by recoding social control. Social control values 13.5 through 20 were recoded as “1.” All other cases were recoded as zero (likely as the reference category).

Integration is constructed using a 5-item scale score (see chapter 3), and the range of values is 7 to 20. A dummy variable, *integ8t2*, was constructed by recoding integration. Integration values 13.5 through 20 were recoded as “1,” and all other cases were recoded as zero (agree as the reference category).

The cross tabulation results are located in Table 13 (demeanor), Table 14 (relationship) and Table 15 (global satisfaction). Global satisfaction was measured using one item, and the

range is 3 (from 1 to 4). A dummy variable, *gblsatc*, was constructed by recoding global satisfaction. Global satisfaction values 3 and 4 were recoded to “1,” and all other cases were recoded as zero (satisfied as the reference category).

Demeanor was constructed using a 2-item scale score (see chapter 3), and the range of values is 6 (2 to 8). A dummy variable, *demeanr2*, was constructed by recoding demeanor. Demeanor values 5 through 8 were recoded as “1.” All other cases were recoded as zero (fair-polite as the reference category).

Relationship was constructed using a 3-item scale score (see chapter 3), and the range is 9 (3 to 12). A dummy variable, *relatn2*, was constructed by recoding relationship. Relationship values 8 through 12 were recoded as “1.” All other cases were recoded as zero (agree as the reference category).

Race had significant relationships with all three dependent variables. This finding is consistent with the literature as most studies identify race as a predictor of citizen perceptions of the police. Researchers who first looked into citizen perceptions of the police often used race as a predictor, and at times as the only predictor. Even in the more contemporary studies where the effects of race are lessened or eliminated by controlling for neighborhood characteristics, race can be a predictor when demographic variables alone are tested on the dependent variable (Schafer et al., 2003).

Social control also had a significant relationship with all three dependent variables. People who felt it was more likely than not that their neighbors could be counted on to help control deviant behavior had disproportionately positive perceptions of the police. This finding is also consistent with contemporary research, which has found that neighborhood contextual

effects are among the strongest influences on citizens' perceptions of the police (Cao et al., 1996; Jesilow et al., 1995; Kusow et al., 1997; Schafer et al., 2003).

Own-rent had a significant relationship with global satisfaction and demeanor. Specifically, people who owned their homes were disproportionately more satisfied with the police overall, and had a disproportionately more positive perception of police demeanor than people who did not own their homes. This is consistent with the conclusions of Marenin (1983). People who own their own homes have a greater stake in the community, and have more to lose if the police are unable to protect them. Therefore they are more supportive of the police (wanting the police to succeed) and as a result perceive the police more positively than transient citizens. Own-rent did not have an effect on the dependent variable relationship.

SIU student had a relationship with global satisfaction. SIU students were disproportionately less satisfied with the police than non-students. Gender did not have significant relationships with any of the dependent variables. Integration did not have a relationship with any of the dependent variables either.

Table 13.

Selected independent variables cross-tabulated with outcome variable – demeanor

DV					
DEMEANOR					
	Polite Fair	%	Impolite Unfair	%	Sig
GENDER					0.896
Male	65	83.3%	13	16.7%	
Female	95	82.6%	20	17.4%	
RACE					0.000
White	136	88.3%	18	11.7%	
Non-White	29	65.9%	15	34.1%	
SIU STUDENT					0.077
Student	49	76.6%	15	23.4%	
Non-student	116	86.6%	18	13.4%	
OWN-RENT					0.019
Own	92	89.3%	11	10.7%	
Rent	73	76.8%	22	23.2%	
SOCIAL CONTROL					0.003
Likely	105	89.7%	12	10.3%	
Not likely	59	73.8%	21	26.3%	
INTERGRATION					0.175
Agree	101	86.3%	16	13.7%	
Disagree	64	79.0%	17	21.0%	

Table 14.

Selected independent variables cross-tabulated with outcome variable-relationship

DV					
RELATIONSHIP					
	Agree	%	Disagree	%	Sig
GENDER					0.833
Male	42	47.7%	46	52.3%	
Female	61	49.2%	63	50.8%	
RACE					0.024
White	90	52.9%	80	47.1%	
Non-White	17	34.7%	32	65.3%	
SIU STUDENT					0.422
Student	30	44.8%	37	55.2%	
Non-student	77	50.7%	75	49.3%	
OWN-RENT					0.364
Own	61	51.7%	57	48.3%	
Rent	46	45.5%	55	54.5%	
SOCIAL CONTROL					0.003
Likely	74	57.4%	55	42.6%	
Not likely	32	36.8%	55	63.2%	
INTERGRATION					0.459
Agree	66	51.2%	63	48.8%	
Disagree	41	46.1%	48	53.9%	

Table 15.

Selected independent variables cross-tabulated with outcome variable – global satisfaction

DV					
GLOBAL SATISFACTION					
	Satisfied	%	Dissatisfied	%	Sig
GENDER					0.758
Male	73	83.0%	15	17.0%	
Female	100	81.3%	23	18.7%	
RACE					0.009
White	145	85.3%	25	14.7%	
Non-White	33	68.8%	15	31.3%	
SIU STUDENT					0.000
Student	45	67.2%	22	32.8%	
Non-student	133	88.1%	18	11.9%	
OWN-RENT					0.028
Own	101	87.1%	15	12.9%	
Rent	77	75.5%	25	24.5%	
SOCIAL CONTROL					0.001
Likely	114	89.1%	14	10.9%	
Not likely	62	71.3%	25	28.7%	
INTEGRATION					0.132
Agree	110	85.3%	19	14.7%	
Disagree	68	82.0%	20	22.7%	

A series of ordinary least squares regression models was used to estimate the impact of demographic characteristics, police contact, and neighborhood characteristics on three perceptions of the police outcome measures. Five models were estimated for each of the three outcome measures. Model 1 examined only the demographic influences on the outcome

variable. Model 2 examined only the contact influences on the outcome variable and Model 3 examined only the neighborhood influences on the outcome variable. Model 4 incorporated the contact influences with the demographic influences in an OLS regression using stepwise data entry. Model 5 incorporated the demographic influences, contact influences and the neighborhood influences in an OLS regression using stepwise data entry. The stepwise data entry method allowed the researcher to observe the changes in proportion of variance in the outcome measure attributable to each variable as the additional blocks of variables were added to the model.

The own-rent predictor was included initially, but two factors led to it being excluded from the analyses. Variance inflation factor and tolerance scores in each of the outcome measure regression results indicated the presence of multicollinearity. Examination of correlation tables revealed that own-rent, income and education were highly correlated, and most likely responsible for the unacceptable variance inflation factors and tolerance scores. In addition, own-rent was never significant in any models, while income and education were, so own-rent was dropped from the analysis. The resulting variance inflation factor and tolerance scores were below the levels at which concerns with multicollinearity begin to arise.

Missing values, in some instances as high as 26, were problematic. The total number of respondents was 224, a small sample, and the number of missing values was judged to be too high relative to the small sample. The missing values were replaced with mean values in all cases before the OLS regression models were run.

The results of the 5 demeanor models are reported in Table 16. Older citizens were consistently satisfied with officer demeanor, but the contact influences were the most influential

predictors of perceptions of officer demeanor across all models. All five models were significant ($p < 0.01$). Model 5 had the most explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.330$), followed by Models 4 ($R^2 = 0.298$), 2 ($R^2 = 0.189$), 1 ($R^2 = 0.173$) and 3 ($R^2 = 0.146$). Consistent with the literature, negative interactions with the police produced significant negative effects on citizens' perceptions of the police (Benedict & Brown, 2002; Gallagher et al., 2001; Schafer et al., 2003; Thurman & Reisig, 1996). In model 1, age, white and income were predictors of citizens' perceptions of the police, with age being the strongest predictor followed by income and white. In model 3, social control and integration were both predictors ($p < 0.01$) of citizens' perceptions of officer demeanor. Counter to the Chi-square results earlier in this chapter, integration had a stronger effect than social control on citizens' perceptions of officer demeanor. In model 2, dissatisfied with voluntary contact ($B = -0.252$) had the strongest contact effect on citizen perceptions of the police followed by dissatisfied with involuntary contact ($B = -0.240$). Satisfied with voluntary contact was also a determinant of citizens' perceptions of the police in models 4 and 5, and was the strongest determinant of citizens' perceptions of the police in model 4. This diverges from the findings of Schafer et al. (2003) and Thurman and Reisig (1996) who found contacts that citizens were satisfied with did not correspondingly raise citizens' perceptions of the police.

When the contact influences were added to the demographic influences in model 4 the effect of white diminished and was no longer significant. The effects of age, income and the negative contact influences were also moderated but remained significant. Satisfied-voluntary contact remained effectively at the same level of influence (from $B = 0.225$ to $B = 0.231$), and was the most influential predictor of citizens' perception of officer demeanor in model 4. After the neighborhood influences were added in model 5, the influence of income was reduced and it

was no longer significant. The influences of age, dissatisfied with voluntary and involuntary contact and satisfied with voluntary contact were all reduced but remained predictors of citizens' perception of officer demeanor. Age was the most influential ($B = 0.217$), followed closely by satisfied-voluntary contact ($B = 0.214$), then dissatisfied-involuntary contact ($B = 0.160$) and dissatisfied-voluntary contact ($B = 0.157$). The neighborhood influences were not predictors of citizens' satisfaction with the police. Overall, the most influential predictors of citizens' perceptions of officer demeanor were the contact variables.

Table 16.

Demeanor Models

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	b	B	b	B	B	B	b	B	b	B
Intercept	1.693		6.337**		3.014**		2.398*		0.815	
DEMOGRAPHIC										
VARIABLES										
Income	0.117*	0.189					0.099*	0.160	0.048	0.078
SIU Student	0.306	0.099					0.252	0.082	0.306	0.099
Education	0.074	0.028					0.070	0.026	0.058	0.022
White/Caucasian	0.481*	0.143					0.336	0.100	0.256	0.076
Crime victim	-0.435	-					-0.397	-	-0.412	-
		0.100						0.091		0.094
Political conservatism	0.041	0.058					0.033	0.047	0.041	0.058
Age (natural log)	0.945**	0.266					0.788**	0.222	0.771*	0.217
Male	0.007	0.002					0.113	0.039	0.146	0.050
CONTACT										
VARIABLES										
Satisfied – Voluntary			0.819**	0.225			0.839**	0.231	0.777**	0.214
Dissatisfied – Voluntary			-	-			1.066**	0.176	-0.951*	0.157
Satisfied – Involuntary			-0.029	-			0.200	0.038	0.241	0.046
Dissatisfied – Involuntary			-	-			-1.26**	0.183	-1.10**	0.160
			1.648**	0.240						
NEIGHBORHOOD										
VARIABLES										
Social control					0.095**	0.205			0.050	0.108
Integration					0.138**	0.224			0.080	0.131
R^2	0.173**		0.1898*		0.146**		0.298**		0.330**	

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Politically conservative, white Carbondale residents consistently agreed that the Carbondale Police Department had a good relationship with the community of Carbondale. All 5 relationship models were significant ($p < 0.01$). Conservative political orientation and age were consistently significant in relationship models 1, 4, and 5. Among the contact variables, dissatisfaction-voluntary and dissatisfaction-involuntary were significant in relationship models 2 and 4. Dissatisfaction-voluntary was significant in relationship models 2, 4 and 5. People who were dissatisfied with officer behavior following a contact, regardless of the reason for the contact, did not believe the Carbondale Police had a good relationship with the community. Among the demographic variables political conservatism was the strongest predictor followed by white then crime victim. Citizens who had been the victim of a crime within the last 6 months consistently disagreed that the Carbondale Police had a good relationship with the community they served. These findings are consistent with the literature. In model 3, Integration was the only neighborhood variable that was a predictor of perceptions of the police. People who believed they lived in a close-knit, cohesive neighborhood also agreed that the Carbondale Police had a good relationship with the community. In the integrated model (model 4) the demographic variable block is still the most influential block followed by the contact variable block. The neighborhood variables did moderate the influence of the demographic and contact variables, but they did not exert a significant influence on relationship. In model 5, political conservatism was the most powerful predictor ($B = 0.229$) followed by white ($B = 0.167$). Politically conservative White citizens consistently believed the Carbondale Police enjoyed a good relationship with the

Carbondale community. The significant contact variables included both dissatisfied-voluntary ($B = -0.137$) and dissatisfied-involuntary ($B = -0.150$). Carbondale citizens who had contact with the Carbondale Police in the last 6 months, and who were dissatisfied with the officer behavior after the contact was initiated did not believe the Carbondale Police had a good relationship with the community. The effect of white, which was diminished in effect with the integration of contact and neighborhood influences, was consistent with the literature. Contemporary studies have indicated that when contextual variables (Contact and Neighborhood) are added to the equation the effects of race are often diminished or disappear (Chermak et al., 2001; Gallagher et al., 2001; Hurst and Frank, 2000; Schafer et al., 2003). The effects of police contact were consistent with the literature. People who were dissatisfied with officer behavior after a stop had poorer perceptions of the police than their fellow citizens (Schafer et al., 2003; Thurman and Reisig, 1996). Also consistent with the literature (Schafer et al., 2003), being satisfied with the officer conduct did not cause a corresponding rise in perceptions of the police. The results for the relationship models are reported in Table 17.

Table 17.

Relationship Models

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	b	B	b	B	B	B	b	B	b	B
Intercept	3.396*		7.658		4.822		4.027**		2.719	
DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES										
Income	0.105	0.147					0.095	0.134	0.055	0.078
SIU Student	0.258	0.073					0.305	0.086	0.349	0.098
Education	0.022	0.007					0.000	0.000	-0.003	-0.001
White/Caucasian	0.790**	0.204					0.700**	0.181	0.647**	0.167
Crime victim	-0.782*	-0.156					-0.556	-0.111	-0.570	-0.114
Political conservatism	0.194**	0.239					0.180**	0.221	0.186**	0.229
Age (natural log)	0.572	0.140					0.473	0.116	0.453	0.111
Male	0.006	0.002					0.089	0.026	0.122	0.036
CONTACT VARIABLES										
Satisfied – Voluntary			-0.061	-0.014			-0.002	-0.001	-0.044	-0.011
Dissatisfied – Voluntary			-1.608**	-0.230			-1.060*	-0.152	-0.958*	-0.137
Satisfied – Involuntary			-0.231	-0.038			-0.042	-0.007	-0.011	-0.002
Dissatisfied – Involuntary			-1.689**	-0.214			-1.312	-0.166	-1.183*	-0.150
NEIGHBORHOOD VARIABLES										
Social control					0.063	0.117			0.026	0.049
Integration					0.122*	0.173			0.081	0.114
R^2	0.176**		0.101**		0.059**		0.222**		0.238**	

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

Overall, white, politically conservative Carbondale residents had the most positive perceptions of the police. White, political conservatism, and age were predictors in Model 1 (demographic influences) of the global satisfaction outcome measure. Age had the strongest effect followed by political conservatism and then white. Older people were more satisfied with the police overall than younger people. Conservatives were more satisfied than liberals and Whites were more satisfied than non-Whites. Dissatisfied-voluntary and dissatisfied-involuntary were predictors of global satisfaction in Model 2. People who were dissatisfied with voluntary contact were more dissatisfied with the police overall than were people who were dissatisfied with involuntary contact. Model 3 assessed the effect of the two neighborhood characteristics, social control and integration. Social control had an effect that was very close to significant ($p = 0.054$), while integration did not ($p = 0.141$). This is consistent with the Chi-square results recorded earlier in this chapter. Global satisfaction model 5 ($R^2 = 0.258$) had the most explanatory power, followed by global satisfaction model 4 ($R^2 = 0.253$).

The contact influences block is added to the regression in model 4, after which changes are observed. Overall, the strengths of the predictors are lessened. The effects of white are no longer significant ($p = 0.074$). The effects of political conservatism and age are still significant, but the strength of their influences has been moderated by the introduction of the contact variables. The demographic variables also moderate the effects of the significant contact influences (dissatisfied voluntary and dissatisfied involuntary). When the neighborhood influences block are added to the model in step 3 the effects of the significant demographic variables (age, political conservatism) and the

significant contact variables remain relatively unchanged. The R^2 increases very little in step 3 from $R^2 = 0.253$ in step 2 to $R^2 = 0.258$. The effects of the neighborhood variables (social control and integration) are weakened relative to their effects in model 3 (see Table 18).

As each block of variables is added to the equation, the effects of all variables are moderated relative to their effects in models 4 and 5. The results of model 5 show age ($B = 0.222$) is the strongest predictor of global satisfaction with the police. The next most influential predictors of global satisfaction with the police are people who were dissatisfied with the police behavior after a voluntary contact ($B = -0.194$) and people who were dissatisfied with the police behavior after an involuntary contact ($B = -0.172$). Political conservatism ($B = 0.167$) was the last predictor of overall satisfaction with the police. The results of the global satisfaction are reported in Table 18.

Table 18.

Global Satisfaction Models

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	b	B	b	B	B	B	b	B	b	B
Intercept	.124		3.082**		1.722*		0.528		0.237	
DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES										
Income	0.049	0.128					0.041	0.106	0.030	0.078
SIU Student	0.095	0.049					0.100	0.052	0.110	0.057
Education	0.013	0.008					0.003	0.002	-0.003	-0.002
White/Caucasian	0.307*	0.147					0.235	0.112	0.212	0.101
Crime victim	-0.277	-0.102					-0.164	-0.060	-0.165	-0.061
Political conservatism	0.080**	0.181					0.072**	0.163	0.073**	0.167
Age (natural log)	0.560**	.253					0.489**	0.221	0.490**	0.222
Male	0.055	0.030					0.110	0.060	0.111	0.061
CONTACT VARIABLES										
Satisfied – Voluntary			0.160	0.017			0.176	0.078	0.159	0.070
Dissatisfied – Voluntary			-1.004**	-0.266			-0.751**	-0.199	-0.735**	-0.194
Satisfied – Involuntary			-0.054	-0.016			0.073	0.023	0.083	0.025
Dissatisfied – Involuntary			-1.014**	-0.237			-0.770**	-0.180	-0.738**	-0.172
NEIGHBORHOOD VARIABLES										
Social control					0.045	0.155			0.020	0.068
Integration					0.045	0.119			0.005	0.014
R^2		0.175**		0.140**		0.060**		0.253**		0.258**

* $p < 0.05$ ** $p < 0.01$

This research has analyzed the data with Chi-square and OLS regression analyses. Chi-square analyses were used to determine if any bivariate relationships existed between the predictors and outcome measures. The Chi-square statistics indicated that white has a significant relationship with all of the outcome measures (global satisfaction, demeanor and relationship). Previous research (Hurst et al., 2000) identified race as a consistent predictor of perceptions of the police. Hurst et al. (2000) discovered significant differences between perceptions of the police held by African American youth and White youth using a series of Chi-square tests. Social control also had a significant relationship with all three dependent variables. Previous researchers (Cao et al., 1996; Jesilow et al., 1995; Kusow et al., 1997; Schafer et al., 2003) have documented the significant relationship neighborhood characteristics have with perceptions of the police. Similar to the findings of Marenin (1983), Chi-square test results in this study determined own-rent had a significant relationship with global satisfaction and demeanor. SIU student had a relationship with global satisfaction, reporting significantly less satisfied perceptions of the police than non-students, while gender and integration had no significant relationships with the outcome measures.

A series of OLS regression models were then used to estimate the effects the demographic characteristics, police contact and neighborhood characteristics had on the outcome measures. Five regression models were run on each outcome measure: the first three models were of the variables blocks (demographics, contact, neighborhood) regressed independently on the outcome measure. The last two models were integrated models. Model 4 utilized stepwise variable entry wherein the demographic variables were entered, then the contact variables were entered. Model 5 was the most complex integrated model, utilizing stepwise variable entry

wherein the demographic variables, then contact variables, then neighborhood variables were entered. Each independent variable was entered into 3 of the 5 regression models run on each of the outcome measures (global satisfaction, demeanor, relationship). Age was a predictor of perceptions of the police in 6 (demeanor and global satisfaction) of the 9 models it was included in. The research of Brown and Benedict (2002), Correia et al. (1996), Decker (1981), Jesilow et al. (1995), Kusow et al. (1997), Marenin (1983), Reisig and Parks (2000), Schafer et al. (2003), Thomas and Hyman (1977) and Thurman and Reisig (1996) conclude that age is a predictor of perceptions of the police. Political conservatism was also a predictor of perceptions of the police in 6 (relationship and global satisfaction) of the 9 models it was included in. Marenin (1983) identified a conservative, law-and-order, political ideology as a strong predictor of positive perceptions of the police, but Cao et al. (1996) found a conservative ideology was not a predictor. The police contact influences were predictors across all 12 models they were included in, specifically the dissatisfied-voluntary and the dissatisfied-involuntary. Dissatisfied-voluntary and dissatisfied-involuntary were strong predictors of negative perceptions of the police. The literature indicates the negative contacts with the police will lower citizens' perceptions of the police (Benedict & Brown, 2002; Gallagher et al., 2001; Schafer et al., 2003; Thurman & Reisig, 1996), but positive contacts with the police generally have no effect (Schafer et al., 2003; Thurman & Reisig, 1996). In this study, satisfied with voluntary contact was a predictor of positive perceptions of the police in 3 (demeanor) of the 12 models it was included in, which is counter to the findings of Schafer et al. (2003) and Thurman and Reisig (1996). In contrast to the recent research that identifies neighborhood influences as very powerful predictors of perceptions of the police (Cao et al., 1996; Jesilow et al., 1995; Schafer et al.,

2003), social control and integration were predictors in only 2 of the 12 models, and were not significant in any of the integrated (stepwise variable entry) regression models.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine what influences have the greatest effect on the citizens of Carbondale's perception of the police and police services. It was reasoned that the discovery of the more powerful influences effecting public's perception of the police could lead to a better working relationship between the public and the police. Research by (Gallagher et al., 2001; Jesilow et al., 1995) has indicated that if the public has a negative perception of the police, they will be less inclined to cooperate with the police. An antagonistic relationship, compared to a harmonious relationship, between the public and the police could lead the police to expend extra resources to perform their duties. This study found that as a person increased in age, their perceptions of the police increased as well. This study also found that a political orientation toward conservatism tended to indicate a more positive perception of the police. This study also found that white citizens tended to have better perceptions of the police than non-white citizens. On the other side of the continuum, police behavior has the potential for effecting citizen's perceptions of the police. Specifically, if the police acted in such a way that left the person they contacted dissatisfied, regardless of the reason for the contact, that person left the encounter with a significantly lower perception of the police. This chapter will be devoted to discussing the hypotheses tested by this research, the implications of the findings of the research, and the implications for future research into the public's perceptions of the police.

The objective of this study was to examine the effects of demographic influences, police contact influences and neighborhood influences on global satisfaction, relationship and

demeanor, three dimensions of citizen perceptions of the police. To examine the predictor effects on the outcome measures, three hypotheses were tested: First, neighborhood characteristics would be the most influential predictors of citizen perceptions of the Carbondale police. Second, the effects of race would be diminished when additional predictors were added to the predictive models. Third, that dissatisfaction with police behavior after a contact, regardless of the reason for the contact, would be a predictor of citizen perceptions of the police, but that satisfaction with police behavior after a contact would have no effect.

This study's first hypothesis predicted that neighborhood characteristics would be the strongest predictor of citizen perceptions of the police in this study. The basis for this hypothesis has support in the literature. The findings of Cao et al. (1996), Jesilow et al. (1995) and Schafer et al. (2003) concluded that neighborhood characteristics are among the strongest predictors of citizens' perceptions of the police. This study did not find that to be true; the neighborhood variables (social control and integration) were not predictors of perceptions of the police in any of the integrated (stepwise) predictive models. This is not to say that the neighborhood variables had no influence, because they clearly did. When the neighborhood variables were introduced into the integrated models the effects of the demographic and contact influences were moderated, but the percentage of variance the neighborhood variables were responsible for was not significant.

One possible explanation for the divergent findings is the way in which neighborhood characteristics were operationalized. This study replicated measures used by Morenoff et al. (2001) and Sampson et al. (1997) to represent neighborhood characteristics. Morenoff et al. (2001) and Sampson et al. (1997) used the measures to represent collective efficacy. They

(Morenoff et al., 2001 and Sampson et al., 1997) observed that higher levels of collective efficacy in a neighborhood were a predictor of lower levels of interpersonal violence. The first hypothesis of this study stated that neighborhood characteristics would be the strongest predictors of citizens' perceptions of the police, and therein lays a possible problem. This study used a measure that effectively predicts a concept (levels of interpersonal violence) that is smaller in scope than citizens' perceptions of the police and neighborhood characteristics. For example, levels of interpersonal violent crime (homicide, assault) have been used, as a small part, as predictors of citizens' perceptions of the police.

Schafer et al. (2003) used five measures to represent the concept of neighborhood characteristics: quality of life, perceptions of major crime, community culture, neighborhood assessment and personal crime rate. Perceptions of major crime, which could include homicides and violent assaults, is one item in a 7-item factor score used to measure quality of life. Quality of life is just one item in one dimension of five dimensions that Schafer et al. (2003) has used to measure neighborhood influences. As perceptions of violent crime increased (1 factor of 7), the perceptions of quality of life decreased (1 predictor of 5 that represent neighborhood influences). As quality of life decreases, negative effects increase on perceptions of the police when the neighborhood influences block is added to the model. Thus, neighborhood characteristics as measured in this study might be more appropriate to predict the more focused, smaller in scope, concept levels of violent crime rather than the broader concept citizens' perceptions of the police. The notion that this study's neighborhood influences are better utilized to predict a concept that is narrower in focus than perceptions of the police gives rise to another possible problem. If the neighborhood influences are really measuring a narrower concept than

previously predicted, what dimensions of the outcome measures have this study missed? Has this study measured a portion of the target concept that is too small in scope to yield the expected results, or a portion of another concept all together? Some examples taken from Schafer et al. (2003) include personal crime rate, major crime, and quality of life. Including these dimensions of neighborhood influences could possibly produce results that more closely match the current literature.

Ordinary Least Squares regression models revealed race was a predictor on all outcome measures when demographics alone were tested on the outcome measure, Whites had significantly higher perceptions of the police than non-whites. In a comparison of means using Chi-square testing, race had a significant relationship with all outcome measures. Whites again had significantly more positive perceptions than non-whites. But, once contact and neighborhood influences were controlled for on the global satisfaction and demeanor outcome measures, racial differences disappeared. This finding is supported by the research of Chermak et al. (2001), Gallagher et al. (2001), Hurst and Frank (2000) and Schafer et al. (2003) who found that when neighborhood influences are controlled for, racial differences in the perceptions of the police are diminished. In a slightly divergent finding, race remained significant ($p < 0.01$), though it was still diminished by the addition of the contextual influences, in the relationship model. This finding might be in part the result of deficiencies in this study's neighborhood measures (previously discussed). An examination of the predictive power in the integrated models revealed a pattern across all the outcome measures; the increase in R^2 is much greater after adding the contact influences than when the neighborhood influences are added. The average increase in R^2 across the three models attributed to the addition of the contact influences

is 47.65%. The average increase in R^2 across the three models attributed to the neighborhood influences is 6.64%. The contact influences increased the R^2 of the models on average more than 7 times the amount of neighborhood influences. The significant racial influence also occurred in the relationship model, the model that had the least explanatory power (Relationship/ $R^2 = 0.238$; Global satisfaction/ $R^2 = 0.258$; Demeanor/ $R^2 = 0.330$). Even though the contextual influences affected the models as predicted, the combination of a deficient neighborhood influence and the weakest predictive model might have allowed racial influences to remain significant despite being diminished.

Police contact had the hypothesized effect with one exception; in the demeanor model, satisfied-voluntary remained significant ($p < 0.01$) across all demeanor models. The departure from previous findings again is probably due to this study's outcome measures. Satisfied-voluntary was never significant in the global satisfaction models or the relationship models, and thus had the hypothesized effect; satisfied-voluntary was significant only in the demeanor model. What is it generally that would leave a person satisfied with a contact? The literature mentions such actions as having the reason for a contact satisfactorily explained by the police officer, which could mean being treated fairly, or politely. The demeanor outcome measure was constructed using a two-item scale score (see Table 3), wherein the main terms used were "fair" and "polite." The frequencies for polite (77.7%) and fair (73.1%) were largely positive. Perhaps the respondents who were satisfied with a voluntary police contact were more inclined to indicate the police treated people fairly and politely.

The contact variable dissatisfied-voluntary was significant in all models (9). Dissatisfied-involuntary was significant in 8 of 9 models. In the 4th model of the relationship outcome,

dissatisfied-involuntary was not a predictor, but in the 5th model of the relationship outcome it was again significant.

Based on the findings of this study, the primary policy issue the Carbondale police department should address is officer conduct. Specifically, officer conduct during contacts with the public. The most consistently negative influence on the Carbondale citizens' perception of the Carbondale police arises directly from the conduct of the police. If the people contacted by the police are not satisfied with how they were treated by the contacting officer, their global perception of the Carbondale police suffered. The consequences of the public having negative perceptions of the police have been discussed previously in this research. In addition to working with the officers who have direct contact with the public to enhance the officer's conduct, the department should implement a policy that allows the people of Carbondale to lodge complaints when they are not satisfied with an encounter with a Carbondale officer. Further, the complaint system must have the confidence of the public.

Since this study did not observe any significant influence of neighborhood characteristics no policy recommendations based on neighborhood influences will be made. However, neighborhood influences have been found to be predictors of citizens' perceptions of the police by other studies (Cao et al., 1996; Jesilow et al., 1995; Schafer et al., 2003). This study has also discussed possible flaws in the outcome measures of neighborhood characteristics used in this study. When the flaws in this study's measures of neighborhood characteristics are considered in the light of the findings of previous research it would not be prudent to declare that neighborhood influences were not present in the Carbondale community. In fact, the findings concerning police contacts, and the need for improved officer conduct suggests that a

Community Oriented Policing model might benefit the Carbondale community. Community Oriented Policing programs lead citizens to feel safer, report increased quality of life, and increase positive perceptions of how the police are performing their duties and interacting with the public (Park 1992).

Future research into discerning the predictors of citizens' perceptions of the police would require measures that accurately and adequately measured neighborhood characteristics. Because of the importance of neighborhood influences in identifying the determinants of citizen perceptions of the police, studies such as Reisig and Parks (2000), Schafer et al. (2003), Weitzer (2000) and Weitzer and Tuch (1999) have devoted considerable time and effort in analyzing the effects neighborhood characteristics on perceptions of the police. Human culture seems to be centered around the generic concept of "neighborhood." Early civilizations had smaller agrarian neighborhoods or towns. Larger city-sized neighborhoods, made up of a collection of neighborhoods divided along class and ethnic lines, developed with the industrial age. People have gathered together for fellowship and protection from the beginnings of man; it is no surprise that neighborhoods are important in people's lives. Police departments that understand the importance of neighborhood influences, and develop policy to address the notion that neighborhood influences are important determinants in how the public perceives them could find they can perform police functions more efficiently and effectively with fewer resources than previously believed necessary.

Another area of research that bears scrutiny is the police contact influence. Why do contacts that a citizen is dissatisfied with lead to negative perceptions of the police, yet contacts that satisfy the citizen do not lead to corresponding positive perceptions? This consistent finding

suggests that the public expects a certain level of professionalism and courtesy from the police, and when those expectations are met the people apparently do not feel it necessary to reward the police for fulfilling their mission. On the other hand, if the police fall below the public's expectations, the public responds with negative sentiment. Future research should seek to ascertain what the public expects from their encounters with the police, as this information could be valuable in shaping policy that yielded long-term returns in the form of public cooperation and support for the police.

Other researchers should heed the limitations of this study before seeking to generalize it to other populations or place. One limitation is the size of the community studied; Carbondale is a medium-sized community. The results from this study may not be generalizable to larger urban areas, to smaller cities, to other medium-sized communities or smaller communities.

The telephone survey began during the summer months, a time when a large portion of the SIU student population left the area in order to take a summer break between semesters. A substantial portion of the Carbondale population is students, and as a result of when the survey took place, the students may be underrepresented in the sample. In addition, most of the respondents were either older adults or younger adults (respondents had to be at least 18 years old), so the middle age group of Carbondale citizens appears to be under represented as well.

The cross-sectional study design yields a static observation of the respondents interviewed, and opinions may differ over time or in relation to current events. Thus, variables that are time-order dependent are difficult, even impossible to discern (Bachman and Schutt, 2001). Telephone surveys are susceptible to selection bias; the survey automatically excludes people who choose to not list their numbers and those who have no phone. In addition,

telemarketers, caller I.D., and answering machines has made it difficult to get a respondent on the line.

Research into citizens' perceptions of the police is nearly a century old, and we still have a long way to go in determining what the police need to do, in policy and practice, to perform their duties and maintain a harmonious relationship with the people they serve. Perhaps it is not possible to achieve a harmonious existence between the police and the public given that the police enforce rules and regulations. But there seems to be room for improvement, and only through research can we determine what is the best way for the police to achieve their mission and get along with the public at the same time.

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