

POLICE BRUTALITY- African American and Police Brutality in America

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NAME

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ABSTRACT

Police brutality in the United States is described as the unjustifiable or excessive and often time unlawful use of force against civilians by police officers. These types of actions by police is considered brutality and have ranged from assault and battery (beatings) to disorder, cruelty, and often times murder. Some plainer definitions of police brutality also includes harassment (false arrest), coercion, and verbal abuse, among other practises of maltreatment. In the United States, use of deadly force by police is a very controversial and high profile issue. While there is no inclusive government data available on killings by police officers in the U.S. according to the Washington Post, in 2019, 1,004 people were shot and killed by police. The FBI, which assembles crime data, has made it compulsory for local police to postulate the FBI with comprehensive data on their use of deadly force. Efforts from various news organizations and other civil rights and advocacy movements such as the Washington post and Mapping Police Violence has opted to gather data but throughout these datasets, the numbers tell the similar tales: Despite formulating merely 12% of the populace in America, Black Americans are the most likely to be executed by the police. Since the Washington Post commenced tracking lethal police shootings, the frequency remains steady, with around 1,000 African Americans dying every year too police brutality. And shocking too many, 99% of these instances never result in criminal charges against the police officers involved and the public opinion on police brutality have shifted drastically. Majority of public favours giving civilians the power to sue police officers for misconduct and two thirds of Americans believe there is a severe problem with police brutality amongst the African American communities.

INTRODUCTION

Americans of all gender, ages, classes, races and ethnicities have been subjected to police brutality. Leet's analyses the late 19th and early 20th centuries, underprivileged and working-class whites conveyed frustration over biased policing in northerly cities. During this period, the Jewish and other migrants from eastern and southern areas also criticized police cruelty against members of their communities. In the 1920s many metropolitan police departments, particularly in enormous cities such as Chicago and New York used extra-legal tactics against members of the Italian-immigrant societies in efforts to put a stop to what was described as organized crime. In 1943 policemen of the Los Angeles Police Department were found to be guilty of attacks on Mexican Americans during the so-called Zoot Suit Riots, highlighting the division's history of aggression toward Hispanics (Latinos). There was also constant aggravation of homosexuals and transgender people by police in New York City around 1969 in the Stonewall riots, which were caused as a result of police officers targeting gay bars; There was vast protest which led the international gay rights movement. In the aftermath 9/11 attacks on Muslim Americans began rapidly and this group voiced grievances about police brutality which of course included not just harassment but also racial profiling and assault. However, despite the variety among these factions that have been targeted by police and experienced police brutality in the United States, the great majority of victims have been African American. In the estimating of some data and activist and other social and legal experts, a key cause clarifying the predominance of African Americans amongst victims of police brutality is antiblack bigotry amongst members of commonly white police departments. Similar biases are thought to have played a role in police cruelty launched against other subjugated or ostracized members of society. While racism plays

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a pivotal role in the major cause of police brutality focused at African Americans and other ethnic members of society, it is not the only reason. Other factors speak to the unique institutional culture of urban police departments, which emphasizes assemblage camaraderie, loyalty, and a what is deemed as a firm hand tactic to address any seemingly defiance to a police officer's authority. For most new police officers adapting and being a team player is vital to one's success in a police department and to one's identity as an officer and as a result, these new officers adopts these values, attitudes, and practices which traditionally have been instilled with antiblack racism. Because African Americans have been the main target of police brutality in the United States, over the years controversy surrounding this topic. Public opinion has shifted and The national survey, conducted June 16-22 among 4,708 adults using Pew Research Centre's American Trends Panel, finds that the public's evaluations of police performance in several key areas have declined since the Centre last explored attitudes among police officers and the public in 2016 will examine the public perception on this issue.

Police Brutality and Race Riots-Background

Since the 1960s, police brutality was a facilitator for a lot of the race riots; riots that resulted from racial conflicts that took place in metropolitan areas in America such as the Detroit Riot in 1967 and the Watts Riots in 1965 and the Detroit Riot of 1967. The Liberty City area of Miami exploded in the 1980's due to a police officer killing an unarmed African American man. Within three days of the eruption, 18 people were killed, millions in property damage and about 1,000 were arrested. About 12 years later Los Angeles police officers with the use of deadly weapons, gave an African American man by the name of Rodney King a brutal beat down publicly, and what followed was charges of assault filed against these officers for excessive use of force and these charges was acquitted, triggering what was known as the Los Angeles Riots of 1992, which is to this day still considered the worst race riots in American history. With a period of about 6 days, 2,300 people were injured, billions in property damage and about 50 people were killed. In 2013, a white neighbourhood watch volunteer in Sanford, Florida, George Zimmerman was arrested and charged with 2nd degree murder and manslaughter for killing an Unarmed Black Teenage boy, Trayvon Martin, which led to the founding of an influential social movement, Black Lives Matter. The movement successively played a prominent role in nationwide demonstrations following severe acts of police callousness against African Americans. Zimmerman was acquitted. Michael Brown, a 14 year old African American, unarmed teenage boy was shot and killed by a white police officer in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014. This was also followed by charges being filed against the officer who was also acquitted and what followed was another riot. The following year, 2015, there was another race riot along with peaceful demonstration as a result of the death of Freddie Gray in Baltimore, Maryland. Freddie was an African American who died while in

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police custody. Fast forward to 2020, George Floyd an African American man killed by police officers during an arrest in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The officer involved in his death was fired but charges were dropped and he was not prosecuted.

Americans' opinions about police brutality

Approximately half of Americans nowadays believe police violence against the public is a grave problem, up from a third, according to a poll. Public opinion is described as being tacit and dynamic due to its ever-changing nature. Following George Floyd's death, Americans' opinions concerning police callousness and racial injustice have shifted dramatically. The poll was conducted by The Associated Press-NORC Centre for Public Affairs Research. According to the poll, only about a third said the same as in September 2019, as well as in July 2015, a few months after Freddie Gray, the African American man that died in police care in Baltimore. In the case of George Floyd, the African American man, died on May 25 after Derek Chauvin, a white Minneapolis police officer hard-pressed his knee into Floyd's neck for approximately eight minutes until he was unresponsive led to protests nationwide.

The current changes in public opinion is unique and has a result pops out due to the fact that when compared to previous studies and survey that was done as a result of comparable killings of Black individuals by police. When compared to other social issues within society such as same sex marriage, this change in public opinion is dissimilar from the sluggish and sturdy movement about same sex marriage. According to the Washington Post, compared to 2015 there are more Americans who say that police use deadly force in most African American community than they would in a white or suburban community. The data revealed 61% today compared too the 49% in 2015; with just about a third of Americans believe that the skin colour of a person of a person does not make a difference when it comes onto to officers using deadly force, compared to about

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a half in 2015 and 65% of Americans claim that injuries and deaths sustained by police officers during an arrest or interaction is treated too nonchalant and a lot of lenience is given to the officers involved by the justice system as opposed to 41% in 2015. Less Americans believe that police are treated fairly or harshly. The recent polls, 2018 General Society Survey shows that there is change in the public attitude concerning race interactions. Within this poll, 52% of Americans believe that the nation devotes too little on cultivating conditions of Black Americans which differs significantly from 30% in 2014 and result reflected individuals beliefs from both the Republicans and Democrats party. The poll also indicated that a lot more Americans state that the racial inequalities in livelihood, education and lodging leads to discrimination.

Police views, public views

The public and police officers have very different views as it relates to crucial aspects of policing as well as on some main strategic issues confronting the country. For example, most police officers agree that they need more officers in order to sufficiently patrol their communities, while the majority of the public seems to disagree with this notion. A lot of officers are also against the banning of assault weapon despite the public believing that these assault weapons are contributing factors to fatal police interactions. 8 in 10 Police officers are also pressing the issue that the public does not understand the risk and danger associated with doing their jobs and what they require to do it effectively, while the same majority of the public believe they do. Two surveys was conducted by the PEW Research Centre, one of 7,917 affirmed police officers conducted online May 19-Aug. 14, 2016, and the other a nationwide illustrative survey of 4,538 adults conducted Aug. 16-Sept. 12, 2016, by both mail and online. These surveys comprised of a number of identically articulated questions, which permitted undeviating comparisons of how the public and officers see the role of the police officers within their neighbourhoods and how they

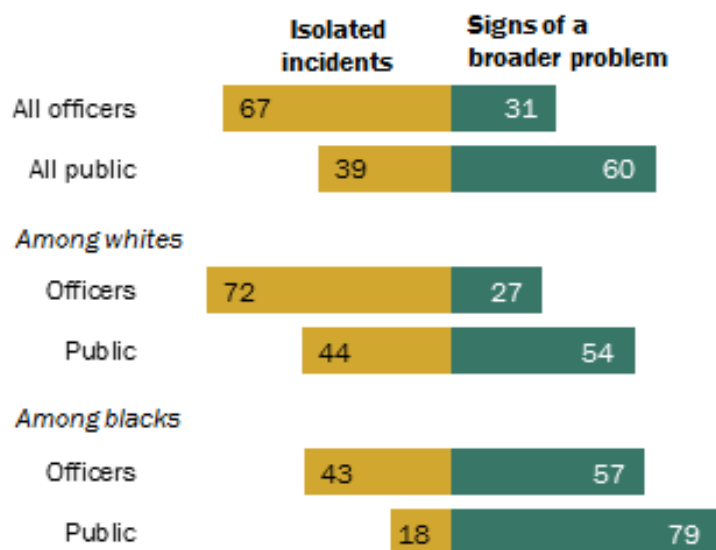
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view deaths of African Americans during encounters with white police officers, as well as their views on policies such as gun control, body cameras worn by police officers and racial progress with the police departments culture.

What the data say;

Police, public differ on perceptions of deadly black-police encounters

% saying the deaths of blacks during encounters with police in recent years are ...



Note: No answer category not shown. Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics.
Source: Survey of law enforcement officers conducted May 19-Aug. 14, 2016; survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 16-Sept. 12, 2016. "Behind the Badge"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Fig 1.

Some of the highlighted differences among police officers and the public in terms of views, is due to varying views on the deaths of African Americans when interacting with police officers, which has resulted in protest over the years. Let's analyze the following example based on Figure 1. 67% of police officers but only 39% of the public describes the is fatal interactions between a

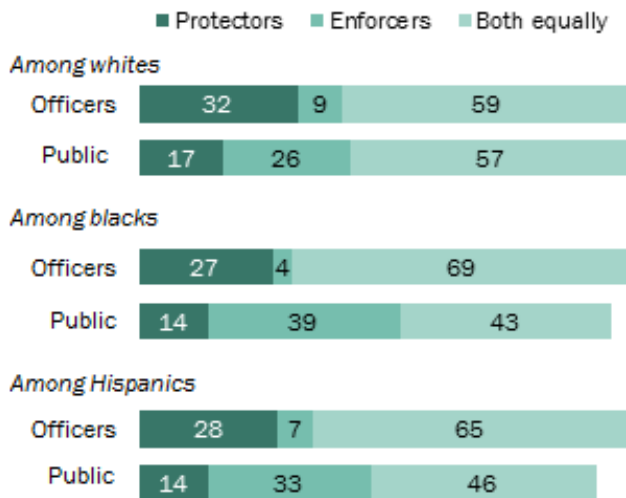
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police officer and an African American as isolated incidents rather than it being a large problem for police officers and African Americans. Analyzing this overall finding by race, one can clearly see that 7 in 10 white officers which is approximately 72% but fewer than half of all African American police officers sees these encounters as isolated incidents. By contrast, majorities of black officers (57%) as well as the public overall (60%) also agree that these fatal incidents are huge problem for the black community as well as for police officers.

When the topic most forward to racial progression, it's a large difference again between the views of the police officers and the views of the public as well as the views amongst blacks and whites from each faction. When analyze carefully you see that when both a police officer and the public is asked if the country has made changes that are in line with giving African-American equal rights with whites about 8 in 10 police officers which contributes of 92% white and 8% African Americans officers stated that, yes the change has been made. While a little under a half (48%) of the public, including 57% of whites but only 12% of blacks, the country has made some changes but more needs to be done for the black community as it relates to the police culture and police violence towards this minority group.

Among blacks, police and public have different views of role of police

% saying they see themselves/see their local police more as ...



Note: No answer category not shown. Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.
 Source: Survey of law enforcement officers conducted May 19-Aug. 14, 2016; survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 16-Sept. 12, 2016. "Behind the Badge"

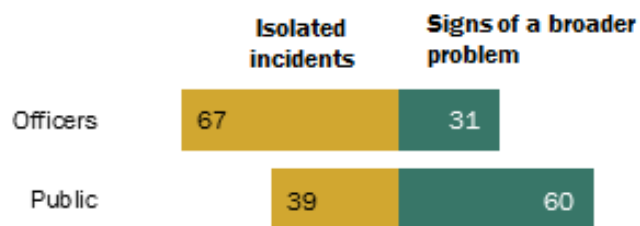
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Fig 2.

Figure 2. Shows the disparity over how the public opinions of police and how officers perceive their role is partly clarified by race. African Americans tend to have interactions and see their local law enforcement officers who are white more (39% vs. 26%) and the African-American community tends to see these officers as enforcers as a post to protectors (43% vs. 57%). While other minority groups such as 46% oof Hispanics adults tend to see police officers in their community as both enforces and protectors with 33% viewing them as enforcers and 14% as protectors. With Hispanic officers about 65% which is about 2/3 see their roles as protector and enforcer with about 7% saying that they are enforcers and 28% considering themselves as protectors.

Majority of police say fatal police-black encounters are isolated incidents; majority of the public says the encounters point to a bigger problem

% saying the deaths of blacks during encounters with police in recent years are ...



Note: No answer category not shown.

Source: Survey of law enforcement officers conducted May 19-Aug. 14, 2016; survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 16-Sept. 12, 2016. "Behind the Badge"

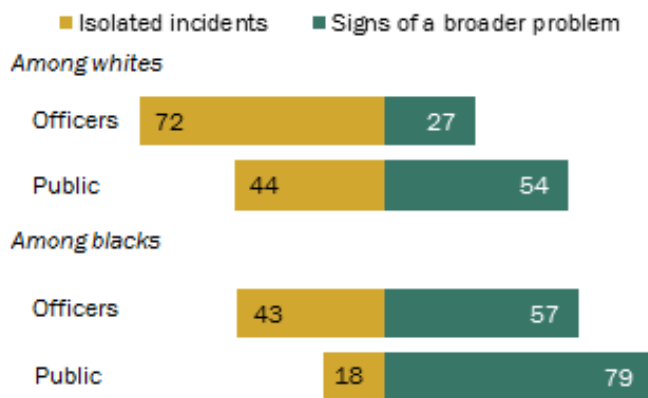
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Fig 3.

Figure 3 illustrates how the police and the public would describe recent fatal shootings of African Americans and police in varying ways. About 2/3 of police officers which is about 67% claim that these incidents are not related but rather isolated incidents while about three and 10 which is about 31% claim that there is a severe problem when it comes onto law and the African American community. As it relates to the public, their opinion about these incidents is that six and 10 states that these encounters show that there is a severe problem with 39% agreeing with police officers who describes these incidents as isolated incidents.

Large racial differences on perceptions of deadly black-police encounters among police, the public

% saying the deaths of blacks during encounters with police in recent years are ...



Note: No answer category not shown. Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics.
Source: Survey of law enforcement officers conducted May 19-Aug. 14, 2016; survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 16-Sept. 12, 2016. "Behind the Badge"

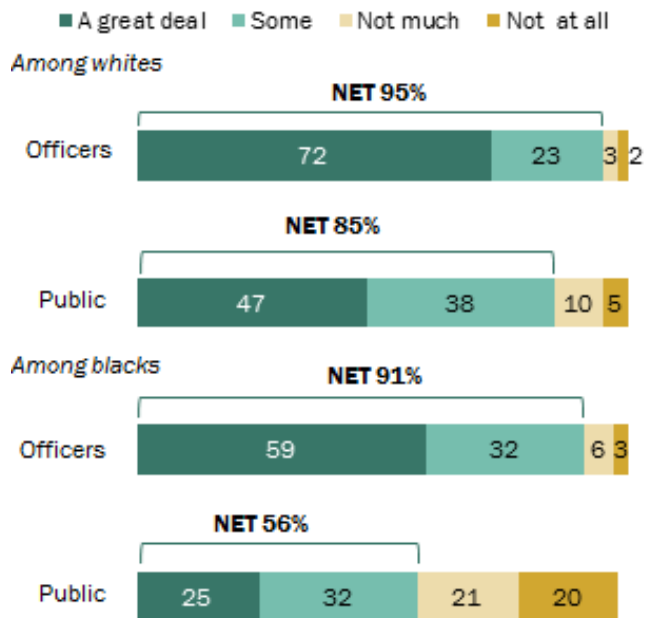
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Fig 4.

Figure 4 shows the racial differences and perceptions of deadly black police involved shooting and the public's view. But African-American and white police officers view these incidents very differently, similarly to whites and blacks in the general public. If we analyze figure 4 will see that about seven in 10 white police officers which is about 72% and about 44% of whites state that these little black police involved shootings are isolated by contrast about four in 10 black officers which is about 43% and 18 of African-American officers also agree with this view. However black officers are twice as likely as black African-American civilians to agree that these encounters can be considered isolated incident (43% vs. 18%). And while a slender majority of black officers (57%) say these officers involved killings points to a larger problem, African-Americans overall is off the public opinion (73%) that is points to a larger problem as well.

Many blacks and whites say anti-police bias is a protest motive

% saying protests over deaths of blacks who died during encounters with the police are motivated ___ by long-standing bias against the police



Note: No answer category not shown. NETs calculated before rounding. Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics. Source: Survey of law enforcement officers conducted May 19-Aug. 14, 2016; survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 16-Sept. 12, 2016. "Behind the Badge"

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Fig 5

As mentioned earlier there is usually large protest that ensues after an African American is killed by a law enforcement officer. Figure 5 highlights the large majority of police as well as the public I agree that anti-police bias was at least a component behind these protest. About nine-in-ten officers (92%) state that the protests were encouraged by bias toward the police, including 68% which attribute this protest towards anti-police bias. 79% majority of the public agrees that Dear is prejudice against police when it comes on today’s protest but only 41 percent believe that it is the major motivation. Another factor to take into consideration which seems to be a familial

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pattern, African-American and white police officers tend to differ somewhat on the motives of the protesters. Nine-in-ten white officers (95%) and 85% of whites nationally say the protests are motivated at least somewhat by anti-police bias. Underlying this diffident variance is the much larger share of white officers who feel that long-standing hostility regarding police officers is a great deal of the protesters' motivation (72% of white officers vs. 47% for all whites). Among blacks, the discrepancy between police and the public is even larger than it is among whites. About nine-in-ten black officers (91%) say anti-police positions are a motive for the protests. By contrast, 56% of blacks generally share this view.

CONCLUSION

The dataset shows that the risk of being killed by police is conjointly patterned by one's gender, race, and age. Police violence is a prominent cause of death for young men, especially those men of colour, whom are more likely to be killed by police.

Inequalities in risk are pronounced throughout the life course. This data set above indicates that Racially unequal exposure to the risk of state violence has profound consequences for public health, democracy, and racial stratification. Results should be interpreted with several considerations in mind. While the methods used in this paper are taken from third party researchers, for nationally precise age, race, and gender- specific mortality estimates, they may mask important subnational variation and changes in risk over time. The national survey, conducted June 16-22 among 4,708 adults using Pew Research Centre's American Trends Panel, discovers that the public's assessments of police functioning in several key areas have declined . Americans believe that police performance has lowered in the last four years and substantial racial and parts of sins is within the police culture and it attributes to these decline which are mainly seen amongst Black adults when interacting

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with police officers. The share of white Americans who say police are doing an excellent or good job of holding officers accountable for misconduct has fallen from half in 2016 to about one-third today (34%). Majority of the public is of the opinion that race please a vital role in police brutality and a lot needs to be done in terms of policies that needs to be implemented against gun control body camera as well as racial disparity.

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