African-American and White Perception of Police Services: The Impact of Diversity on Citizens' Attitudes toward Police Services[1]

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This article explores the relationship between race and satisfaction with police services in a southern city. We surveyed residents of a deep-south medium size city to ascertain those feelings. We find that those who are satisfied with the community as a place to live, those who feel safe walking in their neighborhoods, and are satisfied with police services are positive in their attitudes toward the community oriented police services. Attendance at community events, perceptions of crime, calls to police, age, and college graduates are all negatively related to attitudes toward the police. We also find that African-Americans' satisfaction with police services is not different than non-African Americans' attitudes.

Municipalities provide a myriad of services to its citizens. These services include public utilities, public safety, public works, garbage removal, etc. Using a new public management framework, municipalities seek to not only provide services but to provide quality services and continually improve their service delivery.

This article utilizes a citizen satisfaction survey and focuses specifically on police services. What factors are related to citizens' satisfaction with police services? Does satisfaction vary by the type of service, or are citizens equally satisfied or dissatisfied with all police services? Are there characteristics in the community that can be examined to iden-

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tify who is likely to be less satisfied with the police? How do demographic factors relate to citizen satisfaction services?

This article contributes to public administration in three ways. First, new public management seeks to assess quality measures by gauging citizen satisfaction with services. By assessing the quality of services, municipalities can make necessary adjustments to improve their services. The research contributes to public administration's understanding of citizen satisfaction with municipal services by exploring the relationships between demographics, essential police services, and citizen commitment to their community and satisfaction with police services. Understanding the sources of dissatisfaction aids public managers and public administration scholars develop approaches that improve services through a more holistic lens (Kelly 2005).

Second, this research provides a practical template for police managers and other public administration practitioners for using citizen satisfaction results in service assessment and use of citizen satisfaction in evaluating municipal services. If combined with other performance measures commonly used by municipal police departments (i.e., arrest rates, arrival times, and case closures), this article offers public managers an additional evaluation tool (Kelly and Swindell 2002a, 2002b).

Finally, much of the current literature focuses on race and other demographics to identify populations that are not being well served. This research focuses on the need to move from the broad socio-economic factors to narrower, more controllable factors about cities, neighborhoods, and communities. It is here that city administrators can impact perceptions, service delivery, and quality of life. One of the important findings of this article is that diversity policies can lead to positive views of an organization in communities with large minority populations.

We begin by reviewing the relevant literature on citizen satisfaction and delivery of police and municipal services. From there, the article moves into the development of the hypotheses, the model, relevant variables, and findings. Finally, it concludes with an outline of possible next steps and potential for future research projects.

Satisfaction with Police Services
The abundant literature on citizen satisfaction with the delivery of police services breaks down into three relevant and logical streams: individual citizen factors, city and neighborhood factors, and agency or police factors.

Performance measures of service delivery are generally measured through the collection of both objective and subjective data. Objective data provide researchers with specific measures of police performance including response times, local crime statistics, minority employment statistics, etc. (Brown and Coulter 1983; Kelly and Swindell 2002a). These data are useful in answering quantitative and benchmarking questions and are usually described as output measures (Folz 2004). For example, how does one department perform when compared to a department in a similar city with regards to response times? How effective is a department in lowering crime rates within a locale?

Subjective data deal with individual, perceptual measures of satisfaction and expectations. While subjective data can yield useful information from a departmental perspective,

it is most often used to evaluate citizen satisfaction and answers questions from the citizen perspective. Do citizens perceive treatment from the police differently based on characteristics such as race, gender, and education? Do minority groups see police as being less responsive to their needs or to crimes in their neighborhoods? Are police viewed as respectful within neighborhoods?

Individual Citizen Factors. Much attention is paid to demographic factors including race, gender, age, education, and employment status in the literature. The racial unrest and riots of the last four decades of the twentieth century make race a key focus of research into satisfaction with police service. There is consistent evidence that African Americans tend to be less satisfied with police performance than are whites (MacDonald and Stokes 2006; VanRyzin, et al. 2004; Reisig and Parks 2002; Parker et al. 1995; Brown and Coulter 1983; Peek et al. 1983).[2] African Americans consistently rated the police lower than whites when compared to other organizations (Peek, Alston, and Lowe 1978). African Americans are more critical of police, more likely to report unprovoked searches, the use of coarse language, and rough treatment by the police than whites (Parker, Onyekuluje, and Murty 1995). African Americans rate police services the lowest among municipal services. Not only are African American less satisfied with the police, they also have lower levels of trust (Van Ryzin et al. 2004).

Studies regarding gender and satisfaction with police are few and contradictory. One study found that men are significantly more satisfied with their treatment by the police than women (Brown and Coulter 1983). While another found that men are less trustful of police than women (MacDonald and Stokes 2006). Yet another study concluded that high income ($25,000+ per year), married women living in low crime neighborhoods tend to have higher opinions of the police than low income (<$12,000 per year), single women in high crime neighborhoods (Parker et al. 1995). On the other hand, Reisig and Parks (2002) found no significant differences between men and women and their satisfaction with police services.

Age is often cited as another important variable when investigating satisfaction with police services. Peek, Alston and Lowe (1978) found that respect for the police as an institution among whites was unaffected by age; young (18 – 34 years), middle aged (35 – 49 years) and older (50 +) whites were all just as likely to rate the police highly. Likewise, all age groups were more likely to rate police higher than African Americans of similar ages. However, the middle aged (35-49 years) African Americans rated police markedly higher than either the younger or the older African American age groups (Peek et al. 1978). Later research was unable to find a significant relationship between age and attitudes toward police (Parker et al. 1995). In another study that measured satisfaction across three service dimensions (response time, treatment by police, and equity of protection), age was found to be both positively and significantly related to satisfaction with response time and treatment. However age was not significant and the relationship was negative with regards to equity of protection (Brown and Coulter 1983).

Education is also a commonly investigated variable in the police satisfaction equa-

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[2] We use term African-American through out this article; however, in the literature review if the original author used the term minority/minorities we also used that term. As far as the data and analysis are concerned, we mean to use the term African American.

tion. One study found that education does not have a significant impact on levels of satisfaction with urban services, including police services (VanRyzin et al. 2004). Another study found that once social capital variables are factored into the model, education differences disappear (MacDonald and Stokes 2006). Finally, Brown and Coulter (1983) did not find a significant relationship between education and satisfaction with police services in their study of police satisfaction in Tuscaloosa, AL.

Another independent variable used to explain satisfaction with police services is income. Parker, Onyekuluje, and Murty (1995) found that low income (<$12,000) respondents were more likely to view the police negatively than those respondents in higher income ($25,000+) categories. While this research supports past findings of racial differences, it indicates that all citizens at the lower levels of income are more likely to view police negatively, regardless of race.

City and Neighborhood Factors. What impact do neighborhood environments have on perceptions about police services? Neighborhoods shape individual reaction to policing (Marschall 2004). Citizens who feel safe in their neighborhood and who do not see crime as a problem are likely to be more satisfied with the police (Weitzer and Tuch 2004). Neighborhoods are instrumental in developing capacity for change through neighborhood associations and organizations that promote equity in policing (Bass 2000; Marschall 2004). In her study of Oakland, California and Seattle, Washington, Sandra Bass (2000) found numerous examples of community organizations applying political pressure to reform police behavior and policing philosophy.

The literature indicates there are significant neighborhood contextual factors involved in satisfaction with police services. Kelly and Swindell (2002b) argue that much of the current research conducted at the aggregate level (city-wide) should be disaggregated to draw a better picture of service satisfaction. By changing the level of analysis from the city to neighborhoods Kelly and Swindell (2002b) found that demographic factors still play an important role in service satisfaction across neighborhoods. Accordingly, neighborhoods with higher percentages of minorities generally report lower levels of satisfaction with police as well as fire services, emergency medical services, and street maintenance (Swindell and Kelly, 2005). Similarly, people in high crime neighborhoods tend to hold negative attitudes toward the police (Parker et al. 1995).

Quality of city services has a positive impact on levels of satisfaction. Brown and Coulter (1983) found that citizens with higher levels of satisfaction with the overall quality of local government were more satisfied with police service than those citizens with lower levels of satisfaction (Brown and Coulter 1983).

Neighborhood factors have consistently impacted citizens' perceptions of crime as a problem (Marschall 2004). For example, homeownership decreases the perception of crime as a problem. Likewise, social and political engagement as measured by voting, political discussions among citizens and membership in local groups also significantly reduced the impression of crime as a problem (Marschall 2004). The perception of crime as problematic is strongly correlated with the evaluation of police services as good or bad (Brown and Coulter 1983).

A report issued by the National Institute of Justice, *Satisfaction with Police – What Matters?*, found that a citizen's satisfaction with police is impacted by their personal en-

counters and their evaluations of their quality of life in their neighborhood. The finding that citizen "perceptions of crime, incivilities (i.e., physical decay and social disorder), safety and general rating of the neighborhood" is of particular importance to the context of public administration as it allows a city manager or mayor to focus on environmental issues within their universe of control (Reisig and Parks 2002, 3).

Agency or Police Factors. A substantial portion of the literature finds that individual interaction with police officers is important in police satisfaction. What factors within the control of individual police departments are relevant to increased service delivery satisfaction? One such tool is community oriented policing (COPS).

Community oriented policing focuses on citizens/police problem-solving, and interaction with local communities. Community policing effectively "balances reactive responses to calls for service with proactive problem-solving centered on the causes of crime and disorder" (United State Department of Justice 2006). Some of the hallmarks of community policing include: empowerment of individual officers to allow officers more discretion in performing their duties, the development and use of community volunteers, the return to the "beat" with officers assigned to a particular area of the city or community, and the development of crime prevention activities and citizen partnerships in prioritizing community policing goals and needs. The overarching goal of community oriented policing is to bring citizens and officers together to improve service through community interaction and participatory problem-solving (United States Department of Justice 2006).

As a result of the national implementation of COPS, measures to assess its effectiveness have been developed and incorporated in many citizen satisfaction surveys. Important to COPS research here is value orientation. Zhao, He, and Lovrich (1999) investigated the value change in a COPS department with regards to attitudes toward equality. They found that officers who gave higher priority to equality from 1993 to 1996 were more likely to agree with basic tenets of community oriented policing including working with local residents and organizations and providing citizens with crime prevention information.

It is not a surprising finding that those individuals stopped for traffic violations are less satisfied with the police. However, citizens who entered into a voluntary relationship with officers through crime reporting were more satisfied with the outcome of their contact with the police than those with no interactions. Officer training that focuses on the improvement of the quality and quantity of citizen interactions by police officers also improves satisfaction (Reisig and Parks 2002).

The next sections explore and model the relationships between individual citizen factors, city and neighborhood factors, and agency or police factors with satisfaction with police services. It begins by outlining the methods used to collect the data for the model and concludes with a discussion of the findings.

Data and Methods

The data are drawn from the City of Starkville Resident Satisfaction Survey conducted in the spring of 2006 for the City of Starkville by the Mississippi State University Department of Political Science and Public Administration and the John C. Stennis Institute of Government Survey Center (Perteet, Mickens, Spencer, and Martin 2006). The goal of the sur-

vey was to take a snapshot of citizen satisfaction with city services and perceptions of the effectiveness of those services. Participants were randomly selected from a list of City of Starkville Utility customers who resided in the city limits.[3] A Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system was used to administer the survey. Three thousand phone calls were made to achieve the goal of 300 responses (Perteet et al. 2006). The margin of error for the survey is +/- 5.6. The survey itself measured use of and satisfaction with essential municipal services (public works, utilities, and public safety), recreational services (parks and athletic facilities, community-wide celebrations), respondent demographics and community commitment measures (race, age, income, home ownership, voter registration).

      Characteristics of survey respondents were compared to the U. S. Census Bureau's census data. The survey sample is within the margin or error for many of the characteristics from 2000 census. After analyzing the survey sample we found that college age adults and males were under represented in the sample.[4] A weighting scheme is devised and used for the analyses to accommodate the lack of males and young adults in the survey sample (Deming 1950).

Findings
Table 1 reports police contact and levels of satisfaction with police services. Eighteen percent of the sample reported being a victim of a crime or witnessing a crime within the 12 months proceeding the survey. Fewer African Americans (16%) reported being a victim of a crime or witnessing a crime than non-African Americans (19%). Most respondents (86%) who were a victim of a crime or witnessed one reported the incident to police. African Americans (100%) were more likely to report the incident to the police than non-African Americans (82%).

      The survey also reported that 33% of the respondents called the police within the 12 months prior to the survey. The survey asked respondents to report their level satisfaction with the person who took their call and the time it took the police to respond to the call. A large majority (85%) of those surveyed indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the person who took the call. African Americans (92%) were more likely to report that they were satisfied or very satisfied with their call to the police than non-African Americans (75%). Table 2 also reports that 72% of the survey respondents were satisfied or highly satisfied with the time it took for a police officer to arrive. A sizable majority of African Americans (80%) were satisfied or very satisfied with the police response time; the percentage of those who indicated they were either satisfied or very satisfied was slightly higher than non-African Americans (79%). A greater percentage of African Americans reported higher rates of satisfaction than other races/ethnicities (52% to 13%–very satisfied). The levels of dissatisfaction were the same (20%) for African Americans and non-African Americans. The mean scores

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[3] Starkville Electric Department provides utility services to nearly all residential households within Starkville city limits.
[4] An explanation of the lack of college age students (19% of survey and 30% of population) is warranted. Students generally share housing with other students and friends. Only one phone number is going to be on the electric company's list. In many cases that phone number might be a cell phone number for one of the students or the home phone number of a parent. Also, some rental properties include utilities with the rent. The phone number on the list would be that of the rental property rather than the tenant.

Table 1: Police Contact and Satisfaction

	Yes	**No**	**N**
Have you or any member of your household witnessed or been a victim of a crime in the City of Starkville within the past 12 months?	18%	82%	296
• Was the crime of the witnessed criminal activity reported to the police?	86%	14%	57
Have you or any member of your household called the Starkville Police Department in the past 12 months?	33%	67%	261

Satisfaction with Police Response to Calls				
	Very Satisfied	**Satisfied**	**Unsatisfied**	**Very Unsatisfied**	**N**
How satisfied were you with the person who took your call?	34%	50%	9%	7%	100
How satisfied were you with the time it took for a police officer to arrive?*	27%	44%	4%	12%	101

Source: Data set from Perteet et al. 2006.
*About 10% of the respondent indicated that the call did not require an officer visit.
Note: Figures in the table are percentages. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

show a slightly higher mean for African Americans (3.21) compared to non-African Americans (2.87). The difference in means between African Americans and non-African Americans approaches statistical significance with p=.055. In short, our findings report that African Americans are more satisfied with police services than non-African Americans.

Table 2 reports the survey responses for questions relating to police services in Starkville. The table reports that Starkville residents give high marks to the police department and their personal safety. About 89% of the survey respondents viewed the police as being respectful in their neighborhoods. There are slight differences between African Americans and non-African Americans. Ninety percent of African Americans perceive the police as being respectful compared to 89% of non-African Americans. Starkville residents (66%) indicated that police are visible in their neighborhoods. African Americans (75%) are more likely to agree or strongly agree with police visibility than other races/ethnicities (67%). Most Starkville residents (80%) agree or strongly agree that the police department does a good job preventing crime in their neighborhoods. The differences between races are slight with 85% of African Americans in agreement compared to 79% of non-African Americans. Nearly all survey respondents (95%) feel safe walking alone in their neighborhoods during the day. More non-African American reported higher levels of strongly agree (44%) than African Americans (33%). Seventy-seven percent of those surveyed reported that they feel safe walking alone in their neighborhoods after dark. Again, the differences between races are negligible with 77% of African Americans reporting agreement compared to 78% of non-African Americans. Sixty-six percent of Starkville residents viewed the DARE program as having a positive influence on children. African Americans (71%) are more likely to see DARE as having a positive influence than non-

Table 2: Police Services Survey Items

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N
Police are respectful people in my neighborhood	26%	63%	5%	5%	2%	295
Police visibly patrol my neighborhood	11%	55%	7%	22%	4%	299
Police do a good job preventing crime in my neighborhood	16%	64%	10%	7%	3%	299
I feel safe walking alone in my neighborhood during the day	38%	57%	2%	3%		299
I feel safe walking along in my neighborhood after dark	20%	57%	4%	15%	3%	299
The DARE program has a positive influence on kids in the community	17%	48%	23%	9%	3%	299
The police do a good job with traffic law enforcement	14%	66%	6%	12%	2%	299
Crime is a problem in Starkville	4%	29%	13%	51%	2%	299

Source: Data set from Perteet et al. 2006.
Note: Figures in the table are percentages. Percentages may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

African Americans (66%).[5] Most residents (80%) believe that the police do a good job with traffic enforcement. An equal percentage (79%) of African Americans and non-African Americans agree on traffic enforcement. Finally, only 33% of Starkville residents surveyed believe that crime is a problem in Starkville. A significantly higher percentage of African Americans (52%) are likely to agree that crime is a problem in Starkville compared to non-African Americans (29%).

Table 3 reports gamma scores between several independent variables and perceptions of police services in Starkville. The table shows that some of the variance is explained by the independent variables measuring gender, age, race, education, and home ownership.

Age and Gender
Table 3 reports moderate to strong inverse relationships between gender and safety issues. Females are less likely than males to feel safe walking alone in their neighborhoods during either the day (gamma=-.412, p<.01) or night (gamma=-.360, p<.01). They are also less

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[5] The DARE officer in Starkville is an African American female.

likely to believe that police do a good job with crime prevention in their neighborhoods (gamma=-.214, p<.05) and traffic enforcement (gamma=-.280, p<.01). Finally, women are more likely than males to see crime as a problem in Starkville (gamma=.315, p<.01).

There is only one significant relationship between age and police issues. Older residents are more likely to believe that crime is a problem in Starkville than younger residents (gamma=.225, p<.01).

African Americans are more likely than non-African Americans to believe that crime is a problem (gamma=.264, p<.01). Also, African Americans are more likely than whites to see police patrolling in their neighborhoods (gamma .231, p<.10) and agree that police are doing well in preventing crime in their neighborhoods (gamma .323, p<.01).

Education
College graduates reported higher levels of agreement with feeling safe walking in their neighborhoods during the day (gamma=.190, p<.10). There is also an inverse relationship with college graduates and attitudes of crime in Starkville (gamma=-.176, p<.10). College graduates are less likely to agree that crime is a problem in Starkville.

Homeownership
Finally, homeownership reports significant relationships with nearly all of the variables. Homeowners are more likely to agree that police are respectful in their neighborhoods than renters (gamma=.193, p<.10). The table also reports a weak to moderate association between homeownership and crime prevention (gamma=.167, p<.05). Also reported are moderate to strong associations between homeownership and feeling safe walking alone during the day (gamma=.293, p<.01) and night (gamma=.406, p<.01).

The bivariate relationships provide some interesting findings. First and foremost, there are few differences between race and the police services variables in table 4. It appears that African Americans in Starkville do not experience high levels of alienation from the police department as the literature would suggest. However, multivariate analysis will allow for a clearer understanding of the relationship between race and police services before any definitive declaration is made concerning race and police services.

Combined Effect
OLS regression is used to test the relationship between the important independent variables discussed in the literature review are regressed against the dependent variable, Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). The section that follows outlines the results.

Dependent Variable: Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS)
Attitudes toward the police department and police services are captured in the dependent variable labeled, Community Oriented Policing Services. The Community Oriented Policing variable was constructed by combining the following survey items that capture the essence of community oriented policing into an index:[6]

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[6] The items are coded on a scale ranging from Strongly Disagree =1 to Strongly Agree=5.

Table 3: Relationship between Independent Variables and Police Services

	Female	Age	African American	College Graduate	Own Home
Police are respectful people in my neighborhood	-.175	.069	-.110	.106	.193*
Police visibly patrol my neighborhood	-.051	-.113	.231*	-.032	-.131
Police do a good job preventing crime in my neighborhood	-.214**	-.108	.343***	.007	.167**
I feel safe walking alone in my neighborhood during the day	-.412***	-.050	-.153	.190*	.293***
I feel safe walking along in my neighborhood after dark	-.360***	.073	-.007	.128	.406***
The DARE program has a positive influence on kids in the community	.010	-.035	.072	-.058	.141
The police do a good job with traffic law enforcement	-.280**	-.059	-.050	-.022	.049
Crime is a problem in Starkville	.315**	.265***	.264**	-.176*	.282***

Source: Data set from Perteet et al. 2006.
Note: Figures in the table are percentages. Survey responses are coded as follows: 1= strongly disagree; 2= disagree; 3= neither agree/disagree; 4= agree; 5= strongly agree (9= no opinion—not included). Percentages (*N*=300). *p<.10, **p<.05, ***p<.01

- Police are respectful people in my neighborhood.
- Police visibly patrol my neighborhood.
- Police do a good job of preventing crime in my neighborhood.
- Police do a good job with traffic law enforcement.
- The DARE program has a positive influence on kids in the community.

COPS has a mean of 22.05 (standard deviation= 3.24) and ranges from 10 to 30. Cronbach's Alpha is .626.

Independent Variables: Individual Citizen and Community Factors
The first cluster of variables measures community commitment and social capital. The work conducted by MacDonald and Stokes (2006) indicated the importance of social capital as an intervening variable between race and trust in the police. Analysis of city and neighborhood factors focuses on issues of community involvement, participation, and enfranchisement. The first variable measures *homeownership*. This variable is derived from the survey

question: "Do you own your own home or do you rent?" Homeownership is coded as 1 and 0 for everything else. It is hypothesized that there is a positive relationship between home-ownership and COPS.

The next variable in this cluster, *satisfied with Starkville*, measures community satisfaction. The variable is measured using the survey item which asks: "How satisfied are you with Starkville as a place to live?" The variable is coded from strongly unsatisfied (1) to strongly satisfied (5). It is hypothesized that there is a positive relationship between satisfaction with Starkville as a place to live and attitudes toward the police department (COPS).

The final variable in this cluster seeks to measure community commitment by assessing respondents' attachment to the community by attendance at several highly publicized community events: the Cotton District Arts Festival, the Christmas Parade, and Bulldog Bash. The survey asked respondents if they attended each of the preceding events. The results are summed together to create an *attend community events* variable. The variable ranges from 0 to 3 with a mean of 1.91. Two-thirds of the survey respondents indicated attending at least one event. It is hypothesized that there is a positive relationship between community events attendance and COPS.

The second cluster of variables measures police interaction and perceptions of personal safety. We use the following variables as proxies for police interaction and personal safety:

- I feel safe walking alone in my neighborhood during the day (*Safe walk ing during the day*). (coded 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree)
- I feel safe walking alone in my neighborhood after dark (*After dark*). (coded 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree)
- Crime is a problem in Starkville (*Crime is a problem*) (coded 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree).

The literature concludes that those citizens who feel safer in their neighborhoods will be more satisfied with police services. Therefore, we hypothesize a positive relationship between those who feel safe walking in their neighborhoods and COPS. Similarly, we assert an inverse relationship between crime and COPS. Those who perceive that crime is a problem will also have lower satisfaction with police services.

Two interactive variables are used to measure satisfaction with personal experiences with the police. The survey asked respondents if they have called the police in the past 12 months. The dummy variable, *called police*, isolates those who have called the police (1=called, 0=not). A *satisfaction with police services* measure is created by summing together the two variables measuring satisfaction with the police operator and response time. The index ranges from 2 to 8. As less than 30% of the survey respondents have had direct dealings with the police, we included a zero in the variable to capture those who have not had dealings with the police. We hypothesize that there is a positive relationship between police satisfaction and COPS.

The final cluster of variables measures the survey respondents' personal characteristics. An independent variable, *African American*, seeks to test the relationship between race and satisfaction with police services. Swindell and Kelly (2005) indicate that minorities report lower levels of satisfaction across all city services, not just policing. Therefore,

the model tests the impact of race on the COPS variable to see if there is indeed a difference between the two dominant racial groups in Starkville. Because the literature is nearly unanimous in this conclusion and considering the location of Starkville in the Deep South as well as lingering racial issues that may exist, African Americans in Starkville should be predisposed to lower levels of satisfaction with the Starkville Police Department. Therefore, it is hypothesized that there is a negative relationship between African Americans and the police services (COPS) variable.

The literature is less conclusive regarding the role of gender and satisfaction with police services. Because of the mixed findings in the literature, the next hypothesis states that *females* are less satisfied with police services than males. The variable, *Females*, is coded as 1=female and 0=male.

Some of the literature suggests that there are different levels of satisfaction based upon age of the respondent. It is hypothesized that there is an inverse relationship between age and police services. Younger people are more likely to have favorable opinions about the police. Due to the university and large numbers of students in Starkville, younger adults are more likely to have contact with the police. In fact, the survey bears this out. College age students are more likely to be a victim of a crime or witness one than any other age group. They are also more likely to have reported the crime or called the police in the 12 months prior to the survey. Thirty-one percent of college age adults (18-24) reported that they have witnessed a crime or have been a victim to a crime. The survey asks respondents what year they were born. A variable, *age*, is created by subtracting the year of birth from 2006.

The final variable measures educational attainment. Some of the literature indicates that education had a significantly negative relationship to trust of police. The resulting hypothesis states there is a negative relationship between education and satisfaction with police services. A dummy variable represents *college graduates*. Hosting Mississippi's largest university, Starkville is a highly educated community. About 46 percent of the survey respondents are college graduates according to the U. S. Census Bureau (2006).

Results and Discussion
Table 4 reports the OLS regression results for the model, which explains about 41 percent of the variance in the dependent variable. Two of the three community commitment variables are statistically significant. Surprisingly, homeownership is not statistically significant. Those who are satisfied with Starkville as a place to live also find satisfaction with police services. Every unit of increase in this variable increases the COPS dependent variable by 1.3 units. Although not reported, the standardized Beta for this variable is .267; making it one of the stronger variables in the model.

All of the personal safety and police interaction variables are statistically significant. Starkville residents who feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood during the day or night are positively related to the community oriented policing variable. The model shows an inverse relationship between residents who perceive that crime is a problem and the dependent variable. This variable is the strongest variable in the model with a standardized Beta of -.358. There is also a negative relationship between those who call the police and the COPS variable. The model also reports a positive relationship between the police satis-

Table 4: OLS Regression Results for COPS Variable

Item	Unstandardized b	Standard error
Community Commitment		
Own home	.448	.531
Satisfied with Starkville	1.275	.288***
Attend community events	-.562	.212***
Personal Safety and Police Interaction		
Safe walking in day	1.218	.345***
Safe walking at night	.699	.223***
Crime is a problem in Starkville	-1.210	.214***
Called police	-1.464	.751**
Satisfaction with police services	.308	.128**
Personal Characteristics		
Female	.174	.405
African American	-.263	.523
Age	-.029	.016*
College graduate	-.815	.410**
Constant	15.554	1.950***
Adjusted R^2	.413	
N	300	
*p<.10; **p<.05; ***p<.01		

faction measure and the COPS variable. In sum, survey respondents who feel safe and have had a positive direct experience with the police department also rate police services high. Conversely, those who believe that crime is a problem and have had to contact the police department rate police services lower.

  Two of the personal characteristics variables are statistically significant. As hypothesized, there is a negative relationship between age and the COPS variable. Younger survey respondents report higher levels on the dependent variable. This finding is counter to the literature. Also, there is a negative relationship between college graduates and views toward police services (COPS). People who have not graduated college have more positive attitudes toward police services than those who are college graduates. The variables measuring race and gender are not statistically significant. The sign for females is in the hypothesized direction. The sign is in the hypothesized relationship for African Americans, but is not statistically significant. Another important finding is that community policing interactions with citizens matter.

Conclusion

In conclusion, those who are satisfied with Starkville as a place to live, those who feel safe walking in their neighborhoods, and are satisfied with police services are positive in their attitudes toward the community oriented police services. Attendance at community events, perceptions of crime, calls to police, age, and college graduates are all negatively related to attitudes toward the police.

The fact that all hypotheses dealing with lower satisfaction rates among African Americans are not upheld indicates that something unexpected is occurring in Starkville, Mississippi. The sign for African American is in the hypothesized direction, but it is far from approaching statistical significance. That finding is important. The literature and all the national stereotypes of Mississippi indicate that African Americans should be less satisfied, yet in this small community in the Deep South it is clearly not the case. Why is Starkville, Mississippi different than other Deep South communities? Brown and Coulter's (1983) study of a nearby university community, Tuscaloosa, AL, found negative attitudes toward the police by African Americans. Is the Starkville police department doing something to change the relationships with African Americans? Are the African American citizens more attached to the community than in other communities? Is there a stronger African American voice in Starkville that leads to reform and inclusion?

One explanation for the satisfaction levels among African Americans is the many years of working to diversify the police department. The police department is racially diverse, both horizontally and vertically. Each unit is racially diverse. Shifts are racially diverse, and the various ranks (vertical) are racially diverse. The diverse police department has had positive consequences that have turned into high ratings for the police department, even among African Americans. Theoretically, this is the very reason for diversity and passive representation among street-level bureaucrats (Selden 1997; Lipsky 1980; Krislov 1974).

Suggested research avenues to pursue include other citizen satisfaction surveys in Mississippi and the south for comparison. Another consideration is a careful analysis of staffing patterns in police departments including overall ethnicity rates as well as differences in shift assignments to assess whether the police force is ethnically representative. This research would allow for exploration into the impact of representative bureaucracy theory (Krislov 1974; Lipsky 1980).

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