

BMPL 4002

Preparing for Professional Police Practice

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Title

The potential impact that police powers can have upon communities when they are not exercised with integrity

The police force's ability to prevent crime relies on their diligence, dedication, professionalism, and honesty. The communities they are sworn to serve and protect can provide police with challenging interactions for a variety of reasons. A lot of these issues come from the fact that law enforcement agencies as a whole have different ideas about how society should be regulated and communicate poorly with one another (Torres, 2015). Citizens are more likely to report crimes to the police, offer tips/intelligence to law enforcement, testify as witnesses, and serve as jurors when there are excellent police-community relations because officers understand the public's concerns, especially those linked to crime. Hence, instead of only responding to requests for help, the police may be more proactive and stop crimes before they happen or lessen their severity. Maintaining positive ties between police and the community helps dispel the myth that law enforcement is only a spy agency (Singh, 2022). When police and residents of an area do not get along, the police are seen as an occupying and out-of-touch force that causes more harm than good by everyone, especially those who are already struggling due to high crime, poverty, and homelessness rates. To address these issues, police forces often adopt a reactive stance.

To discriminate in any way is a violation of human rights, which are protected globally. Police officers should not discriminate against anybody for anything. In a just society, everyone is treated equally (Ray and Neily, 2021). Even Nevertheless, racism and other types of discrimination are embedded in law enforcement and judicial systems worldwide. This includes everything from discriminatory practices and prejudiced police checks to the selective execution of drug regulations and the sweeping application of anti-terror legislation. The credibility of the police force in England and Wales has plummeted in recent years due to a number of high-profile incidents including murder, sexism, and violence against women, racism, and profiling. From the case of young Q to everyday stop and searches to the recent police shooting of Chris Kaba, it is clear that the police's persistently discriminatory behaviours and assumptions, as well as the demonstrations of ordinary people who have been standing up to this violence, are eroding trust in the police (Mark, 2023). The Gangs Matrix is a racially biased database used by the Metropolitan Police in London, and Amnesty International has revealed how it has been used to prosecute and stigmatise young Black

males. People's music tastes and the films they view online have led authorities to accuse them of being gang members. When people are added to the Gangs Matrix, the police are more likely to stop and search them, and the label gang member might make it difficult to get hired, rent a flat or enrol in school (Kappeler and Schaefer, 2018). The Information Commissioner's Office determined that the Gangs Matrix may have violated data privacy regulations and failed to discriminate between victims and criminals in 2018, prompting some limited adjustments to be implemented.

When police officers take advantage of the same individuals they are sworn to protect and serve, this is an abuse of power. While the vast majority of law enforcement professionals honour this commitment, a few wilfully utilise their authority for their own ends. As a result, many people who have been hurt by police brutality feel helpless, since they have no way to hold the officer accountable for his or her actions. It is crucial that students understand that even if someone is armed and wearing a badge, they are still subject to the law (Henry, 2020). For the past few years, it seems like not a day goes by without a fresh allegation of police violence or abuse of authority. The prevalence of such incidents raises concerns about whether this is the new normal and if the people will ever feel secure under the protection of the law. Police officers have been known to enter the incorrect residences, draw their weapons, and shoot occupants before alleging that a quick movement prompted the use of lethal force. Officers are shooting unarmed citizens in the back and then claiming the victims were acting aggressively (Amnesty International, 2020). False reports, evidence planting, and public aggressors are all the norm rather than the exception nowadays. The increasing number of police officers who exhibit violent tendencies raises questions about why this is happening. Miscarriages of justice and various forms of discrimination are common outcomes of circumstances involving law enforcement officials abusing their authority. Police who exploit their authority for personal benefit are guilty of corruption, another kind of abuse of power. Theft, extortion, bribery, and the sale or distributions of illegal narcotics are all examples of corrupt police practises. Police officers who strive to do the right thing and set a good example face greater challenges because of the acts of a few bad apples.

When referring to a variety of human rights breaches committed by police, the phrase police brutality is occasionally used. Examples include the use of excessive force during protests, such as beatings, racial abuse, unlawful killings, torture, and the employment of riot control agents without regard to the protesters' identities. Misuse of force by police can have devastating consequences, including the loss of life. Use of excessive force by law enforcement has the potential to cross the line into torture or other forms of ill treatment

(Henry, 2020). The use of unlawful force by police can also constitute a violation of the right to be free from prejudice, the freedom and safety of others, and the guarantee of equal treatment under the law. Whether and how law enforcement can use force, especially deadly force, is governed by a complex web of international norms and regulations. When it comes to international law, the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officers (BPUFF) is the gold standard. Police personnel are only allowed to use deadly force as a last option under international law (Kappeler and Schaefer, 2018). This means that deadly force should only be used in self-defence or to protect others from death or serious harm after all other avenues of preventing or ending the conflict have been exhausted. Several cases of police-involved homicides observed by humans on this planet definitely do not fit this description. Many unarmed Black persons have been slain by police in the United States, including George Floyd, Michael Brown, Breonna Taylor, and Eric Garner (Mark, 2023).

Police brutality is currently a widely discussed topic across the world. A number of high-profile cases have occurred in the UK in which police have been accused of using excessive force, most notably against members of the BME population. The press, the general public, and professionals who do not come from a police background have a huge information gap when it comes to the use of force (Palmiotto and Unnithan, 2010). Legal experts unquestionably know a lot about the rules of the use of force. But, the initial use of force and the rationale behind it are very separate issues. The use of force to defend oneself or another is authorised under common law. A pre-emptive strike would be legal under common law. It is important to use just the minimum amount of force necessary, and to cease using it as soon as the threat has passed (Ray and Neily, 2021). The question of whether or not to employ force is always the most divisive. Different people's experiences and perspectives will lead them to various conclusions about what constitutes appropriate behaviour in this situation. The command staff of the police department must evaluate each scenario and determine whether or not they believe the use of force was unjustified (Singh, 2022). They will have to do a risk assessment of the officers' behaviour and decide whether or not to implement preventative measures to ensure the public's safety. In criminal law, they have alternatives, but under employment law, they have even more. The administration might opt to limit the officer's interactions with the public or even to temporarily remove the officer from duty. A greater weight is now being given to community reaction when police management make decisions as a result of recent global events (Torres, 2015). This can be quite problematic for the relevant law enforcement officials. Police officers get lifelong training in the national

decision model, often known as the officer safety model. It is not the law but rather a guidance to make sure that any force used is justified. Full comprehension of the model requires much time and practise before it can be mastered. Despite the high stakes, some police officers can calmly go through the model (Wright, 2012). They can use force knowing it is appropriate, within the law, responsible, and necessary, and they can explain why they chose that particular amount of force. There will always be situations in which someone uses excessive force. Yet, unless they can provide evidence that their actions were legal, they will be handled the same as anybody else accused of breaching the law.

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