

Examine the impact of partnership working and information sharing when applied to policing practice.

Introduction

In this assignment the key elements of partnership working and information sharing, and their impacts will be delved into to further understand how they help with policing. Both of these topics are extremely important to how policing is carried out and how a situation can be played out. This assignment will also delve into the possible problems that can arise when it comes to partnership working and information sharing, like police bias which has been a huge problem in policing which has been a huge problem in policing, it's even stated so by Chief Constable *Sir Dave Thompson* '...but equally it still contains racism, discrimination and bias.' There will be reliable sources used in this assignment to further evidence what is being relayed and the use of statistics will also be used to further illustrate and better understand what is being said.

The impact of partnership working.

There are many times within the police where the officers are working in a partnership, most times it's just two officers, but it can become a larger quantity depending on the task at hand. No matter the number, when working in a partnership, there needs to be communication as it can affect the outcome of a situation, as of the *College of Policing* website it states that communication can help 'build rapport and establish trust'. It is extremely important for officers working as a team to have trust as it can impact how they work. There was a meta-analysis done in 2016 by *Bart De Jong* to see if teamwork is affected by trust and found that there is, in fact, a link between trust and teamwork, a quote being 'when team members trust one another they are more likely to openly share perspectives and work through differences, improving the quality of their work.'

This can be extremely important, especially when it comes to working as a team in the police due to the fact that they would be more open to sharing opinions but also allows the team to make better decisions.

It also allows a situations to run more smoothly, for example, in the case where there is a possible domestic and there are two officers on scene, they will need to use their teamwork to allow a quicker and more effective resolution, one will be the lead and the other will guide the other person or people involved into a different area and gather information to then relay to the lead officer, from there a conclusion can start to be made.

There can be negatives when it comes to partnership working, though, if there is a lack of partnership, it can result in a lot of tension within the team, it can even cause spats between them due to their disagreements. This can negatively impact them as it does hinder them from properly doing what they were set out to do. Researchers do suggest that some stressors 'relate to issues stemming from police culture and issues with managers and peers' (Shane J, 2010). Problems like this can arise from a cultivation of many things like, different points of views and biases to even just different ways of working. Many teams can work over these and find a middle ground, but some can struggle with this, and it can ultimately affect their relationship with one another.

The impact of Information sharing

When it comes to information sharing between officers it is extremely important that they get all the right details and as much information as possible to help further understand the situation and develop a plan on what they can do and how to approach it. This can directly feed into the NDM, or the National Decision Model that the police use to help them make the most responsible and ethical decisions to a situation. In fact, one of the elements of the NDM is cantered around the code of ethics which is another template that the police use to help better policing. As shown on the *College of policing* website is 'gather information and intelligence,

assess threat and risk and develop a working strategy, consider powers and policy, identify options and contingencies and take action and review what happened.'

Sharing information within the police can have a huge impact on how a situation is dealt with or even how to approach a situation. For example, if police are sent out to a house, a lot of the time, they will receive information about said house, for example, whether the occupants are known to be aggressive towards police or there are young children inside the house, the list can go on. Upon receiving this information, the police would be able to formulate how they approach the situation before even arriving at the house. If they receive no information, it can have an impact on how they police as they do not have time to formulate the best adapted plan on approach.

Sharing information can also greatly help with other public service relations, some affairs need multiple public services involved and they need to communicate to each other to understand what has happened and how to properly deal with the situation, and as stated by GCS (*Government Communication Service*) 'bringing knowledge and expertise together' This allows a higher chance of a smoother outcome and leaves less chance to make mistakes that can be detrimental to the task at hand.

There can be issues with information sharing, though. Take witness statements as an example, it's easy for a random citizen to state they seen a crime or what happened, when they haven't and that can lead them to giving false information that can backtrack the operation at hand. Another problem can be a bias held by a police officer that affects what information is being distributed, for example, they suspect a person is extending the truth simply due to how they are presenting themselves, who they're involved with or even age. A quote coming from the *Police 1* website states, '... and potential bias in data collection and sharing.'

It is a massive necessity to share information as police officers as it gives further insight into how a situation happened, any risks that the officers may face and how to appropriately approach the situation, but it also isn't just for the police, communication is also massive for the general public,

‘upwards of 98% of police work involves verbal communication with the public’ (*Thompson & Jenkins, 2013*).

Conclusion

To conclude this assignment, it has been shown that partnership working, and information sharing is extremely important for the police, it has been shown that it allows a smoother conclusion to a situation and can lead to allowing better decision making. There are negatives though as it has been shown that a lack of partnership and information sharing can develop into tension and disallows a fully functional police team and that biases can play a role in hindering gaining the correct information. Police also need to communicate with the public in the correct way otherwise it can lead to distrust and even lead to people refusing to give statements due to this distrust ‘a YouGov poll off 5,000 UK adults that 49% had confidence in the police ... trust in the police fell from 63% to 53% from February 2020 to November 2021.’ *UK parliament Post*.

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