

POLICE DISENGAGEMENT

The purpose of data collection in policing is to ensure bias free policing, and therefore, gain the trust and confidence of the public, and secure “police legitimacy”

[Modern police learn] There is difference between “power” and “legitimacy” [?]]}}

→ For a long time the profession enjoyed both power and respect as a matter of course (automatic) – public confidence was tied to “protecting the status quo”

→ By society “mainstreaming multiculturalism” – modern police are now challenged to abide the interests of “multiple publics” – [paramilitary policing has evolved into more democratic policing forms – “equity focus”]

→ Police are challenged to protect “multicultural values” – therefore, respecting diversity is the official standard – tied to police legitimacy

→ So data collection is for equity purposes – but it is also fundamental to public confidence in a policing service.

So data collection is “theoretically” an important tool for policing [for building community relations and police integrity – so, for both these reasons, race-based data collection [many argue] is in the “public good”

Benefits of Data Collection

- Avoid rhetoric and accusation and promote more rational dialogue about appropriate policing strategies.
- Send a strong message to the community that the department is against racial profiling and that racial profiling is inconsistent with effective policing and equal protection.
- Build trust and respect for the police in the communities they serve through increased transparency and public accountability.

- Provide departments with information about the types of stops being made by officers, the proportion of police time spent on high-discretion stops, and the results of such stops.
- Help shape and develop training programs to educate officers about racial profiling and interactions with the community.
- Enable the development of police and community dialogue to assess the quality and quantity of police-citizen encounters.
- Alleviate community concerns about the activities of police.
- Identify potential police misconduct and deter it, when implemented as part of a comprehensive early warning system.
- Retain autonomous officer discretion and allow for flexible responses in different situations

Challenges of Data Collection

- Concerns about extra-budgetary expenditures associated with collecting data
 - Developing a robust benchmark against which the data can be compared.
 - The potential burden an improved data collection procedure will have on individual officers in the course of a normal shift.
 - The difficulty of determining the race or ethnicity of the persons stopped.
 - Racial data on its own does not answer definitely whether racial profiling is systemic or not [Replication and Triangulation].
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- The potential for police disengagement from their duties, which may lead to officers scaling back on the number of legitimate stops.
 - The challenge of ensuring that officers will fully comply with a directive to collect stop data.
 - Ensuring that data is recorded on all stops made, and that the data collected is correct. [Misrepresentation]
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The potential for “police disengagement” here is a real problem – if officers turn away from their duty to collect race-based data in a data collection study – which may lead to officers scaling back on the number of legitimate stops, and “misrepresenting race” – it will hurt the “reliability” and “validity” of data collection [and be ineffective tool]

How can officers disengage?

→ We have seen *this* in other **USA** jurisdictions *too* – *if* Police Services *don't 'believe'* they should collect race data, then it results in 'problems for data collection' because of the lack of commitment

Officer Disengagement →

- **Padding** [i.e., recording Black drivers as White; or if you stopped some black people, you'd try to stop some white people too]
- **Ghosting** [adding to the White numbers by making it seem like you conducted a stop {counting babies in a car}]
- **Hawthorne Effect** [i.e., the phenomenon of being studied can lead to *temporarily improved performance*]