

Academy Recruit Attitudes in the Context of Evidence-Based Policing

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Introduction

- Evidence-based policing

- Sherman, 1998; Sherman & Eck, 2002; Weisburd & Eck, 2004; Bullock & Tilley, 2009; Lum & Koper 2014

- In practice, EBP is the exception, not the norm

- Lum, 2009; Funk, 1991; Hirschkorn & Geelan, 2008

- Are officers equipped to innovate?

- Lum et al., 2012; Telep & Lum, 2014

Matrix Demonstration Project

- Matric Demonstration Project: Institutionalizing knowledge into existing law enforcement practices and systems
 - Institutionalizing research
 - Good quality research evidence on police practices
 - Develop a tool or usable example from their demonstration
- <http://cebcp.org/evidence-based-policing/the-matrix/matrix-demonstration-project/>



Receptivity & academy recruits

- Does the academy emphasis on training and acquiring new skills change recruit attitudes toward research evidence and embedding it in their daily practices?
- Can an individual's attitudinal disposition to innovation be measured?
- “Openness to innovation”

The survey

- ▣ National Police Research Platform: Life Course of New Officers
 - ▣ Goals of policing
 - ▣ Opinions about the community (cynicism)
 - ▣ Communication skills
 - ▣ Ethics and integrity
- ▣ Lum & Telep Receptivity Survey
 - ▣ Balance of research and experience
 - ▣ Effectiveness of policing tactics
- ▣ Demographics

Academies

- ▣ State and federal level
- ▣ Over 600 academies
- ▣ Average length 761 hours

Academy 1 (n = 121)	Academy 2 (n=55)
17 agencies	5 agencies
25% 25 and under	50% 25 and under
67.8% white	74.5% white
81.8% male	83.6% male
45.4% college degree	44.8% college degree
19% prior sworn officer	3.6% prior sworn officer

Findings

- ▣ Recruits place a stronger emphasis on experience rather than scientific knowledge, but less so than previous findings
- ▣ Recruits are gaining stronger communication skills (or at least are perceiving themselves as such)
- ▣ Recruits are becoming more cynical about how the community views and relates to them

Findings

- ▣ Academy 2 recruits are becoming more negative regarding innovative-type goals
- ▣ Skills: safety & survival most important; community-based policing least important

Preliminary take-aways

- Police academies first step in series of learning environments
- Some changes that are occurring are contributing to challenges in applying research evidence in policing
- Overhaul of academy curricula and goals could lead to a more embedded approach

Questions/Comments

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