

Community Engagement: Focus Groups on Policing and the Kendrick Consent Decree

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A series of 14 focus groups and 11 interviews were conducted in fulfillment of the Joint Public Engagement Plan outlined by the Memphis Police Department Monitoring Team (Monitoring Team). The focus group planning, recruitment, implementation, and analysis was conducted by a research team from Fisk University. The focus groups were initially planned to be conducted in a two-month process in early 2020. After the completion of data collection during the initial phase in February 2020, the data collection process was disrupted by the “Stay at Home” orders related to COVID-19. In response to the ongoing safety precautions related to COVID-19, the data collection process entered a second phase of recruitment with a virtual platform via Zoom for data collection. The second phase was implemented in June and July 2020.

The Usefulness of Focus Group Methodology

Focus group methodology is a process whereby the quality of responses within an overall narrative are enhanced and themes emerge through the dialogue among participants as compared to a survey. As a qualitative method, the process allows for a potential respondent to expand on comments and engage in a reflective, thoughtful process with other respondents. Focus group methodology can assist in giving voice to typically marginalized persons who are overlooked or ignored (Liamputtong, 2011).

This project was formulated, in part, based upon a similar study on biased based policing conducted in 2003 (Williams, Peters & Speers, 2003). The study was conducted in collaboration with the Metro Nashville Police Department and local universities including Fisk and Vanderbilt. The study had a coordinated recruitment plan across all partners. Whereas, this study regarding the Kendrick consent decree included the cooperation of all parties; however, the research team had no significant ties within the Memphis area. As a result, it was not feasible to recruit individual groups at a specific time over a wide window of opportunity, but rather, potential respondents selected a specific location and time during a targeted data collection period. This may have contributed to a lower response rate than anticipated. In retrospect, a longer, more systematic recruitment phase across neighborhoods and communities throughout Memphis may have yielded a higher response and participation rate. It is unclear if the potential use of these findings within a legal proceeding helped or hindered the participation rate. Nevertheless, the research team worked with all parties to solicit participation

Methodology

Inventory Procedures

The research team was comprised of Drs. Sheila Peters, and Leslie Collins, and 15 student researchers enrolled in the Qualitative Methods class-spring 2020¹). The research team developed a brief questionnaire for the Monitoring Team for use in the development of the interview protocol for the focus groups. The questionnaire contained 4 questions regarding their expectations of the focus groups; specific questions they wanted included and, information they wanted to gather from focus group participants. Five members of the Monitoring Team responded to the questionnaire.

Development of the Focus Group Protocol

¹ Students were required to sign a standard non-disclosure agreement before participating in research regarding the Memphis focus groups.

The research team used a content analytic format to develop initial themes, research goals, research questions, process and focus group materials. Based on the findings, the research team identified the following purposes for the protocol:

- a. Capture perceptions and attitudes about the Memphis Police Department (MPD)
- b. Educate/inform about the Kendrick Consent Decree (KCD) and Monitoring Team
- c. Garner experiences of residents with police officers.
- d. Get suggestions regarding training, activities, community efforts, monitoring team, and department accountability

Data Collection Materials

The research team used a deliberative process to construct the interview protocol for the focus groups, the Individual Participant Protocol, and observation forms. The individual team members developed 4 potential questions for inclusion in the protocol. The questions were examined, consolidated, revise and formatted based on verbal feedback from team members. Drs. Collins and Peters directed all deliberation processes. The interview protocol contained 11 open-ended questions with 2-3 probes. Questions were designed to garner candid information regarding participants' experiences with or as police officers in Memphis; and, evoke conversation about knowledge, beliefs and attitudes regarding current policing practices, the Kendrick Consent Decree, the Monitoring Team and current police/community relations. The Individual Participant Protocol is a 16-question survey designed to elicit demographic information and preliminary information about MPD and the KCD from participants. All questions were closed-ended and varied between rating, and yes/no questions. Team members used observation forms to capture non-verbal information and emergent patterns (recurring responses, concerns, verbiage, etc.)

Sampling and Outreach

The team developed a sampling/outreach plan using snowball sampling². The research team interviewed some key informants (N= 6) face to face and via telephone. Other key informants received flyers sending them information regarding focus groups with the registration website electronically. Potential participants completed an online information from soliciting their name, contact information and preferred days to attend focus groups.

The City and the Monitoring Team provided a list of potential contacts across the Memphis area. The research team tried to contact all suggested parties. The points of contact included but were not limited to phone calls, emails, and voice messaging. Several potential contacts declined participation in the process. The research team contacted local universities and colleges, community organizations and church associations. There was some positive response; however, more referrals for potential participants came from the snow-ball sampling process in which actual participants referred others based on their experience during the process. In addition, the original plan included the recruitment of members of law enforcement in self-contained groups. Unfortunately, as the city was assisting the research team in the recruitment of law enforcement, the priority for law enforcement to prepare and respond to COVID-19 took precedence over participation in a potential focus group.

² Snowball sampling involves contacting key informants (e.g. Memphis residents, community organizers and activists, liaisons with police department, students, contacts at academic institutions, leaders at religious institutions) to garner other participants. Key informants or initial interview participants suggested other possible participants.

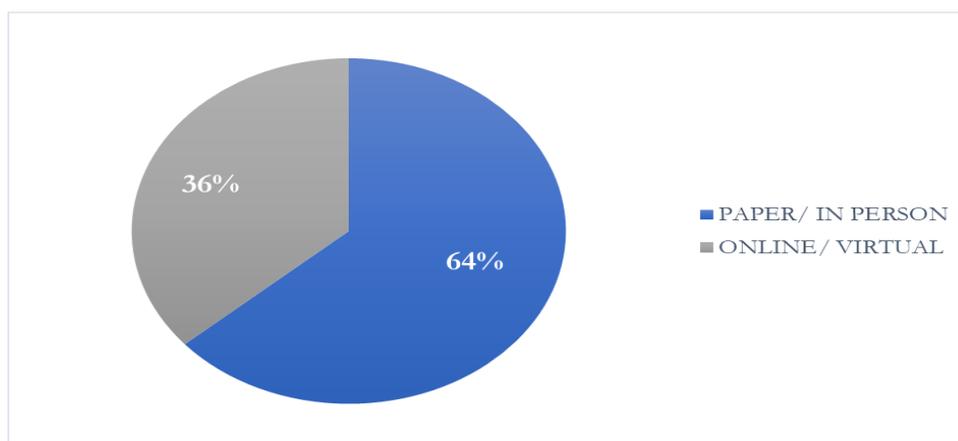
Overall, the recruitment process yielded the participation of concerned individuals who were motivated to express their voice about police and community relations in Memphis. Persons who were more likely to have personal experiences directly or indirectly with the police as compared with others with no negative or positive interactions with the police may have been more interested in the study.

During the recruitment process, individuals appeared cooperative and appreciative of the opportunity to share their perspectives. With the research team located in another city, the scheduling of public spaces for the implementation of the focus groups was facilitated by the city. This process inadvertently altered the original plan for homogeneous groups. As a result, persons signed up for a designated time and location based on convenience. As a result, the focus group respondents were primarily a heterogeneous group based upon convenience and availability. Largely, this process appeared to be effective with mainly one minor conflict. A respondent recognized someone's name when the respondent was signing in on the sign-in sheet during the face to face phase. The respondent approached the individual and asked the individual to leave because the individual was associated with law enforcement. This conflict was unfortunate as the focus groups were open to all interested parties. However, after follow up, the respondent who asked the other individual to leave was mirroring what had been offered and permitted at a previous community forum. The desire for law enforcement to be outside of the presence of other respondents is potentially indicative of the ongoing conflict between some citizens and law enforcement. These strained relationships represent areas of improvement in police/community relationships within the Memphis area.

Focus Group and Interview Process

Face to Face Interviews: The research team conducted approximately 10 focus groups and 9 individual interviews over 6 days (January 29-30 and February 25-28, 2020) in Memphis, Tennessee at various community centers. Focus groups lasted approximately 60- 90 minutes with the average interview at 75 minutes. The focus group process included at least 1 facilitator who asked questions and facilitated conversations (Drs. Peters and Collins), 2 observers who observed groups and noted patterns, 2 recorders who captured interviews via audio recorder, and 1 greeter who welcomed participants and ensured that they completed informed consent forms and an initial questionnaire. The number of participants varied with 2 being the minimum and 6 being the maximum. Although multiple respondents agreed to participate in all scheduled focus groups, some did not attend or reschedule. Thus, a facilitator would conduct individual interviews with sole respondents.

Virtual Interviews: In early March, the research team transitioned from face to face to virtual meetings because COVID 19 "Stay at Home" orders and community closures prohibited the team from traveling and conducting groups in Memphis. Zoom which is a virtual platform used to hold video meetings and conferencing was used in the facilitation of 4 focus groups and 2 individual interviews. Meetings lasted approximately 60-90 minutes. The number of respondents totaled 15. Figure 1 illustrates percentages of individuals interviewed face to face versus virtually.

Figure 1. Respondents' Interview Type

Analytic Process

Respondents completed questionnaires on paper (35) or electronically (20). Dr. Collins and the analysis subgroup³ coded and analyzed questionnaire data using descriptive analytic methods in SPSS. SPSS is a computer based analytic package. Researchers computed mean, and modal scores to describe study respondents and provide a demographic context for interview responses. Additionally, the team conducted Pearson's Correlations tests⁴ on questions related to attitudes about the police, knowledge of the Kendrick Consent decree and interactions with police officers to bolster qualitative findings.

Audio files were transcribed using a private transcription service who utilized anonymous contractors, which ensured security, anonymity, and confidentiality. The data analysis subgroup used content analysis to code data and identify a pattern of persistent themes between focus groups and within focus group responses. Content analysis is a two-step process. The first step involves coding the data using a manifest coding process. Manifest coding involves identifying the most frequently used words within documents to detect patterns and develop initial themes. Once the team identified initial patterns, they met to construct themes in the data—latent coding. To ensure consistency in the analytic process, analysis team members met regularly to discuss process and findings. A similar procedure was used with the Focus group observation forms.

Results

Fifty-five respondents participated in 14 focus groups and 11 interviews (Table 1 details the breakdown by group and interview). Drs. Peters and Collins interviewed 64% (n=38) of respondents face to face, while Dr. Peters interviewed 36% (n=15) of respondents virtually (via Zoom meetings). Conversely 2 respondents were interviewed and did not complete the survey.

³ Dr. Collins and 3 student researchers from the larger research team comprise the analysis subgroup.

⁴ The Pearson's Correlation test is an analysis that determines whether relationships between 2 factors exists, the strength of the relationships and relationship direction. T-test and F-test (Analysis of Variance) is an are analytic tests used to make determinations about differences between specific groups.

Table 1 Total Number of Meetings by Type

	# of Participants	Group Meetings	Individual Meetings	Meeting Type
Day 1: January 29, 2020	1	0	1	Face to face
Day 2: January 30, 2020	2	0	1	Face to face
DAY 3: February 25, 2020	9	3	4	Face to face
DAY 4: February 26, 2020	12	3	2	Face to face
Day 5: February 27, 2020	10	3	1	Face to face
Day 6: February 28, 2020	4	1	0	Face to face
Day 7: June 18, 2020	4	1	0	Virtual
Day 8: June 22, 2020	1	0	1	Virtual
Day 9: July 20, 2020	2	1	0	Virtual
Day 10: July 22, 2020	1	0	1	Virtual
Day 11: July 23, 2020	2	1	0	Virtual
Day 12: July 30, 2020	5	1	0	Virtual
Total	55	14	11	

Questionnaire Results

Fifty-five respondents answered the Memphis Police Questionnaire (MPQ). Six individuals responded to the survey online; however, they did not participate in interviews. All respondents live or work in the Memphis metropolitan Area or a surrounding suburb. Most respondents reported living in the 38104-zip code area (East Midtown) and 38112 (Midtown, Evergreen, and Overton Square) containing 22 % of respondents. Table 2 details residential locations by zip code and neighborhood name⁵.

Table 2 Respondents' Residences

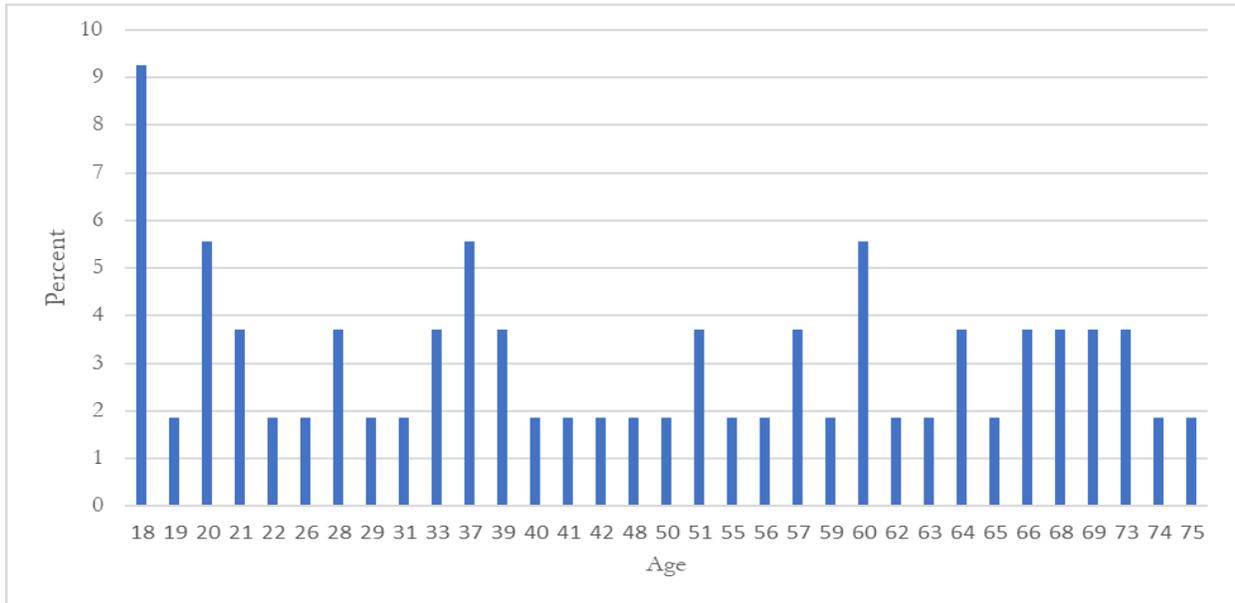
Neighborhood Names	Zip Codes	Frequency	Percent
Cordova	38016	3	5.5
Cordova	38018	2	3.6
Downtown / South Main Arts District / South Bluffs	38103	1	1.8
East Midtown / Central Gardens / Cooper Young	38104	6	10.9
Uptown / Pinch District	38105	1	1.8
South Memphis	38106	3	5.5

⁵ Zip codes were compared to neighborhood name list on <https://www.memphisrealtyssearch.com/memphis-zip-code-map/> and https://www.zipmap.net/Tennessee/Shelby_County/Memphis.htm websites.

North Memphis	38107	4	7.3
Hollywood/Hyde Park/ Nutbush	38108	5	9.1
Coro Lake / White Haven	38109	4	7.3
East Memphis – Colonial Yorkshire	38111	2	3.6
Midtown / Evergreen / Overton Square	38112	6	10.9
Memphis	38114	1	1.8
Memphis	38115	1	1.8
Memphis	38116	2	3.6
East Memphis	38117	1	1.8
Memphis/Germantown	38119	1	1.8
Windyke / Southwind	38125	3	5.5
South Forum / Washington Heights	38126	1	1.8
Frayser	38127	1	1.8
Egypt / Raleigh	38128	3	5.5
Bartlett	38135	2	3.6
South Riverdale	38141	2	3.6
	Total	55	100.0

Sixty-nine percent (n=38) of respondents identified their race as Black/African American, while 31% (n=17) identified as Caucasian or white. Fifty-one percent of respondents (n=28) identified their gender as male or men; and 49% (n=27) identified as female or women. Respondents' ages ranged between 18 and 75 years old. Most respondents were 18 (n = 5). The average age of respondents is 45.11 years, and the median age was 45. Figure 2 illustrates the respondents' ages.

Figure 2 Description of Respondents by Age



Forty percent of respondents had completed a post-baccalaureate degree, while 35 % had received a bachelor’s degree or had attended college.

Table 3 Respondents' Education Levels

	Frequency	Percent
High School or less	10	18
Apprenticeship program	2	4
Trade School	2	4
College/ University	19	35
Graduate/Professional School	22	40
Total	55	100

Most of respondents were employed either full or part time—working more than 30 hours or 30 hours or less respectively (66%). Table 4 below illustrates employment rates. Forty-three respondents (78%) reported working in the Memphis metropolitan area, while 12 respondents (22%) reported not working in Memphis.

Table 4 Respondents' Employment Status

	Frequency	Percent
full-time (30 hours or more)	25	46
part-time (less than 30 hours)	11	20
retired	11	20
unemployed	5	9
student	3	5
Total	55	100

Organizational Affiliations⁶

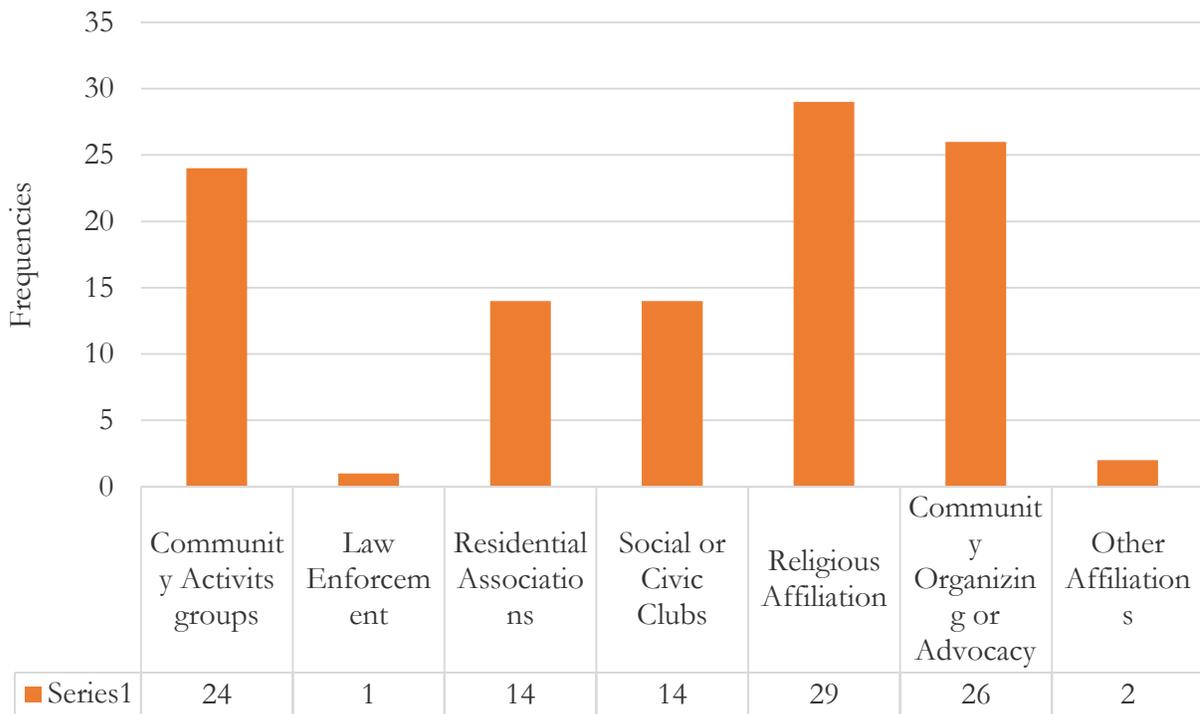
Forty-four percent of respondents reported participation in activism efforts. Activist direct work involves focusing and participating on efforts geared directly toward justice. Many respondents reported affiliations with community organizing and advocacy such as MICAH, NAACP, Trade Union Advocates. Forty-seven percent of respondents report affiliations with community organizing and advocacy groups. Community organizing and advocacy involves groups and/or organizations that are charged with planning educating, awareness raising and often garnering resources (i.e. money and people) towards justice and change efforts. Social and Civic Groups involve organizations that are designed for participants to network; however, they often have civic engagement and public service as a part of their mission (Fraternities, Sororities, Rotary, etc.). Twenty-five percent of participants reported affiliations with residential organizations such as homeowner's associations, block clubs and/or neighborhood watch groups as well as religious institutions such as churches, mosques, etcetera. One respondent reported being affiliated with law enforcement⁷. Figure 3 details frequencies for respondent affiliations⁸.

⁶ To protect participants' anonymity and confidentiality, researchers intentionally did not ask respondents to identify specific group with which they affiliated.

⁷ The research team scheduled focus group meetings for law enforcement exclusively; however, state, and federal stay at home orders were enforced and the scheduling of meetings was suspended.

⁸ Respondents could select multiple affiliations; therefore, the total number of affiliations total more that number of respondents—55.

Figure 3 Respondents' Organizational Affiliation by Type

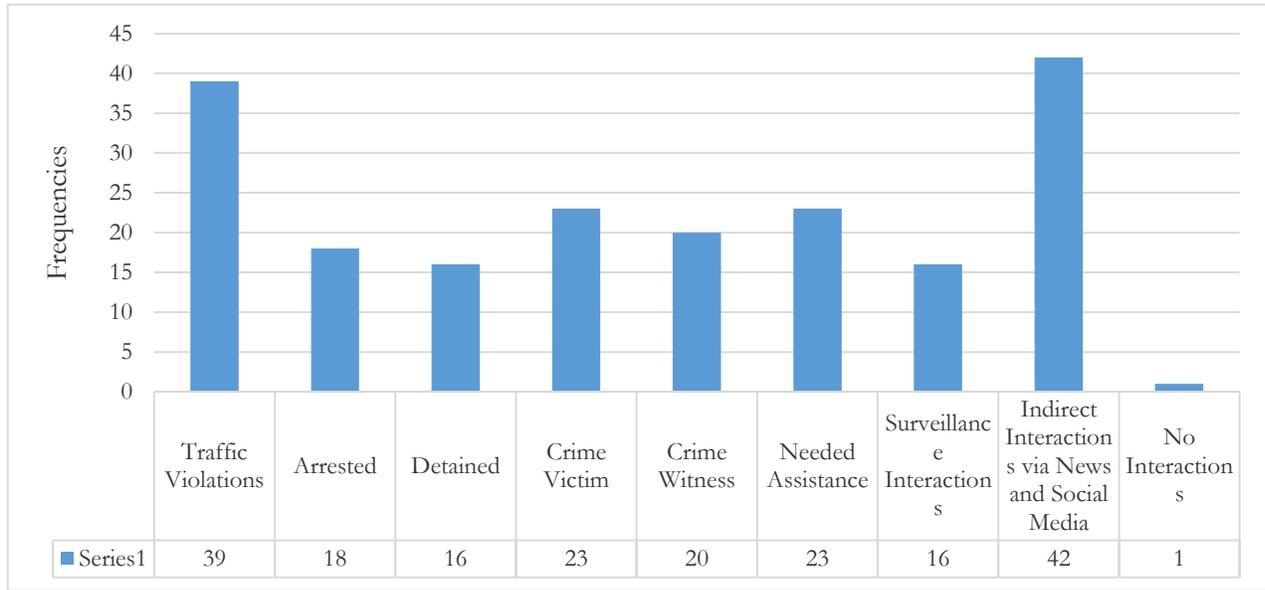


Interaction with Memphis Police Department

Largely, respondents have engaged indirectly with police officers. Seventy-six percent of them report having indirect experience of the Police Department via reading newspaper articles, watching television, listening to radio or via social media platforms (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) These indirect interactions with police have been coupled with direct experiences with police officers for the following reasons: 1. traffic violations (71%), 2. arrest (33%), 3. detained (29%), 4. crime victim (42%), 5. crime witness (36%), and/or 6. general assistance (42%)⁹ (refer to Figure 3).

Figure 3 Respondents' Interaction with Police by Type

⁹ General assistance responses included wellness checks, directions, noise complaints, etc.



Specifically, 29% of respondents report some direct or indirect engagement with police surveillance. Police surveillance could include the following: 1. closed circuit camera in their neighborhoods, 2. parked police cars in residential areas, 3. plain clothes officers on duty at events, and 4. police drones present.

General Attitudes Regarding Police and Surveillance

When asked to rate most recent interactions with police, 23% of respondents rated them neutral. (3) on a 5-point Likert scale¹⁰ from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive). Thirty-six percent of them report having negative interactions with police (rating 2 or lower) and 34% reporting positive interactions (rating 4 or higher). Similarly, when asked to rate police interactions with other residents in their neighborhood, 23% rated neutral (3 on a scale ranging from 1—very negative to 5 very positive). Moreover, 44% of respondents rated police/ community interaction positive (4 or higher) and 26% rated them negatively (2 or below).

When asked about their level of trust in police officers to keep the community safe, 22% of respondents took a neutral position by answering 3 on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 Strongly agree. Forty-four percent disagreed with the statement (rating 2 or lower), while 31% agreed that they trust the police to keep their communities safe. When asked if police should use all methods of surveillance to keep communities safe, most respondents (46%) disagree by rating 2 or lower on a 5-point Likert scale ranging between 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree) Thirty percent agreed that police should use all measures possible, rating a 4 or higher and 22% were neutral rating a 3 on the scale. Finally, when asked to rate the statement “Law enforcement cannot compromise our rights to privacy for safety”, many respondents (48%) agreed (rated 4 or higher), while 29% disagreed. Table 5 details responses regarding attitudes toward police, surveillance, and knowledge of the Kendrick Consent Decree.

¹⁰ Likert scales are questions using continuum ratings for response. Responses tend to range from strongly disagree to strongly agree, best to worst, extremely easy to extremely difficult. The Likert scale allows the researcher to capture nuance within responses to attitude-based questions.

Table 5 Respondents' Attitudes Regarding Police Officers, Surveillance and Knowledge of the Kendrick Consent Decree

	Very Negative	Negative	Neutral	Positive	Very Positive	Total
How would you describe your general or most recent interactions with police?	9	11	12	10	9	51
How would you describe the interactions between police and residents in your neighborhood?	7	7	15	13	11	53
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
I trust that the police keep me and my community safe	11	13	12	7	10	53
The police must use all methods of surveillance to keep our community safe?	16	8	12	8	8	52
Law enforcement cannot compromise our right to privacy for safety.	4	12	10	8	18	52
	No Knowledge	Very Little Knowledge	Neutral	Somewhat Knowledge	Much Knowledge	Total
Rate your level of knowledge about the Kendrick Consent Decree.	8	8	12	10	6	44

When asked to rate their level of knowledge regarding the KCD on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (not knowledgeable at all) to 5 (very knowledgeable), 30% reported knowing very little (2 or lower), while 22% believed they knew a moderate amount (rating 3) and 29% believed they knew a lot about it (rating 4 or higher).

The researchers found no clear relationships between demographic characteristics and attitudes toward law enforcement. Responses regarding trust in police, respect for privacy, individual and community interactions varied without regard to race, gender, location of residence, employment status, educational level, or organizational affiliation.

Interview and Observation Results¹¹

Fifty-one Memphis residents participated in focus group and individual interviews. According to responses to the MPQ, they report residential zip codes that put them within the Memphis Metropolitan area. Respondents could select days and time that they could participate in a focus group. Therefore, responses cannot be delineated by residential area. Some distinctions could be made based on race and gender.

The analytic process revealed 11 themes regarding perceptions about Memphis Police Department, attitudes regarding surveillance, The Kendrick Consent Decree, the Monitoring Team, and suggestions about training for law enforcement. The team found three overarching themes, ambivalence toward the Memphis Police Department and concerns about harassment and a cautious attitude toward the role of the Monitoring Team. The primary themes are general descriptions of respondents' overall tone when discussing the police, surveillance, the monitoring team and/or KCD. Ambivalence involves many respondents' complex and sometimes contradictory sentiments regarding the police officers and police department's engagement and interactions with them and their communities. Similarly, harassment reflects consistent concerns and fear respondents expressed regarding police surveillance. Finally, cautious reflects respondents' reticence and skepticism about change and the Monitoring Team. Primary themes tended to explain and be informed by the eight designated secondary themes: 1. direct interaction, 2. indirect interaction, 3. general attitudes regarding surveillance, 4. transparency, 5. accountability, 6. Knowledge of the Monitoring Team's roles and purpose, 7. subject matter, and 8. training approach. Descriptions of secondary themes are located under their respective categories.¹²

Community Perceptions—(Ambivalence)

Perceptions of police involve participant responses to questions about respondent's direct and indirect interactions with police officers and the Memphis police department. Direct interactions are responses regarding first person accountings of interactions. Indirect interactions involve perceptions formed based on (secondhand accountings) which include but were not limited to discussions with others, reading newspapers, television, radio, and the internet/social media. A primary theme that emerged when discussing perceptions of the Memphis police department was **ambivalence**. Respondents tended to have often conflicting and contradictory attitudes about the police. They understand that their function is to keep them safe.

However, some respondents believe that police officers' presence can create a more dangerous environment than intended because of the department's historical relationship with specific communities¹³. For example, an older, black, woman recounts what she refers to as the "Shannon Street Massacre" occurring in Hyde Park. She stated that police officers stormed into a resident's home, shot, and killed 8 African American men. She explains that incidents such as these have created community mistrust of law enforcement in Hyde Park and other neighborhoods. Other respondents (at least 3) recounted similar events of police involved killings. Several respondents

¹¹ When participating in multi-member groups, some members would make statements and others would nod in agreement or use verbal affirmations such as "yep", "uh, huh", etc.

¹² Overarching themes are bolded next to the section in which they are described. The secondary themes have an italicized heading.

¹³ Four respondents mentioned North Memphis specifically as a neighborhood that had a history of negative interaction with MPD.

mention that the protest on the bridge was sparked by the officer involved killing of Darrius Fisher in 2016.

Direct Interaction. Generally, respondents' perceptions of the police tended to fluctuate between positive interactions to some negative interactions. Most respondents believed that the police were necessary for the safety and protection of their communities—especially in poor and working poor neighborhoods that are known for high incidents of violence and crime. For example, two black women who live in working class/working poor¹⁴ communities with Black and Latinx residents reported trying to forge partnerships with the police department. They are members of neighborhood watch and block clubs in high crime areas. They want to assist police in reducing crime in their areas. Specifically, one black woman stated that she was trying to advocate getting cameras in her neighborhood for purposes of safety. However, they reported that forming these relationships tends to be difficult. Other respondents, White residents, reported incidents in which police officers assisted with children who may have found themselves in trouble and the police called the parents to assist. Additionally, an older white man recounts how the police assisted during a march on the bridge when they assisted with crowd control. This incident was repeated by multiple respondents. However, two white respondents reported that although they would have called the police for assistance in some circumstances when they lived in other cities, they would be hesitant to call the Memphis police. One white, woman recounts having to call the police in her home state to assist her with her daughter, who was diagnosed with a mental disorder. But she would not call for assistance if the situation happened in Memphis.

Respondents were more likely to identify positive interactions if they had a personal relationship with law enforcement. Some respondents had family members, spouses and personal friends who serve in law enforcement. These respondents were more likely to empathize with the complexity of the role of law enforcement.

Conversely, other respondents reported having negative experiences when directly engaging with police officers in their neighborhood. For example, one black woman, a lifelong Memphis resident recounts being dismissed when she called the police to report her young daughter had been abducted from a local shopping center. She reported that when her daughter was found, the officers were hostile and accusatory while taking the report. They also threatened to arrest the victim. Respondents who resided in communities with historically negative interactions with police officers recount similar stories regarding hostility toward them. They reported feeling less safe and often in danger when police officers are present. Poignantly, when asked about positive interactions with police officers, several respondents reported incidents where the police just “did their job” and the interaction concluded without any kind of violent or negative incident.

Additionally, members of some activist and community organizing groups reported having direct negative interactions with police officers and the police department. Many respondents recounted negative interactions with police officers at protests and other non-violent gatherings. They reported the police officers being unnecessarily hostile with them. Additionally, they perceived that the police department tended to be discriminatory against certain groups based on their cause and often the racial/ethnic make up of the crowd. For example, multiple respondents recounted incidents in which other protesters (primarily white rural) could use facilities within the building while protesting in front of the main police station while others were restricted from the building in similar situations.

¹⁴ These words or similar were recurring phrases used by participants during interviews.

Indirect Interaction. Although most respondents discussed direct contact with police officers and the department, some respondents reported that their perceptions of the police were greatly informed by stories that they have heard from others, or that they have encountered via media outlets. For example, two White female respondents reported having no direct interactions with police officers; however, based on recounting from others in their activist groups, their attitudes about police have been negatively impacted. They reported being leery of the Memphis police department and not really trusting their intentions regarding persons and communities of color. They, being White Memphis residents acknowledge discrepancies in the type and quality of interaction they may have with law enforcement. These sentiments were consistently echoed by multiple White respondents.

Ultimately, perceptions of the Memphis police department have been ambivalent. Respondents believe that the presence of police are a necessary evil. Their presence and service are vital to the community. However, the distinctions in “service” and engagement within certain communities, groups and individuals make their presence more problematic as these communities tend not to trust them and feel less safe when they are present.

Attitudes About Surveillance and the Kendrick Consent Decree (Harassment)

Themes regarding surveillance comprise respondents’ experiences with being watched or reviewed by the Memphis police department in person, using devices (i.e. cameras, drones, etc.), and via social media as well as how the information collected is used and disseminated to other organizations. Additionally, facilitators asked specific questions concerning attitudes regarding parameters for police use of surveillance techniques and strategies. Moreover, participants who knew about the Kendrick Consent Decree connected the decree specifically to surveillance tactics. Primary themes that emerged included the following: 1. Beliefs that police harassed respondents using surveillance; 2. transparency regarding Kendrick Consent decree; and, 3. surveillance policies, and accountability.

When asked about experiences with police surveillance, most respondents reported having police cameras or police having a physical presence (e.g. police cars) in their neighborhoods. Generally, respondents believed that the presence was innocuous. They hardly noticed it. However, they did notice that there tended to be more cameras in some parts of town and fewer in others.

Surveillance as Harassment. During the implementation of the face-to-face focus groups, a small contingent of respondents expressed concerns that police department cameras were in community centers and other spaces and that may be intrusive. Some of these respondents reported that they have been videotaped and monitored regularly because of their activist efforts. In fact, on two separate occasions, respondents expressed concerns about the cameras located in community center sites wherein focus groups were conducted. In these occasions, the research team got assurances that the cameras were not connected to the police department or simply covered the cameras for security and confidentiality.

Similarly, respondents associated with activist groups reported police officers using surveillance efforts as a form of **harassment**. For example, they had been followed by police officers from meetings and/or protest events. Police officers have been parked outside of homes, businesses, and other establishments. A black female who is a local activist and pastor reported that police officers are persistently parked outside of her church on Sundays. She believes it is because the congregation is known for their social justice work. Other respondents reported seeing drones at public events as well as under cover police officers there taking pictures and making notes. When the suspected undercover officers were asked about their actions, they would often leave the event. They

expressed concerns that even though the Memphis police department was ordered to cease surveilling activist groups and community organizers, they continue to do so. A white male respondent expressed concerns that MPD may be using a work around by participating in a multi-agency task force (i.e., sheriff's department, Drug enforcement, homeland security, etc.... these agencies are not bound by the Kendrick Consent Decree) to surveil local activist groups. Other members of the group agreed. Similar concerns arose in 2 other meetings as well as at least 4 individual interviews. Respondents tend to believe that activist groups that attempt to address issues regarding police reforms, racial justice, wage inequality, immigrants' rights and unions may have been reclassified as gangs and are not protected by the Kendrick Consent decree.

Attitudes regarding Surveillance. Mostly, respondents believe that some surveillance efforts are vital for police officers to effectively protect communities as well as prevent and/or investigate crimes. However, they believe that this surveillance should and does have limits. For example, when facilitators asked respondents the following question “*Some people would say that we must compromise our privacy for safety, what do you think?*” Most tended to disagree with this statement regardless of race, organizational affiliation, socioeconomic status, or interactions with police. They believed that surveillance should be limited to crime investigation and prevention. They reported that surveillance efforts that violated residents' privacy without specific evidence that the individual had committed a crime was inappropriate and was a violation. They tended to agree that these types of violations made society less safe.

A minority of respondents agreed that police should use all tactics to keep the community safe. While an even smaller group were indifferent. For example, white partners who live in downtown Memphis were opposed when asked the question. One partner was indifferent to use of surveillance tactics while another partner was vehemently opposed.

Kendrick Consent Decree and Surveillance (Transparency). Respondents tended to agree that there was limited transparency within the police department regarding surveillance and was important to assuring that surveillance techniques were used appropriately. When asked about the Kendrick Consent Decree and the ACLU's lawsuit, they believed that violations of the decree were the result of ignorance. They believed that many police officers and departmental staff have limited knowledge about the Kendrick Consent decree or the constitution. Thus, they act in ways that are efficient in getting the job done without consideration for said mandates. Other respondents believed that community members also had little knowledge of the Consent Decree and their rights or responsibilities. Additionally, they believed that the rules and policies regarding surveillance may be nebulous; therefore, there should be some clear conditions under which surveillance should happen and against whom.

Some respondents expressed concerns about lack of transparency regarding surveillance and how the information collected was being used. Respondents reported that their personal information (e.g. name, address, place of employment, email addresses) or that of friends and associates had been collected and publicized. Several respondents asked questions such as “why do they need this information?” or “What are they doing with the information?”. Furthermore, respondents suggested law enforcement develop a more stringent policy for allowing surveillance techniques in the community. A black male and lifelong resident of Memphis contends that police officers should have to provide tangible evidence that they believe criminal activity is happening before they can surveil individuals or groups and that evidence should be documented and made public in cases of abuse.

Accountability. Finally, themes regarding accountability emerged regarding surveillance. Respondents reported that once police officers were made aware of policies and understood them, they should be held accountable for violations. Respondents believe that censure and job loss are appropriate consequences for violation of policies. However, respondents also believed that the police department should be accountable to the community and its residents regarding surveillance. They believe that because the police department violated the decree, they broke trust with the community and should be held to a higher level of scrutiny by a body not affiliated with Memphis Police specifically or law enforcement agencies in general. Some respondents believed that neutral groups such as the citizens review board should be given more authority to investigate surveillance violations as police misconduct.

The Monitoring Team (Cautious/Skeptical)

This section describes general attitudes and knowledge regarding the court appointed Monitoring Team. Generally, respondents believed that the Monitoring Team was well intentioned. However, respondents reported caution about the team's effectiveness. Emergent concerns regarding the Monitoring Team included the following: 1. Knowledge of team's role and purpose; and, 2. Team composition.

Knowledge of Team's Role and Purpose. Largely, respondents were not clear about how the Monitoring Team functions in this process. They believe that the Monitoring Team is supposed to function to hold the police department accountable to following policies regarding surveillance as well as investigating instances when policies are violated. When considering the team from this perspective, they believe that the Monitoring Team has not been as effective as it could be. They believed that the community forums were somewhat helpful in gaining some information regarding the Kendrick Consent Decree and citizens' concerns. A few respondents reported beliefs that the Monitoring Team was simply a formality to show the community that the court had done something; however, had no intention of making significant change.

Furthermore, respondents expressed concerns about the racial, class and occupational makeup of the Monitoring Team. Because it is majority male, white and most if not, all, have past affiliation with local or federal law enforcement agencies, respondents expressed some concerns about a possible bias. The research team was extremely diligent and transparent because of the association to the Monitoring Team. Key informants advised the researchers that it would be difficult to recruit participants because of the research team's connection with the Monitoring Team. Respondents suggest including more community members (non-law affiliated) and persons from marginalized racial groups on the team if it persists.

Police Training and Education

Generally, respondents tended to attribute violations of the Kendrick Consent Decree to police officers' lack of knowledge and understanding regarding the decree and constitutional privacy rights. Additionally, respondents tended to believe that revisions in police training and education as well as policy reform was vital. Respondents made training recommendations regarding subject matter, training approach, and those who should be involved in developing and executing police education.

Subject matter. Respondents believe that most police officers do not know about or understand the nature of the KCD. Therefore, more training regarding the decree and surveillance is necessary. In one discussion, a black male respondent asserted that police officers need extensive training regarding the Constitution and other members of the group agreed. Moreover, respondents tended

to agree that training regarding cultural competency with respect to those with mental illnesses, immigrants, and ethnic minorities was necessary to help redress past violations.

Training Approach. Respondents tended to believe that a different approach to training may be necessary to achieve effectiveness. They suggested using more applied learning styles and requiring more professional development. Additionally, respondents tended to suggest that the police department involve community members, groups, and organizations in the planning and implementation of training—especially regarding community relations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Throughout the process of recruiting and creating an infrastructure for the implementation of the focus groups and interviews, the strained community and police relationships was evident and manifested itself in the Community Engagement activities such as the Community Forums and the focus groups. The lack of trust in the process and the cautious attitude toward the role of the Monitoring Team can contribute negatively wherein the community is resistant to change. Police- community reconciliation and rebuilding efforts may be considered to strengthen police/community relationships particularly around surveillance. Several communities have historically suffered violence through perceived acts, neglect, or apathy at the hand of the police and these efforts may need to be addressed before any significant progress can be made in police/community relationships.
2. The respondents appeared to be asking for greater transparency and clearly articulated policies regarding police surveillance for police officers and community. The community has an investment in keeping neighborhoods safe while wanting fair treatment by authority such as police.
3. There is a need for greater awareness and education about the Kendrick Consent Decree, as well as other types of consent decrees, mandates, and laws regarding surveillance including political surveillance. With the heightened sensitivity regarding potential police brutality on a national level, there is a need to educate the community on the role of law enforcement and fair policing as well as educate law enforcement on best practices in building positive relationships with the community.
4. More stringent policies and accountability regarding privacy rights and police surveillance would help to contribute to a sense of fairness and commitment to improved police/community relations.
5. The need for police training regarding constitutional mandates and institutional policies regarding privacy and surveillance is a perception by some respondents. In addition, cultural competence in policing was asserted by multiple respondents as a training need. Moreover, some community members suggest the need for greater community involvement in police training.
6. Focus group participants wanted access to findings once court proceedings were over. It is recommended that some form of this reported is made accessible to the public.

REFERENCES

Liamputtong, P. (2011). Focus group methodology: Principle and practice. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications.

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