

Recruiting the Next Generation

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Abstract

With a new generation of potential recruits entering college/employment age and new, evolving expectations of law enforcement from the public/media, there is a real concern law enforcement agencies will be unable to recruit an adequate number of qualified recruits capable of satisfying the new expectations of a professional law enforcement officer. Recent studies of Generation Z members (those born between the years 1997 and 2012) indicate their value system fits well with the new expectations of professional law enforcement. There is also an indication the newest generations may view the negative image of the law enforcement profession as a challenge and not an obstacle. They have a desire to problem solve and engage in community activities to build support. There is still a desire for proactive law enforcement activities, but these are tempered by community engagement and altruistic activities. The survey conducted for this research project supports previously completed research under the literature review, however, it concentrates on the segment of Generation Z and Millennials (those born between the years 1981 and 1996) who show an interest in the law enforcement profession.

Introduction

In general, across the United States, recruiting for any profession is competitive. Whether this is due to an increase in demand for that profession or a decrease in the supply of suitable applicants for that profession, organizations are looking more and more to sound research, innovative methods, and marketing to fill gaps in manpower. The law enforcement profession is no different in this regard. Issues currently faced by law enforcement agencies go beyond the common issues of workforce recovery post COVID-19 pandemic. Some studies have alluded to a perceived legitimacy crisis in law enforcement. Public perception of law enforcement, especially in the media, has reached a new low. Scrutiny of the profession through cell phone videos, body worn cameras, and intense media coverage has altered the view of potential applicants. Law enforcement officers currently employed know their jobs have become more difficult under this scrutiny.

In addition to public perception, agencies are challenged with moving police applicants through the hiring process itself. Standards held by most agencies in relation to drug use and criminal history do not reflect current societal standards as reflected by decriminalization and/or recreational use of marijuana. Current hiring processes can be lengthy and tedious, eliminating potential applicants by way of attrition.

Law enforcement agencies will have to find ways of recruiting Generation Z applicants. This is the first generation to not recall a time without readily accessible technology. This generation is considered the most ethnically diverse generation in US history, embracing diversity and inclusion. They communicate primarily through social

media, preferring cell phones and computers to televisions. The questions become how to recruit from this generation, and how do they fit into the profession of law enforcement?

By reviewing past studies, asking the right questions, and building a strategy for recruiting, law enforcement agencies can better understand not just how to effectively recruit applicants, but also who they want to recruit.

Literature Review

For decades, studies have been completed to understand various factors and how they affect employee stress, commitment, and retention in a number of different professions. Similar past studies on motivations to join law enforcement included being attracted to a role of authority or control, viewing the profession as an adventure and an opportunity to help others, or a common motivation with most professions, salary and job security. These studies are summarized below.

In 2019, a study published in the *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* was completed with data collected from 654 students from two US universities, and the study focused on the “Ferguson Effect” on recruiting police applicants. The “Ferguson Effect” is the idea that negative media attention, perception of police engaging in racial profiling, and charges of excessive force, have all contributed to cause a decrease in police proactivity. The Ferguson Effect, as studied, is larger than a single incident and encompasses several high-profile, deadly force encounters that have increased media attention and scrutiny. With media, citizens, and community action groups less likely to consider deadly force encounters as justified or, in some cases, wait for a full investigation, a decrease in proactive police work could be viewed as career preservation. In the 2019 study, the survey sample included both students who intend to apply for positions in law enforcement and those that were undecided. The result showed that students who believe negative media attention has affected the law enforcement profession were more likely to be apprehensive about applying for a position in law enforcement. In contrast, students with a positive view of law enforcement were less likely to agree with the negative views and less likely to allow that negativity to affect their decision to join the law enforcement profession. The recommendation of the study is for increased engagement with the community, specifically on college campuses, to mitigate the negative view of the police profession (Morrow, 2019).

Procedural justice was reviewed as another possible motivator for potential police applicants, according to a 2020 study published in *Criminal Justice Studies*. In essence, does an individual treated in a just manner, by a police officer, then become motivated to join the profession? The results of the study indicate that students who had experienced just treatment by law enforcement officers were less apprehensive about joining the profession, regardless of the negative attention to which the profession has been subjected. In addition, the study surmises that by attracting applicants that identify with and value procedural justice, agencies will be hiring individuals inclined to build a closer relationship with their community. This, in turn, would make recruiting easier from within the community (Morrow, 2020).

Another study in 2020 published in *Police Practice and Research*, investigated the motivation to become a law enforcement officer based on sex, race, and ethnicity. The

basic motivations were financial benefits and job stability, working conditions and prestige, and being able to help people and serve the community (altruism). The study resulted in a recommendation for law enforcement agencies to use targeted recruiting, focusing on pay, retirement, stability and altruistic themes such as community engagement and helping those in need. As far as retention, the study showed applicants recruited based on altruistic motivations to have a higher job satisfaction rate and higher likelihood of retention (Schuck, 2020).

Likewise, in a 2021 study published in the *Journal of Crime and Justice*, public service motivation (PSM) and its relationship to job satisfaction is compared. Individual who value public service are motivated to apply for and remain in jobs that allow them to engage in public service. This also means the agency must value public service to provide the environmental fit for the PSM applicants. Environmental fit is described as a pairing of skills and abilities of the applicant, demands of the job, matching needs of the applicant and values of applicant with the agency. This study, as well, supports job satisfaction among law enforcement officers who are motivated by helping others and altruism. An agency reflecting these values, creating an environmental for altruistic motivations, will better attract and retain these applicants (White, 2021).

Many aspects of the law enforcement profession, combined with family views of the job, will bring about work family conflict (WFC). Stressors inherent to the police profession include shift work, hypervigilance, exposure to tragedies, unplanned overtime, and absence during critical events. These will often lead to WFC, though it does not appear that potential applicants consider potential WFC as a consideration or reason to not enter the profession. Despite the known stress law enforcement can put on a family, a 2001 study showed neither applicants nor their family viewed policing as a stressor relating to WFC. Though WFC is an issue with retention and remains so, anticipated stress on family does not appear to be a concern for potential applicants (Ryan, 2001).

Additionally, in 2010, the US Department of Justice and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services supported a project to study best recruitment and retention practices. The project acknowledged the issue of maintaining a productive staffing level in a police agency while contending with retention issues, increased responsibilities, and limited resources (Wilson, 2010).

A primary issue identified is finding qualified applicants. It is becoming increasingly rare to find an applicant with a clear criminal record, with no history of drug use, who meets physical requirements, who is financially stable, and who meets educational requirements. The study confirmed that drug use is more common in high schools, the nation's obesity rate has more than doubled, and credit card debt has increased. All factors that have been traditionally used in the past, to determine the stability of an applicant, must be reevaluated. In addition, finding candidates who meet more extensive educational requirements have also become an issue due to the cost of higher education (Wilson, 2010).

Because of this decrease in viable applicants, and because of an increase in demand for viable applicants, there is an increase in competition between agencies. Federal, state, and local agencies, along with private and corporate security agencies, are all in competition for the similar applicants. The greater the compensation competitors can provide, the greater the difficulty for smaller, local agencies to compete (Wilson, 2010).

The change and expansion in skill sets required for law enforcement also restricts the applicant pool. Applicants must be prepared to engage and work within their community, build partnerships, and solve complex issues through teamwork with community partners. Applicants, as discussed above, need to have altruistic motivations, measuring performance on multiple levels, not just arrests and citations. When taking these needs of a modern agency into account, the applicant pool shrinks (Wilson, 2010).

Recommendations to help resolve issues with increased competition and shrinking viable applicant pools include the following: 1. have a recruitment unit, 2. designate a budget for recruiting, 3. determine the qualifications an applicant should have based upon the agency's needs, and 4. include the community in the recruiting/hiring process (work within the community and use liaisons to recruit from the community). Agencies should also build internal referral networks amongst employees. Marketing techniques should include developing a brand for the agency which reflects the values and goals of the agency, attending job fairs, recruiting from within youth programs, and having open houses for on-site visits. For external marketing, agencies should ensure portrayals of the agency are realistic and sincere. If the agency and community allow for it, certain restrictions that have limited applicants in the past should be relaxed. For example, utilize technology to shorten the screening, selection, and background process. More and more agencies are engaged in branding, marketing, and aggressively recruiting, as is witnessed in the private sector. This is an area where local agencies must conduct the research, plan, and build a sound strategy if the demand is to be met (Wilson, 2010).

On December 10, 2019, the US Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) held a forum bringing together police chiefs and command staffs of smaller, rural agencies having difficulties in recruitment and retention. The forum also included researchers and academics. These results of this forum were published by COPS in 2020. As in the publications above, the forum attempted to describe the preferred applicant for modern-day policing. In addition to an increase in equipment, technology, required legal knowledge, and expected community engagement, the modern law enforcement officer is under more scrutiny than ever before. The forum discussed attributes such as cognitive skills, emotional skills, and social skills. They were all in agreement on the attributes that are valued and can be summed up as intelligence, integrity, initiative, and altruism. Everyone was on the same page as to what agencies are seeking in an applicant (Bradley, 2020).

The *Police Executive Research Forum* noted in 2019 three significant threats to the law enforcement workforce. They were identified as a decline in applications, a growing number of retirements and an increase in those leaving before retirement age. In contrast to the negative perception of law enforcement agencies, the most important priority for agencies, according to their own administrations, is to build community trust. To do this, administrations know they need to attract applicants who reflect the values and goals of their community (Bradley, 2020).

The forum attendees noted what they found worked to attract the applicants they need. Fostering community support was at the top of this list. This included putting their staff members in the public eye and providing their communities open access. Opportunities included open houses, citizen police academies, "Coffee with a Cop," "Pizza with the Police," etc. One organization offered additional training on poverty and placed recruits in service organizations throughout the community, prior to the field

training program, and another organization brings community members in to provide their “brutally honest” perspective (Bradley, 2020).

These community relationships develop community support which fosters pride in the agency. Thus, reputation of the agency was discussed as a critical recruiting tool. One of the agencies polled their last 12 hires as to the number one reason for applying to their agency. Nine of them advised it was the reputation of the agency. As stated in other studies, the attendees noted the applicants they targeted wanted to do more than make arrests and write tickets, they want a challenge, and they want to be proud of their agency (Bradley, 2020).

Despite the focus on community engagement, there is a public perception of police militarization. This perception runs counter to the image law enforcement agencies are seeking and is more in line with the negative image agencies are attempting to rectify in community engagement and recruiting efforts. A study performed in 2020 and published by *Policing and Society*, utilized police recruiting videos to study police militarization and community policing. Recruiting videos are a depiction of the agency and an advertisement of their values. In this study, community policing would align itself with the guardian concept, where police militarization would be the warrior mindset (Koslicki, 2020).

In the study, police militarization is defined as “a set of beliefs, values, and assumptions that stress the use of force and threat of violence as the most appropriate and efficacious means to solve problems. It emphasizes the exercise of military power, hardware, organization, operations, and technology as its primary tools.” In recruiting videos, indicators would be dress, vehicles, language, or depicted ideology (Koslicki, 2020).

Community-oriented policing is a broad concept but is defined in the study as “decentralization, a service orientation, community partnerships and cooperation, and proactive policing. Community-oriented policing is depicted as foot patrols, community meetings, neighborhood watch programs, and citizen police academies (Koslicki, 2020).

A law enforcement recruiting video should reflect the values of the agency producing the video. At the very least, it depicts how the agency wishes to be seen and the applicant the agency is seeking. Of the 200 recruiting videos reviewed, community-oriented policing themes were in a higher percentage of the sampled videos and were depicted for longer periods of time. There was a noted subset of videos that displayed solely militarized recruiting themes with a high number of firearms exhibited outside a training scenario with no community-oriented policing elements. These videos are likely to get the attention of potential applicants. The study cautions agencies producing these types of videos in how the values of their agency is being depicted and what ideologies it may be attracting (Koslicki, 2020).

In a 2016 study published in *Women and Criminal Justice*, the interest in joining law enforcement comes at time when educated, diverse professionals are needed but the profession of law enforcement is having a perceived legitimacy crisis. The areas focused on are the applicants’ motivation, expectation, and preparation for a career in law enforcement (Todak, 2017).

For motivation, the sample group included those with a lifelong goal of joining law enforcement, those that developed interest in high school, and those who developed interest in college. Again, the single most common factor was altruism, helping others and seeing the result of making that difference. Motivating factors such as comradery and

having an exciting career were also present, but community involvement was the main factor. This group of potential applicants were motivated to change the opinion of others about the law enforcement community and be an example of what a law enforcement officer should be (Todak, 2017).

Expectations for a day on the job included driving around and doing hours of paperwork. They viewed patrol work as unpredictable, going from boredom to excitement throughout the shift. Applicants worried law enforcement would make them jaded and paranoid. They anticipated the hate and hostility portrayed in the media. They worried about the potential for mistakes and scrutiny from everything captured on video (Todak, 2017).

Preparation included firearms training, citizen ride-along, civilian positions in agencies, defensive tactics training, and explorer programs. Applicants viewed criminal justice college classes as beneficial for the community-oriented policing instruction (Todak, 2017).

From the study, it was evident the issues facing the law enforcement profession and the perceived legitimacy crisis did not deter potential recruits but rather challenged them. Applicants took time to learn about the current expectations of the profession and prepare (Todak, 2017).

An interesting note in the study was how female applicants were motivated to join law enforcement due to the challenges. Whether it was breaking stereotypes, proving emotional and physical fortitude, or joining “that exclusive, honorable group of women who debunked the stereotype to hold positions that few other women do.” This highlights a recommendation on recruiting female applicants - to challenge these applicants to break stereotypes and demonstrate competence in predominately male assignments (Todak, 2017).

The youngest generation in the US is Generation Z, also known as the iGeneration. Having been born after 1996, the youngest of this generation are now emerging from college or have already joined the workforce. For this generation, technology has been a focus for their entire life. Previous generations grew up during expanded television access, during the age of emerging computers or the internet. Generation Z has grown up with readily accessible technology through the use of smart phones. This has led to an engagement and access to information not previously known. Demographically, they are the most diverse generation (Pew Research Center). When it comes to social beliefs, 70% of Generation Z believe the government should do more to resolve problems rather than leave it to individuals and corporations (Pew Research Center). The research on Generation Z is still transitional with some research proposing Generation Z as being predominately college bound and other research suggesting alternative education for Generation Z. It could be Generation Z will turn more and more to employers to provide the training and education needed. For those interested in law enforcement, due to standards with federal, state, and local agencies, college may remain in their career path. Either way, Generation Z shows the potential for being community service oriented, much like the Millennial Generation (Meet Gen Z, 2021).

Method

The purpose of this research project was to identify the top motivational factors for the Millennial generation (those born between the years 1981 and 1996) and Generation Z (those born between the years 1997 and 2012) in joining the law enforcement profession and what attributes they are looking for when choosing which law enforcement agencies with which to apply. Factors for previous generations have included pay, benefits, job security, power, and status. Identifying the motivations of current college-aged applicants will allow for more effective recruiting strategies.

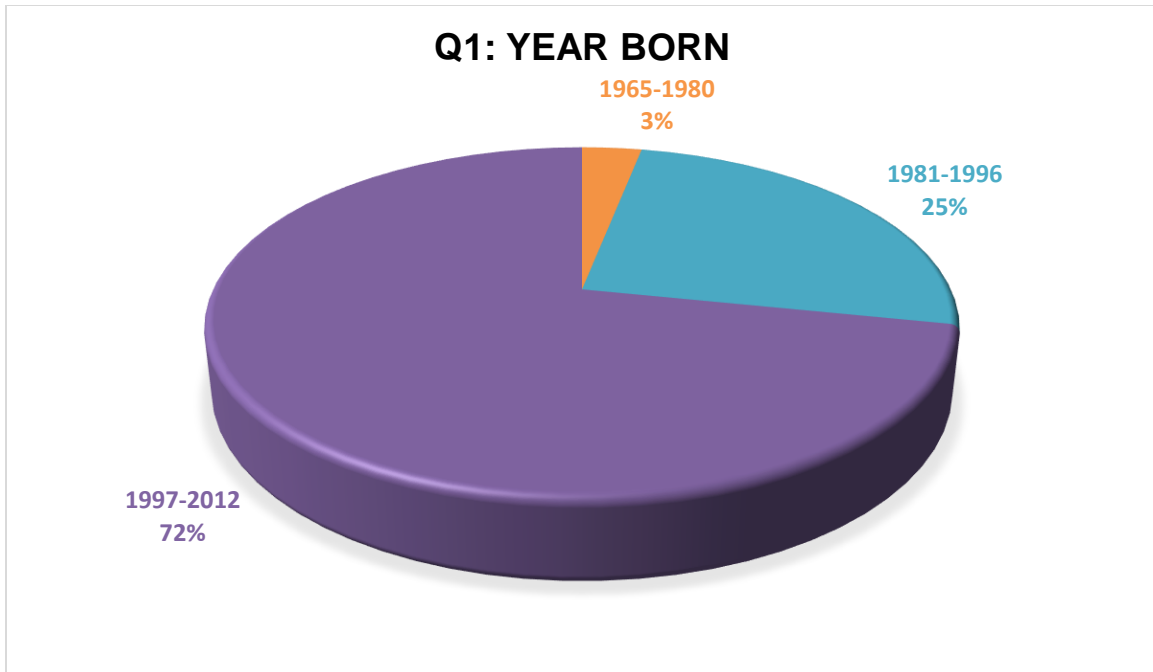
Survey data was collected from Criminal Justice students at four Florida institutions, including Florida State University, Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, Tallahassee Community College and Keiser University. The survey questions were designed to identify the students' motivations for joining the law enforcement profession, what attributes they are looking for in a law enforcement agency, and what factors may discourage them from applying for specific agencies. Students were also asked to provide any feedback or additional information for their answers to survey questions. Also, basic biographical information on age, marriage/family status, and gender identity was collected in order to determine adequate diversity in survey respondents.

The survey was anonymous and each participant was provided an opportunity to participate in a follow-up interview. A weakness in the results was the limitation to only local Florida universities with criminal justice programs and the absence of generational members not attending institutions.

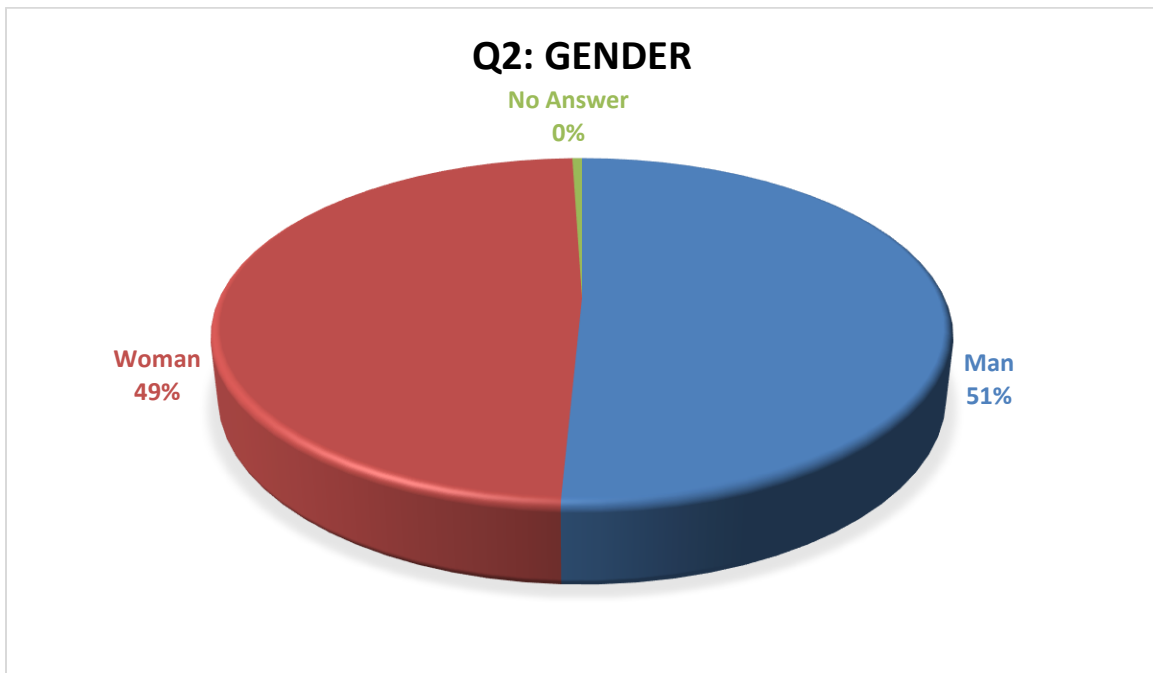
Results

The survey was posted to the Canvas websites for the Criminal Justice Programs at Florida State University, Florida A&M University, Tallahassee Community College and Keiser University. As it was not sent to individuals, and as enrollment numbers are not readily available, there is no way to provide the number of non-respondents. Between the four Criminal Justice Programs, 195 students responded to the survey. To gauge the diversity of the respondents, the three initial questions in the survey were concerning the generation of the respondent, the gender of the respondent and the race or ethnicity of the respondent.

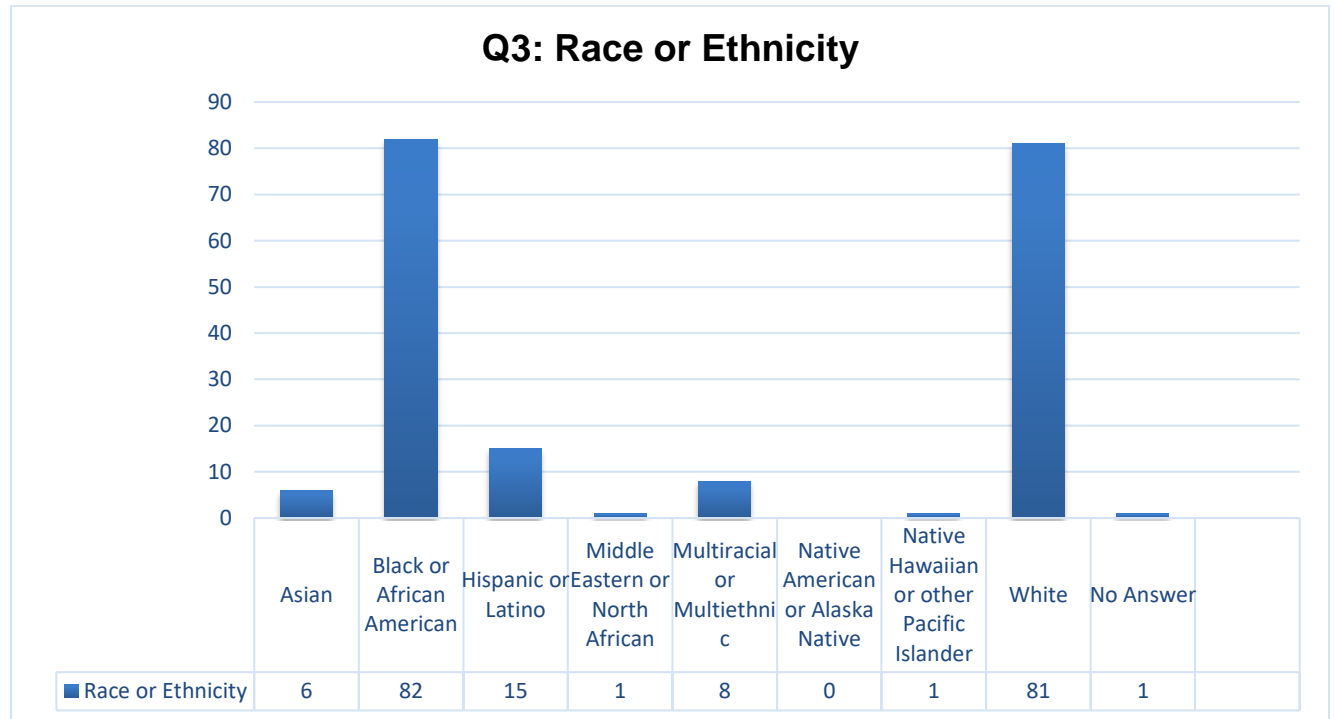
Question 1, concerning the generation of the respondent, showed 140 of the respondents (72%) were from Generation Z. This was the intended target generation for this survey and the subject of most of the research in this paper. The other two generations represented in the survey are Millennials, accounting for 25% or 49 of the respondents and Generation X (born between the years 1965 and 1980), accounting for 3% or 6 of the respondents.



Question 2, concerning the gender of the respondents, showed 99 of the respondents (51%) were male and 95 of the respondents (49%) were female. One respondent preferred not to identify gender.

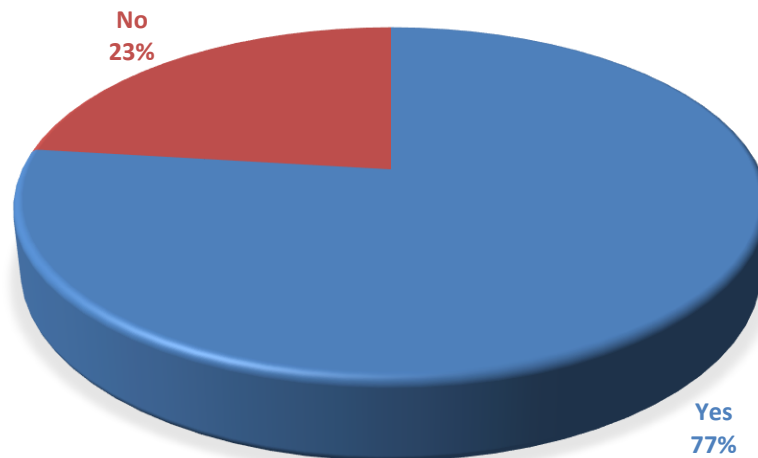


Question 3 concerned the race or ethnicity of the respondents. Of the respondents, 82 (42%) were black or African American, 81 (41.5%) were white, 15 (8%) were Hispanic or Latino, 8 (4%) were multiracial or multiethnic, 6 (3%) were Asian, 1 (.5%) was Middle Eastern or North African, 1 (.5%) was native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and 1 (.5%) selected “another race or ethnicity.”



Question 4, concerning the respondents’ interest in law enforcement, showed 150 respondents (77%) were interested in a career in law enforcement. Of the respondents, 45 (23%) were not interested in a career in law enforcement. This survey was posted on the Canvas site of the Criminal Justice Programs of all four institutions. It is expected some students enrolled in a Criminal Justice Program may have ambitions outside a law enforcement career. Since the survey was described a law enforcement recruiting survey, most of those not interested in a law enforcement career would likely choose not to complete the survey.

Q4: INTEREST IN LAW ENFORCEMENT CAREER



Question 5 concerned the respondents' personal motivations influencing their decision to enter a law enforcement career. In each area the respondent was asked to rank the motivating factor on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being the least important factors and 5 being the most important factors. The top three factors selected by respondents as being most important were as follows:

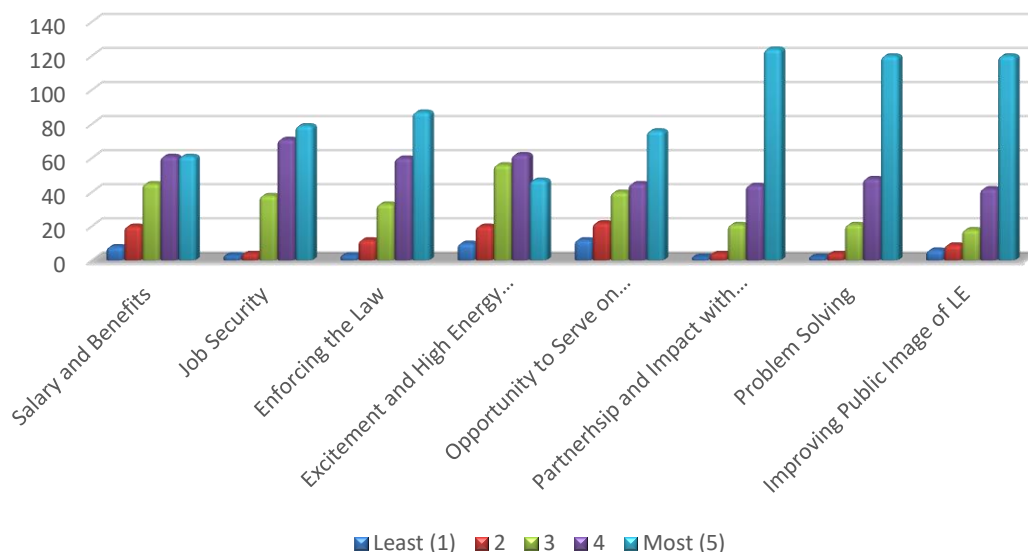
1. Partnerships and impact within your community, selected by 124 (64%) respondents
2. Problem-solving opportunities, selected by 120 (62%) respondents
3. Improving the public image of law enforcement, selected by 120 (62%) respondents.

The lowest three factors selected by respondents as most important were as follows:

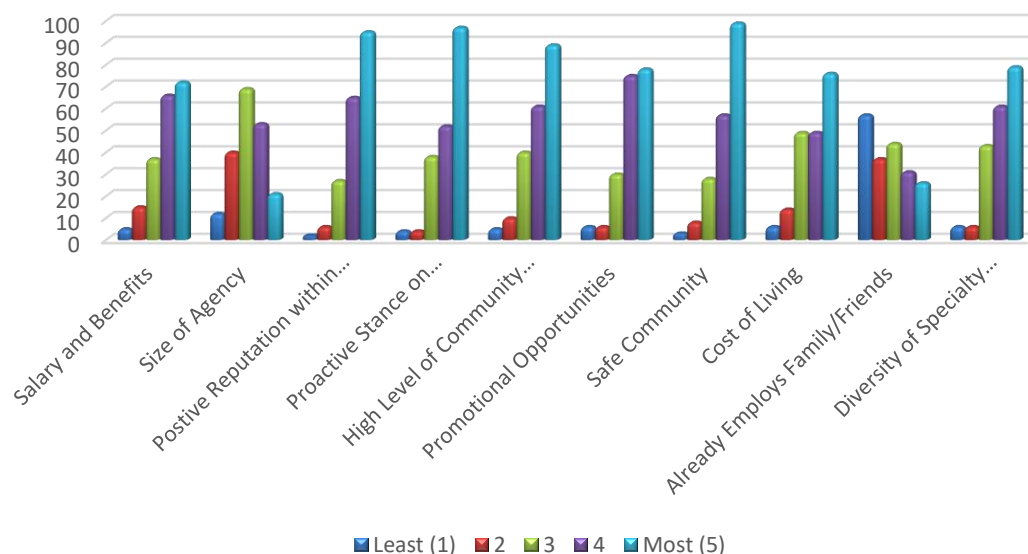
1. Excitement and high energy calls, selected by 47 (24%) respondents
2. Salary and benefits, selected by 61 (31%) respondents
3. Opportunity to serve on specialty squads (investigations, TAC/SWAT, Vice, etc.), selected by 76 (39%) of respondents.

The lowest three factors also were selected the most as least important of factors.

Q5: Personal motivations influencing decision

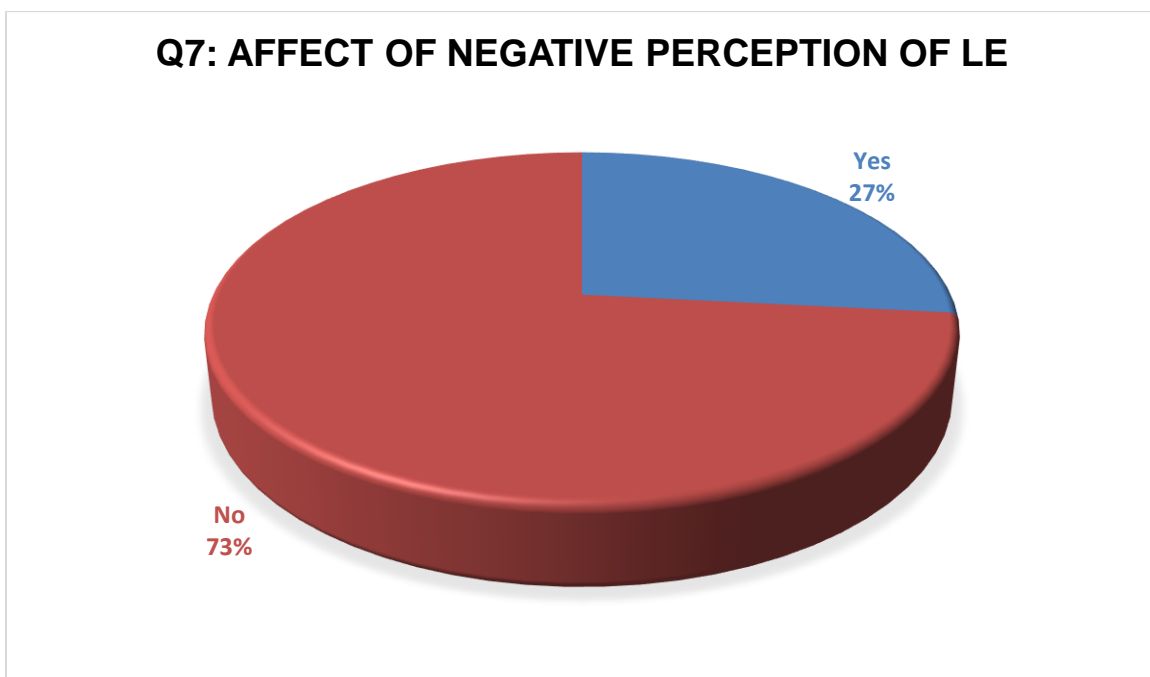


Q6: Agency incentives influencing decision



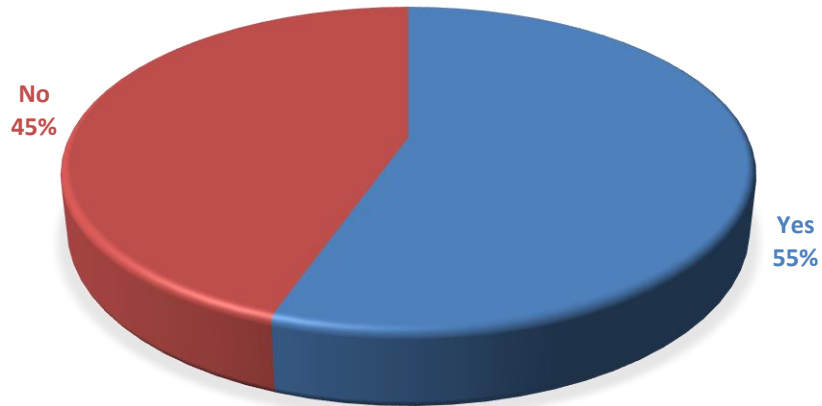
Questions 7 and 8 referenced the negative perception of law enforcement within the media and public. Of the respondents, 143 (73%) advised the negative perception did not affect their decision to join the law enforcement profession and 52 (27%) advised

the negative perception did affect their decision. Question 8 was an opportunity for respondents to explain their answers to question 7. Several respondents expressed the negative opinion of law enforcement was motivation to join a federal agency, work in areas other than patrol, or to not join a law enforcement agency at all. Others acknowledged they would lose the support of family and/or friends if they started a law enforcement career. Most respondents acknowledged the negative perception to some degree. Most respondents, whether they acknowledged the negative perception or not, did not allow this to persuade them against a law enforcement career. In one respondent's words, "Personally, this motivates me to pursue a career in law enforcement even more as I would like to be part of the positive change within the field." Another wrote, "I want to be a positive image and 'humanize' the badge daily through my work." Another summed it up as, "no one wants to work for the people who are responsible for so much misfortune but working from the inside out is the only way to fix it."



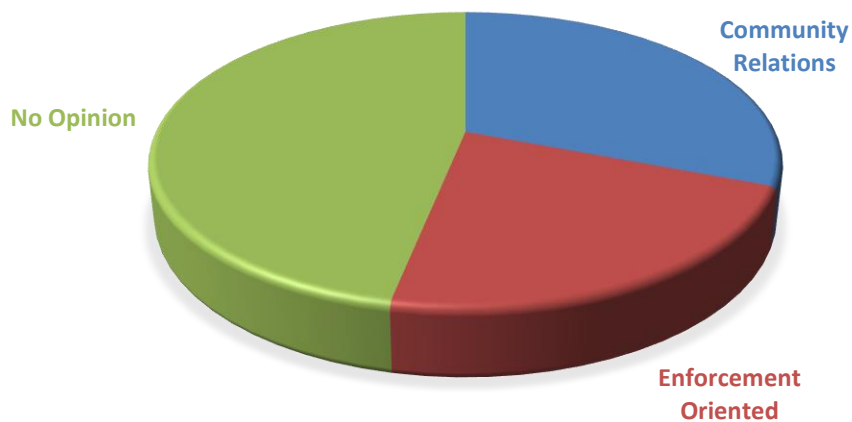
Question 9 asked respondents whether recruitment videos/materials were important in their decision on choosing an agency. Of the respondents, 108 (55%) answered yes while 87 (45%) answered no.

**Q9: RECRUITMENT VIDEOS/MATERIALS
IMPORTANT IN RECRUITING**



Question 10 asked respondents what types of recruiting videos they preferred, community relations-oriented videos or enforcement-oriented videos. Of the respondents, 58 (31%) preferred community relations-oriented recruiting videos, 42 (22%) preferred enforcement-oriented recruiting videos, and 88 (47%) had no opinion.

**Q10: COMMUNITY RELATIONS VS
ENFORCEMENT ORIENTED RECRUITMENT
VIDEOS**



Question 11 offered respondents an opportunity to provide further information related to the survey and/or their responses. The below are a couple of responses that stood out as summarizing what others expressed throughout the survey -respondents are looking for agencies that reflect their values.

"I chose the agency I did because it supported and offered what I want to do for the next 40 years. I've always wanted to serve in one way or another. And I've always wanted to do my part to make the world a better place. And to do my part in changing the view on law enforcement."

"Despite the public image of law enforcement, I want to dedicate my life to serving and growing relationships with the community. I want communities to have positive experiences with Law Enforcement while also enforcing the law."

Discussion

From the research so far completed on Generation Z, there are a number of similarities with Millennials. This generation grew up with social media and information overload, sometimes being called digital natives. They are independent thinkers, used to mass amount of information requiring study. As a result, they focus on the "why". This also means they need a constant flow of updated information to keep motivated. They are known for a desire to improve the world and inspire.

This all was reflected in the survey. In factors that may attract respondents to choose agencies for application, a safe community, a proactive stance on enforcement activities, a positive reputation within the community, and a high level of community engagement all ranked at the top while cost of living, salary and benefits, employment of family/friends, and the size of the agency all ranked at the bottom. It is heartening to see the same factors the public is expecting law enforcement agencies to value are the same factors respondents, potential law enforcement recruits, appear to value.

The same goes for motivating factors for the respondents, our potential recruits. Of the factors offered, partnerships and impact within the community, problem solving opportunities, improving public image of law enforcement, and enforcing the law all are at the top of the list. At the bottom are opportunity to serve on specialty squads, salary and benefits, and excitement/high energy calls. Once again, the motivating factors are in line with public expectations of law enforcement.

As would be expected in a group, regardless of generational status, engaged in criminal justice studies, negative media perception has little effect on career choice. However, instead of denying or rationalizing the negative public/media perception, the respondents are interested in being a part of the change. This is also in line with the previous literature on the newer generations. They take this issue as a challenge; one they feel prepared to meet. Those interested in a law enforcement career are fully aware of the change ahead, the work to be done, and the challenges to be faced. This does not deter them but rather motivates them. This could be a promising sign so long as we can keep them engaged and satisfy their need to be involved in the change.

Though recruitment videos still appear to be important, the focus of the video is less clear. Over 50% of the respondents were split between enforcement-oriented and community relations-oriented videos. The other respondents had no opinion on the

content of the videos. From the rest of the survey and prior research on the new generations, it would appear they are looking to recruitment videos to reflect the culture of the agency.

Recommendations

From past research and the survey completed in this paper, the strategy to attract the newer generations is in line with the current expectations of the public in regard to law enforcement agencies. This strategy includes the following:

1. Acknowledge the declining perceptions of law enforcement and the negative media attention.
2. Emphasize a Department culture of community engagement while also acknowledging a proactive approach to law enforcement and problem solving.
3. Showcase young officers engaged in changing the image of law enforcement and participating cultural changes that affect the agency as a whole.
4. Avoid obvious marketing ploys or unrealistic portrayals. Though pay and opportunities will always be a recruiting tool, emphasize the culture of the agency and its relationship with the community. It may be beneficial to have civilian representatives at recruiting booths or videos of community members expressing their opinion of the Department and positive work being done in the community with law enforcement.
5. Emphasize community partnerships and showcase these in recruiting videos. From the research and survey, it would be beneficial to have multiple recruiting videos, some with a balance of enforcement and community relations activities and some with an emphasis on community partnerships and activities. Each should showcase young officers engaged in improving the image of the Department, being the change they seek.

Lieutenant George Creamer Jr. has been with the Tallahassee Police Department since 1996. He has served as a Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, Financial Crimes Detective, Homicide Detective, Internal Affairs Investigator, and Intel Liaison Officer. In 2012, he was promoted to sergeant. As a sergeant, he served as a Patrol Sergeant, Target Enforcement Squad Sergeant, Field Training Sergeant, Juvenile Service Sergeant, and Violent Crimes Homicide/Robbery Sergeant. In 2020, he was promoted to lieutenant. Lieutenant Creamer is currently the Criminal Investigations Bureau's Persons Section Commander over the Violent Crimes Homicide and Robbery Units, Special Victims Unit, and Juvenile Services Unit. For the past 10 years, he has been the Big Bend Crisis Intervention Team Law Enforcement Liaison. Lieutenant Creamer received his Associates Degree from Tallahassee Community College and his Bachelor of Arts Degree in English Literature/Philosophy from Florida State University.

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References

Appendix A – Survey

Recruiting the Next Generation

Recruiting the New Generation of Law Enforcement Officers

Hello and thank you for taking the time complete this survey. In addition to being a lieutenant at the Tallahassee Police Department, I am enrolled in FDLE's Senior Leadership Program. For my research project, I am seeking information on motivations to join law enforcement, reasons for choosing a specific law enforcement agency, and how those areas vary based on generations. This survey is completely anonymous unless you would like to participate in a follow-up interview. If so, you will have the opportunity to provide contact information at the end of the survey. You can also request a copy of the results if you wish. Again, thank you for assisting me with this project. Hopefully it will give some guidance in recruiting our next generation of law enforcement professionals.

* 1. What year were you born?

☐ 1965-1980

☐ 1981-1996

☐ 1997-2012

* 2. Gender: How do you identify?

☐ Man

☐ Non-binary

☐ Woman

☐ Prefer to self-describe, below

Self-describe:

* 3. What is your race or ethnicity?

- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino
- ☐ Middle Eastern or North African
- ☐ Multiracial or Multiethnic
- ☐ Native American or Alaska Native
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- ☐ White
- ☐ Another race or ethnicity, please describe below

Self-describe below:

* 4. Are you currently interested in a career in law enforcement?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

* 5. As a personal motivation to become a law enforcement officer, please rank each of the following motivations as it reflects your motivation on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 being most important and 1 being least important.

	Least Important			Most Important	
	1	2	3	4	5
Salary and Benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job Security	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Enforcing the Law	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excitement and High Energy Calls	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opportunity to Serve on Specialty Squads (Investigations, TAC/SWAT, Vice, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Partnerships and Impact within Your Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Problem Solving Opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving Public Image of Law Enforcement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 6. When choosing an agency to apply for a law enforcement job, please rank each of the following incentives that would influence your choice of agency on a scale from 1 to 5, with 5 being most important and 1 least important.

	Least Important			Most Important	
	1	2	3	4	5
Salary and Benefits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Size of Agency	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Positive Reputation of Agency within Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proactive Stance on Enforcement Activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High Level of Community Engagement (Community Policing, Public Relations, Town Hall Meetings, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promotional Opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safe Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cost of Living	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Already Employs Family/Friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity of Specialty Units/Opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

* 7. Do current negative public/media perceptions of law enforcement affect your decision to enter a career in law enforcement?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. If yes, please explain.

* 9. Are recruitment videos/materials important in your decision making process regarding your choice of agency(s) to apply with?

☐ Yes

☐ No

10. If yes, do you prefer community relations-oriented or enforcement-oriented recruitment videos?

☐ Community Relations

☐ Enforcement Oriented

☐ No Opinion

11. If you believe any of your answers need further clarification or you would like to provide further information that may assist in this research project, please do so below.

12. If you would like a copy of the data collected from this survey, please enter your email address below.