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**Police Pursuit Driving:
A Study Of Municipal Police Discord**

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Cecil R. Queen

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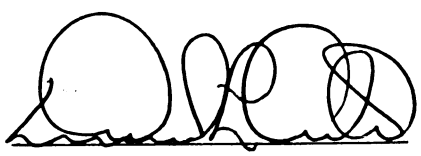

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POLICE PURSUIT DRIVING:
A STUDY OF MUNICIPAL POLICE DISCORD

By

Cecil R. Queen

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ABSTRACT

POLICE PURSUIT DRIVING: A STUDY OF MUNICIPAL POLICE DISCORD

By

Cecil R. Queen

Upon reviewing the literature, it was found that minimal research had been conducted to determine police officer perceptions relating to their vehicular pursuit policies and associated factors. The vast majority of the research pertains to descriptive analyses regarding the nature and extent of pursuits.

This study was conducted to evaluate the relationships that exist, if any, between the varying ranks or job types within municipal police agencies and their levels of agreement with the elements of pursuit policy. The purpose of this research was to assist police executives in their search for sound pursuit policy by providing empirical data about their officer's perceptions about current pursuit issues.

An attitudinal survey was given to all sworn municipal police officers within one large metropolitan county in southeastern Michigan. It was predicted that officers' pursuit-related perceptions would vary significantly based upon job type.

Several significant differences were discovered in perceptions involving policies, training, supervisory support, and experiences as they relate to the job type.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge this thesis would not have been possible without guidance, support, and encouragement of my thesis committee. Dr. David Carter, chairperson, shared his vast knowledge and expertise in research design and writing. He also continued to encourage me when I needed it the most. His drive to succeed inspired me greatly. I am sincerely grateful to Dr. Dennis Payne who shared his interest and incredible insight of police pursuits with me. His patience and willingness to help was significant toward the outcome of this project. Finally, I would to thank Dr. Charles Corley for his kind and thoughtful assistance in the completion of this thesis.

I would like to thank Ernest A. Costa for his continued support and encouragement during my undergraduate years and his suggestion to seek graduate education at Michigan State University. I also would like to acknowledge to late Dr. Robert Trojanowicz who convinced me that commuting 200 miles per day to study at M.S.U. would be worth the effort. He was correct.

Finally, I recognize the love, support, inspiration, and continuous encouragement of my wife, Cynthia. She is the wind beneath my wings. I would also like to thank my children, Cecil Ryan and Jillian, for their love and support during the many hours spent on this paper. Thank you all.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The average law-abiding citizen turns to the police to help them or keep them safe and secure within their community. Criminals in American society are within all walks of life and may not be far away. The police have mandates from their community to protect them and serve them and the police have promised to do that and attempt to keep them safe. This social contract immediately is placed in jeopardy when a criminal runs from the police in a vehicle and the police chase them at high-speeds. Many of these pursuits end in vehicle crashes with property damage, injuries, and even deaths. The media then report the disastrous outcomes in newsprint and television with vivid accounts of the details skewed to interest their readers or viewers. The citizens and politicians become involved and push for legislation or pursuit policy reviews where the goals are pursuit restrictions. Civil litigation usually follows a negative pursuit outcome and can cost the police department, city, and the public millions of dollars in damages. This is where sound pursuit policy may be able to predict and mitigate many of these potential problems, but first, the police executives must know the true parameters of the problem. Scientific research may assist them.

Upon conducting initial research regarding pursuit policy decisions, law enforcement officials quickly discover that they are faced with a multi-faceted problem. Many new issues can develop simply form the resolution of one of the problems, such as deciding that your officers will be allowed to pursue only felons. The community will take a dim view of the police when the local kidnap-rapist fails to stop for a red light and then flees from the police and no pursuit is initiated. The officer had no way of knowing that the rapist had his latest victim in the trunk of his car, but the public will not be pleased. On the reverse side, if the policy decision is to allow pursuits at the full discretion of the officer, local citizens will be enraged when reports of the fifteen-year old joy rider ran from the police and crashed into an innocent family killing them. Pursuits have costs attached to them, and those costs can be measured in human suffering, loss of life, and financial burden. Police executives must deal with those costs and construct appropriate pursuit policies that will find acceptance within their community. The balance between the need to apprehend criminals and the need to maintain public safety must be sought and displayed within pursuit policy. Perhaps, empirical research on pursuit policies will provide some answers in order to balance these critical issues.

Statement of the Problem

This thesis will examine and evaluate the relationships that exist between the different ranks or job types within police departments (i.e. patrol officers, investigators, first-line supervisors, administrators) and their levels of agreement with the elements of pursuit policy. It will be argued that significant differences of perception concerning pursuit policy factors exist within police agencies pursuant to the four job categories resulting in disagreement. Thus, the rank or position held within a police department will significantly affect the officers' perceptions on the pursuit issues of policy restrictions, training, supervisory support, liability concerns, operational aspects, discretion, and external support mechanisms.

Purpose of the Thesis

Among the factors that police administrators should consider when making policy decisions are the beliefs and attitudes of their subordinates, the officers and first-line supervisors in the field who are actually conducting and overseeing the vehicle pursuits of criminals. The patrol officers can define what is a pursuit by virtue of their enormous discretion while on patrol. With this discretion, they can decide whether or not to initiate a pursuit, continue it, or terminate the chase. They also decide on pursuit tactics and, many times, even whether or not to formally report their actions. Their attitudes, perceptions, and agreement with pursuit policy can

potentially affect their decisions before, during and immediately after a pursuit situation. ''Policies that are inconsistent with officers' attitudes require strong supervision because they can be by-passed or ignored'' (Alpert, 1998, p.348). If there is disparity among patrol officers about pursuit policy, the lack of cohesive thinking between the ranks will probably fester.

Many police department investigators have the task of investigating crime after receiving reports forwarded to them by patrol officers. These investigators normally have many years of experience and have been previously assigned the patrol duties, so their perceptions of pursuit policy may be similar to the patrol officer. Conducting investigations, however, may have affected their attitudes about pursuits, as they may have been required to look into past pursuit negative outcomes resulting in attitude modifications. Supervisors and administrators alike would then scrutinize the investigators' final reports. The investigators' perceptions will be a part of the final work product even if unintentional.

First-line supervisors are given the task of reviewing and evaluating the work of the patrol officers and investigators. According to Alpert and Fridell (1992), the supervisor is ''the most important person to insure that policies are being followed and that risk is balanced appropriately...'' The supervisors' perceptions of pursuit policy must not be overlooked. If they do not supervise

properly and enforce policy requirements because of their varied attitudes, then pursuit policy becomes ineffective. Exposure to public review, media reports, and judicial assessment will then broaden for those officers involved, including the supervisor who fails to perform properly and the administrator from a vicarious standpoint.

It is very possible that supervisors' perceptions of the policy elements may not be consistent with the patrol officers or even their own boss, the administrator. If the supervisors' opinions differ greatly from the department administrators' opinions of pursuits, this disparity will become detrimental toward the administrator's ability to implement, influence and enforce policy. There is also a high probability that pursuit-related litigation will increase pursuant to these disparities.

This potential lack of consistency in perceptions of pursuits and correlated policy within the department may go unnoticed by the busy police executive over time. The identification of inconsistent attitude trends toward policy is crucial for law enforcement's executives so that appropriate training initiatives and increased supervision can be facilitated with pursuit-related litigation being diminished.

It is very clear that pursuits can quickly become dangerous events resulting in property damage, severe injuries, and even death. The pursuits with disastrous outcomes have resulted in substantial civil litigation

against police agencies and the municipalities that govern them. Increases in pursuit litigation have concerned police administrators for past decades and may have an affect on their perceptions as they relate to vehicle chases. As police administrators draft pursuit policy, they may have been affected by civil litigation aspects and perceive the policy elements differently than their subordinates, thus causing further disparity within the organization.

Police pursuits have clearly become a topic of review for the police, media, attorneys, legislators, and scholars. For the past twenty years, the debate surrounding the viability of vehicular pursuits has evolved into basically three groups arguing their points of view. The first position finds that all pursuits are too dangerous and seeks severe restrictions on pursuits (Alpert & Fridell, 1992; Beckman, 1987; Blankenship & Moneymaker, 1991). The second position believes that pursuits are necessary to maintain public order, but that moderate restrictions must be placed upon the officers making the pursuit decisions (Abbott, 1988; Alpert & Anderson, 1986; Payne & Corley, 1992; Shuman & Kennedy, 1989). The third group understands the resultant mayhem of allowing no vehicular pursuits of criminals and believes that pursuit of criminals outweighs the needs of public safety. Therefore, proscribing pursuits would allow any traffic or law violator to avoid the consequences of their misdeeds by speeding away in the vehicle, and this erodes the basic premise of the police mission by not

affording the police the opportunity to protect and serve them (California Highway Patrol, 1983; Solicitor General Report, 1985).

This cross-section of opinion can cause tremendous indecision by police administrators when developing and implementing pursuit policy, and also when deciding which philosophy to consider and how much discretion to give to the field officers.

During the past twenty years, a significant amount of research pertaining to pursuits has been reported. Amongst this profusion of literature, most of the data aligns itself with descriptive analyses, such as accident rates, environmental conditions, vehicle speeds, as well as other issues. It is important to note that only five studies have investigated officers' attitudes and perceptions toward pursuits with some this research being minimal in depth, especially when considering differences between the ranks. Britz and Payne (1994) and Alpert (1998) conducted the most comprehensive attitudinal comparisons to-date where significant explorations into perception differences of officers and supervisors about pursuits were reported.

In order to design and implement sound pursuit policy, police executives must analyze and understand perceptual differences between the various job types within their agencies as it correlates to the elements of pursuits. With this as motivation, it was strongly believed that it was necessary to investigate the perceptual harmony among

various police officer ranks within sixteen municipal police agencies in close proximity from the same Michigan county.

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis assumes that there will be no significant relationship between the perceptions of the different job types (road patrol, investigator, first-line supervisor, and administrator) and the variables of police pursuits (policy, training, supervisory, liability, operational, perceptual, and external).

Definitions

The definitions that follow should enhance the understanding of the remainder of this thesis.

Police pursuit: an active attempt by a law enforcement officer in a police patrol vehicle to stop or apprehend a the occupants of another moving vehicle where the driver is aware of the officer's attempt to stop and the driver is resisting by ignoring or taking evasive action to elude.

Officer: a sworn municipal police officer, county deputy sheriff, or member of the state police.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Past research conducted about high-speed pursuits have tackled many different issues with the majority of significant pursuit-related research in the past twenty years aimed at descriptions, characteristics, incidents, and outcomes. Most of this research has played a role in the formulation of opinions about police pursuits. However, very little empirical research has analyzed police officer's perceptions and opinions. This leaves police administrators with very little data which to build policy and consider behavior training programs. Sound policy requires substantial data in which to guide policy direction (Alpert, 1998; Wells & Falcone, 1992).

Prior Officer Perception Research

Illinois Police Officers' Opinions Study

Charles and Falcone (1992) conducted an exploratory qualitative analysis of police officer opinions regarding police pursuits. Their intent was to assist police administrators by developing a cache of data related to officers' opinions about pursuits. Charles and Falcone believed that having a clear understanding of pursuits from a street perspective would be useful in developing new pursuit policies and procedures. If policy was developed

without this viewpoint in mind, pursuits may become increasingly problematic from the standpoint of officers failing to adhere to policy demands. The study's objective was to determine the officers' and supervisors' levels of understanding of their pursuit policy.

Charles and Falcone conducted interviews with 107 police personnel of different job types from 29 police and sheriffs' departments throughout Illinois from a purposive selection of 51 agencies. The departments used in the non-random sample were selected in order to provide a representation of department sizes and geographical locations within Illinois. The selection of interviewees was determined by the respective police agencies with a request to include officers of both genders, minorities, and officers of varying levels of experience. The departments provided officers (N = 64) fitting the descriptors from road patrol and traffic assignments. Police supervisors and administrators (N = 43) were interviewed either in-person or by telephone as schedules permitted. The authors admitted that the sample of selected officers might have been purposefully selected by department administrators in order to place their agencies in the best light. Some departments even gave officers copies of their pursuit policy just prior to their interview so that they would be better prepared. Generalizability of findings was very limited.

The interviews consisted of verbal answers to eleven open-ended questions where the field interviewers attempted

to develop an understanding of the officer's perceptions and attitudes about pursuits.

Most officers, including field training officers and supervisors, reported not knowing or understanding the policy, they could describe acceptable pursuit field behaviors, but could not provide appropriate details about their policies. The officers further had ''developed a unique understanding of how far they could push a pursuit'' and avoid discipline and civil litigation (Charles & Falcone, 1992, p. 78). Even a police chief admitted reading his policy five times prior to his interview and reported that he did not understand the policy (Charles & Falcone, 1992, p. 77).

With respect to pursuit discretion, the officers differed considerably with many wanting increased discretion and others requesting that their pursuits be limited to serious felonies only. While most officers agreed that supervisors should monitor their pursuit activities, some officers felt that supervisors should not be able to terminate pursuits because they may not have enough information to make that determination. Percentages were not provided.

They found that officers indicated that three main control mechanisms steered their behaviors while working. The first control factor was a clearly written pursuit policy and procedure. The policy must be understood and enforced by the department to be effective. The second

factor that controlled pursuit behaviors was training. Training helps to reiterate and provides a better understanding of the policy objectives. The third pursuit control mechanism was found to be command supervision. If policy is understood by officers and enforced by supervisors, the officers reported that they were more likely to adhere to policy mandates.

The officers also reported that they did not wish to violate judicial standards and become exposed to pursuit civil litigation. Critical incident review panels further supplied an influence on the officers' pursuit behaviors. If policy is vague with training and supervision nonexistent, police officer reactions to pursuits will vary greatly over time. The authors conclude that these variations will exist throughout police agencies within the same geographical area.

Police Pursuits and Officer Attitudes Study

During the summer of 1992, Falcone (1994) conducted another qualitative analysis of police officer perceptions. He formulated several research questions pursuant to a AAA Foundation research grant that was a larger research project exploring pursuit issues. The research questions were (Falcone, 1994, p. 144):

- Do officers generally believe that a no-pursuit policy would result in increased numbers of chases and encourage offenders to attempt to elude?
- Do officers hold their pursuit attitudes independently or are there discernable patterns within departments and across departments?

- Is there evidence that departments with discouraging/highly restrictive policies have a greater number of offenders who attempt to elude?

- Do departments with discouraging policies actually experience fewer pursuits?

In order to answer these questions, Falcone developed 17-question structured interview and conducted interviews with officers from five police departments and one military police operation within one county outside of Chicago, Illinois. State highways ran directly through the military base, so vehicular traffic traveled freely there. The departments were intentionally selected based upon their pursuit policy characteristics, such as restrictiveness and comprehensiveness, and based upon their size, location, and organizational structure. Two agencies were described with discouraging pursuit policies, three departments had a restrictive policy, and one agency had a discretionary policy.

The discouraging policies forbid pursuits except under exceptional circumstances that were specified within the policy. The restrictive policies granted pursuits under many circumstances, but limited officer discretion. The discretionary pursuit policy allowed officers full authority and discretion in pursuit decisions.

The study involved interviews with a 13 percent sample of the total number of sworn officers (N = 26) within the five selected departments and a 6 percent sample of military police officers from the military installation (N = 10).

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The respondents (94%) clearly indicated that they thought pursuits would substantially increase if a no-pursuit policy was enacted. The data also show that 42% believed that pursuit attitudes were related to intra-agency culture. Falcone found that intra-departmental attitudes on pursuits had a strong measure of central tendency leading to a finding that internal agency culture substantially impacts pursuit perceptions and attitudes. He indicated that the officers were concerned about peer approval and disapproval on discretionary decisions made during pursuits, especially within the smaller departments.

The next question regarding whether departments with discouraging policies would have more attempts to flee resulted in 94% of the officers reporting that they believed that discouraging policies would result in more attempts to elude. The self-reported number of pursuits did not confirm this, as the departments with the most discretionary policies had the most pursuits.

The last research question asking whether agencies with discouraging policies have fewer pursuits revealed that the officers felt that departments with discouraging policies had the most pursuits. Again, this was found not to be the case. Pursuits and the number of attempts to elude officers appeared to increase as the departments' policy restrictions decreased.

The research additionally revealed that 5% - 15% of the officers believed that the general public would be

encouraged to flee if a no-pursuit policy was known. The officers felt strongly (94%) that a no-pursuit policy would have a negative impact on law enforcement as a whole

Falcone uncovered an element of underreporting pursuits in departments with discouraging policies. The officers' underreporting actions were conducted in order to avoid supervisory inspection and to avoid paper work. If the chase ended quickly and positively, the offender was usually just ticketed and released. Supervisors and administrators would not have knowledge of these pursuits as no official record was made. This might help explain some of the other findings of underreporting pursuits (Payne, 1997; Payne & Corley, 1994).

Falcone concluded that officer behaviors could be significantly affected by their pursuit policy restrictions. This finding could have a noteworthy impact on pursuit policy development.

Effect of Pursuit Policies on Officers' Tendency to Pursue Study

Homant and Kennedy (1994) took an exploratory, quantitative approach toward studying the effects of different pursuit policies on police officers' likelihood to chase as well as other factors. They stated that while many police departments have recently changed their pursuit policies, others have maintained the policy approach of wide discretion for their officers in pursuits. This policy direction leads to negligible amounts of attention on the

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effects that policy plays on the actual field officer's behavior.

The researchers surveyed officers from departments with varying pursuit policies seeking their perceptions on recent pursuit involvement (past twelve months) and on their likelihood to pursue in two hypothetical situations. An attempt was made to study 47 state-level police departments and 24 municipal agencies. Due to police concerns of enhanced liability or embarrassment, only seven state agencies agreed to participate. A survey was distributed to the officers of each department either randomly or selected by the post commanders with 614 surveys being returned and useable.

The survey instrument was designed to measure: 1) the officers' knowledge of the policy, 2) what type of policy the officers' preferred, and 3) the officers' likelihood to pursue. Homant and Kennedy gave the respondents a list of five pursuit policy types and they were (Homant & Kennedy, 1994, p. 97):

- Pure Judgment. The officer is cautioned against unreasonable danger to the public. Guidelines to consider may be given, but the officer has wide use of discretion.

- Limited Judgment. The officer is aware of close supervision over his or her decision making. A fairly detailed list of things to consider is given. The general tone is that the officer must be ready to justify the decision to pursue, but the basic policy is to support law and authority as long as the risks do not outweigh the benefits.

- Mild Restrictive. Some clear guidelines are given for when not to pursue. Minimizing risk is more

important than enforcing the law. Officer liability may be stressed, but there are no firm restrictions on the type of offense for which one may pursue.

- Severe Restrictive. The burden of justifying the pursuit is clearly on the officer. There are clear restrictions on the way in which to pursue, and pursuits arising from routine traffic stops are typically prohibited.

- Pursuit Discouraged. Pursuit must be a last resort to prevent escape when there is probable cause of a dangerous felony. There is a clear statement that the policy is to avoid pursuits.

The officers were then asked to select the policy type that corresponded the most with their pursuit policy. This allowed judgment in reference to policy knowledge. They were also asked which policy type that they liked the least and liked the most. The respondents' pursuit tendencies were examined by direct survey questions.

The researchers found a weak relationship between policy type and the officers' probability to chase. Most of the officers perceived their policies as the opposite of the actual restrictiveness rating given by the researchers. More discretionary policies were perceived as restrictive and the officers saw the more restrictive policies as permissive. The data show that officers with discretionary policies were more apt to pursue and officers with restrictive policies were less apt to pursue.

Homant and Kennedy also determined that officers' perceptions of policy have more to do with their experiences with their supervisors than it does with the actual words used in the policy. The researchers admitted that some

internal validity issues may have been factors in the results as several extraneous variables may have affected the data outcomes.

Homant and Kennedy summarized that no particular policy is better than another. They added that clarified policy and definite enforcement of pursuit policy make pursuit decisions more predictable and consistent with policy requirements. This finding correlates with some the conclusions of Charles and Falcone (1992).

Sensation Seeking as a Factor in Police Pursuit Study

A study was conducted to assess the relationship of an officer's personality trait, sensation seeking, with their potential become involved in pursuits by Homant, Kennedy, and Howton (1993). The sensation-seeking variable relates to physical feelings as opposed to mental intentions.

The researchers conducted exploratory, quantitative analysis by using a survey instrument and testing a group of officers from one police department in a suburban metropolitan area. All 72 officers agreed to participate resulting in 69 useable surveys. They theorized that the officers' sensation-seeking scores would correlate positively with their inclination to engage in pursuits.

Official department records were studied for pursuits that involved police car damages for the previous two years. Homant, et al. believed that officers would be very likely to report chases that involved damage to their patrol car as

they were aware of officers' tendencies not under report their actual pursuits.

They concluded, with much reservation, that the self-report measure of pursuit activity correlated significantly with the total sensation seeking score. The authors clearly steered away from the practical applications of their methods and provided that their causal findings may be more theoretical than practical. It was recognized that the results need further research in order to ascertain other influential factors in pursuit driving decisions. Homant et al. believe that supervisors should account for officers' personality differences when implementing pursuit policy.

Police Pursuit Driving Study

Alpert and Madden (1994) conducted quantitative research of attitudinal issues pertaining to police pursuits by surveying police recruits, citizens, and police supervisors. They concluded that prior research has identified four important factors related to police decisions to engage or not engage in a pursuit. These factors were: 1) the precipitating violation; 2) the area that the chase occurs; 3) traffic variables; and 4) weather conditions. These factors lead them to study the impact of these four variables on the three groups: police recruits; police supervisors; and a group of citizens (civilian law enforcement students).

The sample consisted of 46 police recruits attending their second day of the police academy, 27 police

supervisors from several different police departments in Texas, and 139 citizens of similar age to those who tend to flee from the police. A questionnaire consisting of pursuit scenarios was distributed to the three groups in order to evaluate their attitudes on pursuits.

The data reveal that the most important factor in their decision (60%) to pursue a fleeing suspect is the need to apprehend. The respondents (40%) felt that the risk to public safety was less critical. Traffic conditions were the most important risk factors for all three groups. The supervisors were most likely to pursue based upon the scenarios and were most likely to support pursuits when they occur. The students were least likely to pursue at all.

The police supervisors' perceptions of pursuit issues varied significantly from the other two groups. This should come as no surprise as they view the subject from many different perspectives and experiences.

Policy Implications for Pursuit Driving Study

Britz and Payne (1994) designed quantitative research to establish whether different police job types had different perceptions about pursuit policy attributes. They realized that the officer in the field has much discretion and is the primary decision maker in pursuit occurrences. They posit that policy and training will be the officers' guide. Administrators who make pursuit policy must understand the affects that policy has on the officers' and supervisors' perceptions. They explored the perceptual

differences among the department's rank structure as they related to numerous policy issues, training aspects, supervisory issues, experiential factors, operational issues, and external factors.

A survey instrument was developed and distributed to 2,220 sworn officers of the same agency. Regardless of rank, all of the officers had prior road patrol experience with the likelihood of previous pursuit involvement. The respondents described their job type as patrol officer, investigators, first-line supervisor, or administrator on the questionnaire and answered 63 questions regarding their agreement with the various pursuit topics.

A 55 percent response rate was achieved (N = 1212) that incorporated patrol officers (N = 675), investigators (N = 202), First-line supervisors (N = 170), and administrators (N = 165).

The analyzed data reveal that patrol officers were most likely to find their policy restrictive and discouraging toward pursuits. Administrators were the least likely to see the policy as restrictive, but reported that they (46%) had pursuits that went unreported. When observing the entire sample, 35% of the respondents admitted unreported pursuits in the past.

Patrol officers agreed more than supervisors and administrators that they have received adequate training in pursuit driving tactics. A noteworthy finding was that supervisors (49%) were the most likely group to find their

policy to be confusing or vague. The officers in the field must depend on the supervisors for guidance and if the supervisors are confused on the policy, this is a mixture for disaster.

Several supervisory variables were analyzed, and it was discovered that while most supervisors thought that they supported the field officers, patrol officers were least likely to believe that the support was present. Another notable finding was that 80% of supervisors and 72% of administrators admitted that they had not provided policy training to the patrol officers. It would be difficult for the supervisors to train subordinates on policy that they themselves were confused about.

The patrol officers and administrators disagreed on the mechanisms in place to ensure safe patrol vehicles. The officers were least likely to believe that they had safe cars while the administrators were most likely to agree that the department provided safe patrol cars. The data also show that 38% of the all respondents admitted to being involved in intentional collisions. This reveals that the officers might not be adhering to policy requirements. Patrol officers (84%) favored to use of roadblocks during pursuits, while administrators (64%) sharply disagreed. The entire sample, however, revealed that 74% agreed with this pursuit tactic.

The researchers found that most patrol officers favored enhanced discretion in pursuit decisions, ramming suspect

vehicles, and using firearms to stop fleeing vehicles. To the contrary, administrators were least likely to support these discretion enhancements.

When viewing the external variables studied by Britz and Payne, the data reveal that patrol officers and investigators were least likely to agree that the public and the courts supported them in pursuit matters.

The researchers concluded that many training and supervisory implications had been identified that should assist administrators in their quest to reduce pursuits with negative outcomes. The lack of training and communications between supervisors and road officers must be addressed because they are significant factors toward management of pursuit events. The officers wanting more discretion to use extreme force (ramming and handguns) to stop vehicles clearly support the authors' recommendations for more training and supervision. The research did find, as expected, perception differences between the job types studied as related to pursuits.

Police Pursuit and Use of Force Study

Alpert et al. (1996) conducted research into multiple police pursuit issues under grant for the National Institute of Justice. A portion of that research (Alpert, 1998) studied the perspectives and attitudes of police officers and their supervisors as they correlate to pursuits. The sample involved surveying 1,055 police officers consisting of 881 police officers and 174 supervisors from four police

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agencies. The researcher's purpose was to determine if patrol officers' attitudes on pursuits differed across police agencies, differed from officers who had never been in a chase, and differed from police managers.

The surveys consisted of pursuit scenarios that encapsulated the need to apprehend with public safety risks and risk potential based environmental conditions.

Alpert found that the percentage of officers and supervisors willing to pursue or authorize a pursuit increased as the precipitating event or crime increased. The nature of the original crime was the most important factor in the officers' decisions to continue a pursuit. This variable was twice as important as the environmental factors.

The need to immediately apprehend was found to be the most important concern for all respondents. The data revealed that the need to apprehend (75%) was significantly more important than the public safety risk (25%) to the respondents.

Both supervisors and officers were less likely to pursue in residential areas than commercial or freeway environments. Less congested roadways accounted for three times the likelihood of a pursuit than congested roads. Both groups reported that their pursuit likelihood for dry roads was 1.7 times greater than that for wet roads.

The data further reveal that the officers from the different agencies had similar perceptions about pursuits

regardless of the nature of their policy. Alpert discovered that there was consensus between the officers and supervisors because there were no significant differences in pursuit attitudes between the groups.

Alpert concluded that officers' behaviors may change swiftly with the enactment of new pursuit policies, but their perceptions and opinions will not change at the same rate. Findings from attitudinal research can ultimately help administrators with their duty to train officers to understand and internalize their pursuit policies.

Policy Content Research

An area that might relate to officers' perceptions and attitudes on pursuits is the content of the policy itself. Administrators design pursuit policy and adopt levels of restrictions as one of their main objectives. The administrators develop and implement the policy, and the supervisor's job is to ensure that the policy restrictions and mandates are followed. It is finally expected that the officers will integrate the policy content into their pursuit behavior patterns. This is the intent and goal of substantive policy. The results may be somewhat different.

James Auten (1990) conducted quantitative analysis on existing pursuit policies by studying 296 municipal and county police agencies in Illinois. The sample agencies were randomly surveyed about their pursuit policy content as it was related to 16 policy elements. He was surprised to find that nearly 21% (N = 61) of the agencies did not have a

written pursuit policy, especially with the common practice of police operating vehicles and the potential of liability exposure. Auten further determined that 100% of the policies required officers to consider their safety as well as the safety of others when deciding to initiate and continue a pursuit. Consideration of the seriousness of the precipitating event was mandated in nearly 94% of the policies reviewed.

Auten's survey revealed that 93% required dispatcher notification and supervisors had the authority to terminate pursuits in 83% of the policies. Supervisors could authorize roadblocks in 40% of policies and special permission was required to assist in an interagency pursuit in 57% of the pursuit polices. Written reports were found to be required in only 73% of the policies, which allows under reporting of pursuits as a matter of policy.

Some of the researchers significant findings were that more than half of the police agencies with written policy failed to regulate the use of roadblocks, caravanning practices, and the use of marked police cars only. While the percentages were generally low in most categories, 80% of the departments had taken the first step of implementing pursuit policies.

Wells and Falcone (1992) theorized that the organizational environment is relevant to the study of pursuit policy and customs. They stated that, "... the structure and environment of police organizations constrain

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the content of policing activities that occur within them, and they do this through the mediating effects of department policy'' (1992, p. 319).

They surveyed 51 municipal, county, and state police agencies resulting in 35 useable survey forms being returned. They also conducted telephone interviews with each agency that returned a questionnaire to obtain further clarifying data. Their data show that 82% of the departments had written pursuit policies with varying content. This obviously leaves six departments (18%) admitting that they do not have a written policy.

The majority of the policies were described as restrictive or discretionary, with 25% leaving the pursuit discretion completely with the officer and 80% allowing a broad range of precipitating events for pursuits. The researchers' working definitions of policy ratings were: 1) discouraging (severely restricts or discourages any pursuit, except in the most extreme circumstances); 2) restrictive (places some specific restrictions on officers' judgments and decisions); and 3) discretionary (allows individual officers to make their own decisions when and how to pursue). These policy types mirror the policy descriptions by Nugent et al. (1989).

Wells and Falcone found that 54% of the agencies had no pursuit training requirements and 92% had no in-house pursuit training. However, it was learned that 75% of the departments required firearms (deadly force) training, even

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though, vehicle pursuits were much more prevalent than police shootings.

Only half of the departments kept records of their pursuits leaving post-pursuit study very difficult. Further, it was found that the larger departments had the most comprehensive pursuit policies and that pursuits were most likely to occur in agencies with less comprehensive policies. Smaller departments with minimal policy content equaled increased pursuits.

Agencies with more focus on department hierarchy and chain-of-command were found to have more extensive and restrictive policies. Higher stratification in structure reveals tighter control over the field officers' pursuit decisions. Wells and Falcone found that policy restrictiveness had no bearing on the frequency of pursuits.

The researchers concluded that organizational culture and customs were significantly related to pursuit policy and behaviors.

Kinney and Alpert (1997) found that 57% of municipal police agencies had drafted new pursuit policies since 1990 and the 47% of the departments had done so during the past two years. They surveyed a national sample of police agencies (N=737) regarding pursuit policy elements and determined that many of the departments admitted to only minimally preparing their officers for pursuits. Municipal agencies were more likely to restrict pursuits, such as marked cars only and mandate supervisor responsibilities

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than the county sheriff departments. The researchers discovered also that 31% of the police agencies kept regular pursuit statistics while 71% could provide data detailing the number of pursuits encountered during 1993. Nearly 16% of the law enforcement agencies revealed that they had been involved in pursuit litigation, and 25% indicated that they had pursuits that additionally resulted in the use of force over and above the chase itself in order to apprehend the suspect.

Falcone and Wells (1998) studied a nonrandom national sample (N=288) of pursuit policies by conducting a content analysis on twelve policy variables divided into 114 specific issues. In 1994 and 1995, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) collected the policy data that was used. Their analysis reviewed the typical items that should be present in pursuit policy, such as, when to initiate a chase, driving tactics, restrictiveness, and the balance of public safety. The levels of pursuit restrictions used by the researchers were the same three policy models suggested by Nugent et al. (1989), which included discretionary, restrictive, and discouraging. They discovered that 59% of the policies were discretionary, and that when dissecting the policy content there were no statistically significant differences between municipal and county agencies. A strong relationship was found between the size of the department and the extensiveness of the policies with larger agencies being much more detailed. Falcone and Wells predict that

policies will become more restrictive over time and increasingly comprehensive due to liability concerns. They concluded that a comprehensive pursuit policy with vigorous training would negate most liability exposure when pursuits have negative outcomes.

Legal Considerations

In 1988, California enacted legislation granting immunity from pursuit litigation to police agencies that adopt minimum pursuit policy standards (California Vehicle Code, 17004.7, 1988). Fick (1997) looked at the statute to determine if it actually works and found, that as long as the departments limit officer discretion in determining when to initiate, continue, and terminate a pursuit, that the courts are still upholding the statute.

The law set four minimum standards to allow immunity from claims resulting from pursuit personal injuries or deaths and damage to property resulting from a collision with the vehicle driven by the fleeing offender. The statute further delineated that it was a question of law for the courts and not juries to determine whether the policy complied with the required standards that provide immunity. The four standards include 1) supervisory control of the pursuits, 2) the policy must designate a primary car and limit the number of cars to be involved, 3) provide procedures to coordinate with other police agencies, and 4) describe guidelines for balancing law enforcement needs to apprehend with public safety needs.

Fick found that the policies that failed the judicial test neglected to provide any substantial criteria for continuing or terminating pursuits and allowed officers too much freedom in their decisions while under stress. The courts mandated that the decision factors must be specifically listed and cited another out-of-state agency that would be a prime example to follow. Multiple factors were to be employed when making pursuit decisions, such as driving environment, speeds, seriousness of precipitating event, weather, road conditions, time of day, traffic, and the location, as well as others. Perhaps, other states may adopt this type of statute to align their police departments with statutory requirements on policy content.

In Fiser vs. City of Ann Arbor (1983), the Michigan Supreme Court reviewed several prominent issues surrounding police pursuits. The court examined governmental immunity in the light of negligence standards and emergency vehicle statutory exemptions.

The case involved Ann Arbor police officers attempting to stop a person for disobeying a traffic signal. The suspect ignored the officer's signal to stop and drove through residential and business areas of the city at speeds of up to 110 miles per hour. The suspect lost control of his car and was struck by the police car. As one officer approached the suspect on foot, the suspect sped away nearly striking the officer. The officers continued to pursue the suspect the wrong way on a one-way street and eventually

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lost sight of the suspect vehicle. Another Ann Arbor police supervisor spotted the suspect car within two minutes and pursued the vehicle with lights and siren activated. After about six blocks at 55 mile per hour speeds within 25 mile an hour zones, the suspect struck a third party broadside at an intersection causing serious bodily injuries to an innocent third party, the plaintiff in the case.

The city and the officers argued that they were immune from tort liability due to Michigan statute (MCL 691.1407) providing immunity when a government agency is exercising a governmental function. However, another Michigan statute (MCL 691.1405) provided an exception from government immunity for injuries stemming from the negligent operation of a government-owned vehicle when operated by a government employee. The court determined that if the pursuit amounted to negligent operation, then the officers and city were not immune from tort liability. In order to be liable the officers had to violate the due care standard owed to Fiser and negligently cause his injuries.

The lower court and the Michigan Court of Appeals upheld the officers' and city's claim to governmental immunity. The Michigan Supreme Court reversed the ruling by indicating that the officers and city were not automatically immune from liability. The court remanded the case for a jury to decide whether the actions of the officer during the high-speed pursuit were unreasonable, whether an emergency

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existed, and whether the officer violated the standard of care owed to the plaintiff.

The court found that Michigan Vehicle Codes (MCL 257.603 & 257.632) might have not protected the officer's actions because he was not proceeding to an emergency call and was not proceeding with due regard of the safety of others. The statute authorizes an emergency vehicle, when responding to an emergency call to: 1) violate parking laws; 2) disregard traffic signals and stop signs after slowing down for safe operation; 3) exceed the speed limits as long as life and property are not endangered; and 4) disregard direction of movement or turning laws. This is authorized if the emergency vehicle sounds a siren, horn, bell, or whistle and is operating a flashing or oscillating light. The statute had no specific mention of driving while in pursuit of a fleeing suspect, only when driving to an emergency call.

Michigan Vehicle Code 257.632 does allow police to violate speed limitations, when driving with due regard for safety, to an emergency or in pursuit of law violators. The exemption only applies if an audible bell, siren, or whistle is operated in conjunction with a flashing or oscillating light. Reckless disregard for the safety of others also voids the exemption.

The ruling in Fiser must still be incorporated in police pursuit policy and when making pursuit driving decisions for both officers and supervisors.

In County of Sacramento v. Lewis (1998), the United States Supreme Court ruled on a case pertaining to police pursuit driving. The case involved a Sacramento County sheriff deputy chasing two teenagers on a motorcycle who were fleeing from the deputy. Within 75 seconds, the suspects skidded to a stop, but the officer was unable to stop in time striking and killing the passenger. The family sued the officer, the police department, and the county for civil rights violations under 42 USC 1983.

The court ruled that the deputy did not violate the deceased's ''due process by causing death through deliberate or reckless indifference to life in a high-speed automobile chase aimed at apprehending a suspected offender'' (p. 833). Further, the court held ''that in such circumstances only a purpose to cause harm unrelated to the legitimate object of arrest will satisfy the element of arbitrary conduct shocking to the conscience, necessary for a due process violation'' (p. 836).

While this decision favored the officers' conduct, this decision does not protect officers from future lawsuits because the case was based on fourth Amendment arguments of search and seizure. The court stated that neither occurred because the deputy did not stop the deceased's freedom of movement (Becknell et al., 1999). The police conduct must be so terrible that it ''shocks the conscience'' of the community, and the police must have intended to harm the suspects. Currently, there is no additional protection in

Michigan from state civil litigation pertaining to pursuits. (Police Law Bulletin, 1998)

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a view of previous research that pertains to police officer attitudes and perceptions of pursuit correlated issues and pursuit policy content. Several central themes were present within the literature that may shed light on these topic areas.

One reoccurring theme was the finding that many officers and supervisors misunderstood their pursuit policies. This lack of policy understanding highlighted other concerns, such as under reporting of pursuits and negligible pursuit training in many departments. Civil liability also is a continued threat in the State of Michigan, but may have been somewhat lessened as a federal civil rights concern.

The literature concludes that in order for policy to affect behavior of officers to any significant level, four things must be present. First, the police agencies must have a pursuit policy. The literature revealed that approximately 20% of police departments did not have written pursuit policies. Second, the pursuit policy must be clearly written and fully understood by the officers and supervisors. Third, the pursuit behaviors will most likely change with repetitious and substantive training. And last, supervision must be constant and ready to enforce policy mandates throughout pursuit activities. Policy may change

or even begin in some cases, but officer attitudes will not change without effective supervision and training, and attitudes may affect behaviors.

Officers and supervisors were found to have different attitudes and perceptions about the many pursuit aspects. Officers want more pursuit discretion in areas of serious concern, such as intentional ramming of suspects and the use of firearms to stop vehicles from fleeing. Supervisors and administrators usually disagree with them. The perceptual disparity on these issues and others reveals many serious pursuit issues that require further research and examination in order to provide policy makers with prominent data on which to build their pursuit policy. This thesis intends to delve further into the attributes of the disparity that exists between officers, supervisors, and administrators as it pertains to police pursuits.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The goal of this thesis is to provide insight into decision processes used by police officers during vehicle pursuits. The research should allow police agency policy makers to see certain demographical, environmental, and judgmental conditions that exist when police officers are making pursuit decisions in the field. The results and conclusions of this study will assist those same police executives in designing substantive policy, training, and methods of supervision relating to vehicular pursuit incidents.

The survey instrument used in this research was somewhat of a replica of the instrument used by Britz and Payne (1994) during their research into the policy development issues discussed here. A self-administered General Opinion Survey was distributed to all 2,200 sworn members of the Michigan State Police who perform or had performed duties that involved general road patrol functions. A survey was developed to determine the opinions of officers who have made decisions while actually performing pursuit-driving tactics (Britz and Payne 1994). The goal of this study was to replicate that research by using the same instrument and exploring a different subject

population: sworn municipal police officers. This study selected the known 1,034 sworn municipal police officers that either currently perform or had performed general patrol duties. Each of the enlisted personnel was asked to describe their job from one of four categories: 1) Road Patrol, 2) First Line Supervisor, 3) Investigator, and 4) Administrator.

The rationale for studying this separation in police job classifications was to identify differences of thinking or perceptions that may exist between the officers in the field making the pursuit decisions and the police policy makers themselves. If significant differences of perceptions are present, then substantive actions such as training and tighter supervision might be warranted in order to ensure consistency on the street. Furthermore, it is believed that the resulting information will be very useful in creating a solid barrier against civil litigation by formulating and implementing sound pursuit policies. Pursuit policy that has an empirical research foundation should assist in that battle, but no policy alone will keep municipal police agencies from being sued as their deep pockets are always targeted.

Survey Design

The replicated opinion survey consisted of the original 64 questions that were limited to the subject of vehicular pursuits and additional seven questions related to the respondent's race, gender, age, educational level, police

job experience level, and agency size. These independent variables were added to provide for an enhanced database for future research and were not the focus of this study. The job type was used as the dependent variable under review. The study was designed to be anonymous in a direct effort to achieve maximum internal validity. Anonymity was facilitated to eliminate any biased responses from officers who might feel supervisory influence or pressure when responding to the survey.

To obtain the goals of anonymity, all sworn members of the police departments surveyed were provided with the survey by it being placed within their personal department-provided mailboxes. The surveys were delivered to the chief executive officers or their designate whom then arranged for the delivery of the survey packets to the individual mailboxes. Each survey packet contained a cover letter with an explanation of the study's purpose, along with the survey instrument, and a self-addressed stamped envelope for the survey's anonymous return by the U.S. Mail receptacle of their choice. Removing the return process from the normal organizational chain of command aided in providing for an atmosphere of confidentiality and anonymity.

Several meetings were held with the chief executive officers of the agencies selected in order to receive their approval and permission to distribute the survey packet within their departments. Their support was necessary to obtain the highest possible return rate and to provide their

subordinate officers with a clear understanding that they may complete the survey instrument during duty hours without fear of reprisals from their supervisors. The chief executive officers indicated that they would provide each member with a letter requesting their assistance with this research project. Another meeting was held with the county's police chief association where a presentation was given requesting their support. That agency voted unanimously to approve and support this endeavor. A thirty-day time limit was placed upon the return of the instruments. Responses were ordered in a Likert-type scale with four possible answers: 1) Strongly agree, 2) Agree, 3) Disagree, and 4) Strongly disagree. No neutral option was available to the respondents. The personal characteristic questions were either open (fill the blank line) or multiple choices depending upon their personal history or agency of employment.

Population

The population of this study consisted of all known sworn police officers from one county located within southeastern Michigan and included 15 police departments and the county sheriff department. The only exception was that only one police department in that county refused to allow the survey to be distributed within that department. The police chief forbid any contact with any of the officers due to two pending civil suits against the agency, which were pursuit related.

The officers surveyed were either presently assigned or had been assigned to general patrol duties during their tenure as a police officer. The respondents were from one county placing them within close proximity with regard to geographic and demographic conditions. It was decided that the entire population of each department would be utilized in order to bring about the greatest amount of difference among the job types and to gather as much information as possible from each agency. Therefore, samples were not drawn from the departments; rather the entire population of each was used.

The pursuit policy of each agency surveyed was reviewed, and the policies were found to be very similar in structure and scope. The policies provided for patrol officer discretion with some limitations on their judgment. The officer was aware that constant supervision during the pursuit initiatives is taking place and that as long as the risks did not outweigh the benefits, the policies generally supported law and order. Only one policy strongly discouraged pursuits unless a life or death situation was in progress, and that was the one department within the county that would not authorize the survey to be distributed. Therefore, the one policy that was well outside the county norm was not a factor of this research.

Of the 454 respondents, 435 (96%) of males and 19 (4%) were females. The educational level mean was just higher than two years of college, and the mean age was 37.7 years

with the mode 30 years of age. The department size average was reported to be between 101-250 officers. The experience level ranged from six months to 37 years of police duty. The race of the respondents was reported a 423 white, 11 Native Americans, 4 Hispanics, 4 African American, 1 Asian, and 4 others, with the remaining 7 persons not identifying their race. The mean of the respondents' pursuit experiences was between 10 and 20 pursuits.

Response Rate

The total number of known sworn police officers within the selected Michigan county was 1,034, and they were all sent a survey packet. Four hundred and fifty four (n=454) useable surveys were received providing an overall response rate of 44%. Table 3.1 illustrates the response distributions for the four job types. This response rate was lower than expected, however, it is still considered as a substantial rate for social science research. The explanations for this lower than expected response rate are many. Two recent fatal accidents within the county involving police pursuits may have created anxiety on the part of many officers not to reply. Some respondents did not answer all of the questions on the survey instruments, thus resulting in a variance of numbers from question to question.

Table 3.1 Distribution of Responses

Job Type	N	Percentage
Road Patrol	261	57
First Line Supervisor	71	16
Investigator	82	18
Administrator	40	9

Survey Instrument

The research design implemented is meant to be exploratory and descriptive with goals to discover various facets within criminal justice management, such as training needs, supervisory assessments, and policy direction for police pursuits. The questionnaire was replicated knowing that its authors were determined to discover the opinions of police officers, who have made decisions on the job regarding vehicular pursuits. It was also designed to discover whether strong differences of opinions or attitudes existed between varying rank levels within the departments relating to pursuit decisions and existing policy (Britz and Payne, 1994).

The survey instrument was replicated with the intent to further explore the attitudes of police officers on several issues related to vehicular pursuits. Officers of all ranks were queried, but were placed into four general job

categories; 1) Road Patrol, 2) First Line Supervisor, 3) Investigator, and 4) Administrator. Of the 63 perception questions, seven classifications of variables are present. These classifications include the following: 1) policy; 2) training; 3) supervisory; 4) liability; 5) operational; 6) perceptual; and 7) external factors. Because of the nominal characteristics of the data collected, the Chi-Squared ($\chi 2$) statistic was utilized. In order to determine the strength of the relationships, if any, Cramer's V statistic was utilized. The Proportional Reduction in Error (PRE) measure used was the Lambda measure of association. Lambda was utilized because at least one of the variables was nominal which precluded the use of Gamma and Spearman's Rho measures of association.

The Chi-Square Statistic

As the variables used in this research design are categorical in nature, the Chi-Square ($\chi 2$) statistic was utilized because of its capability to measure the independence of the relationship between categorical variables. It is based upon a distribution of frequencies and on the null hypothesis or the assumption that there is no relationship between the two variables in the total population. The Chi-Square determines whether two variables are independent, have no relationship, or are dependent where the relationship would seldom occur by chance. The Chi-Square test was also used in order to be able to compare

and contrast the discovered data with the data found by Britz and Payne (1994) during future research endeavors.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The data will be analyzed and presented by using the method of cross tabulation of the independent variables, the four job types, against the sixty-three (63) dependent variables.

The independent variables were operationalized into four categories: 1) road patrol - the officers whose main function is patrol duties; 2) investigator - the officers whose primary assignment is to investigate and are not supervisory in nature; 3) supervisor - first line superior of patrol officers and investigators; and 4) administrative - upper management of the police agency. The respondents placed themselves into one of these four job types based upon their current position or job duties.

The dependent variables consisted of sixty-three questions that consisted basically of seven different categories. The seven categories are the following: 1) policy; 2) training; 3) supervisory; 4) experiential; 5) operational; 6) liability; and 7) external. The sixty-three variables were tested for statistical significance in order to make determinations as to whether or not the differences in attitude or perception exist between the four job types. The intent of this data analysis is to confirm or deny the

existence of perceptual disparity amongst the ranks. In order to enhance the data analysis by enlarging the cells of the cross tabulations, each of the sixty-three responses were collapsed into a two-category answer. The strongly agree and agree responses were combined into an agree category. The strongly disagree and agree were combined into a disagree category. The exact difference between strongly agree and agree, for example, is difficult to ascertain, thus making the data analysis more efficient while still sufficient.

Policy Variables

Nine of the questions of the survey instrument (Appendix A) were categorized into the policy variable analysis due to their significance in relating to policy issues. The questions either directed referred to policy or were indirectly related to policy matters. The policy variables involved issues, such as, their understanding of the policy, whether the pursuit policy guides them in their pursuit decisions or whether they believe that the policy is too restrictive thus eliminating their discretion. Compliance and the ramifications of non-compliance with the policy are also queried.

Table 4.1 - Policy Variables - Ind. Variable = Job Type

Dependent Variables	$\chi 2$	sig	Lambda	V
Policy is clearly written. (Q5)	13.372	.004	.000	.1716
Policy is too restrictive. (Q7)	13.613	.003	.013	.1737
Involved in unreported pursuits. (Q9)	8.533	.036	.000	.1371

df = 3

The data in Table 4.1 reveal that three of the nine variables were found to be statistically significant. Significant differences therefore exist between the officers in each of the job types and their attitudes toward the clarity and objectives of the pursuit policy. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for the three variables in this category.

Upon reviewing the percentages associated with the level of agreement with each variable in Table 4.2, it was discovered that administrators (88%) and investigators (77%) were most likely to agree that their policy is clearly written. Patrol officers, who at the time of the research actually perform most of the pursuit activities, were the least likely to agree (63%) that the policy was clear to them. This should not be surprising as the administrators develop, write, and implement the policy. They should be

extremely clear about their own policies and should be very up-to-date on the latest tactics and techniques used in successful vehicular pursuits. To their credit and advantage, administrators should also have the most experience and a current view of the larger picture within law enforcement.

The data also indicate that patrol officers believe that the pursuit policy is too restrictive, leaving one to infer that they feel that their personal discretion may be limited. This indicates a significant disagreement with the policy restrictions, but does not necessarily mean that they will violate the policy. The patrol officers are most likely to dissect the policy, as they have to work with it on a daily basis and administrators see the policy mostly during revision stages or after negative pursuit outcomes.

The respondents reported overall (77%) that they have not been involved in unreported pursuits. However, an element of under reporting pursuits exists as the groups agreed that 23% had been involved in unreported pursuits. This factor resembles the findings within the literature.

The administrators should take heed in these results as their officers in the field find the policy less clear and too restrictive. This discord has resulted in some policy violations, not reporting pursuits, and will continue if training and supervision is not enhanced.

Table 4.2 - Policy Variables - Percentages

Dependent Variables	Patrol		Super.		Invest.		Admin.		All	
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D
Policy is clearly written. (Q5)	.63 (164)	.37 (97)	.70 (50)	.30 (21)	.77 (63)	.23 (19)	.88 (35)	.12 (5)	.69 (312)	.31 (142)
Policy is too restrictive. (Q7)	.51 (132)	.49 (127)	.31 (22)	.69 (49)	.37 (30)	.63 (52)	.33 (13)	.67 (26)	.44 (197)	.56 (254)
Involved in unreported pursuits. (Q9)	.21 (54)	.79 (207)	.18 (13)	.82 (58)	.26 (21)	.74 (61)	.40 (16)	.60 (24)	.23 (104)	.77 (350)

n = ( )

Training Variables

Nine of the variables were classified as associated with training, such as in-house training objectives involving driving tactics and maneuvers, written policy review, and post-academy pursuit testing. This category also included the variable regarding the officers' capabilities of balancing the needs of apprehension against the needs for public safety.

Table 4.3 - Training Variables - Ind. Variable = Job Type

Dependent Variables	$\chi 2$	sig	Lambda	V
Adequate training in pursuit policy. (Q15)	12.014	.007	.000	.1632
Post-academy testing on pursuit policy. (Q16)	7.969	.046	.006	.1325
Understanding reasonable vs. unreasonable driving behavior. (Q40)	10.967	.012	.010	.1568
Difficult to balance of need to apprehend and public safety. (Q58)	7.907	.048	.000	.1325

df = 3

The data in Table 4.3 disclose that four of the nine training variables were found to be statistically significant. Therefore, significant differences exist between the officers in each of the job types and their perceptions toward the adequacy of department training, pursuit policy testing, and the ability to balance the need to apprehend criminals with the needs for public safety. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for these four variables.

Table 4.4 - Training Variables - Percentages

Dependent Variables	Patrol		Super.		Invest.		Admin.		All	
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D
Adequate training in pursuit policy. (Q15)	.58	.42	.63	.37	.68	.32	.85	.15	.63	.37
	(150)	(109)	(45)	(26)	(55)	(26)	(34)	(6)	(284)	(167)
Post-academy testing on pursuit policy. (Q16)	.30	.70	.31	.69	.31	.69	.52	.48	.33	.67
	(79)	(182)	(22)	(49)	(26)	(56)	(21)	(19)	(148)	(306)
Understand reasonable vs. unreasonable driving behaviors. (Q40)	.98	.02	.91	.09	.96	.04	1.00	.00	.97	.03
	(252)	(4)	(64)	(6)	(77)	(3)	(40)	(0)	(433)	(13)
Difficult to balance of need to apprehend vs. public safety. (Q58)	.71	.29	.83	.17	.73	.27	.87	.13	.75	.25
	(184)	(75)	(58)	(12)	(59)	(22)	(35)	(5)	(336)	(114)

n = ( )

The data show that disagreement exists as it relates to the pursuit training endeavors within the police agencies. For example, administrators were most likely to agree that they had received adequate training on their department's pursuit policy. They realistically should have the clearest knowledge and understanding as they most likely designed and developed the policy prior to implementation. This may allow them to feel better trained. The patrol officers were least likely to agree, but still had 58% of the respondents in agreement. First line supervisors were only slightly more agreeable (63%) than patrol officers with regard to the

adequacy of their department's policy training. With 37% overall indicating inadequate pursuit training, a clear message is sent to the administrators as to the immediate need for pursuit-related training.

The data in Table 4.4 show that administrators were most likely to agree that they had received post-academy testing on pursuit policy. The other three job types were much less likely to agree on that issue as each group had respondent percentages of nearly thirty. The lack of testing and training after academy training may become issues of exposure to civil litigation. Additionally, it has been many years since most of the respondents attended the police academy, as the mean for years of experience for all respondents was 13.7 years.

Also shown in Table 4.4, all four of the job classifications were extremely likely to agree that they understand the difference between reasonable and unreasonable driving behaviors. The administrators were in unanimous agreement (100%) with patrol officer respondents showing 98% agreement. Investigators and supervisors were also both in the ninety percentile ranges of agreement. This outcome should be seen as favorable to policy makers and trainers alike because almost all of the respondents know when pursuit-driving behaviors have become unreasonable. This ability should clearly aid the officers in their decisions as to whether or not they should continue the pursuit.

A finding from the data in Table 4.4 is that administrators (87%) find it most difficult to understand the balance between a police officer's need to apprehend fleeing violators and the public's need for safety. Supervisors (83%) are very close to the administrators in being unable to balance the need for police apprehension and the need for public safety. These are important findings because they must understand the balance question better than the officers that they must teach and direct. It is very difficult to teach something that you do not understand. Patrol officers (71%) still struggle with this issue, but surprisingly have the least amount of difficulty finding this important balance. Patrol officers make the decisions for the most part and might have decided that the need to apprehend is more important as was found in the literature. As a result, all of the job types uniformly have difficulty with the balancing of social needs with law enforcement needs, which really should not be surprising. This overall outcome was expected, as the balance is difficult to define. Training will be necessary in order to add clarity to this issue, and place all officers in line with the policy direction.

Supervisor Variables

Eight of the sixty-three dependent variables in this research related to supervisory perceptions, such as how the officers perceived support from their commanding officers.

Other questions used were more generally related to their interactions with supervisors.

Table 4.5 - Supervisory Variables - Ind. Variable = Job Type

Dependent Variables	$\chi 2$	sig	Lambda	V
Supervisor has instructed on pursuit policy. (Q17)	9.712	.021	.000	.1464
Pursuit policy applied equally to everyone. (Q18)	13.488	.004	.015	.1739
Supervisors support officers regardless of policy. (Q20)	24.890	.000	.029	.2362
Supervisors support me when there are injuries. (Q42)	28.055	.000	.091	.2525
Supervisors will support me if I am not at fault. (Q45)	15.856	.001	.000	.1877

df = 3

The data in Table 4.5 reveal that five of the eight variables were found to be statistically significant as the four job types were more likely to disagree on the five issues. Therefore, significant differences exist between the officers of each of the job types and their perceptions of supervisory support and interactions. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for these five variables.

Table 4.6 - Supervisory Variables - Percentage

Dependent Variables	Patrol		Super.		Invest.		Admin.		All	
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D
Supervisor has instructed on pursuit policy. (Q17)	.54 (141)	.46 (119)	.69 (49)	.31 (22)	.57 (47)	.43 (35)	.75 (30)	.25 (10)	.59 (267)	.41 (186)
Policy applied equally to everyone. (Q18)	.49 (125)	.51 (131)	.61 (43)	.39 (27)	.57 (46)	.43 (34)	.77 (31)	.23 (9)	.55 (245)	.45 (201)
Supervisors support officers regardless of policy. (Q20)	.32 (82)	.68 (173)	.46 (33)	.54 (38)	.21 (17)	.79 (63)	.63 (25)	.37 (15)	.35 (157)	.65 (289)
Supervisors will support me when injuries. (Q42)	.40 (100)	.60 (152)	.57 (41)	.43 (30)	.45 (35)	.55 (43)	.82 (32)	.17 (7)	.47 (208)	.53 (232)
Supervisors will support if I am not at fault. (Q45)	.68 (175)	.32 (82)	.85 (60)	.15 (11)	.74 (61)	.26 (21)	.92 (37)	.08 (3)	.74 (333)	.26 (117)

n = ( )

As Table 4.6 indicates that there is overall agreement (59%) that supervisors have provided instructions on the pursuit policy. Supervisors and administrators were the most likely to agree. Patrol officers (54%) were the least likely to agree with 46% indicating that they have had no pursuit policy instructions from their supervisors. Overall, 41% of the respondents indicated that they have not received this policy training. This finding relates clearly with the lack of supervisor pursuit training amongst the police agencies being studied.

Administrators and supervisors were found to most likely believe that the policy of their departments is applied equally to all personnel. In contrast, patrol officers and investigators were least likely to agree with the statement. Fifty-one percent of patrol officers perceive that their policy is not being applied equally. Noteworthy is the finding that 39% of the supervisors perceive the same unfairness of management, and they are a major part of that management team. Overall, only 55% of the respondents agreed that pursuit policy is applied equally throughout the departments. This reveals that management implications exist and must be dealt with.

With regard to supervisory support, patrol officers and investigators were least likely to agree that their supervisors support them regardless of policy. The majority of supervisors also disagree that they support officers without considering policy. A critical result is that 63% of the administrators and 46% of the supervisors agree that they support the officers regardless of policy. These high percentages indicate that there might be mistrust between administrators and their first-line supervisors on the perception of proper management. If administrators believe that supervisors are supporting officers without considering policy, then they feel that the supervisors are aligned too closely with field officers and not aligned with the upper management or administration. Lines of communication between these management ranks must be open and honest in

order to remedy these perceptions. Management training may assist in this venture.

Patrol officers and investigators readily disagree that supervisory support is present when their pursuits result in injuries. To the contrary, administrators (82%) and supervisors (57%) indicate that they do support the officers when pursuit injuries occur. This issue is difficult to interpret as the extent of the injuries is not defined and might make considerable response differences based upon injury severity.

If the officers are found not at fault during the pursuit, then the patrol officers and investigators reverse their disagreement showing agreement percentages of sixty-eight and seventy-four, respectively. Administrators (92%) are very likely to agree that supervisors' support is prevalent when the officers are not at fault. The overall agreement of 74% of the respondents shows confidence in their supervisors and their departments.

Experiential Variables

Eleven of the sixty-three dependent variables involved the officer's perceptions about their discretion levels and their work experiences as it relates to pursuits.

The data in Table 4.7 show that four of the eleven variables were found to be statistically significant as the patrol officers, investigators, first-line supervisors, and administrators are more likely to disagree on the four subjects. Significant differences were found between the

officers in each of the job types and their perceptions on their experiences and discretion threshold. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for these four variables.

Table 4.7 - Experiential Variables - Ind. Variable = Job Type

Dependent Variables	$\chi 2$	sig	Lambda	V
Officers should have more discretion in pursuits. (Q10)	62.795	.000	.080	.3719
Decision to ram should be officers discretion. (Q24)	45.711	.000	.007	.3198
Officers with personal problems more apt to crash. (Q20)	11.254	.010	.011	.1597
Support greater officer discretion to use firearms to stop fleeing vehicles. (Q53)	15.833	.001	.030	.1869

df = 3

As shown in Table 4.8, the data indicate that the patrol officer and investigators are least likely to agree that officers with personal problems are more apt to crash during pursuits. The supervisors (53%) agreed more often that it would be factor, where the administrators were split on the issue at fifty percent. Overall, 39 percent of the respondents believe that personal problems are a factor in pursuit driving situations and that officers with those difficulties will crash more often. The respondents'

agreement levels indicate that they are aware of the psychological effects on pursuit driving.

The remaining three dependent variables dealt with perceptions of officer discretion where the patrol officers and investigators were more likely to agree with each other. The data show that officers (79%) and investigators (72%) want more general discretion in pursuit decisions. The supervisors (65%) and administrators (57%) disagree. There is overall agreement that officer should have more pursuit decision discretion. This shows that the officers want to make their own pursuit decisions. Strong supervision and policy training will be important to maintain adherence to policy requirements.

The data in Table 4.8 indicate that officers and investigators believe that they should have the discretion to ram a fleeing offender. Sixty-three percent of the supervisors also agree that officers should have the option to ram. Administrators were the least likely to agree, but nearly half of them (48%) were in agreement.

Patrol officers were most likely to agree that greater officer discretion in firearms usage to stop fleeing vehicles is warranted. A surprising result was that 45% of administrators agreed with the statement. The administrators must be aware of the public safety and liability ramifications related to shooting firearms at fleeing motorists, yet they still had a high level of agreement. The public safety elements of shooting and

ramming fleeing suspects and their legal considerations should be a vital part of policy training, as well as strict supervision of pursuit are warranted.

Table 4.8 - Experiential Variables - Percentages

Dependent Variables	Patrol		Super.		Invest.		Admin.		All	
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D
Officers should have more discretion in pursuit decisions. (Q10)	.79 (207)	.21 (54)	.35 (25)	.65 (46)	.72 (59)	.28 (23)	.43 (17)	.57 (23)	.68 (308)	.32 (146)
Decision to ram should be officer's option. (Q24)	.88 (224)	.12 (32)	.63 (45)	.37 (26)	.81 (65)	.19 (15)	.48 (19)	.52 (21)	.79 (353)	.21 (94)
Officers with personal problems more apt to crash. (Q32)	.35 (88)	.65 (164)	.53 (37)	.47 (33)	.32 (25)	.68 (54)	.50 (20)	.50 (20)	.39 (170)	.61 (271)
Support greater discretion in firearm use to stop fleeing vehicles. (Q53)	.52 (136)	.48 (124)	.27 (19)	.73 (52)	.40 (33)	.60 (49)	.45 (18)	.55 (22)	.45 (206)	.55 (247)

n = ( )

Operational Variables

The variables in this category were related to the officer's operational involvement in pursuits, such as tactics, patrol vehicle safety inspections, policy violations, and collision experiences. This category had the widest range of variables and included officer perceptions on pursuit termination decisions.

Table 4.9 - Operational Variables - Ind. Variable = Job Type

Dependent Variables	$\chi 2$	sig	Lambda	V
Vehicle repair system assures safe patrol vehicle. (Q10)	9.562	.022	.011	.1461
I have rammed vehicles to stop them. (Q25)	22.426	.000	.000	.2240
Experienced intentional collisions in pursuits. (Q36)	10.922	.012	.056	.1566
Experienced non-intentional collisions in pursuits. (Q37)	13.617	.003	.000	.1753
Support use of roadblock as pursuit pursuit tactic. (Q51)	10.444	.015	.000	.1520

df = 3

As revealed in Table 4.9, the data show that, of the fourteen operational variables, five were found to be statistically significant as the respondents were more likely to disagree on the five issues. Significant differences are present between the officers in each job category and their perceptions of the operational issues. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected for these five variables.

Table 4.10 - Operational Variables - Percentages

Dependent Variables	Patrol		Super.		Invest.		Admin.		All	
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D
Vehicle repair system assures safe patrol vehicle. (Q10)	.32	.68	.37	.63	.44	.56	.55	.45	.37	.63
	(83)	(174)	(26)	(45)	(35)	(45)	(22)	(18)	(166)	(282)
I have rammed vehicles to stop them. (Q25)	.26	.74	.45	.55	.50	.50	.45	.55	.35	.65
	(66)	(190)	(32)	(39)	(40)	(40)	(18)	(22)	(156)	(291)
Experienced intentional collisions in pursuits. (Q36)	.45	.55	.59	.41	.61	.39	.65	.35	.52	.48
	(116)	(139)	(42)	(29)	(48)	(31)	(26)	(14)	(232)	(213)
Experienced non-intentional collisions in pursuits. (Q37)	.51	.49	.65	.35	.71	.29	.70	.30	.59	.41
	(130)	(123)	(46)	(25)	(56)	(23)	(28)	(12)	(260)	(183)
Support use of roadblock as pursuit tactic. (Q51)	.79	.21	.61	.39	.73	.27	.70	.30	.75	.25
	(207)	(54)	(42)	(27)	(60)	(22)	(28)	(12)	(337)	(115)

n = ( )

As Table 4.10 reveals, patrol officers are most likely to disagree that their vehicle repair systems assures them of a safe vehicle. Supervisors (63%) and investigators (56%) also disagree with the operational issue showing additional dissatisfaction with the repair systems utilized. Administrators are most likely to agree that their vehicle maintenance systems provide safe patrol vehicles. Perhaps the administrators do not have to work in patrol cars, as they are more likely to have new and less mechanically used vehicles during their daily activities.

The data further show that 45% of the supervisors and administrators and 50% of the investigators have been involved in ramming suspect vehicles. In contrast, only 26% of patrol officers agree that they have rammed vehicles in order to stop them. This difference may be due to the probability that most supervisors, administrators, and investigators have more experience than patrol officers, however, not always. Experiences reported here may relate to policing and pursuits dating back to when pursuit policy and restrictions may have been non-existent or minimal in scope.

Administrators, supervisors, and investigators were most likely to agree that they were involved in collisions that were both intentional and non-intentional. Patrol officers were admitted involvement in pursuit collisions the least. Once again, the past experiences of the potentially older supervisory and command personnel may account for this. Restrictions on ramming were not prevalent and may have been an approved practice resulting in more collisions occurring back then. Another factor that may be presenting itself is that many officers may not be complying with their policy mandates regarding intentional collisions.

Table 4.10 shows that patrol officers (79%) are most likely to support the use of roadblocks during pursuits. Administrators (70%) also firmly support roadblocks with supervisors (61%) the least likely to support them. The total percentage for all of the respondent's support for

roadblocks (75%) was significant. This may reveal that administrators want pursuits to end as quickly as patrol officers, so they agree with roadblock tactics to get the job done swiftly. Training with regard to the applications of roadblocks is necessary due to the high levels of agreement with a tactic that has many legal considerations.

Table 4.11- Liability Variables - Ind. Variable = Job Type

Dependent Variables	$\chi 2$	sig	Lambda	V
Less pursuits since becoming aware of law suits. (Q44)	8.369	.039	.000	.1367
Personally know officers involved in pursuit litigation. (Q62)	8.193	.042	.000	.1345

df = 3

Liability Variables

Seven of the sixty-three dependent variables related to liability perceptions and the effects that liability may have on the officer's actions in the field. Fear of discipline and lawsuits were explored along with knowledge of others involved in or personal involvement in pursuit litigation.

The data in Table 4.11 reveal that two of the seven liability perception issues were found to be statistically significant as patrol officers, supervisors, investigators,

and administrators are more likely to disagree on the two subjects. Significant differences exist between the officers of the various job types and their perceptions of two liability topics. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected for the two significant variables.

Table 4.12 - Liability Variables - Percentages

Dependent Variables	Patrol		Super.		Invest.		Admin.		All	
	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D	A	D
Pursued less since becoming aware of law suits. (Q44)	.60 (155)	.40 (102)	.75 (53)	.25 (18)	.67 (54)	.33 (26)	.77 (31)	.23 (9)	.65 (293)	.35 (155)
Personally know officers involved in pursuit litigation. (Q62)	.73 (190)	.27 (70)	.79 (56)	.21 (15)	.85 (70)	.15 (12)	.87 (35)	.13 (5)	.78 (351)	.22 (102)

n = ( )

As the data in Table 4.12 project, administrators and supervisors are the most likely to agree that they have pursued less since becoming aware of civil ramifications. The majority of patrol officers (60%) and investigators (67%) also pursue less because of lawsuits. The percentage of agreement for all respondents is at the 65% level. This indicates the clear impact of civil litigation across all levels of the agencies studied.

The table further shows that administrators, supervisors, and investigators are most likely to agree that they personally know officers involved in pursuit

litigation. Patrol officers (73%) are not far behind others with their agreement to this question. This may additionally impact their pursuit decisions when deciding whether or not to initiate the pursuit.

External Variables

Of the sixty-three variables, five were related to perceptions of external aspects of pursuits. These five dependent variables dealt with the perceived influences of television, the courts, the legislature, and the public. The external impact of these issues on the respondents was measured to determine if they affect the officer's pursuit decisions. The analysis revealed that none of the five variables were statistically significant showing that the respondents were not more likely to disagree on the factors queried. As a result, the null hypothesis fails to be rejected for all five of the variables.

Conclusion

This chapter has presented the data as analyzed by using the method of cross tabulation of the four independent variables as they affect the sixty-three dependent variables. This research discovered twenty-three (23) of the dependent variables to be statistically significant and the implications of each were discussed.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

This research was conducted by administering a self-report questionnaire to 1,034 sworn officers who comprised the entire police population of a large metropolitan county located in southeastern Michigan. The aggregate data was analyzed in search of attitudinal disparities regarding police pursuit issues between various job classifications in police agencies. It was hypothesized that disparities would exist. Several supervisory, training, and policy implications were discovered that should be considered by police executives when developing or redesigning pursuit policy.

Discussion

Perception disparities were discovered to exist between the four police job types of patrol officer, investigator, first-line supervisor, and administrator. This was found by using the respondents' job types as the independent variables and statistically analyzing whether they affect perceptions on the sixty-three dependent variables utilized. Significant differences were observed on the variable issues of policy, training, supervision, operational considerations, discretion, and liability concerns.

The generalizability of these results is limited due to the small sample that utilized. The respondents were officers from only one county with Michigan and this county may not provide a cross representative sample of police officers in Michigan. Further, ninety-three percent of the respondents were white with two percent Native American and one percent African American. Ninety-six percent of the sample officers were male and four percent were female. As a result, these factors limit the generalizability of the data reported herein.

The policy variables provided a view of officer perceptions about restrictiveness and found that patrol officers were most likely to agree that their pursuit policies were too restrictive. Of all of the respondents, 44% agreed with the premise. The respondents of all job types also reported that they had been involved in unreported pursuits at a rate of twenty-three percent. The literature finds these same two factors to be prevalent throughout pursuit research. One policy issue that did not mirror the literature was policy clarity. The officers overall stated that their policies were written clearly. This was not the norm within the literature reviewed.

Pursuant to the training aspects of this study, the author found that pursuit policy training was reported to be adequate by 63% of the subjects surveyed. While this may be a substantial amount, 37% of the officers rate their pursuit policy training unacceptable. The majority of respondents

indicated that they have not been tested on policy since the police academy and that they were having difficulty balancing the need to apprehend suspects with the need for public safety. Similar results were found repeatedly in the literature. The most alarming finding was that 87% of the administrators and 83% of the supervisors had difficulty with balancing law enforcement needs with public risk. Those two groups are responsible to teach and guide less experienced officers. One cannot teach what one does not understand.

The issue of supervisory support for officers was examined and revealed that nearly sixty percent of the respondents had not received supervisor instruction on pursuit policy and nearly half felt that policy was not applied equally to all department members. The groups in total strongly agreed that supervisors would support them if they were not at fault showing confidence in their supervision, but reversed directions when injuries were added to pursuit situation. A lack of communication was noticed between administrators and supervisors on the issue of supervisors supporting officers regardless of policy. The most administrators believed that their supervisors would support the officers even if policy mandated otherwise. The nearly eighty percent supervisors thought just the opposite. Perhaps, mistrust by the administrators had appeared. This discord must be faced and dealt with by intense management and communication skills training.

Managerial support, such as praise, feedback, and involvement in decision making, has been found to improve police officer commitment to the organization (Beck & Wilson, 1997). These methods should be implemented.

Officers have tremendous discretion while in the field as most of their activities have no direct or immediate supervision. When relating to pursuits in general, the patrol officers overwhelmingly wanted enhanced discretion. Past police pursuit research indicates similar findings. When asked about the use of pursuit tactics, the respondents overall reported that the decision to ram the suspects vehicle should be the officers' option. Even most supervisors agreed with the statement. Most of the patrol officers indicated that they supported greater discretion in firearm use to stop fleeing vehicles. In a surprising result, forty-five percent of the administrators agreed with them. Strict supervision and pursuit tactic training must be provided to preclude officers' behaviors from mirroring their wishes without justification.

This study found that many officers admitted to ramming cars to terminate pursuits and the most indicted that they had experienced intentional and accidental collisions during chases. Some of these incidents may have violated policy or occurred before policy was enacted. The use of roadblocks was strongly supported by all job levels indicating the officers' desires to end the pursuit quickly. Supervisors

must be continually vigilant in their assigned duties particularly when a pursuit is in progress.

Finally, two-thirds of the respondents reported being involved in fewer pursuits since becoming aware of civil litigation and more than three-fourths indicated that they knew officers engaged in similar litigation. It might be likely that these factors are intertwined as they impact police officers' perspectives on pursuit driving.

Conclusion

Understanding the perceptions and attitudes of police officers strengthens the knowledge of pursuit driving while simultaneously provided sound data for police executives. Several studies and cases have been reported that analyze and review officer perceptions, policy content, and liability as it relates to this research.

This research somewhat replicated the study conducted by Britz and Payne (1994) by using similar dependent and independent variables and statistical analysis methods. The survey instrument was also adopted in order to provide true comparison of data in future research projects. Municipal police officers were surveyed instead of Michigan State troopers.

The data reported here can aid police administrators by providing them with insight and perspective into the attitudes of patrol officers, investigators, first-line supervisors, and themselves. The empirical results of the comparisons that were statistically significant will assist

police executives in their quest for pursuit policy implementation and training enhancements. Several discrepancies in perception have been identified and reported as well as previous literature that pertains to this topic. Police executives can now vigilantly examine all of the findings presented here and determine which areas of supervision and training that must be addressed.

Police executives must keep in mind that just because police officers request greater discretion in pursuit tactics and decisions (i.e. ramming, firearms usage, and roadblocks) that it does not mean that officers will necessarily disregard policy demands.

Finally, more research on officer perceptions and attitudes is necessary. Researchers have only just begun to scratch the surface in this area. It is hoped that this study and its results will inspire future research in this area to further expand and develop criminal justice management.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SURVEY COVER LETTER

Dear Michigan Law Enforcement Officers:

This is to request your participation in a brief survey to determine the opinions of officers when making decisions during police pursuits. Attached is a copy of the **"Michigan Police Pursuit Survey"** which we would like you to complete with respect to your own experiences during high-speed chases. A similar survey was administered to the Michigan State Police several years ago, and this study is focused on the opinions and attitudes of Michigan city/municipal/county law enforcement officers. The goal of the research is to provide data that will (1) assist police agencies in the development of training programs, (2) aid in the development and refinement of police policies, and (3) provide feedback to officers in order to help them make the best decisions during pursuits.

There are no right or wrong answers, only your opinions. Your honest response is the only thing can truly explain the breadth, scope, and nature of these police actions. Proper training programs and police policy cannot be clearly enhanced until your perceptions are known and thoroughly understood. Only police officers who have truly been there, in the heat of a pursuit, can clarify many of the issues surrounding this topic. Your participation will involve indicating the amount of agreement that you have with a series of pursuit related statements and should take approx. 15 minutes to complete.

All of your responses will remain **anonymous** at all times. The results of this survey will be reported only as aggregate data so that no respondent or their respective police agency can be identified. We strongly request that you do **not** identify yourself by name. **You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this questionnaire.**

This research is being conducted by Sergeant Cecil R. Queen of the Sterling Heights Police Department while under the direct supervision of Dr. David Carter and Dr. Dennis Payne of Michigan State University. If at any time you have questions about the research, please contact the researchers at the numbers listed below.

Simply enclose the completed or uncompleted survey in the accompanying envelope and place it in the U.S. Mail for direct delivery to the researchers. Please return the survey **no later than January 30, 1997**.

A fellow police officer thanks you very much for your assistance.

David Carter, Ph.D.
Dennis Payne, Ph.D.
Michigan State University
(517) 355-2197

Sgt. Cecil R. Queen (Master's Student)
Sterling Heights Police Department
(810) 977-6123, Ext. 362

Please Continue With The Next Page

APPENDIX B

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Michigan Police Pursuit Study
1997

Please express your honest feelings and perceptions about each statement by indicating whether you Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), or Strongly Disagree (SD). **Circle** the appropriate answer. **Please choose only one answer per question. Feel free to use pen or pencil.**

	SA	A	D	SD
1. Reporting details of pursuit to a dispatcher provides support for the officer.	1	2	3	4
2. Reporting details to dispatcher puts officer in a favorable position should an accident result.	1	2	3	4
3. I have been involved in pursuits in the past in which the dispatcher or supervisor was not informed.	1	2	3	4
4. Because of potential lawsuits, the more detail reported the better.	1	2	3	4
5. My agency policy is clearly written.	1	2	3	4
6. Department policy provides guidance to me for making sound decisions.	1	2	3	4
7. My agency policy is too restrictive.	1	2	3	4
8. Paper work following pursuits discourages officers to report pursuits.	1	2	3	4
9. I have been involved in pursuits which were not reported.	1	2	3	4
10. Officers should have more discretion in pursuit decisions.	1	2	3	4
11. There have been occasions when I felt I should have pursued and did not.	1	2	3	4
12. Supervisors generally support my agency's pursuit policy.	1	2	3	4
13. Existing policies on emergency response and pursuits discourage officers from initiating or continuing pursuits.	1	2	3	4
14. I have been adequately trained in high speed driving techniques.	1	2	3	4
15. I have been adequately trained in my agencies pursuit policy.	1	2	3	4

16. Since graduation from the academy, I have been tested on pursuit policy.	1	2	3	4
17. My supervisors have instructed me on pursuit policy.	1	2	3	4
18. The policy of my agency is applied to all officers equally.	1	2	3	4
19. Supervisors always follow the written policy.	1	2	3	4
20. Supervisors generally support officers - regardless of policy.	1	2	3	4
21. Our vehicle maintenance program assures me of a safe vehicle.	1	2	3	4
22. I check my emergency equipment prior to going on patrol.	1	2	3	4
23. I make a physical check of my tires and brakes prior to going on patrol.	1	2	3	4
24. Deciding to ram a car should be an option of the officer.	1	2	3	4
25. I have rammed cars in order to stop them.	1	2	3	4
26. My decision to pursue is affected by liability issues.	1	2	3	4
27. The more serious the incident the more risks I will take.	1	2	3	4
28. I have pursued vehicles after being instructed to discontinue.	1	2	3	4
29. I feel as though I have failed when I discontinue a pursuit.	1	2	3	4
30. An officer's physical conditioning affects the success of a pursuit.	1	2	3	4
31. Training affects the success of a pursuit.	1	2	3	4
32. Officers with personal problems are more apt to have accidents when pursuing.	1	2	3	4
33. Fear of discipline affects my decision to pursue.	1	2	3	4
34. Generally, I am confident when driving at high speeds.	1	2	3	4
35. Older officers pursue much more than younger officers.	1	2	3	4
36. I have experienced intentional collisions in pursuits.	1	2	3	4
37. I have experienced non-intentional collisions in pursuits.	1	2	3	4
38. I know the pursuit policy of my department.	1	2	3	4
39. I frequently watch TV police shows depicting pursuits.	1	2	3	4
40. I understand reasonable and unreasonable driving behavior.	1	2	3	4
41. Pursuits depicted on television are realistic.	1	2	3	4

42. Generally, supervision will support me when there are injuries resulting from pursuits.	1	2	3	4
43. The risk of injury to other people is a primary factor in my decision to discontinue a pursuit.	1	2	3	4
44. I have pursued less since becoming aware of lawsuits.	1	2	3	4
45. Supervisors in my agency will back me up if I am not at fault.	1	2	3	4
46. The courts generally support the police in pursuit matters.	1	2	3	4
47. As a general rule: My agency supports officers who follow policy in pursuit matters.	1	2	3	4
48. The State Legislature has given adequate support to police in pursuit matters.	1	2	3	4
49. Generally, the public supports police pursuits.	1	2	3	4
50. I seldom report successful pursuits.	1	2	3	4
51. I support the use of a road block as a pursuit tactic.	1	2	3	4
52. I support the use of boxing-in as a pursuit tactic.	1	2	3	4
53. I support greater officer discretion in the use of firearms to stop fleeing vehicles.	1	2	3	4
54. I continue pursuits because I suspect a serious crime.	1	2	3	4
55. Over confidence is a primary cause in pursuit driving accidents.	1	2	3	4
56. Experience is a primary factor in avoiding emergency response accidents.	1	2	3	4
57. I am sometimes confused: "I feel I can't pursue the people I am supposed to apprehend."	1	2	3	4
58. It is difficult to balance a police need to apprehend criminals against the need for public safety.	1	2	3	4
59. My personal safety is a primary factor in my decision to initiate or terminate a pursuit.	1	2	3	4
60. I have been disciplined as a result of my actions during a pursuit.	1	2	3	4
61. I have been involved in litigation as a result of being involved in a pursuit.	1	2	3	4
62. I personally know officers that have been involved in litigation as a result of a pursuit.	1	2	3	4

63. Patrol car "cornering and handling" characteristics are primary factors in my decision to initiate or terminate a pursuit. 1 2 3 4

64. My job can best be described as:

Road Patrol	1
First Line Supervision	2
Investigative	3
Administrative	4

65. My gender is:

Male	1
Female	2

66. My race/ethnicity is:

African American/Black	1
Asian	2
Hispanic	3
Native American	4
White/Non-Hispanic	5
Other	6

67. My education level is:

High School/GED No College	1
Two years of college or less	2
More than Two years of college but no degree	3
Bachelor Degree	4
Some Graduate School	5
Graduate Degree	6
Post Graduate Education	7

68. I have _____ years experience in police work.

69. My police agency has _____ sworn, police officers.

1 - 20	1
21 - 50	2
51 - 100	3
101 - 250	4
251 - 500	5
Over 500	6

70. My current age is: _____ years old.

71. I have been the primary pursuing officer in _____ vehicle pursuits.

More than 30	5
Between 20 -30	4
Between 10 -20	3
Between 1 - 10	2
None (0)	1

PLEASE RETURN THE SURVEY NO LATER THAN JANUARY 30, 1997

Per the Instructions,
Please Place Your Survey in the Envelope Provided
and Deposit it in the U.S. Mail

Thank You For Participating In This Study

APPENDIX C

VARIABLE CATEGORIES AND

ASSOCIATED SURVEY QUESTION NUMBERS

VARIABLE CATEGORIES	SURVEY QUESTION NUMBERS
Policy Variables:	3-5-6-7-9-13-38-50-60.
Training Variables:	14-15-16-29-31-40-57-58-63.
Supervisory Variables:	12-17-18-19-20-42-45-47.
Experiential Variables:	1-10-24-30-32-34-35-53-55-56-59.
Operational Variables:	2-8-11-21-22-23-25-27-28-36-37-51-52-54.
External Variables:	39-41-46-48-49.
Liability Variables:	4-26-33-43-44-61-62.
Job Type:	64.

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