

Minorities in Democracy and Policing Policy: From Alienation to Cooperation

Abstract: Tense relations between the Israeli police and the Arab citizens of Israel have been a major concern in recent years. Policing provides a challenge in democracies with diverse societies where cultures, religions and competing national identities challenge the existing order, and where the police in many cases have yet to develop the capabilities to engage with diversity and overcome its own biases and prejudices in order to better serve minorities. While police officers and policy makers may be aware of the need to initiate reform in order to succeed they need to identify the actual needs of minorities. In this study of police reforms in Israel vis-à-vis the Arab minority we propose a bottom-up study of the potential impact of three types of reforms: recruitment of Arab citizens to the police, cultural training of police officers and institutionalizing police-community relations. Our findings are based on two complementary stages of research, four focus groups and a comprehensive research survey of a representative sample of 1,006 adult Arab citizens.

Introduction

Policing provides a challenge for democracies with diverse societies where cultures, religions and competing national identities challenge the existing order, and where the police in many cases have yet to develop the capabilities to engage with diversity and overcome its own biases and prejudices in order to better serve minorities (Barlow and Barlow, 2000; Casey, 2000; Kelling and Moore, 2006). The police are a central public service in a modern state that possesses the power for protection of fundamental freedoms essential for democracy, but also the potential power for severe abuse of these freedoms (Jones, Newburn and Smith, 1996). While policing rests on implied consent, the disenfranchising and de-incorporation of certain citizens from the structures of government and the use of the police to require minimum levels of social compliance implies that “in many respects policing is against the resistance of certain communities in order to retain the respect of other communities” (Findlay, 2004: 7).

Tense relations between police and minorities are often underscored by real or perceived discriminatory police practices against minorities. Literature and experience point to two central issues in police-minority relations that can be described as

"under-policing", the neglect of minority neighborhoods, and "over-policing", an aggressive approach that singles out minorities. Minorities who suffer from over-policing and/or under-policing are likely not to trust the police and not to cooperate with it. This mistrust may lead to a vicious cycle in which police is unable (or unwilling) to provide services for minorities and, as a result, will lose more trust. While institutional change will be required, in order to improve trust of minorities in the police and the ability of the police to operate among minorities, such change may be difficult to achieve. First, while police officers (as well as policy makers) may be aware of the need to initiate reform, institutional and political constraints could limit the reforms so that they fall short of minorities' demands and expectations. And, second, police reforms might fail to identify the actual needs of minorities.

Arab citizens in Israel are a nondominant, nonassimilating, working class minority, considered by the Jewish majority as dissident and enemy affiliated (Smootha, 1989: 218). Arab citizens, in spite of formal democratic equality, suffer from higher rates of poverty and low quality of public services and are underrepresented in the public sector. Tensions between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority involve struggles over land and budget allocations, demands for equality and representation and have led to a diminishing trust of the minority in Israel's democracy and state institutions. Relations between the Israeli police and the Arab citizens of Israel has been a major concern in recent years, especially since the events of October 2000 when during demonstrations the police gunned down 13 Arab citizens. An Inquiry committee formed after the events placed the blame not only upon the police but also on Arab leaders' inflammatory rhetoric and pointed to long-term discrimination of Arab citizens of Israel underscoring the frustrations. The report described a "muddled relationship" between the police and Arab citizens and outlined the need for reforms:

The committee noted the need for a reform of police systems with regard to the Arab sector. The police is not conceived as a service provider by the Arab population, but as a hostile element serving a hostile government. There is a need to expand community police services in order to improve service to this sector. (Orr Commission, 2003)

The general criticism was accompanied by more specific measures: Inculcating moderate and balanced norms of behavior among all ranks of police personnel with

regard to the Arab sector, uprooting existing prejudice among officers and raising the level of dialogue between police officers and the leaders of the Arab community. Various reform initiatives were initiated by the police after the events, including new channels of communication and allocation of resources to improve the service provided to Arab citizens. Yet, as discussed below, trust of Arab citizens in the police remains significantly lower than that of Jewish citizens.

What reforms are likely to have a positive impact on trust of Arab citizens in the police? While in many democratic countries there is broad support for general principles of good policing (use of minimum force, impartiality, fairness and accountability), surprisingly little is known about the level of popular support for specific kinds of reforms (Weitzer and Tuch, 2006:37). As in other fields of public policy planning of policing has to take into account not only the needs of individual citizens but also of communities (or “target groups”) that have specific requirements. What is needed, therefore, is a bottom-up approach for public policy where data is generated from below, based on experience and perceptions of citizens and minorities in particular, in order to understand what reforms can change the relations between the minority and the police. Thus, integrating the public into the evaluation process by mapping the attitudes of minority groups creates new opportunities for public influence and expertise and, in turn, for policies that suit the needs of those it seeks to influence.

In this exploratory research we propose to study these questions through definition of key areas of reform, based on other case studies, and the perceptions of Arab citizens regarding policing and reforms. Specifically, we examine issues of over-policing and under-policing and three types of reforms: recruitment of minority officers, changes of procedures and training and involvement of community leadership. Our findings are based on two complementary stages of research. First, four focus groups of 7-8 participants, Arab citizens of Israel, were conducted in order to assess general perceptions of the police and of potential police reforms. In the second stage, based on the findings of the focus groups, a comprehensive research survey was created and administered. The survey, a representative sample of 1,006 adult Arab citizens, is the core of this study and provides an understanding of the challenges and potentials of future reforms. Combined, the focus groups and the survey provide for a bottom-up analysis of actual perceptions, demands and needs of the Arab minority vis-à-vis the Israeli state and the police.

Democracy, Policing and Minorities

The discussion of policing in a multicultural society, and police reform, is embedded in the broader context of political responses of democratic states to diversity. Cultural diversity and ethno-national politics are common to most contemporary states who, contrary to their image of the homogeneity, must contend with a multicultural and at times multinational reality (Connor, 1994; Tully, 2002; Walker, 1994). The growing reality of Multinational and/or multicultural democracies, composed of cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic minorities calls into question conventional understandings of national sovereignty, group identity, social justice and group and individual rights (Tully, 2002; Young, 1998). Political and economic institutions, no longer regarded as neutral, can turn into a site for intensified ethnic identities and conflicts, something that states have not been well prepared to deal with (Keating and McGarry, 2001). Some states have shifted towards a more accommodating approach to diversity and adopted "multicultural policies" (Banting and Kymlicka, 2003) that go beyond the protection of basic civil and political rights guaranteed to all individuals in a liberal democratic state, others still debate how to address the challenges of diversity.

Examination of particular models for multi-cultural or multi ethnic states must take into account not only their contribution to political stability, at times a short-term measure, but also their ability to promote in the longer run a participatory democracy, fairness, social cohesion and social justice. Questions of rights (individual and group rights), equal opportunities, democratic participation, and access to public services, underscore practical questions of policy and policy reforms. The assessment of policy choices – multicultural or other – must examine the needs and preferences of ethnic-cultural groups, the capacity of existing institutions to meet them and the actual impact of these policies.

The police, in charge of maintaining public order, are often the target of complaints and concerns of ethnic minorities. Democratic policing can be identified with procedural regularity and the rule of law, respect for substantive rights or popular participation in policing through civilian oversight or delegation of authority to the community (Skalansky, 2008: 3-4). In the context of a multicultural setting democratic policing can also refer to the capacity of the police, on the one hand, to provide services that fit the needs of different communities and, on the other hand, to uproot existing prejudices and unfair practices towards minorities. Unfair practices

can be divided into “over-policing” and “under-policing.” Over-policing implies mistreatment of minorities by the police, either by excessive use of force towards minorities or by discriminatory practices against them (Findlay, 2004:101). Thus, “racial profiling,” the targeting of visible minorities as suspects, creates tensions between police and minorities (Open Society, 2009; Wortley, 2003; Wortley and Tanner, 2004; Closs, 2006; Smith, 2006). Under-policing is largely about police neglect of minorities and their needs. Thus, complaints of racial harassment and attacks against minorities by racist groups can be ignored or not taken seriously, police may absent themselves from minority neighborhoods regarded as “hopeless” so that poor urban communities suffer from unresponsive policing and high crime rates.

Both under-policing and over-policing can be related to discriminatory practices that frustrate minorities and explain their low trust in police. Minorities can suffer from both under policing in their neighborhoods where police is absent and from over policing outside their neighborhoods where they are targeted as suspects. Consequently, a wide gap between minority and majority's perceptions of and trust in the police emerges. In the US, for example, blacks are more inclined than whites to believe that the police abuse citizens, treat black suspects different than white suspects and ignore crime in neighborhoods where the majority of citizens are black (Weitzer and Tuch, 2006: 5-6). These perceptions are often grounded in reality as racial and ethnic minorities, it was demonstrated, are more likely than white Americans to be arrested, stopped, questioned and searched by the police (Walker, Spohn and Delone, 2000). When frustrations mount, clashes between police and minorities can erupt (Barlow and Barlow, 2000; Casey, 2000; Mazerolle, Marchetti and Lindsay, 2003), further eroding trust.

The alienation of minority groups from the police can be the result of unjust policies, police racism, negative perceptions of police or language and cultural barriers between police and minorities they serve (Fleras, 1992; Howell, Perry and Vile, 2004; Brunson and Miller, 2006). This Alienation can, on the one hand, undermine police work and, on the other hand, prevent citizens of minority groups from receiving the police services they are entitled to. When mistreatment of minorities by the police was exposed, public uproar and calls for reform emerged. In Britain, for example, the murder of Stephen Lawrence, a young black man, by a racist group and the subsequent police mistreatment of the family exposed racism within the police and led to an inquiry committee and, later, to a debate over British

multiculturalism and "the future of multi-ethnic Britain" (Runnymede, 2000). In the United States, the beating of Rodney King by the Los Angeles police led to a heated public discussion over the mistreatment of African Americans by the police.

Police Reforms

Reforms aimed at improved working relationships with minorities may be the result of public pressure following significant incidents of violence or police brutality, or acknowledgment by the police that reforms would improve its efficacy and public image (Brown and Benedict, 2002). In some cases, as in Northern Ireland, police reforms were part of a comprehensive process of post-conflict institution building that included the creation of an effective, professional, fair and accountable police service (McGarry and O'Leary, 1999). The reform of police in Northern Ireland, that included changing the name of police from the RUC (Royal Ulster Constabularies) to the PSNI (Police Service of Northern Ireland), is seen as one of the few instances where it has had a broadly sustainable impact (Ellison, 2007; Bayley, 2005).

Reforms begin by recognition of policymakers or of the police itself that its functions must be broadened so it can engage effectively with different cultural groups, take part in conflict resolution and problem solving, provide services that will strengthen its legitimacy across society and answer to democratic challenges described above. Reforms require first and foremost a willingness of the police to critically examine its policies towards and treatment of minorities (Kelling and Moore, 2006; Chan, 1997). In practice, it includes the provision of services that suit all segments of society, the diversification of the police force so it will mirror society, an improvement in the image of the police among minorities, and serious engagement with hate crimes against minorities (Oakley, 2001).

Police reforms related to multiculturalism and minority groups usually fall into six categories: (1) diversification of human resources; (2) cultural sensitivity training for police officers; (3) formal antiracism policies within the police; (4) a review and revision of operational practices that may lead to "systemic discrimination;" (5) liaison between the police and minority communities; and (6) inclusion of minority group representatives within the membership of the police's governing authorities (Stenning, 2003). These recommendations can be divided into three central areas that together tackle the central issues of over-policing and under-policing. First, change in the patterns of recruitment in order to diversify the police. Second, training of police officers and a revision of police practices, that can be

described "cultural sensitivity". And, third, improvement of relations between police and minorities by measures of police-community liaisons or by adoption of community policing.

The suggested reforms suggest a common-sense approach to multicultural policing as they relate to the general problems of minorities, under and over-policing. But, the potential impact of reforms depends on specific needs and desires that differ from one community to another. Policymakers, therefore, must assess, on the one hand, the resources available for reform and, on the other hand, the specific problems and expectations of minority communities.

Recruitment of minorities to the police is significant when the police force is homogeneous in terms of ethnicity, gender and class so that important parts of society are not represented. Recruitment is part of a wider debate of "cultural diversity" in the work place, private and public, and its benefits and difficulties (Williams and O'Reilly, 1998; Brief, 2008). A Homogenous police force can be perceived by minorities as alien, it may lack the knowledge and capacity to engage with minorities' needs or even develop a "police subculture" that regards minorities as alien and suspicious. The diversification of the police force, therefore, can strengthen the legitimacy of the police and improve its capacity to operate among minorities and provide a better service. Yet, some doubts are raised on the actual impact of the recruitment and its ability to change existing discriminatory practices (Desroches, 1992; Tinor-Centi and Hussain, 2000; Coderoni, 2002; Stevens, 2007). Consequently, minorities can be suspicious of police attempts to recruit them, be critical of minority officers serving in the police and expect major changes in the police before considering to join the police.

Cultural sensitivity training of police officers is designed to change police practices considered offensive to minorities, to reduce stereotypes that interfere with police work and to translate commitment to equality into policies that eliminate existing discriminatory practices. In addition, when necessary, language training and cross-cultural communication skills can also be included in police training. This training could contribute to reduce existing misperceptions and incorrect filtering of communication "data" (Shusta et al, 2008: 112). Cultural training is subjected to several debates and concerns. First, police prejudice is not necessarily equal to cultural miscommunication. In some cases (miss)communication is not the problem and what minorities demand is not cultural recognition. Rather, police (and society at

large) prejudice underscores unfair treatment of minorities whose main concern is equality. Moreover, minorities might be concerned with gaps between police classrooms where tolerance and equality is taught and the actual performance of police on the streets vis-à-vis minorities.

Improving relations between police and minorities can be achieved not only by interpersonal exchanges but also by structural changes through which community becomes involved in police works and vice versa. Community policing is one measure for bridging the gaps between the police and minority communities and includes principles, policies, and practices that link police and community members together in the joint pursuit of local crime prevention (Fleras, 1992: 74; Roberg, Kuykendall and Novak, 2002: 56). Community policing, however, might be considered by police and by the minorities themselves as "too soft" and ineffective. Alternatively, reforms can include formal and informal channels for communities to convey their needs and concerns or even provide an opportunity for citizens to oversee police work (Perez, 1994; Stone and Bobb, 2002; Lewis, 2005). Civilian oversight may help police to gain legitimacy and the trust of minority groups, by subjecting its policies and practices to public scrutiny. However, the police may resist subjecting itself to civilian control and, consequently, minorities might remain suspicious and uncooperative if oversight proposed is perceived a facade.

Policy Planning: Bottom-Up Approaches

Measures of recruitment and training of police officers, uprooting of discriminatory practices, community engagement and oversight are all methods of reform that can be part of the police adaptation to a multicultural reality. Yet, the potential advantages and shortcomings of these measures must be contextualized and adapted to local conditions. Differently stated, different minorities suffer from different problems and, therefore, reforms have to answer to concrete demands and needs in order to bring the desired change in police-minority relation. Thus, a bottom-up research that studies the actual demands and needs of specific minorities and provides a genuine democratic measure must precede policy planning and policy making. This approach, as any process of democratizing policy making decisions, involves an unprofessional public in professional policy decisions and carries the risk of populism and short-term considerations. Yet, gathering information regarding public needs and demands, rather than assuming them, provides a voice for the public and a critical tool for policy makers.

A top-down approach to policy planning or design often fails due to a hierarchical structure, unduly optimistic expectations likely to be disappointed in the face of complexity (deLeon and deLeon, 2002) and resistance from groups opposed to the policy, often not consulted in the planning stages. A bottom-up approach, conversely, is a reflection of communal interests, more conducive to a democratic approach and likely to provide the policy planning and implementation with greater legitimacy (deLeon, 1997). Such approach would require that policy makers "do more than listen to themselves, their in-house analysts, and extant interest groups...reaching back in the policy process framework to include policy formulation deliberations as a means to help define policy goals by talking with the affected parties well before the policy is adopted by the authorized policy maker" (deLeon and deLeon, 2002).

Effective strategies for police reform can draw on lessons learned elsewhere regarding bottom-up democratic policy planning. Specifically, if stakeholders have no voice in the reforms it may be difficult for them to embrace them when implemented. Thus, when governments provide citizens with voice they make them partners in public policy-making. A bottom-up policy reform means, first, the rejection of "one size fits all" formula and, second, attentiveness to the different needs that exist among citizens, especially in diverse societies. The police, as other governmental institutions whose current policies may reflect what they perceive as citizen demands, have also to take into account "the risks associated with a citizen focused police agenda, namely policing for the majority at the expense of the minority" (Harrison et al., 2009). In diverse or multicultural societies especially the police require accurate tools for planning policies that would properly serve all communities. Surveys are a tool used by more and more agencies, including the police, as part of a bottom-up strategy designed not only to assess performance but also to capture public perceptions and to help shape strategy and service delivery to enhance public trust (Harris et al, 2009). Thus, surveying the needs and concerns of minority groups is essential for devising police reforms that would improve relations between police and minorities and enable legitimate and effective policing.

The Arab Citizens in Israel

Arab citizens in Israel and the police have a long history of tense relations, itself a reflection of the tension between the Jewish state and the Arab minority, whose peak was in October 2000 when 13 Arab citizens were killed by police officers during riots in the Northern part of Israel. The inquiry commission established after

the events found fault not only in the police actions but also, and more importantly, in deeper structural causes:

“The events, their exceptional character and their adverse consequences were the result of structural factors that caused an explosive situation among the Arab public in Israel. The state and the elected governments consistently failed to seriously engage with the difficult problems of a large Arab minority within a Jewish state. The government's treatment of the Arab sector was generally of neglect and discrimination. At the same time, not enough was done to enforce the law in the Arab sector...as a result of this and of other causes, the Arab sector suffered deep distress evident, among other things, in high levels of poverty, unemployment, shortage of land, problems in the education system and serious deficiencies in infrastructure. All those created ongoing discontent, heightened towards October 2000” (Orr Commission, 2003).

The Jewish-Arab cleavage is considered the deepest schism in Israeli society. Arab citizens are a nondominant, nonassimilating, working class minority and are considered by the Jewish majority as dissident and enemy affiliated (Smootha, 1989: 218). From the end of the war in 1948 until 1966, in spite of their formal citizenship, Palestinian Arabs were placed under military rule that limited their movement. The gradual relaxation of Israeli policies towards Arab citizens since 1966 has not diminished the social gaps between them and the Jewish majority and has not ended their economic, social and political marginalization (Gavison and Abu-Ria, 1999; Lustik, 1985; Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov, 1993). Today, non-Jews in Israel constitute close to 20 percent of the population or about 1 million people who belong to three religious communities: Muslim (81%), Christian (9%) and Druze (10%). The Druze minority occupies a relatively privileged position in Israel, is distanced from other Arabs and takes part in military service. Arab citizens suffer from higher rates of poverty, low quality of public services, underrepresentation in the public sector and political marginality. In recent years Arab citizens tend to adopt a Palestinian national identity.

The demands for equality and representation, or individual and group rights, challenge some of the basic foundations of the state – its Jewish character - and encounter widespread resistance from the Jewish majority. The Jewish character of the state, almost a consensus among the Jewish majority, implies that Palestinian Arabs are citizens of a state whose symbols reflect the Jewish majority's culture and are exclusive in nature. Beyond the symbolic issues, the preference of Jews over non-Jews is anchored in laws that deal with immigration, use of state land and semi-

governmental institutions, as well as in Israel's basic laws that anchor the Jewish character of the state (Rouhana, 1998). Palestinian citizens, in a recent document, described Israel as an "ethnocratic state" that denies full citizenship to the minority and, consequently, Palestinian Arabs suffer from "extreme structural discrimination policies, national oppression, military rule that lasted until 1966, land confiscation policy, unequal budget allocation, rights discrimination and threats of transfer" (Future Vision, 2006).

The relations of Arab citizens and the police derive from general frustrations and mistrust of the state, but are often extenuated due to police' specific assignments. Demonstrations, civil disobedience or demolition of houses built without permits in Arab towns and villages position the police against the Arab minority and have the potential to escalate. The Orr commission described a "vicious cycle" where mutual distrust provokes altercations that, in turn, amplify Arab's alienation from the police, reinforce their belief that they are not full citizens of the country, and hinder police crime-control efforts in Arab communities due to their distrust of the police" (Weitzer and Hassisi, 2008). The explosion of these tense relations in the events of 2000 has brought the police under severe criticism but has also led to internal recognition that reform is necessary. Following the recommendations of the Orr Commission, police stations were opened in Arab villages, community policing was established, training of police officers with the help of NGO's is taking place and various channels of communication were established between the police command and Arab leaders. These reforms, however, as discussed below, have yet to have the desired impact.

Methodology and Research Questions

Nine years after the events of October 2000, and after several efforts of reform were made, it is possible to examine the current state of relations between the Arab minority and the police, the impact of reforms conducted as of now and the potential of new reforms. Low level of trust and the significant differences between Arab and Jewish citizens suggest that reforms have yet to make their impact and change the relations between the Arab minority and the police. But, what reforms are more likely to produce positive change? To answer this question our research is based on two stages of research, qualitative focus groups and a survey. The focus groups consisted of 30 people divided to four groups of 7-8 participants. An assigned discussion leader guided the groups into a directed discussion on topics dealing indirectly with the question at hand. Subjects were all Arabs citizens of Israel, residents of three different

Arab cities (Tira, Cassem village and Jut). There were 16 women and 14 men aged between 20-25 years. The focus groups provided an empirical basis to build effective tools of research for the second stage, a telephone survey of a random sample of 1006 Arab citizens of Israel, adults over the age of 18.

The survey was conducted by Haifa university survey center, during March-April 2009. Interviews were conducted in Arabic by Arab interviewers. 65% of the subjects completed the entire interview. There were 48.5% men and 51.5% women, average age 35.33 years (standard deviation of 13.2 years), 80.4% defined themselves as Muslims, 1.6% Bedouins (all together 82% Muslims compared to 81.6% in the general population), 11.9% define themselves as Christian (10.3% in the population) and 3% Druze (8.13% in the population). 74.9% of the subjects (70% in the population) live in the Galilee at the north of Israel, 18.9% in the center (the 'triangle') and 6.3% in the southern Negev. The Negev Bedouins are underrepresented in the survey because many of them live in small unrecognized villages and cannot be reached in a phone survey.

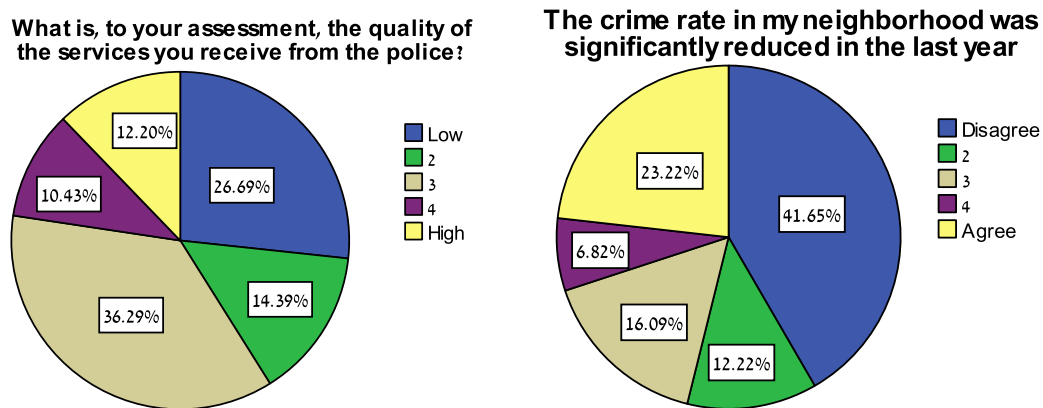
We begin with an overview of the general perceptions of the Arab minority of the policing and police services, identify the major problems as experienced by Arab citizens and continue with the three potential areas of reform discussed above. Accordingly, we posit the following questions: First, can recruitment of Arab citizens to police change current perceptions? Second, is training of police officers and a revision of police practices, that can be described "cultural sensitivity" necessary according to Arab citizen's perceptions? And, third, can police-community liaisons and community policing contribute to improving the relations? We will discuss the significance of our finding in the last part of the paper.

General Attitudes

Studies consistently show that the trust of Arabs citizens in the Israeli Police is low. Ratner (2005) conducted several surveys between 2000 and 2005 and found that the low trust of the Arab minority in the police is similar to that of the Jewish Majority. But, while Arab and Jewish citizens report low levels of trust in police they differ in their reasons. For example, 71.3 percent of Jewish citizens agree that the police treat people fairly and equally, but only 30.6 of the Arab citizens agree with this statement (ibid, see also Smith et al, 2004). Similarly, in this study, while only a minority of the respondents (26 percent) report they have personally experienced a discriminatory treatment from the police, a large majority (77 percent) believes that

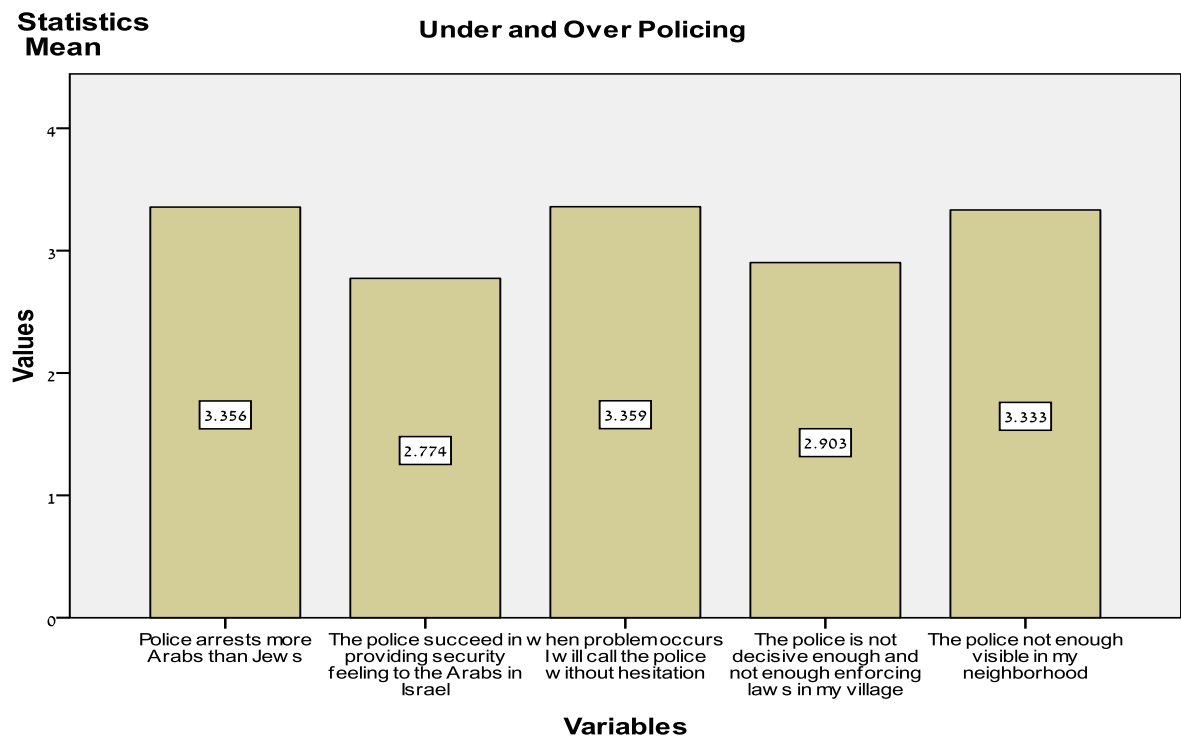
police treats Jewish citizens better than Arab citizens. The majority of the respondents (42 percent) believe the relations between the minority and the police are "problematic" and only 30 percent believe that the problematic relation is more an image than a reality. This feeling is reflected also in the perception that police is largely unable to fight crime in Arab neighborhoods (figure 1).

Figure 1: *Discrimination Feelings and perceptions of crime rate*



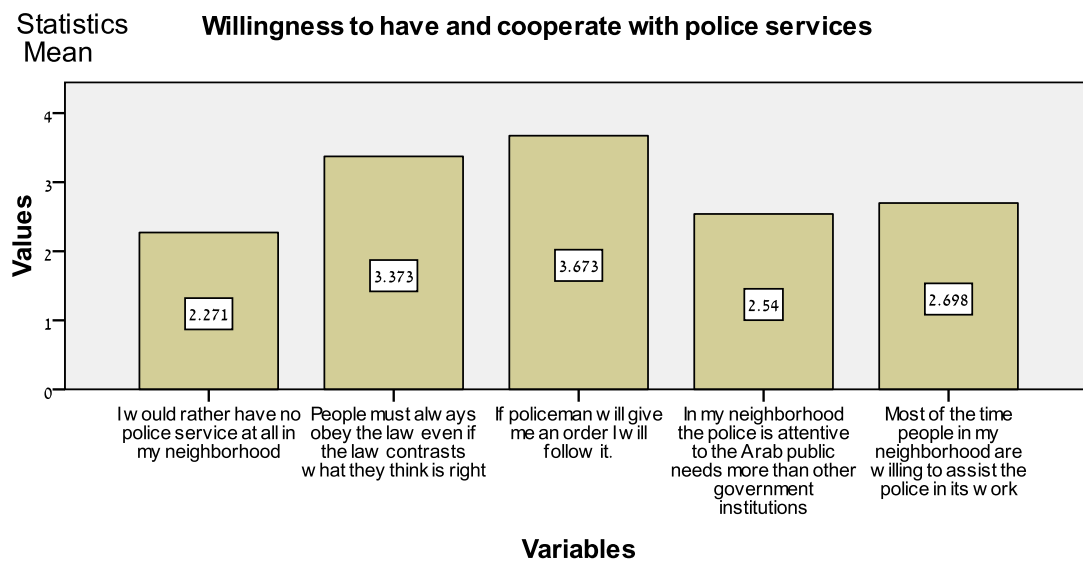
Arabs citizens' perceptions of police reflect both over-policing and under-policing. Thus, Arab citizens agree (49 against 22 percent) that the police arrests more Arab citizens than Jewish citizens (over-policing). But, respondents also feel that the police is not decisive enough in enforcing laws and is not visible enough in their neighborhood and disagree that the police provides Arab citizens with security. Only 30 percent believe that police provides security to Arab citizens while 46 percent believe it fails to provide them with security. Specifically, if a problem would occur in their neighborhoods, however, Arab citizens would call the police 40 percent of the respondents would not call the police, 38 percent would and 20 are not sure.

Figure 2: Under and over policing



Yet, as the table above indicates, Arab citizens are unwilling to give up on police services, even if they regard them as discriminating and of low standard, and are willing to cooperate with the police and follow its directions. These mixed reactions can be explained, on the one hand, by feelings of discrimination and resentment but, on the other hand, on the understanding that no practical alternative to police is available and that Arab neighborhoods require an effective police. Consequently, there is potential room for reforms that would change the relations between the police and the Arab minority and provide effective, fair and legitimate police service for the minority.

Figure 4: Willingness to cooperate with police services



Recruitment

Recruitment of Arab police officers could potentially contribute to existing police-minority relations by bringing required cultural knowledge and representing the minority in policy planning processes. Currently, however, only 10.3% of police officers are non-Jewish, divided between 50% Druze, 19% Christian-Arabs, 18% are non-Bedouin Muslim, and 6% are Bedouin (Weitzer and Hasisi, 2008). Since Muslims constitute 80 percent of the non-Jewish population they are heavily underrepresented in the police force. The recruitment of Arab citizens to the police is a sensitive issue because of recent history and overarching questions of identity and belonging. The growing tensions between the Arab minority and the state and the events of October 2000 present political and psychological obstacles that may prevent Arab citizens from joining the police force, regarded as hostile and discriminating. But, on the other hand, the recruitment of Arab police officers could, potentially, improve police service in Arab neighborhoods, change police practices and, consequently, the image of police among Arab citizens. Question remains whether Arab citizens believe that joining the police could make a significant change or whether distrust is too big.

The obstacles for recruitment were evident in the focus groups where participants expressed strong objections for joining the police. Arab citizens, who serve as police officers, it was argued, are part of a system that discriminates Arabs and prefer loyalty to the police over their co-ethnics. Alongside this criticism hope was expressed that in the future Arabs will become equal citizens and will be able to serve the police without feel guilty. Until these changes occur, however, Arab police officers, they claimed, will have little if any positive impact on the way the police treats the Arab minority and, consequently, Arabs should not join the police.

The survey, however, yielded different results. A majority of 60% of the 1006 interviewed support the recruitment of Arabs to the police forces. While 54 percent would not join the police if they were looking for a job, 29% declare they would and another 13 would consider the possibility. If a family member or a close friend would decide to join the police 34 percent would support him and 41 would not object to his decision. As table 3 below indicates support for recruitment of an Arab citizen or a resident of the village is about 65 percent, somewhat, somewhat lower for a family member (56 percent), lower for a son (42 percent) and very low for a daughter (19

percent), probably a result of the traditional character of Arab society in regard to women employment and gender roles.

Some 45 percent of the respondents believe that the recruitment of Arab citizens will have a positive impact on the relations between police and the Arab community. This does necessarily mean that Arab citizens want to be policed by Arab police officers. Rather, respondents indicated they were more concerned with the fairness and quality of service than with the ethnicity of the police officers in the neighborhood. The favored make up of policing is a joint Jewish-Arab policing in Arab towns and neighborhoods and Arabs assigned should be from outside the place of assignment. Overall, about 45 percent of respondents agree that “an Arab citizen serving in the police is also serving his community”, underscoring the willingness of many Arab citizens to join the police.

Table 3: recruitment

| <i>The preferable profile of an Arab policemen:</i> | | % | N |
|---|--|-----|---|
| Religion: | Arab and a Jewish | 56% | |
| | Arab only | 12 | |
| Residency: | Arab policemen from outside my village | 60 | |
| Support of recruitment according to social relation: | | 65 | |
| Arab citizen | | | |
| | Resident of my village | 64 | |
| | Family member | 56 | |
| | Son | 42 | |
| | Daughter | 19 | |

Training

Effective policing in a multicultural setting requires cultural sensitivity and familiarity with the needs of ethnic minorities. Indeed, in both focus groups and the survey there was a general agreement that training police officers could be of significant value for the relations between the police and the Arab minority. But, beyond a general agreement it was difficult to pinpoint what exactly such training

should consist of. Participants of the focus groups found it easier to point on what should not be part of the police officers training, mainly entrenchment of the perceptions of Arab citizens as enemies. Accordingly, it was suggested that police officers be trained to treat Arab citizens as equals and with proper respect. Some more specific suggestions included familiarizing police officers with Arab culture and providing an opportunity for police officers to meet Arab citizens in comfortable settings rather than on the beat.

In the survey, because of its nature, more specific questions were asked on the topic. About 65 percent of the participants agreed that “a police officer who is not familiar with the Arab culture and customs cannot perform well when working among the Arab community.” In addition, 63% percent believe that when working in Arab neighborhoods the police should attempt to solve problems in accordance with the local culture. The training of police officers may be an arena for police minority cooperation as 42 percent of the respondents agree that Arab citizens could and should take an active role in the training of police officers.

Police Community Relations

More general perceptions of cooperation with the police were also examined. Community-police reforms, as discussed above, can include initiatives from joint forums of consultation to supervision of the police through civilian boards. These reforms require both the willingness of the police and of the community. The majority of the respondents (60 percent) rejected the statement that “It is unlikely that Arab citizen will collaborate with police forces in any matter” and 49 percent reported that they will obey police officer’s orders even if they disagree with them. 40 percent believe that good policing must include a sincere effort of involvement in community life and 75 percent agree that “police will succeed working among Arab communities if it will involve community leaders and seek their help when problems in the community arise.” Also, 40% believe that good policing must include police efforts for involvement in community life.

Strong and positive correlations (Pearson’s R) between the issues discussed above were found (table 3). Participants that expressed relatively positive attitudes toward police estimated the quality of services they get from police more positively ($r=.408$), were ready more than other to collaborate with police ($r=.587$), supported recruitment of Arab citizens to the police ($r=.238$) as well as involvement in cultural training ($r=.292$). Most of the demographic factors (geography, ethnicity or age) were

found not significant. Yet, lower education and higher income were found positively related to positive attitudes towards police. This can be explained by the stronger national identity among educated Arab citizens, often resentful of the state and the police and the concern of citizens with higher income to their safety and property, expecting police protection.

Table 2: Pearsons' R correlations between variables

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
|-----------------------------|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. Attitudes toward police | | .408** | .587** | .238** | .292** | NS | -.233** | .189** |
| 2. Quality of services | | | .407** | .198** | .170** | -.135** | -.106** | .107** |
| 3. Reciprocal collaboration | | | | .369** | .456** | .091** | -.137** | .156** |
| 4. Recruitment | | | | | .215** | .151** | NS | NS |
| 5. Cultural training | | | | | | NS | NS | .106** |
| 6. Age | | | | | | | -.146** | NS |
| 7. Education | | | | | | | | -.436** |
| 8. income | | | | | | | | |

**p=0.000

Conclusions

Many democratic states contend with the reality of cultural differences and struggles between ethnic, national and religious groups over questions of recognition and justice. The rising plurality within states posits challenges not only for conceptual definitions of democracy but also to actual practices of its institutions. Police have a special role in contemporary democracies as its practices often display inherent societal prejudices and discriminations with grave importance for minorities. Tense relations between police and minorities are often underscored by real and/or perceived discrimination of either over policing or under policing minorities. The perceptions of minorities of neglect or abuse lead to declining trust in police, reluctance to cooperate and, in some cases, direct clashes that further erodes trust. But, if police is able to develop the capabilities to engage with diversity and overcome its own biases and prejudices in order to better serve minorities it might gain trust, improve its ability to operate among minorities in accordance with democratic norms.

The purpose of this work was to identify the potential for police reforms in Israel that would contribute to improving relations between the police and the Arab minority. Literature review points to three main areas of reform examined in this work: recruitment of minority police officers, training of police officers and the

establishment of police-community cooperation. While broad support for general principles of good policing (use of minimum force, impartiality, fairness and accountability) was found in many countries and ethnic minorities little is known about the level of support for specific kinds of reforms (Weitzer and Tuch, 2006:37). The combined potential of different reforms has to be examined in specific locations in relations to the needs of the community. Accordingly, a bottom-up approach of policy planning was used in this work to study the perceptions of Arab citizens in Israel in order to understand what reforms might be of value.

Arab citizens' general perceptions of police and policing include, on the one hand, strong feelings of discrimination or over policing and, on the other hand, of neglect or under policing. Combined, these feelings underscore the tense relation with and distrust of the police often exemplified in real incidents. Arab citizens regard police services as discriminating and of low standard, but realize that no practical alternative to provide for security is available. This realization is reflected also in the perceptions towards reforms. Arab citizens agree that training and police-community liaison could improve police work and are willing to take part in reforms. Recruitment of Arab police officers is a sensitive issue but nevertheless there is a general support for this measure and a willingness to join the police. Thus, while relations between the Israeli police and the Arab minority reached low ebb ten years ago, and have yet to improve, reforms in police may benefit both sides and be part of a democratic inclusive measure towards the Arab minority. This, of course, depends not only on perceptions among Arab citizens but also, and to a larger extent, on what police and policy makers would be willing to do.

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