Chapter 2
The Literature and Research on Police–Research Partnerships in the USA

Partnerships between the police and researcher community have existed in some form for more than four decades in the USA. One of the classic pieces of policing research, the Kansas City Preventative Patrol Experiment, conducted in the early 1970s, was a practitioner–researcher partnership that was generated by questions inside the agency regarding patrol deployment (Kelling et al. 1974). While additional examples of researchers working with agencies would follow, these relationships often represented the researcher getting the cooperation of an agency to conduct a study that pursued questions of interest to the research community (McEwen 1999). These relationships were quite limited and did not reflect the knowledge exchange strategy. However, there has been an emergence and growth in police practitioner–researcher partnerships over the past 20 years that shows the progress made in the development of the knowledge exchange model.

This chapter provides an extensive review of police–researcher partnerships in the USA. This is accomplished by integrating the recently developed literature on this topic with the findings from a recent study conducted by the first and third authors of this monograph. The chapter starts with an examination of the growth and prevalence of police–researcher partnerships in the USA, followed by a discussion of the benefits related to participation in these relationships. Attention is then given to the barriers and facilitators for forming and sustaining these partnerships.

The Growth and Prevalence of Police Practitioner–Researcher Partnerships

A major impetus for the growth of these partnerships has been federal funding. Sherman (2004) identifies the Drug Market Analysis Program (DMAP), funded by NIJ, as one of the first in a stream of grant initiatives requiring the partnership of practitioners and researchers. The DMAP grants were built around the partners working together to design and evaluate police efforts at addressing illegal drug markets. Sherman asserts this initiative was a success in that it produced a body of scientific knowledge through publications on initiative sites and engaged police

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leaders with scientific findings. However, the DMAP initiative was ended in the mid-1990s, which Sherman notes was due, in part, to the overall cost relative to only four program sites.

The DMAP was followed by the Locally Initiated Research Partnerships (LIRP) in policing program funded by NIJ. Between 1995 and 1996, the program funded 41 police practitioner–researcher partnerships nationwide in agencies with jurisdictions that ranged in size from 2,000 to 7 million citizens (McEwen 2004). The partnerships were funded with the idea of expanding community policing and were intended to provide models that would alter the traditional working relationship between police agencies and researchers. The basis to the LIRP initiative was to fund collaborative partnerships between police agencies and researchers in which both partners engaged in identifying an issue to address, evaluating the issue, designing and implementing a solution, and evaluating the impact of this solution (McEwen 2004).

At the same time, the NIJ was funding other collaborative police practitioner–researcher partnerships outside of the LIRP initiative that were specifically directed at addressing violent crime. The first of these efforts was Boston's Operation Ceasefire initiative, which represented a collaborative effort between the Boston Police Department, other criminal justice agencies (local, state, and federal), community organizations, and researchers from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. The initiative relied on data-driven problem-solving and targeted enforcement strategies aimed at specific gangs thought to be responsible for violent crime (Kennedy et al. 2001). Although it is important not to miscalculate the role of the researchers relative to other partners in this initiative, academics were undoubtedly crucial in assisting the agencies with the implementation of the data-driven process for defining the problem, as well as developing response efforts and evaluating those responses (Braga et al. 2002). The success of the Boston partnership in reducing levels of youth violence (see Braga et al. 2001) spurred the NIJ to fund the implementation of Ceasefire replication efforts in 10 cities under the Strategic Approach to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI), with each site incorporating a collaborative partnership between law enforcement agencies and researchers (Roehl et al. 2006). In addition, the Ceasefire and SACSI initiatives were the basis to the federally funded Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) program, which also incorporates partnerships between law enforcement practitioners and researchers. PSN, initiated in 2001, has been implemented in all 94 USA Attorney districts, and the initiative continues today (McGarrell et al. 2009).

The most recently funded police practitioner–researcher partnership initiative is the Smart Policing Initiative supported by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Smart Policing Initiative is built on the underlying premise that law enforcement agencies need to be "effective, efficient, and economical" in a fiscal climate, in which agency budgets are constrained, and the opportunity for staffing increases are limited (BJA 2011, p. 3). A data-driven approach to identifying problems and the utilization of best practices appears to be the solution to improving policing under these conditions. The initiative calls for law enforcement agencies to partner with a researcher to engage in efforts that combine intelligence-led and evidence-based

practices in order to address crime and other related community problems (BJA 2011). The initiative has funded more than 30 partnerships to date that have primarily implemented offender-based and place-based strategies to address specific crime problems (Smart Policing, n.d).

In addition to the funding provided by the NIJ and BJA, police–researcher partnerships have increasingly found support from the law enforcement community. Law enforcement officials who have participated in these partnerships have become advocates to their peers on the value of their experience (Beal and Kerlikowski 2010; Engel and Whalen 2010). Police practitioner periodicals have presented articles to their readership that outline the benefits of engaging in these partnerships (Cosner and Loftus 2005; Sanders and Fields 2009). New York Police Chief William Bratton's call to researchers best exemplifies this sentiment: "I am asking that more of you begin to work with us and among us in the real work laboratories of our departments and cities to help us prove or disprove the beliefs and practices that practitioners like myself and most of my colleagues deeply believe in, espouse, and practice" (Bratton 2006, p. 2).

Consistent with the knowledge exchange logic, Bradley and Nixon (2009)—the latter a former Australian police commissioner—have argued for "close and continuous collaborative relationships" between practitioners and researchers. They argue that past efforts to produce research intended to impact policing failed to understand the limitation of the research diffusion process that relied on publications in academic journals and other outlets. Further, they observe that past approaches to encourage the use of research privileged research knowledge over the experience-based knowledge of practitioners, which generated resistance among practitioners. As a result, they advocate for improving interactive partnerships that respect the knowledge both communities have to offer when identifying and developing responses to issues. In sum, they favor a participatory action research approach (also see Marks 2009; Wood et al. 2008).

In strongly supporting these partnerships, the IACP (2004) has argued police–researcher partnerships are crucial to improving police operations and practices and that every law enforcement agency should be participating in these kinds of efforts. In an attempt to support this advocacy, the IACP developed two complementary publications for researchers and practitioners offering guidance for the establishment and continuation of these partnerships (see IACP, n.da, b) in addition to forming the RAC in 2004—which was created to promote partnerships between police leaders and researchers.

Collectively, the support for practitioner–researcher partnerships from federal funding and the advocacy of practitioners, along with the limited evidence of their presence and utility, demonstrate that an orientation to the knowledge exchange form of research translation is present, but their prevalence in American law enforcement is largely unknown.

Findings on Partnership Prevalence from the NIJ Partnership Study

In 2009, the National Institute of Justice funded a study conducted by the first and third authors of this monograph to examine the barriers and facilitators to the development and sustainability of police–researcher partnerships in the USA—hereafter referred to as the NIJ partnership study.[1] The first component of this study was a national survey of law enforcement agencies intended in part to examine the prevalence of these partnerships. As noted above, the provision of policing services in the USA is accomplished through a complex structure of approximately 17,000 largely independent agencies that span the federal, state, county, and municipal levels of government. In order to capture a picture of partnership participation across these agencies, they administered a survey on partnership experience to a stratified, random sample of 2,015 municipal, county, and state law enforcement agencies.

A total of 871 agencies returned completed surveys, representing 43 % of the sample agencies. It is important to note that there is considerable variation in the response rate across agency size, type, and region. The response rate of agencies serving large jurisdictions (population 100,000 or more) was 50 %, whereas the response rate for small jurisdictions (population less than 10,000) was 30 %. The overall response may partially be explained by agencies operating under the belief that the survey did not apply to them since they had not participated in a partnership. Despite the cover letter for the mailed survey, as well as reminder letters noting that responses were desired from all agencies regardless of whether they had participated in a research partnership, the authors still received numerous phone calls from agencies asking if they needed to complete the survey since they had not be involved in a partnership.

Survey Focus

The survey had two primary objectives: (1) provide insight into the prevalence of police practitioner partnerships and (2) identify agencies that have engaged in partnerships, whether past or current. The survey instrument was subsequently divided into two sections in relation to these objectives. The first section captured information on partnership prevalence by first asking respondents if they had participated in a partnership with a researcher or research team in the past 5 years. The survey broadly defined a research partnership as follows:

[1] Alpert et al. (2013) Building Bridges Between Police Researchers and Practitioners: Agents of Change in a Complex World. A Final Report to the National Institute of Justice. NIJ Grant # 2009-IJ-CX-0204.

> A relationship with a researcher with the goal to define or implement a research project. Examples include situations where police agencies and researchers work together to learn about training, leadership, policies, procedures, or other related matters. These efforts can also include police agencies and researchers working together to develop, implement, and/or monitor policies, new programs, and initiatives.

Agencies that reported participation in a partnership were then asked to define the nature of the partnership commitment. The goal of this second question was to distinguish between the formality and length of partnerships. The survey utilized a three-category classification system outlined by the IACP (n.da, b). The respondents were asked to classify the nature of commitment in their partnerships as one of the following:

> *Cooperation*—short-term and informal partnerships that may involve such efforts as the agency seeking advice from a researcher or simply providing the research partner data for analysis
>
> *Coordination*—more formal partnerships that center on a specific project or goal, such as contracting a researcher to conduct a specific analysis or jointly securing grant funding with a researcher to evaluate a specific initiative. The partnership ends with the conclusion of the project
>
> *Collaboration*—formalized long-term partnerships where police agencies and researchers work together on multiple projects over time. An example of such a partnership could involve a MOU or contract between an agency and university or researcher for engaging in ongoing and multiple research efforts

In recognition that some agencies may have participated in more than one research partnership over the past 5 years, the respondents could identify more than one type if they have been involved in different types of partnership. Thus, agencies that had been involved in two cooperation type partnerships and one coordination type would check both the cooperation and coordination categories.

The first question provides the opportunity to explore the prevalence of practitioner–researcher partnerships. The types of partnerships captured by this question are intended to be more inclusive than those found in the LIRP, Ceasefire, SACSI, PSN, and Smart Policing programs. Ceasefire, SACSI, and PSN focused on improving an agency's ability to understand and respond to problems of violence in their respective communities (Braga et al. 2002; Roehl et al. 2006). LIRP included a broader array of partnerships, with projects that involved such efforts as developing community policing in agencies, creating a crime analysis capacity in agencies, and improving the response to domestic violence, to name a few (McEwen 2004). Smart Policing partnerships have largely focused on intelligence-led strategies that have place-based or offender-based approaches. The question used for this study was intended to capture these efforts as well as other projects that focus on improving agency operations, such as research efforts evaluating training and policies related to the use of force or police misconduct.

The second question is an opportunity to measure the degree to which agencies are engaging in partnerships consistent with the knowledge exchange model outlined above. Cooperative partnerships represent efforts with limited interaction between the agency and researcher that suggest a partial commitment to the idea of bringing in external knowledge and resources to improve the function of the agency. Coordination and collaboration represent the next step. Here, agencies have bought into the idea of working with a research partner to the point they have established a formal relationship oriented to addressing a defined problem or problems. The primary characteristic distinguishing coordination and collaboration is that the former represents a short-term partnership oriented to the completion of a single project and the latter is a long-term partnership that incorporates multiple projects. Thus, collaborations represent an even stronger commitment to the practice of partnerships.

Survey Findings

Overall, almost one-third of the respondents (32 %) had engaged in a partnership with a researcher in the past 5 years. This participation, however, is influenced by agency size. Figure 2.1 illustrates that nearly one-half (47 %) of agencies with 100 or more sworn personnel had participated in partnerships in the past 5 years. However, partnership participation among agencies with 50–99 sworn personnel (26 %) was nearly one-half the rate of agencies with 100 of more personnel, followed by agencies with 25–49 sworn personnel (21 %), 10–24 personnel (9 %), and 1–9 personnel (6 %).

Those respondents who reported involvement in partnerships within the past 5 years were subsequently asked to define their partnerships based on the three categories provided: cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. Given that the cooperation level of partnerships does not reflect a knowledge exchange form of translation that captures a working relationship between the practitioner and

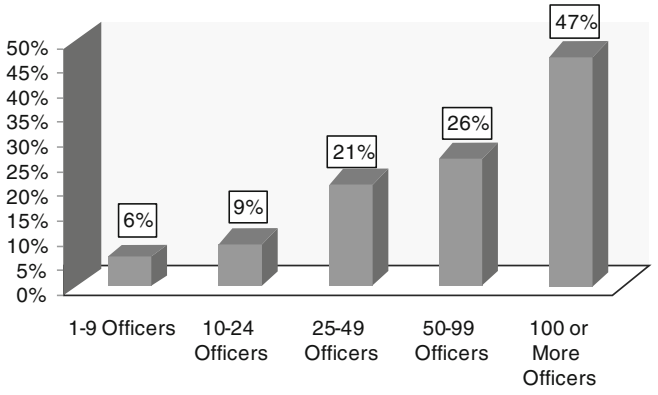


Fig. 2.1 Agency participation in partnerships with researchers by size

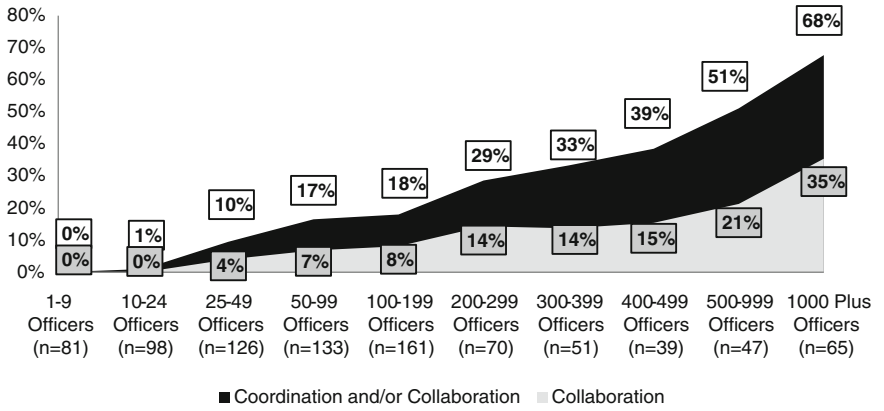


Fig. 2.2 Percent of agencies with coordination and/or collaboration partnerships

researcher, attention is only given here to the coordination and collaboration levels. The reported participation rate in coordination and collaboration partnerships across all agencies was low, 18 and 10 %, respectively. When participation in these types of partnerships was broken down by agency size, a similar pattern was observed in relation to large and small agencies as found in for partnership participation in general. Figure 2.2 illustrates this with two patterns. The pattern in black represents agencies that reported participation in a coordination or collaboration partnership, or both. The rate of participation was highest among agencies with 1,000 or more sworn personnel at 68 %, followed by agencies with 500–999 personnel at 51 %. There is a drop off to 39 % for agencies with 400–499 sworn personnel, and this downward trend continues for the remaining categories (300–399 personnel at 33 %, 200–299 at 29 %, and 100–199 at 18 %) and further declines to zero or near zero for agencies with less than 25 sworn personnel. A similar pattern was found in collaboration only participation, which is illustrated with the gray pattern area. The rate of participation was 35 % for agencies with 1,000 or more officers and 21 % for agencies with 500–999 officers. Participation for the remaining categories was at 15 % or less.

For those agencies reporting no participation in a partnership in the 5 years prior to the survey, a follow-up question was asked on why they had not engaged in these efforts. Table 2.1 presents the responses to this question, with agencies having the ability to give more than one reason. More than half of these non-participating agencies reported they did not have the funding or resources (56 %), followed by having not been approached by a researcher (27 %). The belief that partnering with a researcher would not be much value to their agency was the third most comment category (15 %), followed by a much lower number of agencies reported they did not trust the motives or intent of researchers wanting to partner (2 %) or they heard of other agencies having a negative experience in a partnership with researchers (2 %). The remaining reasons were a diverse number of write-in responses that were classified as other (16 %).

Table 2.1 Agency reasons for not participating in a partnership

Reason reported	N[a]	%
Do not have the funding/resources to engage in a partnership (staffing, etc.)	328	56
Have not been approached by a researcher	162	27
Do not think partnering with a researcher would be of much use to my agency	91	15
Do not trust the motives or intent of researchers wanting to partner with my agency	13	2
Heard of other agencies having a negative experience in partnerships with researchers	10	2
Other	93	16

[a] 591 respondents. Agencies could report more than one reason

The results of the national survey show there is some level of participation in coordination or collaboration partnerships that are in line with the knowledge exchange orientation, particularly among the largest agencies in the USA. However, once the small category of agencies with 1,000 or more sworn personnel is excluded, the rate of partnership engagement becomes less prevalent. Even among the remaining agencies generally categorized as large agencies (100–999 sworn personnel), the range of participation rates is at best 51 % and low as 18 %. Based on the findings in Table 2.1, it appears that a large number of law enforcement executives in the USA do not see the benefit of engaging in these partnerships, or at least not enough value to dedicate their limited resources to them or to assertively seek out researchers as partners.

The Benefits of Partnership Participation

The lack of participation in research partnerships by a large number of law enforcement agencies in the USA is understandable to some degree. Many police practitioner–researcher partnerships that revolve around research and change are messy, at times frustrating, and represent demanding work (Buerger 2010; Lum et al. 2012). These efforts have to contend with the competing demands law enforcement agencies face and a variety of local political circumstances (Hoover 2010; McEwen 2004). At the same time, however, the recent policing literature has begun to identify both potential and real benefits that accrue to practitioners and researchers when they engage in these partnerships (Engel and Whalen 2010; Foster and Bailey 2010; McEwen 2004). Police agencies can infuse new ideas and practices into their operations, they can have quality evaluations of their efforts and of the issues they face, and they can gain a degree of credibility from stakeholders by working with researchers to improve their practices. Researchers increase their accessibility to agencies and data, improve their future research efforts through the insight provided by practitioners, and are permitted intimate involvement in efforts that have a direct impact on problems and issues they generally study from a distance.

Following these latter arguments, the NIJ partnership study also sought to examine the real or perceived benefits of partnerships between police agencies and researchers. When this study was funded, the effort for making the case of why the police should engage in these relationships was relatively limited in policing and research outlets, with the IACP (2004, n.da, b) and McEwen's (2004) review of the LIRP initiative being the notable exceptions. Given the relative absence of agencies participating in these partnerships, one of the goals of the NIJ partnership study was to capture how individuals with experience in these working relationships articulated the key benefits to these efforts. The communication of these perspectives to peer police practitioners and researchers subsequently has important utility in convincing the further expansion of this practice.

Findings from the NIJ Partnership Study

In addition to capturing the prevalence of partnerships with researchers among police agencies, the above-mentioned national survey also served as a mechanism for identifying existing partnerships. The agencies that indicated they had participated in a partnership were additionally asked to provide information on these partnerships and a key contact person in the agency with knowledge about the partnership. The research team subsequently identified a sample of partnerships that served as a basis for conducting follow-up interviews with the key law enforcement official and researcher to capture more detailed information on their specific partnership, along with their opinions on partnerships in general. During the interview, each of the practitioner and researchers were asked about the benefits to practitioners from engaging in these relationships. In total, the research team interviewed 90 law enforcement officials and 57 researchers, capturing information on 89 different partnerships.

The police practitioners offered a number of general statements on these relationships and their benefit to both parties involved, referring to them as "mutually beneficial" and "a win for everybody." They also noted very specific elements that were beneficial to agencies. Across these interviews, four general benefits to agencies emerged as the most commonly articulated in some form or another by both parties.

The Insight and Skill of the Researcher

The respondents reported the researchers bring theoretical- and scientific-based knowledge that offers a different perspective on the problems and issues that agencies must deal with. In a number of cases, this knowledge base was from the field of criminology, but also included researchers from a number of other disciplines (e.g., psychology, sociology, computer forensics, engineering, and military science). The researchers can also bring methodological skills agencies find useful,

such as complex statistical analyses, survey design, sampling, ways to improve data quality, or evaluation design. It was argued by the practitioners and researchers that these knowledge and skills improve the identification of problems and lead to the incorporation of new policies and practices.

Third-Party Credibility

Partnerships with researchers were also noted to provide third-party credibility to agencies. Police practitioners stated an independent researcher gave them confidence in the evaluations that were conducted of their programs/practices or problems. Researchers also represent third-party credibility to agency stakeholders, including the public. Many of the practitioners commented that researchers provided credibility to their activities or policies to outside entities, either as a result of the perceived independence in the perspectives offered by the researcher or the specific empirical evidence they provided.

Increased Capacity and Efficiency

Agency respondents also reported that partnering with researchers increased the operating capacity of their agency, whether this meant providing an analytic ability the agency does not possess or simply an individual to conduct research the agency wants completed but does not have the time or resources to dedicate. The researchers also expanded the capacity of the agencies through grant funding, which included assisting in the development of grant proposals or performing the required evaluation component. In addition, evaluations conducted by researchers reportedly assisted in improving agency efficiency, identifying which programs and practices were more or less effective and thereby efforts and resources can be more efficiently directed.

Impact on Public Safety and Relationship with Community

An underlying reason why many agencies formed a partnership with a researcher was to improve their ability to address crime, disorder, and other public safety issues. A number of partnerships reportedly achieved that goal, and the researchers were also noted to have improved the relationship between agencies and communities in a number of partnerships. In some cases, the researchers acted as a broker or facilitator between the agency and other community organizations by conducting surveys of community members, which created an opportunity for citizen input. A number of the practitioners also noted a more utilitarian benefit from their involvement in a research partnership, in that the information and findings that result from their efforts may be useful to the law enforcement community in general.

While the above considerations all relate to the reported benefits to law enforcement agencies, it is also important to recognize these partnerships provide benefits to the researchers as well. From a research productivity perspective, participation in partnerships provided researchers access to the agencies, their personnel, and data, which provide the information to produce publications, the currency for academic researchers. Researchers also reported the partnerships provided experiences they can bring to the classroom to improve their teaching, as well as mentorship opportunities for students. On a more general level, a number of the researchers reported their involvement in the partnership provided them a degree of personal satisfaction. Some of the researchers also commented on the value of seeing their work in an applied context, contributing to efforts at improving an agency or community.

Barriers and Facilitators to Police–Researcher Partnerships

Sharing the above benefits of partnerships to practitioners and researchers who are currently not engaging in these efforts is important to their expansion. However, receptivity to these potential benefits is only one component in the overall development and success of these relationships. As the two cultures discussion in Chap. 1 notes, there can be complicated dynamics to bringing police practitioners and researchers together for joint ventures. This has increasingly been recognized by the advocates for these partnerships, who have subsequently given attention to identifying those factors that act as barriers and facilitators to making these efforts work. A noted in Chap. 1, recent issues of the academic journals *Police Practice and Research* (2010, 2012) and *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* have been specifically dedicated to addressing the role of research in policing and police-–researchers partnerships. A review of the articles within these special editions, which contain practitioner and researcher authors, and a handful of other articles provide insight on key elements to partnership formation.

Trust

Trust is often cited as the most important factor in the development of police practitioner–research partnerships. Given the critical tradition of police research (Bradley and Nixon 2009), practitioners may be apprehensive about opening their doors to researchers when they are unsure of a researcher's motives. Trust between the police and researchers takes time to build, sometimes years, and is often the primary burden of the researcher (Boba 2010; Engel and Whalen 2010). In order to gain acceptance and legitimacy, the researcher has to "pay their dues" by doing ride along with officers, meeting with staff and officers department-wide, and assisting the department at times outside the scope of the project (Engel and Whalen 2010; IACP, n.db; McEwen 2004). This trust provides evidence that the researcher is

interested in helping the agency rather than simply exploiting the agency for data and other information solely for personal interest. This time-intensive demand explains why McEwen (2004) found that LIRP sites with no preexisting relationships between the agency and the researcher took longer to develop. Moreover, the formation of trust is not a guarantee, and nor is it permanent, and rather, it is an ongoing goal and accomplishment that characterizes the partnership (Greene 2010). The formation and continuation of this trust create interpersonal relationships between practitioners and researchers that form the basis for the necessary and mutual commitment (IACP 2004).

Involvement of the Right People

Logically, partnerships depend on police officials who are open to research and on researchers who are open to working with the police (Boba 2010). The implicit assertion here is that not all practitioners and researchers have this orientation. The police partner has to show an appreciation for research and commitment to its utility in informing their agency's practices (IACP, n.db). Consistent with this proposition, a 2011 IACP survey found that police leaders with graduate degrees are more likely to have an interest in using research and that their agencies are more likely to have collaborated with a college or university researcher (IACP 2011). Police leaders with bachelor's or associate's degrees reported lower rates on both of these measures, yet these rates were higher than police chiefs with a high school diploma as their highest level of academic completion—this group came in last.

Similarly, researchers have to be comfortable working in a police environment and work to understand the local police culture (McEwen 2004). Moreover, they have to be willing to address questions of interest to the law enforcement agency, show appreciation for agency demands and needs, and be flexible in their methodological approaches to research such that they accommodate specific situational conditions (Boba 2010; Bradley and Nixon 2009; Bratton 2006; Engel and Whalen 2010; Sparrow 2011). Steinheider and colleagues (2012) suggest that researchers who are former police practitioners may be ideal to effectively fill this research partner role, asserting that such individuals are more likely have an orientation to the above considerations. While this may be the case, it is important to recognize there have been a number of researchers without such experience who have effectively engaged in partnerships with the police. Regardless of a researcher's background, the premise of involving the right people to foster a mutual respect for the knowledge and expertise each party offers is imperative to achieving the respective and communal goals of the partnership.

Communication

Communication between the practitioner and the researcher is connected to the above issues of trust and the involvement of the right people. Partnerships require

open discussions about the expectations, goals, and possible risks early on in their development (Buerger 2010; Fleming 2012; Stephens 2010). This helps to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each party. Moreover, this communication should continue throughout the project through meetings, phone calls, and emails and is facilitated to some degree when the agency and researcher can be in close geographic proximity (Boba 2010; McEwen 2004). The traditional research approach has been to gather data and return some time later when the analysis is done and the final report is complete. This approach does not reflect the interactive process of the knowledge exchange strategy or the expectations of practitioners. This process presumes the police partner wants to be kept informed about what is going on with the proposed project or research endeavor (Fleming 2010). Interim reports allow them the opportunity to share their perspectives about the project and potentially allow them to adjust their practices before the partnership is complete (IACP, n.da). The efforts of continuous communication and interim reports partially address practitioners' demands for more timely research results (Greene 2010; McEwen 2004; Skogan 2010).

Clearly, the final written products of the research also address concerns of communication. Consistent with the above discussion on the culture gap between police practitioners and researchers, practitioners do not want an extensive literature review and description of methodology, nor do they favor reports filled with academic jargon typically found in a final report for a grant or in an academic publication (McEwen 2004). Instead, they want a concise and readable report, which suggests researchers need to be mindful of creating two or more publication formats to address the demands of their different audiences (Stephens 2010). Moreover, researchers should consider how to report negative or bad findings in a constructive way to reduce defensiveness from the practitioner and give them advance notice of these findings before they are released to the press (IACP, n.da). This does not mean suppression of findings; rather, it serves to perpetuate positive relations and simply allows the agency to not be caught off guard.

Permanency of Personnel

Boba (2010) observes partnerships are ultimately the product of relationships between people. The above three factors that are key to forming partnerships are based on the quality of interpersonal relationships, and as a result, partnerships are vulnerable when one of these individuals leaves. It is not uncommon in partnerships for police personnel taking a lead role in a project to promote, transfer, or retire. Similarly, researchers often leave their college or university to take a position at another institution (McEwen 2004). These changes can slow the progress of a partnership in light of the need to bring new individuals up to speed or to develop new interpersonal ties among the main players. It remains a real risk these ties may or may not materialize such that a project may be terminated (see Decker and Rosenfeld 2004). McEwen (2004) asserts that such changes can be particularly

difficult to recover from if a researcher with special skills leaves. There have been few proposed solutions to this problem other than general statements that both parties should try to ensure key personnel stay in place or develop strategies to cope with turnover (IACP 2004; McEwen 2004).

In general, these four factors reflect the basic culture gap between practitioners and researchers. Together, they suggest there is a need to build interpersonal relationships and cross this divide between the two sides of the spectrum to increase research utilization (or knowledge translation) through partnership. In addition to these factors, McEwen (2004) asserts that sustaining established partnerships requires additional efforts. It is important to recall that the LIRP partnerships he was reviewing were grant funded, with an important consideration being the continuation of the partnership after grant funding had ended. One strategy he observed across the project sites to support partnership sustainability was the maintenance of informal contacts between practitioners and researchers. A number of the LIRP partnerships involved practitioners and researcher with a preexisting relationship, with this grant funded project representing just one of many efforts wherein they have worked together. A second strategy involves future support for the partnership with recurring funding in the police budget. The third strategy is the formation of a memorandum of understanding between the practitioner and researcher to engage in future research. However, examination of these sustainability approaches is largely nonexistent.

Findings from the NIJ Partnership Study

As noted above, the primary focus of the NIJ partnership study was to identify the barriers and facilitators in the development and sustainability of partnerships between police practitioners and researcher. The underlying goal of this effort was to identify the factors that influence the success or failure of these relationships. Using the national survey, the research team sought to capture a diverse set of partnerships that varied by funding, nature of the problems addressed, longevity of relationship, and nature of the relationship. At the same time the research team was starting this effort, articles were being published in the above-mentioned special editions of academic policing journals where some of the authors (police practitioners and researchers) shared their experiences in these partnerships, which included elements of barriers and facilities. The research team decided not to review these articles in order to avoid biasing their analysis. Instead, they analyzed the practitioner and researcher interviews of the 90 partnerships that were a part of their study independent of concepts from the simultaneously emerging articles. However, once the analysis was complete, a review of the study findings and the articles revealed considerable overlap in these sources in what is important to making partnerships work.

The following provides a short overview of the NIJ partnership study findings. The practitioners and researchers were asked to identify the barriers and facilitators to their specific partnership being discussed, other similar partnerships in which they participated, as well as provide their general perspective on these issues. In general, the barriers to and facilitators of partnerships were not separate issues for agencies and researchers. Instead, they were often two sides of the same coin. For example, if the development of trust between the participating practitioners and researchers was viewed as a facilitator to partnerships, then the absence of such trust was identified as a barrier. Overall, the interviewed practitioners and researchers identified a number of facilitators and inhibiters to partnerships that are informative to those who engage in the partnerships or wish to engage in them. These different influences are grouped here under three general categories: structural characteristics, value orientation of the participants, and interpersonal relationship of the participant.

Structural Characteristics

Structural characteristics refer to the resources and other components that represent the setting of the partnerships. The structural characteristics identified by the practitioners and researchers as influences on partnerships do not necessarily represent barriers and facilitators to their relationships in a strict sense, but instead operating conditions that impinge upon them that make their success more or less difficult depending on the adaptability of the participants. Across the interviews, there were four structural characteristics that were most frequently cited for having this influence.

1. Financial Support—A number of the interview respondents reported that receiving grant funding is the best way to provide resources to support partnerships. In many situations, the ending of funding resulted in the end of the partnership. However, a number of partnerships did not operate with grant funding at all or for the full length of the partnership, instead operating with funding provided by the law enforcement agencies, academic institutions, other sources, or simply operating without any funding. Sustainable partnerships operated with a mix of these various sources, where both partners expressed a commitment to a continued relationship.
2. Geographic Proximity of Partners—The geographic distances between the law enforcement participants and researchers varied and ranged from being colocated in the same community to being on the opposite sides of the country. However, a number of practitioners expressed a preference for working with researchers located in or near their communities. This proximity reportedly allowed for a higher level of researcher involvement and interaction, which the practitioners preferred and viewed as facilitating the interpersonal relationship between partners.

3. Permanence of Key Participants—Turnover in key partnership participants, practitioners and researchers, was frequently cited as a barrier to the development and success of partnerships. Changes in personnel reportedly slowed the progress of projects and threaten the existence of the partnerships. Change required that new members be brought up to speed, the reestablishment of buy-in and new interpersonal relationships having to be developed.
4. Institutional Demands for Both Partners—Practitioners exist in agencies, while researchers most often work in academic institutions, which carry a broader set of rules and regulations that can pose barriers to partnerships. The practitioners and researchers alike noted that agency concerns, or the concerns of legal representatives with oversight of agencies, in some cases created difficulty in the sharing of data with researchers due to confidentiality concerns, data control issues, and potential liability. These barriers were not universal across partnerships. A number of researchers noted the chief or sheriff they worked with, and other agency personnel, where completely forthcoming and provided unfettered across. Counter to the above agency-based barrier, institutional review boards at universities that have oversight on research conducted by faculty members were noted in cases to create issues with lengthy review processes and resulting stipulations that limit what the practitioner and research partners want to accomplish. Again, the nature of this review and related stipulations can vary across universities. The orientation of review boards, particularly in relation to their stringency and control, differs from one university to the next, including what degree of review, if any, is required based on whether the faculty is being contracted by an agency or is conducting the study for primarily for scholarly purpose.

Value Orientation of the Participants

The value orientation of the participants captures the beliefs and perspectives of the practitioner and research partners on working with one another and what they are trying to accomplish. Simply put, without both parties wanting to engage in these partnerships, their formation is unlike to occur or will have a strained and fleeting existence.

1. Practitioner Values—Both the practitioners and researchers interviewed noted that partnerships are facilitated when key practitioners and other agency members value the incorporation of research and the involvement of outside researchers, as well as being open to changing the way they do business. In a number of cases, the representatives of both sides noted that their partnership worked, for example, because "the chief gets it," referring to the chief's support of research. This support of the agency leader was cited as key in many cases since they set the tone in the agency that they support a given research project or researcher partner, along with the expectation that other agency members will do the same.

2. Researcher Values—Interviewed practitioners expressed the importance of working with researchers that emphasize the desire to assist agencies, along with not being judgmental of the agency and their personnel, facilitated partnerships. Interviewed researchers similarly acknowledged the valuation of this orientation. In addition, a number of practitioners reported they prefer working with researchers who express a shared stake in improving the agency and community, as well as researchers who show they value the knowledge of practitioners. However, some researchers also noted that even when researchers have this orientation, they may still face challenges from the values of their institutional setting if they work in a university. Researchers will often face pressure to produce articles in academic journals and pursue grant funding for tenure and promotion at their university, where less emphasis is placed on working with agencies, which a number of the interviewed researchers noted can be very time consuming. This can place researchers in the position of maintaining a delicate balance between keeping their commitment to the partnerships and addressing institutional demands.

Interpersonal Relationship of the Participants

The interpersonal relationship relates to the social dynamic of partnerships. Practitioners and researchers expressed the need to feel comfortable in working with each other, which they noted are influenced by two elements, communication and trust:

1. Effective and Ongoing Communication—Both practitioners and researchers commented that communication provides the opportunity to address potential barriers to trust. As part of this process, it is important for the law enforcement partner to communicate what is expected from the researcher, and the researcher must explain what is needed from the agency to conduct the research. It was noted this communication includes discussing the various roles for all participants, procedures for accomplishing the project, and the work products that will result. Moreover, a number of the interviewed practitioners and researchers asserted it is important for both partners to maintain continual dialogue and to inform each other about issues, changes, and progress.
2. Trust—Trust was argued to be a prerequisite to the establishment of police practitioner–researcher partnerships, particularly from the viewpoint of the law enforcement partners. While it is important for law enforcement executives and officers to trust the researcher as it relates to the project, it was noted as more important for the researcher to be trusted as a person. The researcher's motives for engaging in a partnership are central to this trust, with concern about whether the researcher enters with objectivity or bias and whether the researcher will exploit the relationship for personal gain.

The review provided in this section only captures the core concepts and issues most cited by the interviewed police practitioners and researchers. A more detailed review containing examples and a fuller explanation can be found in the full NIJ report on the project. Nonetheless, the findings drawn from the participants of these 89 partnerships reveal the same points mentioned by other researchers in the literature provided at the beginning of this section, with a few additional dynamics. This suggests there is fair degree of consistency in the factors that are viewed as important to making police practitioner–researcher partnerships work that should serve as a guide to practitioners and researchers embarking in these efforts for the first time. Moreover, the following chapter reveals that these key factors are not only relevant in the USA.

Conclusion

Partnerships between police practitioners and researchers in the USA do not have a long history, but they have found increasing advocacy over the past two decades. These partnerships have been actively championed by a small and influential cadre of law enforcement executives and the IACP and supported in part through grant funding initiatives. While these factors have no doubt contributed to the growth of these partnerships in the USA, the findings from the national survey presented in this chapter illustrate there is still a way to go for them to become the routine practice of American law enforcement. Such expansion will, in part, depend on exposing those who are not currently engaging in them to their benefits reported here. Those practitioners and researchers who acknowledge and seek these benefits will do well to heed those key factors outlined above that act as barriers or facilitators to successful partnerships.

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