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**PERCEPTION OF TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN  
THE LOCAL FINNISH POLICE**  
African Immigrants' Perception

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# ABSTRACT

Saka Ganiu Olakunle: Perception of Trust and Confidence in the Local Finnish Police: African Immigrants' Perspective  
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The focus of this thesis is to study and analyse African immigrants' perception of trust and confidence in the local Finnish police using a trust and confidence questionnaire that was shared with African immigrants living in Finland. Scholars believe that the importance of building and fostering trust between the local police and minority groups is underemphasised. Thus, this thesis attempts to examine police trust from the perspective of African immigrants living in Finland.

The thesis first delved into the background of what motivated this study so that the reader can understand the context that prompted its initiation. It proceeded with literature on police-minority relationships, volumes of which are from culturally diverse societies in the United States and the United Kingdom. Theories on police-minority relationship were also dissected.

Furthermore, terminologies involving discriminatory practices were examined and analysed to deepen the readers' knowledge of the subtly but important technicalities of these terms, and to provide ancillary details on how they affect police-immigrant relationships. Apart from this, the institutional and administrative structure of the Finnish police was also studied to understand the roles, hierarchies, and responsibilities of the agencies operating under the Police of Finland.

The third part of the thesis considers the concept of trust, the intricacies surrounding trust vis-à-vis police trust measurement, and how trust in the police affects police legitimacy.

The result of the study shows that majority of African minorities trust and have confidence in the operational capability (instrumental capability) of the local Finnish police. However, procedurally, African immigrants perceive the local police to be biased and negatively stereotypical towards them due to race and language barriers. Moreover, half of the respondents believe that their perception of the local police does not affect their willingness to report crimes.

The result shows that there is a nexus between trust, cooperation, and legitimacy. There is a need for the local police to cooperate with immigrant minorities to promote mutual trust relevant to preventing and solving crimes, and for the continued sustenance of social cohesion, public order, safety, and the overall security of the Finnish society.

Keywords: Finnish local police, African immigrants, perception, police-minority relationships, trust and confidence building, legitimacy, racial profiling, bias

The originality of this thesis has been checked using the Turnitin Originality Check service.

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# 1 Introduction

Finland is a Nordic country with a sparse population. Until recently, Finland was – compared to other European countries – homogeneous and ethnocultural (Pitkänen & Kouki, 2002). As one of the Nordic countries, Finland has always enjoyed public confidence and trust. Virta and Taponen (2017) described policing in the Nordic as democratic, stable, and non-militarised.

For many years, the perception of the public about trust and confidence in the local Finnish police has been tremendously positive. For example, the 2020 Police Barometer - a survey conducted by the Government every two years - shows that 91 per cent of respondents trust the police ‘a lot or a fair amount’ (Finnish Government, 2020). The survey report affirms that there is overwhelming Finnish support for the police. The result, however, shows a slight decline in police trust compared to the previous survey carried out in 2018, where 95 per cent of respondents trust the police (Finnish Government, 2020).

Apart from the Finnish Government’s Police Barometer, the Finnish police are reputable for their high standard of efficiency, credibility, and impartiality in different global police reports. For instance, the International Police Science Association (2016) ranks Finland as the second best-performing country in the world out of the 127 countries surveyed. The Index’s ranking relied on capacity, process, legitimacy, and outcomes. Similarly, the Global Police Index (2019), with a yardstick that comprised of efficiency, accountability, and corruption, ranks Finland as the best-performing country among the 135 countries surveyed (Global Police Index, 2019).

However, despite its local overwhelming trust and support and its global acceptance and recognition as one of the bastions of the contemporary societal policing archetype that other states need to emulate, the perception of the local police among immigrants in Finland is yet to be widely studied and analysed. Egharevba and White (2007) believe that studies relating to the relationship between the local police and African immigrants in Finland is in its nascent stage.

Brunson and Miller (2006) pointed out that studies show that people of colour resident in socioeconomically deprived urban communities [in the United States] fall victims to police proactive policing policies and inordinate unjustness and misconduct. Thus, recent studies on police-minority relationship have specifically focused on the interaction between the police and Blacks, exploring Blacks’ experiences and their perceptions of police legitimacy (Brunson & Miller, 2006).

Furthermore, Ellis et al. (2020) and Weitzer (2014) noted in their research focusing respectively on Somali and Hispanics in the United States that there is a general lack of studies on police-new immigrant interactions.

Recent events reported by *Yle News* (a Finnish national broadcasting company) concerning the operational excesses and biases of the local police - particularly those concerning immigrants in Finland – is a compelling reason for evaluating the local police of Finland and their relationship with minority communities in order to test the hypothesis that immigrants in Finland are less trustful and confident of the local police and to understand the impact of police-minority news reportage on African minorities.

Furthermore, rumours and sentiments that the local police in Finland are subtly prejudiced and stereotypical toward immigrants in Finland are rife. There are arguments among immigrants that when you juxtapose how the local police conduct themselves when dealing with a native Finn and an immigrant in similar situations, local police actions differ significantly.

Thus, I developed interest in systematically exploring how African immigrants view the police taking into consideration their individual experiences and how recent accusations of police misconduct against minority groups affect their perception of the police. Understanding this perception may help in suggesting ways in which trust and confidence could be fostered between the local police minority groups in Finland. African immigrants were considered due to their physical characteristics that are unlike ‘Finnish’ and easily identifiable as ‘foreign’ or immigrants.

In addition, understanding the reality and perceptual belief of minority groups – and in this thesis African immigrants - are pivotal to the enactment of the policies that tend to promote trust and cooperation between the police and minority groups in Finland (Tyler & Huo, 2002). Moreover, perceived unbiased interactions between the police and minority groups tend to encourage police operational best practices, strengthen police legitimacy, influence individual social identity, and increase the overall sense of belonging of the larger society (Ellis et al., 2020). In this thesis, the focus is on African immigrants living in Finland.

## 1.1 Thesis Background

In a report by ‘The Stopped – Ethnic Profiling in Finland’ (*Pysäytetyt: Etninen profilointi Suomessa* in Finnish) co-authored by Keskinen, Alemanji, Himanen et al., (2018), 40 per cent of respondents reported being racially profiled or know someone who had been racially profiled in Finland. In the report, approximately 20 per cent of all the respondents experienced being stopped by the local police without discernible cause. The report attracted public interest (both online and offline), particularly among immigrants living in Finland, and was also published by *Yle News* in June 2020 with the headline ‘Research: Finnish police discriminate, racially profile’. Similarly, the Finnish Non-Discrimination Ombudsman confirmed that cases involving racial profiling and discrimination in Finland are often underreported (Yle News, 2020) despite the existence of a strict Non-Discrimination Act. Such admittance suggests that, pragmatically, reporting and proving a case involving discrimination is intricate, bureaucratic, and problematic.

For instance, the National Non-Discrimination and Equality Tribunal of Finland ruled in January 2019 that two Finnish citizens of Tanzania origin were discriminated against and profiled by the Helsinki Police Department (Yle News, 2019). Similarly, a recent survey conducted by The Stopped: Profiling in Finland (*Pysäytetyt: Etninen profilointi Suomessa*) concluded that 40 per cent of respondents reported being racially profiled or know someone who had been racially profiled in Finland (Keskinen et al., 2018).

In another news report by *Yle News* in May of 2021, it was discovered that the Helsinki Police Department had, for years, methodically profiled the Roma community living in the capital city, in an act that some researchers refer to as *Driving while Minority* (DWM) (Crank & Caldero, 2000, p. 3). DWM refers to the ‘stopping of vehicles based on the race or ethnicity of the occupants’ (Crank & Caldero, 2000, p. 3). In a December 2021 follow-up report, the Non-Discrimination Ombudsman concluded that the police are specifically guilty of discrimination against the Roma community in Finland and, therefore, recommended that the police should engage in dialogue rather than racially profile the Roma minority group. The proven case of discrimination against a minority group in Finland is particularly noteworthy because, according to Crank & Caldero (2000), it is problematic to establish and/or prove a case of racial profiling against the police.

In another unfortunate encounter with the local police in 2018, a Ghanaian, resident in Austria at the time, died under controversial circumstances during his detainment by the Helsinki police department for speeding. While a formal investigation into his death by the police authority remains unpublished and classified, the police officers involved in the case were absolved of any wrongdoing that may have led to the victim's death, according to Svenska Yle (the Swedish bureau of Yle [English] News). However, controversies surrounding his death endure, partly due to the non-disclosure of information relating to the victim's death by the police, albeit a blood test confirmed the victim had no drugs or alcohol in his system at the time of death.

Notwithstanding the perceived targeting of immigrants and ethnic minorities by the local police in cases involving ethnic profiling, discrimination or bias, there were also few cases involving the Finnish police and native Finns being reported by the media. For instance, in early September 2020, a district court in Päijät-Häme, Finland, delivered a guilty verdict on a senior police constable for using 'unnecessary and excessive force' during the detainment of a prisoner in handcuff in February 2019. The unidentified prisoner suffered a fracture and bruises and was momentarily unconscious during the incident (Yle, 2020). The video of the incident was posted online by *Yle News*, and it could be seen at 00:04 seconds that the man in question is White, although his identity or nationality cannot be verified.

The local police have also faced several prosecutions and convictions in the past due to misconduct. For instance, in 2018, Kuopio Police officers were prosecuted and convicted for misconduct after injuring a man in their custody by forcing him to the ground. Similarly, an Ostrobothnia Police officer was convicted of assault and official misconduct after an unjustified use of a taser on a man (Yle, 2020). In both cases, however, the identities of the victims were unknown.

Regional bodies like the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) have also raised concerns about the systemic and systematic nature of discrimination in Finland. In 2019, the ECRI concluded in a report that Finland failed to keep a detailed, methodical record of hate speech and hate-inspired violence. The ECRI report also pointed out that despite the increase in discriminatory and bigoted rhetoric in public discussions, prosecutions in Finland regarding these acts have largely been disappointingly low.

Despite the 2019 ECRI report on Finland, some researchers have claimed that hostile policies against immigrants extend beyond Finland's borders. Keskinen, Skaptadóttir & Toivanen (2019) argue that the Nordic and European migration strategies are institutionally interlinked with crime and criminality.

Such a strategic, albeit flawed nexus, have the potential to exacerbate discriminatory and biased behaviours by law enforcement agencies against immigrants in these regions. Similarly, research conducted by Fekete and Weber (2010) & Aas and Bosworth (2013) evinced how minority and immigrant groups (described by the authors as undocumented migrants, asylum seekers, and Roma migrants) are associated with immigration control and crime control measures.

Despite these reported cases of police misconduct in Finland - as this thesis background has shown - it is important to note that these cases are isolated, unusual, and rare. It is also worth noting that police excesses defy boundaries as bodies of literature related to immigrant-police relationships have shown. Biases and misconduct are not limited to specific countries, regions, or cities. They are transnational, contemporary challenges that should be critically, fundamentally, and comprehensively studied and holistically approached from a case-by-case perspective.

However, this thesis explores the view and perception of African immigrants living in Finland regarding the recent incidents and reports of local police misconduct and excesses, and how they affect African immigrants' perception of the local police of Finland. The study aims to promote healthy public debate regarding how minority groups in Finland view the police vis-à-vis the cause-and-effect of trust and confidence perception in policing.

## **1.2 Research Goal and Question**

Considering the elevated level of trust and confidence that the local police enjoy among the Finnish population - as observed in survey results conducted by different local and international agencies and organisations - the goal of this thesis is to study, understand and reflect on the level of trust and confidence of African immigrants regarding the local police of Finland.

The goal of the study is:

- I. To explore and understand the level of trust and confidence enjoyed by the local police among African immigrants living in Finland.

Research Question: What is the perception of African immigrants regarding trust and confidence in the local police of Finland?



### **1.3 The Scope of the Thesis**

The scope of this research is limited to the perception of African immigrants regarding trust and confidence in the local police of Finland. There have been several surveys and barometers published both locally and internationally regarding the elevated level of trust and confidence that the local police of Finland enjoy amongst the public. Numerous studies have also been conducted in Finland to understand the attitudes of Finnish police cadets toward immigrants (Egharevba & White, 2007); Finnish authorities' attitudes toward immigrants and immigration in Finland (Pitkänen & Kouki, 2002); trust in the police and how it affects crime reporting (Kääriäinen and Sirén, 2011); police relations with immigrant minorities in Finland - with emphasis on racism and discrimination (Egharevba & Lauri, 2005), amongst other studies.

A large volume of these research works focused on police perspectives on minority and immigrant groups in Finland. However, recent events regarding the disputatious interactions between the local police and immigrants in Finland call to question the kind of perception that immigrants - and in this thesis - African immigrants have of the local police. Thus, this thesis aims to research and examine the trust and confidence perception of the local police by African immigrants residing in Finland. The questionnaire on the perception of police trust and confidence served as a criterion for measuring the level of African immigrants' trust and confidence in the local Finnish police, assessing police-African immigrants' relationship and benchmarking police performance from the perspective of African immigrants of the police by African immigrants living in Finland.

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used to collect and analyse data in order to understand the experiences and encounters that shaped the views and perceptions of African immigrants living in Finland. Police performance from the perspective of African immigrants was evaluated and categorised based on procedural and instrumental approaches.

Previous works of literature on race and minority groups' relationship with the police are explored. In addition, police ethics, ethical dilemma, procedures for solving ethical challenges, trust concepts and the complexities surrounding police trust measurement, police conduct and its implication on legitimacy were examined to allow the readers to understand existing research and discourse on the topic.

Furthermore, I studied and dissected the administrative and institutional structures and frameworks of the Finnish police to understand the hierarchies, responsibilities and roles of the agencies operating under the police of Finland. The understanding of these hierarchies, responsibilities, and roles of the agencies operating under the Police of Finland will provide the reader with an insight into the governance structure, chain of command and the legal requisites required of the Finnish police to carry out their constitutional responsibilities ethically and professionally.

The Finnish police comprise of five police agencies with different policing mandates (as discussed in subsection 2.2). Out of these five police agencies that form the Police of Finland, this thesis study focused specifically on the local police departments referred to as ‘the local police/local Finnish police’ in this thesis.

Additionally, the recruitment criteria and admission process of the Finnish police were analysed to allow readers to fathom the level of rigour involved in the selection [of the most ethically upright and physically durable of the applicants], recruitment and training of police cadets that are expected to graduate to become police officers in Finland. Moreover, the constitutional responsibility of the Finnish police is also highlighted.

Some scholars have argued that the regulations guiding police recruitment, training and operation are remarkably stringent, globally. They advised that ancillary measures are needed to promote acceptable ethical conduct by the police. Some of these measures are discussed in this study.

Finally, the ‘local police’ refers to the 11 local police departments in Finland that operate publicly and are closest to the public. The ‘Finnish police’, however, refer to the agencies that form the Police of Finland (National Police Board, Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (Supo), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), Police University College, and the local police departments).

The use of the word police or the police encapsulates individuals, groups, agencies, organisations, or institutions representing the police or collection of police.

## 1.4 Previous Studies on Police - Minority Relationships

The works of literature involving police-minority relationships and perceptions are mostly based on case studies; that is, studies are specific to countries, regions, or cities (Ellis et al., 2020). Voluminous studies have been conducted regarding police relationship with minorities: Ellis et al., 2020; Eterno and Barrow, 2020; Tyler & Fagan, 2010; Hasisi, 2008; Smith, Rojek, Petrocelli & Withrow, 2017; Egharevba & White, 2007; Egharevba & Lauri, 2005; Pitkänen and Kouki, 2002; among other works of literature. However, despite researchers' efforts to study and evaluate this strained relationship, arguments abound that little is being done in the research on police interactions with new immigrant categories (Weitzer, 2014; Ellis et al., 2020) despite notions that racially-triggered police excesses are global (Egharevba & White, 2007).

Researchers believe that the relationship between the police and minority groups has long been disdainful (Decker, 1981, Weitzer, 2014). Atak (1999) refers to the phenomenon as a global policing challenge. Goff and Kahn (2012) argue that it is contentious to discuss police assessment vis-à-vis minority community policing.

Studies relating to minority-police relationships have proven Decker (1981) is not incorrect in his assessment. In the United States, for example, Eterno and Barrow (2017) believe that the relationship between the police and minorities can best be described as apathetic, or at least, unstable. Globally, studies have shown that there is mutual suspicion between dominant majority inhabitants who are mostly in control of the police and minority communities who believe they are victims of police systemic bias and racial profiling. Even some of the largest and most outstanding police departments find it problematic to effectively police minority communities (Eterno and Barrow, 2017).

However, the analysis of these intricate, frangible relationships between the police and minority communities is fundamental to the development of an impartial policing system that can operate in collaboration with minority communities (Provine et al., 2016).

Due to conflicts, persecution, and economic downturns in developing economies, new immigrant populations are surging in different parts of the world, particularly in the developed world. In some cases, migrants travel with the desire to seek knowledge. Refugees and economic migrants are, in large numbers, migrating to Western economies for peace, stability and hope for greener pastures, thereby influencing the balance of socio-cultural understandings. The statistical and social relevance of these categories of minorities cannot be overlooked vis-à-vis their interaction and experience with the local police in their chosen destinations.

Police interactions with immigrants can be instrumental in the way and manner immigrants view their new environment: welcoming and friendly or hostile and averse (Ellis et al., 2020). This is because the police are regarded as the most noticeable agency of government and state authority (Alexander, 2010; Goff & Kahn, 2012; Tyler & Huo, 2002; Ellis et al., 2020). Good policing practices can potentially increase confidence in the police while, simultaneously, reducing crime rates (Ellis et al., 2020). Thus, understanding the perception between the police and minority groups, particularly immigrant minorities is a crucial social assignment for researchers (Ellis et al., 2020). Such understanding, especially from minority groups, is pivotal in addressing the challenges of distrust, discord, and ineffectiveness of policing practices in minority communities (Tyler & Huo, 2002; Ellis et al., 2020).

Goff and Kahn (2012) argue that racism and its assessment represent one of the most controversial topics in policing. Egharevba and White (2007) believe that racially-triggered police misconduct – especially against immigrants – is a global issue (Egharevba & White, 2007). However, some researchers believe that racial prejudice in the police is an exception practised by naïve, youthful, and agitated police officers (Bourne, 2001).

In a study of Somali refugees in the United States, Ellis et al., (2010, 565) argued that Black immigrants who are refugees and Muslims face ‘triple jeopardy’ regarding marginalisation due to their race, religion, and immigration condition. Blacks are believed to face racial prejudice from law enforcement as a result of policing practices that are based on decades-long perceptions (Ellis et al., 2020). Moreover, a history of Black subordination by the police especially in America is also a crucial factor in the cantankerous nature of police-minority relationships (Weitzer, 2014) which has, as studies have shown, adversely affected interactions between law enforcement and new immigrants.

In addition, minority groups are believed to be predisposed to stop-and-search operations known as ‘driving while minority’ (DWM) (Crank & Caldero, 2000, p. 3). Minorities are also the most likely to be profiled, stopped, and detained (Tyler & Huo, 2002). Eterno and Barrow (2017) argue that police performance management strategies are centred on aggressively controlling crime rather than focusing on partnering with communities to prevent crimes. Such strategies, Eterno and Barrow (2017) believe, contribute negatively to police-minority interactions. One of these is the palpable suspicion and inherent hesitation that are associated with police-minority relationships in efforts to control rather than prevent crimes due to the perception of police racial bias by minority communities (Tyler & Huo, 2002).

In America, for example, one national study concluded that African-Americans have a higher disproportional probability of being assaulted by the police than other groups: African-Americans are more than three times more likely to suffer police brutality than their White counterparts (Timothy, 2016). Studies have also suggested that individuals of minority groups are susceptible to police and courts’ racially biased judgments (Cole, 1999). In their research, Muhammad (2010) and Tyler & Huo (2002) concluded that minority groups believe that discrimination and bias by the police are state-orchestrated persecution.

Furthermore, the belief by [some American] police officers that Black Americans are more inclined to commit crimes, and, therefore, are more prone to police use of force (Timothy, 2016) alludes to Muhammad’s (2010) and Tyler & Huo’s (2002) claims. Demirkol and Nalla believe that a prejudiced police officer is likely to abuse state authority when dealing with refugees, irregular migrants, or immigrants.

According to Smith et al. (2017), encounters between the police and the public typically arise through traffic or pedestrian stops, arrests, resort to force, and during deployments. However, Ellis et al. (2020) observed in their study of Black Muslim immigrants that racial minorities believe that they are particularly often targeted and unfairly treated by the police, in part due to their skin colour. Studies have also shown that the police are inclined towards conduct that mostly serves the interest of the dominant group, which further highlights why minority members are underrepresented in the police (Hasisi, 2008).

Regression analysis of minority groups conducted by Tyler & Huo (2002) in California concluded that minorities are less trustful of the authorities and more unwilling to disclose their supposed procedural unfairness to legal authorities for consideration. Such distrust, according to Tyler & Huo (2002), encourages the sharing of the perception that the authorities are biased towards minorities compared to Whites (Tyler & Huo, 2002). Smith (1986) and Egharevba (2011) argue that the strong social and cultural affinity that exists among minority groups has the potential to rapidly escalate the negative perception of the police among minority group members even when such incidents can be overlooked by dominant groups.

Eterno and Barrow (2017), however, conclude that contemporary policing strategies and departmental bureaucracies inadvertently elicit unfavourably and, occasionally, racist policing; asserting that police top echelons are partly culpable in the racist conduct of officers in their departments. Eterno and Barrow's (2017) argument suggests that institutional culpability by the police cannot be disentangled from the discourse of police racial bias in minority communities.

Apart from contemporary policing strategies and bureaucracies, Eterno (2003) assert that researchers believe three other factors influence police conduct: the law, police culture, and the immediate community that the police serve.

For the police to enforce the law, discretion plays a critical role (Eterno & Barrow, 2017; Crank & Caldero, 2000). Thus, the police cannot carry out legitimate duties uniformly. Eterno and Barrow (2017) believe that discretion is needed in sieving through police cases based on factors that include public significance, empathy for offenders, compromise for information, etc. Similarly, discretion could also be used as a justification for illegally conducting stops, searches, and arbitrary arrests, particularly in low-income communities (Skolnick, 1966, as cited in Eterno and Barrow, 2017).

Police culture, according to Skolnick (2002, p. 8), is an unwritten code that encourages a sense of 'loyalty' to colleagues, rather than to the law and society (Eterno & Barrow, 2017). To understand the concepts of misconduct in the police, it is equally important to understand the police culture of affinity (Eterno & Barrow, 2017; Westmarland & Rowe, 2018). Police culture may encourage and protect criminal police groups in breaking the criminal law (Skolnick, 2002) under the guise of providing security and safety through abuse of power and what Crank and Caldero (2000, p. 16) refer to as 'noble-cause corruption'.

Several other contentious euphemisms like ‘code of silence’, ‘blue code’, ‘curtain’, ‘cocoon’, ‘curtain’ or ‘blue wall of silence’, ‘testilying’, etc. have been used to describe police culture that allows police officers to commit crimes and complicitly shield their colleagues from being answerable to the law after engaging in unethical behaviour and acts that constitute professional misconduct (Kleinig, 2000, p. 7; Skolnick, 2002, p. 7; Westmarland & Rowe, 2018, p. 854; Eterno & Barrow, 2017, p. 38).

Notwithstanding the negativity surrounding police culture, Skolnick (2002) and Waddington (2013) argue that the sense of loyalty in the police also has positive implications for police officers. For Skolnick (2002), the police’s sense of affinity and fraternity helps in protecting personnel from the dangers of their job. Despite the contention surrounding the existence of a curtain of silence, researchers agree that there is the existence of a global pervasiveness of unwritten rules that tend to promote a general code of silence by the police (Skolnick, 2002; Klockars et al., 2003; Westmarland & Rowe, 2018; Eterno & Barrow, 2017).

In addition, the community in which the police carry out their duties also plays a role in how police officers behave (Eterno & Barrow, 2017). Minority communities are known to harbour crimes due to socio-political, (Hasisi, 2008) and socioeconomic (Riksheim and Chermak, 1993) disparities which are key factors that are responsible for the tense relationship existing between the police and minority communities. These disparities often lead to biased and prejudiced policing of minority groups (Hasisi, 2008). Such bias, Eterno and Barrow (2017) argue, obscures police officers’ discretion, engendering unrestrained and illegal acts in deprived communities as compared to wealthy neighbourhoods.

Furthermore, researchers have documented higher rates of police arrests, imprisonment, misconduct, and excesses; and a corresponding opposition towards the police by minority communities (Hasisi, 2008; Sung 2001; Gau & Brunson, 2015). Brunson and Miller (2006) pointed out that juvenile minority males are the most affected by police misconduct. Notwithstanding, some researchers maintain that racial prejudice in the police is an exception practised by naïve, youthful, and agitated officers (Bourne, 2001). Moreover, police institutions have perpetually denied that they are partial, stereotypical, and biased in their crime assessment, control operations, and enforcement of the law irrespective of the environment (Eterno & Barrow, 2017).

In buttressing the police argument of impartiality, Eterno (2008) and Fyfe, Klinger, and Flavin (1997) opine that it is simplistic to believe or conclude that police actions are disproportionately unlawful in poor neighbourhoods as compared to their wealthy neighbours. Weitzer (2014) suggests that a long and extensive history of Black subjection to the justice system and the police in the United States plays a crucial role in how Blacks - both individually and collectively [as a racial group] - perceive the contemporary law enforcement agencies as a repressive tool of the dominant group.

Hasisi (2008) believes that cultural peculiarities in police-minority relationships are overlooked by researchers while momentous emphasis is placed on the political justification for the tense relationship between police organisations and minority groups. He argues that superfluous focus on political factors serves as a pitfall for understanding police-minority relationships. Further, Hasisi (2008) opines that the dissimilarities in dominant and minority cultures, particularly socio-legal cultures like bigamy, blood revenge, honour killing, child and spouse abuse, etc., may lead to arrests and subsequent unrest in traditional/minority neighbourhoods that view such arrests as legally oppressive and unacceptable.

Brunson and Miller (2006), after reviewing volumes of literature and research works on police-minority relationships, suggest that there is a nexus between race, suspect's mien, and police interaction with minorities in poor neighbourhoods; and that police behaviours in these disadvantaged neighbourhoods contribute to the intricacies surrounding the contrasts in research results.

In Finland, a survey on the attitude of Finnish authorities towards immigration and immigrants shows that a significant number of local police officers consider their experience with immigrants to be negative or neutral, while, in contrast, the majority of social workers had a positive experience with immigrants (Pitkänen & Kouki, 2002). Thus, in comparison with other public authorities, Pitkänen & Kouki's (2002) survey suggests that apart from the factors that previous literature and research works consider as a hindrance to police-minority relationship, exposure, and the nature of works of public authorities also play a crucial role in how immigrants are viewed. Thus, public authorities that interact and socialise more often with immigrants tend to have significantly higher positive experiences than the authorities (for example, the police) whose experiences are mostly dependent on professional grounds (Pitkänen & Kouki, 2002).



Egharevba and White (2007) opine in their study of the Finnish police cadets in Turku that there are palpable strains in the relationship between the police and immigrants due to language barriers, misconceptions, religious affiliations, preconceived beliefs, and misunderstandings. However, Pitkänen & Kouki's (2002) research implies that these factors are merely contributory and not solely responsible for the mutual suspicion that may exist between the police and immigrants in Finland. Moreover, Egharevba (2003 & 2004a) suggests that allegations of discrimination and perceived racial bias by minority groups against the local police in Finland could also be linked with ignorance, stereotype or lack of experience or training in race-related interactions within the local police.

Furthermore, Pitkänen & Kouki (2002) and Egharevba (2011) opine that stereotypes and prejudice are rooted in the beliefs of some Finns that Finland remains an ethnocultural and homogeneous country that is confronted with the challenges of adulteration by other unfamiliar cultures. Hence, the rejection of these cultures and groups which increases the level of prejudice that is experienced by minority groups, particularly African immigrants (Pitkänen & Kouki, 2002). According to Egharevba and White (2007), such prejudices and suspicions may continue to impede unbiased interactions between African immigrants and the local police in Finland. In addition, Pitkänen & Kouki (2002, p. 116) argue that public authorities in Finland are inadequately trained in multicultural interactions, suggesting that there is a need for 'a two-way relationship' between the Finnish culture and other cultures so that Finnish authorities can be cognisant of their cultural practices and, concomitantly, appropriately understand foreign cultures.

On the other hand, Egharevba (2003, 2004a & 2011, p. 3) note that sentiments about police prejudice by African immigrants in Finland may be due to 'perceived knowledge of bias' provoked by immigrants' cultural, racial, and religious background experiences from their country of origin. Moreover, Tyler & Huo (2002) argue that minorities share the perception that the police are biased towards their groups compared to the dominant groups. Despite the mutual suspicions, Jackson & Sunshine (2007) and Lewicki, McAllister & Bies (1998) believe that the promotion of public trust and confidence by police authorities is germane to maintaining social cohesion, order, and moral societal consensus. Additionally, it is believed that minority concerns, however their perception, are pivotal to the development of policies that tend to strengthen cooperation, promote trust, and boost confidence between minority groups and the police (Tyler & Huo, 2002).

### 1.4.1 Police-Minority Relationship Theories

According to Jacobs and O'Brien (1998), the peace and orderliness enjoyed in modern democracies mirror citizens' submission rather than consent [to the law]; that is why sociologists theorise that a society subjected to unbridled coercion would likely fail (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998). In societies where economic and racial inequalities are partially maintained using intimidation, the likelihood of deploying 'enhanced state violence' is rife due to threats posed by disadvantaged communities (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998, p. 839). Thus, political justifications show that police killings are most common in economically deprived communities with a higher population of minorities. This is partly due to their economic insignificance and the threats posed by potential unrest by these disadvantaged minorities to the economy of the dominant class (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998).

Researchers have used different criteria to study minority threat theory vis-à-vis social control. Moreover, a growing body of literature has also shown that several key factors play a role in how the police are deployed and how they interact with communities. There is a connection between an increase in minority populations, particularly Blacks and the perception or fear of crimes by dominant groups (Mullins & Kavish, 2017). Jacobs and O'Brien (1998), in their study of 170 American cities, discovered that factors such as racial bias, and interpersonal violence experienced by the police contribute significantly to the use of deadly force by police. Additionally, their study revealed that black-dominating communities have a higher rate of police killings than other areas. Mullins and Kavish (2017) note that such discovery is unsurprising considering the overwhelming propensity of synonymising racial minorities, particularly African-American and Hispanic teenage males with criminality. However, Jacobs and O'Brien (1998) noted in their study that the incumbency of a black mayor decreases the killings of Blacks by the police as their research suggests.

Other factors that affect economic and racial inequality in maintaining social control include the size of police departments (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998), per capita number (Liska, Lawrence and Benson, 1981) and the influence of economic disparity (Jacobs, 1979), the Black population in relation to police expenditures (Jackson, 1989) and in permitting Americans to carry concealed weapons (Mullins & Kavish, 2017), etc. These respective variables contribute to the empirical complexity of analysing police killings of minorities.

Researchers' experiments on minority threat theories vis-à-vis social control in different stages of police operations, criminal trials, and the use of lethal force imply that detention percentages and policing operations are motivated by dominant groups' inclination to deploy social control over minority groups (Mullins & Kavish, 2017). Furthermore, research has shown that the media also plays a key role in social control (Barak, 1994; Mullins & Kavish, 2017) by using media narrative to excessively portray Blacks, especially teenage Blacks, as perpetrators of major crimes in American cities (Barak, 1994) despite the lack of evidence that real crimes - rather than perceived fear of crimes - are committed in Black-dominated neighbourhoods (Chiricos, Hogan & Gertz, 1997).

In their study of the relationship between racial (Black) composition in neighbourhoods and the fear of crimes, Chiricos et al. (1997), find out that the actual composition of a race [in their study, Blacks] has no effect on the fear of crimes, but the perception of racial composition has a consequential effect on fear of crimes among Whites. However, Chiricos and his fellow researchers (1997) note that perceived minority status in a White neighbourhood have no significant elevation of fear of crimes among Blacks. The study shows that perceived rather than a real composition of a race [Blacks] in a White neighbourhood heightens the level of fear among Whites; while contrarily, the perception of being a minority in a White neighbourhood has no significant increase in fear of crimes among Blacks.

Jacobs and O'Brien (1998) theorise that the police are more inclined to use deadly force in neighbourhoods with a higher composition of minorities and communities that have experienced a recent uptick in Black residents. According to Jacobs and O'Brien (1998), the authorities also believe that an increase in Black [-American] residents translate to an increase in crime rates. In other words, sentiments that composition and an increase in the composition of minorities (Blacks) in White majority areas may lead to an increase in crimes are not solely held by Whites or White-dominated neighbourhoods but are also held by the police; notwithstanding, Jacobs and O'Brien (1998) note that it may be erroneous to assert that dominant groups influence or are directly involved in the increase of police deployment of lethal force against minorities. Irrespective of this, tacit support is given to police deployment of lethal force in underprivileged neighbourhoods through deliberate maintenance of silence by the powerful dominant group (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998). This also legitimises political explanations for police illegality and misconduct.

In another research study to test the hypothesis that race contributes to the punitiveness of offence, Chiricos, Welch and Gertz (2004), found out that race is clearly pronounced in judgement, and is, in fact, a predictor of the seriousness of the criminal penalty. Moreover, conservative Americans, as shown in the study, believe that crimes are predominantly committed by Blacks, thus, racial factors contribute significantly to the punitiveness of offence. Apart from the role of race in crimes' punitiveness, Jacobs and O'Brien (1998) agree that racial and political inclination also impact police use of deadly force: police top echelons are more sensitive and responsive to police use of lethal force if the mayor is a racial minority (Black) due to the political power the mayor wields within his/her jurisdiction concerning police (mis)conduct. Thus, police deployment of lethal force is expected to decrease in cities with Black mayors as a result of the prevailing political interest, comprehensiveness of investigation and probably severe consequence after conviction as compared to the consequence in cities with White mayors (Jacobs & O'Brien, 1998). Jacobs and O'Brien's (1998) assertion that police chiefs are indirectly culpable in the high-handedness and racist conduct of officers in their departments was also shared by Eterno and Barrow (2017) in their conclusion that contemporary policing strategies and departmental bureaucracies supervised by police top echelons inadvertently elicit unfavourably and, occasionally, racist policing.

All in all, minority group threat theories have exposed the nexus between police misconduct, deployment of lethal force, socioeconomic disparity, and the indirect culpability of the influential dominant group in the study of police-minority relationships.

#### **1.4.2 Distrust Between the Police and Minority Communities**

Several studies have shown that the uncooperative, distrustful, suspect, apathetic and estranged relationship between the police and minority groups impedes police efforts in carrying out their legitimate tasks of preventing and controlling crimes (Tyler & Huo, 2002; Ellis et al., 2020; Atak, 1999; Egharevba, 2011). Similarly, such a frangible and volatile relationship discourages minority communities from cooperating with the police in ridding their communities of crime and criminality (Tyler & Huo, 2002; Hasisi, 2008; Egharevba, 2011). Minority communities believe that they are excessively being targeted as crime suspects in contrast to law enforcement's insensitivity and unresponsiveness to their plights as victims of crime (Sung, 2001). Such belief partly contributes to the compounding police-minority relationship as observed in several volumes of literature. Gau and Brunson (2015) add that socioeconomically deprived communities see the police as uninterested and vain in the policing objective of their communities.

Barrow and Jones-Brown (2014) in a study of Brooklyn residents conclude that police deployment of aggression and incessant stopping of youths in Brooklyn resulted in attitudinal disguise of youths in the area; the youths were able to decipher why they are constantly being stopped (dress code, visiting areas considered hotspots, visiting specific individuals, etc.) and subsequently adjusted their lifestyle to detract police officers' attention from the stereotyped factors that lead to suspicion and harassment (Brunson & Miller, 2006).

Similarly, in a research conducted by Gau and Brunson (2015) about how young males are adapting to the perceived bias of city policing, it was observed that youth in cities avoid going out alone due to police harassment and increased level of vulnerability that such outings portend; hence, they adopt the habit of going out in the company of friends and family members to feel secure. However, this behaviour invited more police aggression and illegal stoppage due to police miscalculation of their confidence-boosting strategy for gang membership activity (Gau & Brunson, 2015). Such police impropriety can increase systemic distrust, reduce the perception of trust and confidence, and diminish cooperation and legitimacy despite the belief in police quarters that stops-and-searches are not targeted at minority individuals but a police activity to reduce crimes and prevent criminality (Gau & Brunson, 2015; Eterno & Barrow, 2017).

Furthermore, Gau and Brunson (2015) opine that police procedural failures have the potential to aggravate police-minority discords which could, in turn, result in community violence. In addition, perceived injustice, racial profiling, and discrimination by the police could potentially lead to police-citizen confrontation (Tyler and Wakslak, 2004) which adversely affects police trust and confidence perception among minority communities (Weitzer & Tuch, 2002). In addition, studies have shown that legal cynicism and police disaffection are more widespread among minority communities than among Whites due to police aggressive encounters in minority communities (Ellis et al., 2020; Weitzer & Tuch, 2002).

The harassment of innocent citizens can also lead to apathy in reporting crimes and seeking police help or protection from gangs and criminal elements which counteracts the police's supposed effort of reducing crimes (Eterno & Barrow, 2017). Overall, blanket deployment of unreasonable and undue aggression by the police based on prejudice, economic situation or race of the victim poses significant challenges to the core objective of contemporary policing which is to prevent and reduce crimes.

## 2 Key Terminological Concepts

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the *Police* refer to the individuals that work for an ‘official organisation’ saddled with the responsibility of making ‘people obey the law,’ ‘prevent’ and ‘solve crimes.’ Etymologically, the name ‘police’ originates from the Latin word ‘Politia’ which translates to citizenship (Oxford Dictionary). The name permeated from the Greek to the French police, and from the French police to the English in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century (Lepore, 2020). According to Crank & Caldero (2000, 2), the police are the ‘guardians of the thin blue line between order and disorder’.

The Oxford Dictionary’s definition of the police describes the primary function of the police: compelling people to obey the law, preventing and solving crimes for the good of society as Hobbes (2008) envisioned in 1651.

Globally, the police are regarded as the primary agents of law enforcement. As Den Boer (2018) posited, it is the state that has the monopolistic legitimacy and capability to enforce the law through the police. The police and other law enforcement agencies exist as instrumentalities of states saddled with the responsibility of enforcing the law and preventing a breakdown of law and order (Den Boer, 2018). In many countries - including Finland - the police are responsible for investigating and solving crimes (see subheading 2.2). The police also have the responsibility to maintain cohesion and control (Lewicki, McAllister & Bies, 1998). However, Jacobs and O’Brien (1998) note that excessive control of people leads to policing challenges.

Police powers give the police the right to stop people for divergent reasons: traffic or crime controls; maintenance of order, safety, or security; comparison of suspects’ profiles; arrests, etc. (European Union for Fundamental Rights, 2021; Smith et al., 2017). The European Union for Fundamental Rights (2021), however, believe that police powers can be abused through indiscriminate and disproportionate profiling of individuals based on ethnicity, background, or race. Furthermore, studies have shown that ethnic minorities are specifically targeted and harassed due to their race and ethnicity (Ellis et al., 2020; Hasisi, 2008).

Moreover, a growing body of research has suggested that police powers are subject to abuse globally, particularly in the study of police-minority relationships. For example, Deflem (2016) asserts that police misconduct and brutality are daily occurrences. Egharevba & White (2007) argue that, globally, minority groups are victims of police misconduct and excesses. Atak (1999) claims that such misconduct and excesses happen due to racial bias.

History also shows that police bias and stereotypical attitudes toward minority groups and communities are commonplace occurrences (Atak,1999) despite the belief that the police are the most conspicuous of state authority (Alexander, 2010; Goff & Kahn, 2012; Tyler & Huo, 2002; Ellis et al., 2020). Some researchers believe that it is problematic and scientifically burdensome to define and categorise police biases and excesses as racially motivated (Vaughan, 2019). Hence, such a socially relevant conundrum stymies the narrowing of inequality in society (Goff & Kahn, 2012).

Furthermore, researchers believe that there is an intricate interplay between practices and principles in the police. According to Scarman (in Pike, 1985, foreword by Scarman, p. vii), good policing practice, for example, is a modifier and influencer for police principle, and principle in the police dictates practices.

According to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all forms of discrimination are immoral and illegal, yet several studies have shown that discriminatory practices exist in the police, especially against minorities (Eterno and Barrow, 2017; Ellis et al., 2010; Ellis et al., 2020; Weitzer, 2014; Atak, 1999). Such biases are claimed to be a global occurrence (Atak, 1999).

Defining and categorising discriminatory acts such as biased behaviours, impressions, perceptions, or feelings that allow some sections of society to belittle and denigrate others, based on their categorisation or group are complex and problematic (Brown, 2010; Vaughan, 2019).

Moreover, attempts by researchers and government agencies to study and investigate issues of racial inequalities have principally proved abortive (Goff & Kahn, 2012). In the United Kingdom, for example, academics have been unsuccessful in differentiating between prejudice and discrimination, hence they avoid using the terms (Vaughan, 2019). According to Duckitt (1992), early works of literature about prejudice and racial bias are premised on specific historical and social events which makes it difficult to generally contextualise racial anomalies in the realm of theories and frameworks.

In early studies of racial anomalies, researchers focused on case studies in South Africa and the United States due to the peculiarities of both countries' historical and unpretentious displays of prejudice toward certain groups (Vaughan, 2019). Others have attempted to define and make distinctions among these complex terminologies for the purpose of influencing policy formulation and furthering research arguments (Thomasen, Batros & Youhana, 2016; European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014; Weitzer & Tuch, 2002). In addition to deepening research arguments, studies relating to discrimination and inequality will broaden researchers' understanding of the factors that contribute to social inequality, and in the raising of awareness about the phenomenon in societal and political realms (Keskinen et al. 2018).

### **Racial/Ethnic Profiling**

Ethnic profiling is generally one aspect of discrimination. According to Thomasen, Batros, and Youhana (2016) of the Open Society Justice Initiative, ethnic profiling refers to the use of generalisations, rooted in disallowed justifications, for example, ethnicity, origin, or race by law enforcement, as opposed to specific individual behaviour, conduct, or the use of actual evidence as the rationale for suspicion in taking policing measures. The Ontario Human Rights Commission believe that the reliance of law enforcement on stereotypical elements rather than the use of reasonable suspicion in singling out individuals for further checks or unfair treatment amounts to racial profiling.

George Bush, the former American president, referred to racial profiling as the use of 'race as a factor in conducting stops, searches, and other investigative procedures' (Goff & Kahn, 2012, p. 178). Weitzer and Tuch (2002) assert that race is not just a factor in racial profiling, but a key factor in stopping and interrogating individuals.

The definitions by Thomasen et al. (2016), Bush (2001), and the Ontario Human Rights Commission indicate that racial and stereotypical factors can serve as motivations for identity checks (including but not limited to vehicular inspection), surveillance, stops-and-searches, etc. In addition, Bourne (2001) claims that racial bias manifests in the blatant over-representation of minority groups in street raids conducted by the police in England. Such acts, Bourne (2001) believes, could lead to systemic racism if the judiciary is in constant agreement with the police description of such suspicious arrests.



The Finnish Non-Discrimination Act prohibits all forms of discrimination. However, it is believed that ethnic profiling happens in Finland when the local police carry out immigration control measures or during regular police activities that significantly increase interaction between the local police and immigrants living in Finland (The Stopped [Pysäytetyt], n.d.).

At the regional level, 79 per cent of border guards operating at EU airports claimed that ethnicity is a significant factor in identifying individuals aiming to enter the EU against EU immigration laws (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2014). However, the European Network Against Racism (ENAR, 2016) believes that unjustifiable and disproportionate focus on individuals or groups by security agencies - often due to their ethnic background - increases the possibility of missing criminals and dangerous individuals entering or exiting the EU.

Furthermore, the ENAR 2016 report suggests that ethnic profiling can adversely affect the police trust level of the public, especially among minority groups. Moreover, profiling individuals based on their ethnicity or race can potentially undermine police legitimacy and hinder cooperation between the police and the public (Tankebe, 2013).

## **Racism**

According to Bourne (2001, p. 8), racism was initially believed to be a 'colour problem' while issues relating to the phenomenon were hitherto compared with interpersonal relations. As such, notions of racism were largely discussed under personal psychology or cultural anthropology (Vaughan, 2019). Egharevba (2011) argues that racism has historical roots, and is the most humiliating and distressing form of prejudice that is rooted in innate superiority or inferiority belief by a racial group against another. Bourne (2001) asserts that racism is the entrenchment of discrimination in individualistic views and opinions. Siebers & Dennissen (2015) suggest that such views can be veiled under cultural incompatibility arguments.

Some scholars believe that racism is expressive of 'prejudice plus power,' equating it with xenophobia and personal prejudice (Bourne, 2001, p. 12). Furthermore, researchers believe that aggressive political rhetoric can exacerbate racism and racist attacks on immigrants and minority groups (Eterno & Barrow, 2020; Bourne, 2001).

In Finland, hate crimes are not directly captured by Finnish law (Police of Finland). However, hate-inspired crimes, for example, based on prejudice due to the victim's ethnicity, origin, race, religious beliefs, skin colour, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristics that differ from that of the perpetrator(s) can be charged under the more punitive Criminal Code of Finland.

## **Stereotype**

To stereotype, according to Brown (2010), is to ascribe presumptions from an individual to the category or group s/he belongs to. Allport (1954), Brewer & Campbell (1976), and Brown (2010, p. 70) believe that the exaggerated perceptions (or 'grain of truth') of a group metamorphose into stereotypes. In other words, generalising the perceived persona of an individual to the group or category s/he belongs could be regarded as a stereotype.

Brown (2010, p. 68) propounds three questions concerning to stereotype discourse: *Where do they come from? How do they operate and with what effects? And, how can they be changed?* In the ethnic and national stereotypes studies carried out by Gilbert (1951) and modified by Karlins, Coffman & Walters' (1969), it was observed that stereotypes are dynamic due to varying intersocial conditions and the social disaffirmation of previous information (Brown, 2010).

Thus, negative stereotypes can metamorphose into positive stereotypes while positive stereotypes can become negatives or even have neutral connotations (Brown, 2010).

## **Prejudice**

Prejudice is the display of negative views toward a social group (Duckitt, 1992). Brown (2010) sees prejudice as the unabated advancement of stereotypes. In a more elaborate definition, Esses, Jackson & Armstrong (1998) refer to prejudice as the attitudes that encompass unfavourableness which is directed toward members of a group, notwithstanding the nature of the group.

Unlike stereotypes, prejudice is manifestly negative as the definitions suggest. Bourne (2001) believes that prejudice itself should not be seen as a social concern, but rather the unrestrained display of individual prejudice which forms the basis for discrimination. Gong, Xu & Takeuchi (2017, p. 507) argue that discrimination 'is in the eye of the beholder'. Bourne (2001) notes that prejudice is not tantamount to racism due to the belief that an attitude cannot be equated with an act.

## **Discrimination**

Racism and discrimination are two of the most prominent racial or socio-cultural inferiority-superiority terms. According to Banton (1959), some academics believe avoiding strangers or having the tendency to socially distance oneself from strangers defines discrimination rather than beliefs of superiority or the display of violence. However, Findling et al. (2019) review of early literature suggests that nationality and socioeconomic standing mediate between discrimination and racism. Scholars' assertion implies that discrimination and racism are interlinked by arguments of national and cultural identifications, including the socioeconomic conditions of individuals.

Vaughan (2019) claims that the intricacies involved in accurately defining discrimination in a socially acceptable and applicable manner forced some researchers to avoid using the term. However, despite Vaughan's (2019) claim, Davies (2011) believes that the theory of discrimination is well-developed and detailed.

Generically, Aristotle (350BC, as cited in Davies, 2011) defined discrimination as the treating of like situations in an unlike way, and/or the treating of unlike situations as unlikely. Such behaviour, Aristotle (350BC/2000) claimed, may lead to injustices that are capable of breeding unjust actions. Gong, Xu & Takeuchi (2017) assert that discrimination motivates violent behaviours. Davies (2011) believes that discrimination emphasises like and unlike – the like/unlike characteristics that are based on the relevance of race, colour, sex, language, religion, opinion, origin, property, birth, or other statuses – serving as the ground for justifying treatments which may occur directly or indirectly.

In Finland, the Ministry of Justice through the 'yhdenvertaisuus.fi' or 'equality.fi' provides explicit, real-life conditions, scenarios, and examples that qualify as discrimination against minority groups in Finland. For instance, the Roma, Sami, or immigrant minorities; disabled and sexual minorities; or certain religious adherents are exposed to prejudice and discrimination due to their cultural affiliation. Discriminatory acts may involve facing racial slur, harassment, or racially-motivated public assault.

In addition, individuals can face discrimination in Finland due to their physical condition, sexual orientation, or age (Ministry of Justice). Moreover, discrimination in Finland may involve a lack of employment due to having a foreign name or speaking the Finnish language with an unfamiliar accent (Ministry of Justice). Previous studies in Finland have also suggested that racism and discrimination are responsible for unemployment among minorities in Finland (Forsander, 2001; Wahlbeck, 1999 & Egharevba & Lauri, 2005). Unemployment broadens the gap of social inequality that equality would otherwise shrink. As Davies (2011) pointed out, discrimination abets societal and economic disparity.

In a study, Pitkänen and Kouki (2002) draw a nexus between the nature of work and immigrants' outlook on public service employees in Finland. In the study survey, the police and border guards reported the highest level of negative experiences with immigrants. And consequentially, the police displayed more negative behaviours toward immigrant minorities than other Finnish authority groups surveyed.

## **2.1 Ethics in the Police**

The Free Dictionary defines ethics as a set of moral principles of right conduct. The Oxford Learners Dictionary refers to ethics as the 'moral principles that [...] influence a person's behaviour.' According to Klockars, Kutnjak and Haberfeld (2003), ethics relate to specific professionally-based attitudes that are maintained by different professions.

Due to the police authority's power to restrain individual liberty, there are elevated expectations that the police will maintain and uphold ethical standards by following established internal disciplinary codes and self-regulatory guidelines (Pike, 1985). However, as a result of police discretionary powers, it is discernible that there are hardly clear-cut rules guiding the practicalities of the self-regulatory conduct of the police. As Marshall (2005) enquired, in what manner and to whom should the police be accountable regarding their activities?

Crank and Caldero (2000) admit that it is arduous and problematic to hold the police responsible or accountable for their operational and professional misconduct or unethical behaviour. Westmarland and Rowe (2018, p. 854) believe that the cause of the intricacies surrounding police accountability may be linked to the strong sense of internal solidarity and disinclination of the police to 'snitch' on their colleagues.

Furthermore, the convolution of rules guiding police operations, for example, as enshrined in different criminal and civil statutes and police department guidelines complicates police accountability based on these differing guidelines (Crank & Caldero, 2000).

Undeniably, however, the breaking of the law by the police to accomplish their goal of providing security and safety, and preventing crimes amount to an abuse of power and blatant corruption. Crank and Caldero (2000, p.16) refer to such acts as ‘noble-cause corruption’. Several other contentious names like ‘blue wall’, ‘blue code’, ‘cocoon’ or ‘curtain of silence’ have been given to acts that encourage the police to complicitly shield their colleagues from being answerable to the law after engaging in unethical behaviour and acts that constitute professional misconduct (Skolnick, 2002, p. 7; Westmarland & Rowe, 2018, p. 854). Such complicity - with regards to retrieving information about police misconduct that involve line officers – undermines and renders outsiders [officers and officials who are not members of the department] and managers’ effort during investigations futile (Crank & Caldero, 2000).

In anticipating police excesses, early nineteenth-century utilitarian, Jeremy Bentham, recommended that the law should explicitly define the conditions that may warrant police interventions, noting that such interventions should rely solely on the law as a justification for impinging on the people’s security, property, and honour (Pike, 1985).

Notwithstanding the contention surrounding the existence of a curtain of silence, researchers agree that there is the existence of a global pervasiveness of unwritten rules that tend to promote a general code of silence by the police (Skolnick, 2002; Klockars et al., 2003; Westmarland & Rowe, 2018). However, Waddington (2013) emphasised that the blue code is not entirely about pessimism, arguing that most police officers are committed to discharging their duties responsibly and impartially.

The ethical dimension of trust in the police by the public stems from a general adjudgment and acceptance of the justness and fairness of police actions by the public - police conduct must be generally considered to be ethically acceptable in order to elicit public trust and confidence (Pike, 1985; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). However, when police actions are ethically and criminally questionable, the blue code appears to serve as an impediment to investigation or inquiry into such police excesses, notwithstanding the geography of such occurrences (Skolnick, 2002).

The perceptible code of silence in the police that is seemingly encouraged by the blue code appears to adversely affect public trust and confidence in police institutions. Westmarland & Rowe (2018) argue that empathetic feelings constitute one of the most influential police occupational cultures. Moreover, early police researchers note that the police often supported each other and persistently inform and protect each other from potential threats and dangers (Banton, 1964; Cain, 1973; Skolnick, 1996). In recent literature, Skolnick (2002, p. 8) claims that ‘loyalty’ to fellow officers is one of the key factors in police culture of affinity, irrespective of the enormity of the crime or misconduct of officers.

### **2.1.1 Solving Police Ethical Dilemma**

According to Pike (1985), during Henry II’s reign in England, freemen at the time were mandated to bear arms in what is known as a mutual pledge arrangement that allows for the preservation of peace and the obligatory tracking of criminals through the collective responsibility of all men. Henry II’s security arrangement in England paved the way for King Edward I’s approach to policing as manifested in the Statute of Winchester in 1285. Edward I’s strategy for policing was based on local participation: the sheriffs raise the hue and cry while every man between the ages of 15 and 60 gets ready to use their arms to maintain peace.

Anglo-Saxon England’s approach to security under Henry II and Edward I, as described by Pike (1985), shows that providing security – even in medieval times - is the responsibility of all [men]. That is, communities protect and safeguard themselves on the orders of their leaders. The Anglo-Saxon’s England approach to security which, overall, supported the feudal system and encouraged local responsibility, failed due to corruption, civilisation, and urbanisation (Pike, 1985). Nonetheless, the security strategy’s lessons were noted by subsequent magistrates, justices, writers, and political administrators in England so that adjustments and improvements can be made (Pike 1985).

Jeremy Bentham, a philosopher and one of the early proponents of ethical theory, recognised that police powers can be subject to abuse, thus suggested and proposed that ‘no method of prevention action [safety and security measures] should be employed, which is likely to cause a greater mischief than the offence itself’ (Bentham, 1843 as cited in Pike, 1985, p. 42). Bentham anticipated the formulation of a common law of liberty that will remain legally purified by a free press, a representative Parliament, alongside an impartial, independent judiciary (Pike, 1985).

The fundamentals of the common law, therefore, will remain bound by liberty and justice, whereas liberty is constrained, it should not be disentangled from the law (Pike, 1985). In Bentham's theory, a standard legal approach must exist to counterbalance police powers to prevent abuse of power and promote a justice system that is dependent on the law and scrutinised by the free press. Bentham anticipated a policing system that is transparent and accountable to the people through the provisions of the law.

As the police - like the rest of the public - regrettably do not always comply with the law (Crank & Caldero, 2000), it is incumbent on the other parties that form the justice system (government, judges, lawyers, psychologists) to scrutinise and proffer ideas that will prevent malpractices in the police (Williamson, 1996). Williamson's (1996) focus on the justice system in upholding checks and balances in the police had already been proposed by Bentham in 1843, over a century ago. Morgan & Newburn (1997) emphasised that policing is of enormous significance to society and public policy; thus, policing tasks should not be left to the police alone.

In my opinion, it is also the responsibility of the modern police to rid itself of unprofessional conduct to enhance public trust in police institutions and to promote police legitimacy. Williamson (1996) believes that the focus of the police should be to search for the truth and cumulate facts in a professional, impartial manner.

In the United Kingdom, as a consequent of concerns by the public over police malpractices and unethical conduct, a Royal Commission on Criminal Procedure (RCCP) was inaugurated in 1978 and its report published in 1981 (Pike, 1985). The RCCP aims to scrutinise police duties and suspects' rights during criminal investigations and in the process of prosecuting criminal cases (Williamson, 1996). Proposals by the RCCP emphasise the importance of transparency and accountability in upholding fundamental human rights during criminal investigations and prosecutions.

To check police ethical malpractices and misconduct and to promote accountability and transparency in the arrest and prosecution of suspects, the RCCP proposed that an official custody record should be set up (Williamson, 1996). In addition, suspects should - as a matter of fundamental rights and not privileges - be permitted to seek legal advice without personal financial charges. Moreover, the RCCP recommended that suspects' interviews need to be recorded to corroborate official police reports and confirm whether suspects' confessions were made without undue interference and whether details were accurately documented (Williamson, 1996).

Furthermore, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) of 1984 was enacted. PACE was enacted to regulate police powers and protect the rights of the public (Government Digital Service; Williamson, 1996). Similarly, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) was also established. Both the CPS and PACE began operation in the United Kingdom in 1986. The CPS monitors police operational ethics and guides public interest (Williamson, 1996). As an independent agency, the CPS takes prosecutorial decisions on the concluded criminal cases that have been investigated by the police and other investigative bodies in England and Wales (Crown Prosecution Service).

Despite varying procedural attempts to promote police accountability and protect people's rights by various governments (one of such is the United Kingdom's approach described in previous paragraphs), research (Banton, 1964; Skolnick, 1996; Cain, 1973; Skolnick, 2002; Klockars et al., 2003; Westmarland, 2005; Westmarland & Rowe, 2018) have shown that the curtain of silence remains veiled among police circle.

In a study by Westmarland & Rowe (2018, p. 866) members of the police largely agree that offences involving theft and accepting bribes by police officers are widely regarded within police circles as serious crimes, and would, therefore, be reported; other 'middling' crimes such as driving under the influence of alcohol or the excessive use of force by members of the police were less likely to be reported by colleagues.

From the perspective of scholars and researchers to the conclusions of commissions that have been set up to alleviate police misconduct, their goals are to improve transparency, accountability, and legitimacy of the police by using the law as a guide. Measures recommended by these think tanks are fundamentally akin to what Jeremy Bentham proposed over a century ago. However, practical measures have been proposed and implemented over the years to prevent abuse of power and increase accountability by the police. Some of these measures include the introduction of an official custody register for the registration of information regarding detainees, the right to free legal advice, the recording of suspects' interrogation and taking away prosecutorial powers from the police to prevent prosecutorial bias. However, researchers note that despite these measures, affinity in the police hinders accountability by blockading and sabotaging internal investigations involving members of the police. Researchers coined different names for acts that encourage the police to complicitly shield their colleagues from being answerable to the law after engaging in unethical behaviour and acts that constitute professional misconduct. One of these is the 'curtain of silence' (Skolnick, 2002, p. 7).



Apart from the existence of a curtain of silence based on fraternal loyalty in the police, more research studies need to be conducted to understand the role of race, culture (and subcultures), and group affiliations (left-, right-wing ideologies, etc.) in the study of police culture and misconduct. Additionally, affinity in the police should be further explored to understand how it impacts police operational (mal)practices. Studies in this regard may also help to understand in-depth how police characteristic loyalty is formed and sustained inside police institutions.

### **2.1.2 Other Dimensions to Solving Police Ethical Dilemma**

Apart from enacting laws to guide police operations and the establishment of independent agencies to superintend and decide on the prosecution of cases, Crank and Caldero (2000) believe that other measures need to be taken to promote acceptable ethical conduct by the police. The authors (p. 79-80) argue that ethics-based police education and training infer that the police are not sufficiently ethical; that ethics education and training are inclined toward 'economic corruption and violence against minority groups.' However, Crank and Caldero (2000) assert that police recruits are, most times, remarkably exceptional considering the meticulousness of the police hiring procedure that is designed to segregate ethical from unethical police recruits.

Police recruits, while ethically upright, learn the *rules of thumb* for maintaining amity with their colleagues and in handling regular police challenges (Crank & Caldero, 2000, p. 97). The focus, therefore, should be shifted towards balancing police decision-making in the process of maintaining societal values with good and congruous police ethics (Crank & Caldero, 2000). The authors opine that police education and training place more emphasis on societal value and its maintenance while compromising efficiency due to ethical considerations. This is believed to be a futile, time-wasting, and foolish decision by the police (Crank & Caldero, 2000).

Crank and Caldero (2000) conclude that excessive administrative supervisory policies (for example, different ethical standards, statutes, education, and training) targeted at the police can potentially be austere and alienating. However, Marshall (2005) believes that police prosecutorial powers [aside from the United Kingdom, the police prosecute cases in many countries] present distinct challenges to democratic theories and accountability. Therefore, such uniqueness necessitates balancing police accountability with some measure of independence (Marshall, 2005). For Crank and Caldero (2005), it is counterproductive to place undue supervision on the police yet expect officers to operate freely.

To avoid creating potential dilemmas that threaten police operations due to excessive administrative supervisory policies that are ineffective in maintaining good police ethics, there is a need for consistency and measured balance between police decision-making practices, ethics, independence, and accountability. Crank and Caldero (2000) suggest that ethics training should continue to be thought in police academies and colleges while practical and realistic scenarios should be discussed amongst senior police officers in different departments during training. This is to allow police recruits to be aware of the dynamic nature of police work and the reality that accompanies their operations.

Apart from the mandatory entry-level police ethics training, Crank and Caldero (2000) opine that mid-level training should also be conducted for senior police officers so that they can be able to confront the rapidly changing organisational responsibilities in the police. Moreover, as senior police officers are known to be influential in the socialisation and adaptation of police recruits, eliminating influences that erode the maintenance of ethics from police operational conduct from the top can also have positive impacts on police recruits (Crank & Caldero, 2000).

Overall, Crank and Caldero (2000) believe that police basic ethical standards, statutes, education, or training are insufficient in guaranteeing ethical best practices in the police without the consideration of the importance and dynamism of discretion in police operations. Decision-making practices and police ethics must be in tandem with societal reality and must be consistent, balanced, practical, and adaptable to operational situations. As the volumes of literature works suggest, at inception, police are ethically-upright individuals. However, the complexity and unpredictability of their operations, along with the 'loyalty' (watch-my-back-I watch-yours) that comes with the blue code, it is problematic for the police to always attain ethical best practices. As a consequence, there is the gradual diminution of trust and delegitimisation of the police as the guardians of societal order from disorder.

## **2.2 Description of the Finnish Police: Background and Institutional Framework**

The Finnish police operate under the directorate and guidance of the National Police Board. The National Police Board functions under the Ministry of the Interior, which is also responsible for formulating legislation for the police (Ministry of the Interior). This hierarchical system, however, contrasts with other Nordic countries (Iceland, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden) policing structures where their police carry out their activities under the Ministry of Justice (Egharevba, 2011).

In Finland, five agencies operate under the police: the National Police Board, the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (Supo), the National Bureau of Investigation, the Police University College, and the local police departments, all of which operate under the Ministry of the Interior (Ministry of the Interior).

### **The National Police Board**

The National Police Board oversees the operational conduct of the police. It superintends the planning, developing, and directing of police operations and other police-related activities. Apart from overseeing the affairs of the police, the Board also supervises the activities of various national and local police units and divisions in Finland. It is also in charge of providing equitable access to police services across Finland which is aimed at balancing police ethics with operational fairness.

The National Police Board is headed by the National Police Commissioner. In addition to superintending over police operations, the Board also supervises the Gambling and Firearms Administration, and the Private Security Sector which oversees providing private security services.

### **The Finnish Security and Intelligence Service**

The Finnish Security and Intelligence Service, also known as Supo, operate as a national police unit under the Ministry of the Interior (Ministry of the Interior). Its mission is to prevent terrorism, counter threats and illegal intelligence gathering (also known as espionage) by foreign nation-states, and combat the most significant threats to Finland's national security from within and outside of Finland through intelligence gathering. The Service also works to ensure continuous, seamless government activities and critical social services in Finland notwithstanding the situation. The Finnish Security and Intelligence Service is led by a director.

Supo has nine departments across Finland. One of its major responsibilities involves providing higher-level intelligence aimed at preventing disruptive threats to Finland's national security, in advance. Except for the Defence Ministry, Supo handles security clearance matters relating to facility security, citizenship, and residence permit issuance. Aside from these, Supo's intelligence provision also aids decision-making by political leaders, ministries, and partner authorities. The Service performs its mission from Finland and abroad with a workforce of approximately 522 personnel (as of July 31, 2022). Supo employees include police officers, translators, analysts, and IT experts (Finnish Security and Intelligence Service). The Service also works in conjunction with public authorities like the police, border guard and Finnish customs.

### **The National Bureau of Investigation**

The National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) is another unit of the Finnish national police saddled with carrying out its mission across Finland. The Bureau is headed by a director who reports to the National Police Board. The NBI is responsible for investigating international, sophisticated, serious, and organised crimes that threaten or affect Finland. It is also central to maintaining Finland's international synergy with the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol), the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), and Schengen's Supplementary Information Request at the National Entries (SIRENE).

Furthermore, the Bureau operates Finland's sole forensic laboratory. The laboratory allows different police departments across Finland to conduct forensic investigations and analyses of criminal activities. In addition, the NBI manages the Cybercrime Centre of Finland where national cybercrimes are combated. The NBI functions under the National Police Board (Ministry of the Interior).

### **The Police University College (Polamk)**

The Police University College, also known as Polamk, is the only police college in Finland. The college oversees the selection, recruitment, education, and provision of various levels of training to police officers in Finland. These functions are carried out by the institution's 200-plus workforce, 50 per cent of which are lecturers.

Police training in Finland dates to the early twentieth century. The first police academy in Finland was sited in Helsinki - in the Helsinki Police Department. It was later moved to Suomenlinna Fortress, and then to the National Traffic Police, where it was later transferred to the Police Academy in Espoo. The journey of the College to Tampere began in 1974 as a Police Academy.

The Police University College, Tampere, functions under the National Police Board. The College has the capacity to accommodate over 750 police students within its facilities which span more than 21 hectares of land. Despite being a police college, the college is also recognised as a University of Applied Sciences in Finland.

In addition to providing police education and training to its students, the College also offers policing-related courses to private security operators and security stakeholders. Importantly, all police recruits in Finland must pass through the police college to become serving police officers. Also, the college is responsible for superintending over research and development in the Finnish police (Police University College).

### **The Local Police Departments**

There are 11 local police departments in Finland, with an approximately 7,300 police workforce (as of 2021) (Ministry of the Interior). They are responsible for maintaining public order and providing a safe society for all (Ministry of the Interior). Both the National Police Board and the Local Police Departments (central administration) are headed by the National Police Commissioner (Police of Finland) who is appointed by the Government of Finland (Council of Europe, 2018). However, heads of police departments are appointed by the Ministry of the Interior (Finnish Government, 2020). A proposal to change this arrangement and empower the National Police Board to appoint the heads of police departments is in the Parliament awaiting approval (Finnish Government, 2020).

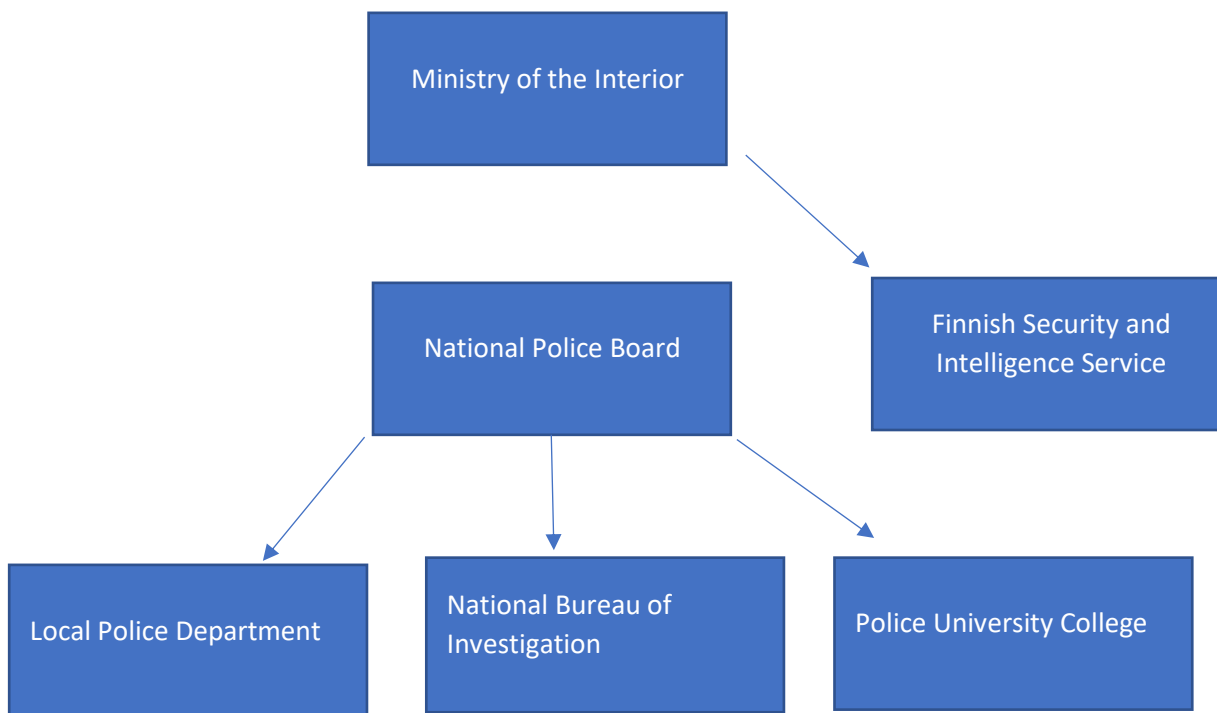
The local police departments in Finland are the closest and most visible to the public. Other police agencies' responsibilities involve administrative work, policy formulation, recruitment and training, investigation, or undercover policing activities that are not apparent or directly relatable to the public's perception of public policing.

The local police departments, the National Bureau of Investigation, and the Police University College all function directly under the National Police Board. The National Police Board acts as the central administrative department for the police in Finland. The Finnish Security and Intelligence Service (Supo) is subordinate only to the Ministry of the Interior and, therefore, reports directly to the Ministry (Ministry of the Interior).

The activities of the local police and their impact on providing security and maintaining societal order can easily be noticed and scrutinised by Finnish society. This is due to their constant visibility, interaction, and closeness to the public. Thus, this thesis will focus on understanding African immigrants’ perception of trust and confidence in the local police of Finland. The degree to which African immigrants trust and have confidence in the local police serves as a benchmark for measuring police performance vis-à-vis African immigrants’ perception.

For clarity, the ‘Finnish police’, as referenced in this thesis, refer to the agencies that form the police of Finland (National Police Board, Finnish Security and Intelligence Service, National Bureau of Investigation, Police University College, and the local police departments). In contrast, the ‘local police’ refers to the 11 local police departments that operate publicly and are closest to the public.

*Figure 1: Finnish Police Administrative Structure*



## **Constitutional Responsibility of the Finnish Police**

The responsibility and constitutional power of the Finnish police are vested in the Police Act of 1966, as subsequently amended: 493/1995, 315/2011, 872/2011 to 1168/2013 (Ministry of the Interior, 2015).

The current Police Act (1168/2013), as amended, contains nine Chapters (each Chapter includes several Sections) which cover police operational responsibilities and guidelines. The Chapters in the Police Act specify the general provisions of the law guiding police actions; general powers; security checks [on police premises]; technical monitoring and rights to information; clandestine intelligence gathering techniques; investigations; non-disclosure obligation and the right to remain silent; damage compensation and fees; and miscellaneous provisions (Ministry of the Interior, 2015).

Chapter 1, Section 1, of the Police Act states that:

*The duty of the police is to secure the rule of law; maintain public order and security; prevent, detect and investigate crimes; and submit cases to prosecutors for consideration of charges.*

The Police Act also emphasises that the Finnish police, as a matter of obligation, synergise with other public authorities, particularly the Finnish Border Guard and the Finnish Customs. The law guiding police cooperation with other security agencies is contained in the Act on Cooperation between the Police, Customs, and the Border Guard [687/2009]. The Act was enacted to maximise efficiency and promote seamless interoperability and inter-agency cooperation among Finland's security agencies.

Apart from the cooperation of security agencies, the Police Act also encourages the Finnish police to collaborate with communities and locals with the objective of maintaining a safe and secure environment for all. Moreover, the Act allows for cooperation between the Finnish police and foreign authorities in order to promote both the internal and external security of Finland.

Other supplementary Acts exist to enhance and complement the Police Act. For example, the Criminal Investigation Act (805/2011) and the Coercive Measures Act (806/2011) supplement the Police Act in the investigation of serious crimes/criminal matters, and the preconditions and scope of implementing coercive measures in the investigation of suspected serious offences (Ministry of the Interior; Ministry of Justice).

## **Finnish Police Requirement Criteria**

Finland's sole Police University College, Tampere, is responsible for the selection, admission, and recruitment of individuals into the police. Despite being a university college, the application and admission process of the police university is distinct from regular higher academic institutions in Finland. Moreover, the Police University College is independent of the joint application process of higher education institutions; hence, programmes are offered only in Finnish and Swedish.

The Police College Act (1164/2013) and Government Decree (282/2014) guide admissions into the Police University College. They also specify eligibility criteria for intending applicants. Based on the government's policy, the National Police Board decides about the number of admissions to be taken into the College each year.

For admission into a Finnish-offered bachelor's programme in Police Services, four slots exist per year. However, the Swedish-offered equivalent is scheduled every one-and-a-half years. In order to be considered for admission, intending applicants to the Police University College must be Finnish citizens with proficiency in either the Finnish or Swedish language. These prerequisites must be met by the end of the application period. Furthermore, applicants must meet a specific level of education standard, acceptable state of health (including drug tests), and be of good conduct (background checks are conducted).

In addition, driving (category B level) and swimming skills are required as parts of the general criteria for evaluation and admission into the Police University College. To ascertain applicants' criminal backgrounds, background checks are carried out on each applicant. The background security checks are conducted by the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service. Further assessment of individual applicants is dependent on the report of the Intelligence Service provided other criteria are met. In other words, the result of the background check determines applicants' admissibility for police jobs.

## **Admission Process into the Police University College**

Application to the Police University College is carried out on the Police University College's website: <https://haku.polamk.fi>. Ongoing application periods can be confirmed before applicants can decide on their applications. To apply, applicants will need to prove and verify their identity (strong authentication is required) before they can proceed to complete their application. Eligible applicants are invited for



entrance examinations and aptitude tests at the Police College. The entrance examination is organised in two stages:

Stage One Involves:

- i. Physical evaluation (Fitness test)
- ii. Written test, and
- iii. Psychological tests

Stage Two involves:

- i. Psychological tests
- ii. Individual and group assignments and,
- iii. Personal interview

After the tests are completed, scores are awarded by examiners to a maximum of 100 points. The Police University College admits applicants based on their total score from both tests - applicants are admitted to the Police Services Bachelor's programme in the order of their performance regarding the final aggregate scores from both the aptitude tests and entrance examinations. Admitted students to the College are electronically and confidentially notified of their admissions.

From the admission criteria and process, information regarding the age limit and the percentage of men-to-women admission was lacking. Moreover, information relating to the comprehensiveness and thoroughness of security screening was also missing. For example, it would be enlightening for potential applicants to know - beforehand - how prior [minor] contravention of the law (for instance, detention without being charged or conviction for minor offences) affects their chances of being admitted into the Police University College.

Furthermore, information or statistics regarding diversity in the local police can potentially encourage immigrant-background prospective applicants to apply to join the police. However, according to Kimmo Himberg, the Police University College Director, the college lacks a record that includes students' ethnic backgrounds.

### 3 Concept of Trust

According to Mellinger (1956), trust is dependent on personal experiences, relationships, exposures, etc. Mellinger (1956) theorised that it is even possible for individuals to misrepresent their views especially when they are being expressed to people they mistrust. Thus, it is important to explore the concept of trust and the theories of trust measurement by scholars in order to understand the intricacies surrounding trust and its measurement, particularly in the study of the African immigrants' trust perception of the police.

The intricacy and specificity involved in determining and measuring trust and confidence are evident in the assertions of scholars in the field of sociology. For example, Baier (1986, p. 235) believes trust is a non-purposive phenomenon; Hardin (2002) opines that trust is based on individual cognition; Markova (2008, p. 7) claims that trust is a 'relational concept'; Lewicki et al. (1998) accentuate the fundamental collaborative capability of trust in a relationship. However, what makes trust performance measurement arduous and challenging can be found in the early postulation of Mellinger (1956).

Mellinger (1956) theorised that an individual may either misrepresent his/her attribute when expressing it to mistrusted individuals or people, or deploy the withdrawal, compliance, and aggression defence reaction typology that was suggested by Horney (1945, as cited in Mellinger, 1956) just to be able to navigate inconvenient situations, avoid confrontations or escalate them. Such an attitude may misrepresent the true reflections of individual thoughts and opinions, making police trust performance measurement difficult to objectively assess.

Furthermore, we trust based on personal relationships and experience (Hardin, 2002), not for reward or favour (Baier, 1986). Thus, individuals' trust distinctiveness and peculiarity subject police trust measurement to invariability (Markova, 2008). In addition, trust underlies successful social cooperation among individuals and groups (Lewicki et al., 1998).

To promote trust and confidence between the police and the public, trust, elements that constitute trust, and the importance of trust, must be comprehensively explored and understood. According to Lewicki et al. (1998), methodical research involving trust and its influence on organisations has been carried out since the 1950s. Early researchers of trust focused on the reposed confidence, intentions, motives and expected capabilities of individuals in a trusting relationship.

More recently, research has shifted to anticipated individual behavioural tendencies capable of reassuring the trustor that the trustee will independently act in the best interest of the trustor (Lewicki et al., 1998).

Deutsch (1958) was among the early researchers of trust with a focus on the aftermath consequences of the expectations that accompany trust. Deutsch (1958) defines *trust* from an individualistic perspective, claiming that the otherwise expected outcome of the trustor's presumption becomes more damaging and detrimental than the positives associated with his/her expectations if they are carried out.

Sheppard (1995) emphasises that the solidity of trust relationships - irrespective of the disciplines or multidisciplinary nature of the groups involved (for example, the police and the public) - remains crucial to maintaining productive cooperation.

Lewicki et al. (1998) opine that trust is understood to be the underpinning factor for societal development and that such opinion is not limited to a specific discipline. The study of trust, why people trust, and how trust affects human social relations is a central study interest for scholars of different disciplines who have attempted to use the understanding of trust to positively influence their area of specialities (Lewicki et al., 1998).

Hardin (2002) considers trust from two perspectives: trust as encapsulated interest and trust as three-part relation. Firstly, when one's (citizenry) interest (notwithstanding how mundane or uninteresting it is) is regarded as serious to the interest of the other party (for example, the police) in a pertinent affair, it shows that my interests are encapsulated in yours. This is what Hardin (2002) refers to as trust as encapsulated interest. In perspective, irrespective of the incongruous nature of my interests to yours, which may, in effect, affect your (in)actions, showing interest in my interests encourages the prolongation of our relationship (Hardin, 2002).

The police need to understand this linear, underlying need and reality of society. It is imperative for the police to display a positive attitude that discourages prejudice and guarantees fairness. It is equally important to maintain communication platforms that both the police and the citizens can use to share information, highlight security challenges, and proffer solutions (Jackson & Bradford, 2010). These, according to Jackson & Bradford (2010) can strengthen and promote trust and confidence-building between the police and the society, regardless of individual or cultural differences.

Secondly, trust is generally believed to be a three-part relationship that is sometimes contextually situated (Hardin, 2002). Baier (1986) and Luhmann (1980, as cited in Hardin 2002, p. 9) simplify and summarise it as 'A trusts B to do X'. However, the context of trust in this relationship varies. In perspective, an individual may confide in someone with a disparaging tattle about others but not with his/her money; or trust someone with your money but not with a disparaging tattle about others (Hardin, 2002). It is almost impossible to trust others completely and unconditionally except for children and some adherents of Faith, albeit their level of trust is contested by scholars as being misappropriated (Hardin, 2002).

In general, trust relationships must fulfil fundamental elements of equitable and clearly defined mutual interest that determine the continuity of such a relationship (Hardin, 2004). The same trust fundamentals apply to police-public relationships. According to Tyler & Huo (2002), Sunshine & Tyler (2003), Jackson & Sunshine (2007), and Jackson & Bradford (2009), the public sees responsible policing as that which is fair, responsive, maintains shared interests, values, and a compelling commitment to the society they police. A key element of a trusting relationship between the police and the public must entail communication (Deutsch, 1958). In trusting the police, the public is dependent on the 'intentions and goodwill' of the police (Markova, 2008, p. 4).

### **3.1 The Intricacies of Police Trust Measurement**

One of the most widely used yardsticks for measuring police performance is the understanding of the level of the public's trust and confidence in the police. To understand the effectiveness of a policing strategy, policy, or practice, the public's perception of trust and confidence in the police is important (Jackson & Bradford, 2010). As succinctly captured by Bok (1978, p. 31), 'whatever matters to human beings, trust is the atmosphere in which it thrives'.

The building of public trust and confidence by the police is germane to maintaining social cohesion, order, and moral consensus (Jackson & Sunshine, 2007; Lewicki, McAllister & Bies, 1998), which invariably affects police operations and institutions. However, how the citizens assess police performance concerning trust and confidence in the police remains burdensome. This is due to the individualistic perception (Hardin, 2002) attached to measuring trust and confidence. Yet, a low-performance measurement of trust and confidence by the public diminishes collaboration and support for the police (Tyler & Huo, 2002; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003b). Hence, the understanding of trust and how it is formed is important in measuring citizens' trust and confidence in the police.

Jackson & Bradford (2010) interrogate three criteria for measuring police performance in the determination of trust and confidence. They ask if effectiveness, procedural fairness, or community engagement is most important. They assert that each criterium is germane in the overall measurement of citizens' trust and confidence in the police. In conclusion, Jackson & Bradford (2010) suggest that, at local levels, localised refinements of these criteria are needed to appropriately capture and utterly understand citizens' views, to be able to encourage public engagement in policing policies and practices that promote trust and confidence between the police and the public.

The level of trust in the police stems from police performance - police actions determine the level of societal trust (Kääriäinen & Sirén, 2011). According to Jackson and Sunshine (2007), thoughts about societal risks and crimes are unsubstantial in determining trust and confidence in the police - the public is more concerned about the erosion of social cohesion triggered by the deterioration of societal values and norms. Warner (2007) also concludes that trust in the police is not a significant precursor for either directly intervening or involving formal authorities in community matters.

Regardless of Jackson & Sunshine's (2007) or Warner's (2007) assertions, Fagan (2010) believes that the police need the cooperation of communities to lower crimes and protect communities. Both the police and communities need to work together to maintain security (Tyler & Fagan, 2010) which can be achieved by building trust and confidence by both parties, to inspire compliance with the law (Jackson & Bradford, 2010).

Kääriäinen & Sirén (2011) approach the public's assessment of the police theoretically. The authors deploy two yardsticks: instrumental and procedural approaches. They argue that citizens trust the police based on twofold suppositions: prompt police intervention/protection in dire situations that threaten their lives and properties (*instrumental approach*); or the maintenance of the principle of fairness and uprightness of the police when dealing with citizens (*procedural approach*). Notwithstanding Kääriäinen & Sirén's, (2011) argument, Jackson & Sunshine (2007) suggest that for the police to enjoy public trust and confidence, police institutions must embed and exemplify good ethical standards (Jackson & Sunshine, 2007).

Pragmatically, crime victim questionnaires are used to analyse the factors that trigger the willingness or unwillingness of victims to report crimes to the police (Kääriäinen and Sirén, 2011). Answers to such questionnaires may reflect the level of trust and confidence citizens have in the police (van Dijk, Manchin, van Kesteren & Hideg, 2007). However, Jackson & Bradford (2010) emphasise the need to modify and clarify crucial survey questions to avoid receiving biased, corrupted, or equivocal opinions or results. Such equivocal results are described by Hardin (2002, p. 10) as 'elliptical claims.' Elliptical claims, according to Hardin (2002) are views or opinions that obscure the intent of respondents' answers to survey questions due to lack of clarity. Phrases such as 'most of the time' and 'most people' are ellipsis that Hardin (2002, p. 10) claims may eclipse the views of respondents' survey answers.

Comparably, Jackson & Bradford's (2010) and Kääriäinen & Sirén's (2011) principles of measuring trust in the police are fundamentally similar - the capableness of the police to prevent crimes, protect citizens, be impartial, respect citizens' constitutional rights, and the engagement of communities in societal security discussions determine the level of the public's trust and confidence in the police. However, the burden of citizens' police assessment yardsticks remains discernible. In mitigating such a burden, Jackson and Bradford (2010) suggest that survey questions relating to trust and confidence perception need to be modified and more comprehensible for respondents to understand.

## 3.2 Police and Legitimacy

Legitimacy, according to Kääriäinen and Sirén (2011), refers to an institution or authority's (such as the police) attribute that allows its people to feel that the activities of such institution or authority are carried out justifiably. Gau and Brunson (2015) see legitimacy as the cleavage between barely possessing the legal power of law enforcement and the privilege of having legal authority and moral authority. However, Crank and Caldero (2000) believe that the justness of actions alone is unreliable. They argue that 'just means' overemphasise administrative and legal relevance while, on the contrary, 'ends' are disregarded or seen as unimportant (Crank & Caldero, 2000, p. 220).

In other words, the 'end' result (or the consequences) of police 'justness' may prove to be more relevant or important than the 'mere' justness of their actions. That is why Marshall (2005) emphasised the distinguishing factor between the law and the constitution in the British context. Irrespective of what the law stipulates in Britain, moral and political considerations are, in practice, contemplated before decisions are made (Marshall, 2005).

Tyler (1990, p. 25) claims that legitimacy involves the public's acceptance of the requisiteness of controlling the appropriateness of their behaviours through the orders of an 'external authority' [the powers vested in the police]. In simple terms, the people significantly influence police legitimacy through their acceptance of police control for the maintenance of societal order. If the people perceive the police to be biased or unjust irrespective of the claim of justness by the police, the legitimacy of the police may be scrutinised and jeopardised. This is also the argument of Crank and Caldero (2000, p. 220) -- that the 'end' result of police actions should not be de-emphasised while the justness of police actions is being promoted.

In defining legitimate security, Virta and Branders (2016) emphasise the importance of openness, transparency, and citizens' participation in societal security, in which the police are an essential component. Furthermore, Treverton et al. (2011) claim that for the police to maintain legitimacy, broader authority, auxiliary support for the implementation of policing strategies, and engaging the public are crucial.

Police legitimacy is based on a two-fold principle: one, people trust the police because they believe that the police will serve and protect them (effectiveness of the police); two, people trust the police because the police act fairly, justly, and ethically responsible (Sunshine & Tyler, 2013). Tankebe (2013, p. 103), however, believes that there is a conflation between the concepts of legitimacy and the cognate concepts of 'trust' and 'obligation to obey the law'. Admittedly, Tankebe (2013) agrees that effectiveness is an integral part of legitimacy, and, as such, police institutions that are aiming to maintain legitimacy must show that effectiveness is a normative requirement in their daily operations.

Moreover, Tankebe (2013) cautions that the legitimacy of power-holders (such as the police) is not solely responsible for why people obey the law and legal authorities and that such conceptual pitfalls must be avoided. As Weber (1978, p. 214) noted, '... people may submit from individual weakness and helplessness because there is no acceptable alternative'. Therefore, the police should not mistake the obligation to obey police institutions and police officers based on a sense of fear or powerlessness, or a pragmatic passive agreement for broad legitimacy (Tankebe, 2013). Such erroneous belief, Tankebe (2013) noted, could further complicate relations between the police and the public, and could potentially lead to intolerable situations.

As scholars and researchers explore the concepts of legitimacy, it is evident that police legitimacy does not exist without the people's consent, acceptance, active participation, or contribution concerning how they are being policed regarding societal behavioural standards regulated by the law. Legitimacy does not singularly focus on the justness of police actions but also on the public's acceptance of the principles of police justness.

Additionally, the concept of 'obligation' is habitually conflated with the notion of legitimacy (Tankebe, 2013, p. 124), whereas legitimacy encourages voluntariness and the willingness of the people to obey the law and respect officers of the law and provide useful and actionable information to the police regarding social order. Obligation, on the other hand, may be due to oppression, trepidation, or collective powerlessness of the people (Tankebe, 2013).



## 4 Methodology

Methodology in research paves the way for the research method that will be used in a research task (Mukherjee, 2020). Methodology simply means the study of methods while *method* analyses the technical aspects of research (Anderson, 2016). Methodology can also be compared to a protocol or approach that frames the tasks to be explored according to specific plans (Mukherjee, 2020). Research methodology provides the grand strategy that involves the processes, principles, procedures, and techniques needed to find a solution to an identified research exercise (Mukherjee, 2020).

Conducting research is to search for new knowledge, apply existing knowledge to new applications, or both (Mukherjee, 2020). The ‘knowledge’ in research indicates the various phenomena dominant in the society, economy, or our environment which when put together forms the ‘perceptual world’ (Mukherjee, 2020, p. 1). Research, according to the Frascati Manual (2015, p. 44) published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) refers to the creative work conducted systematically to increase ‘the stock of knowledge’ of humanity, including culture and society, using the stock knowledge to develop new applications.

Exploring new knowledge is the most significant aspect of research which relies on the processing of different germane and interrelated pieces of data and information acquired through experience, observation, study, or experiment (Mukherjee, 2020). In this study, I attempt to explore knowledge about the perception of trust and confidence in the local police by African immigrants living in Finland.

According to Chandra and Hareendran (2017), several types of research exist depending on the methodology adopted by the researcher. Some of these are:

Pure research

Applied research

Quantitative research (descriptive, and experimental research)

Qualitative research (action, and historic research)

Comparative research

Exploratory research, etc.

However, irrespective of the researcher's adopted research method, in principle [at the minimum], research, according to the Frascati Manual (2015), must fulfil five features. These are novelty (expect new findings), creativity (must be original), uncertainty (without pre-conceived answers), systematic planning (planned and budgeted for), and transferability/reproducibility (the result should meet reproduction standards). Notwithstanding the Frascati Manual research features, Mukherjee (2020) notes that not all conducted research works lead to discoveries or inventions.

In conducting research, defining the research gap is important. The research gap clearly shows the area of concern, a condition that needs improvement, challenges requiring a solution, or a probing question of academic literature, theory, or practices that need to be evaluated and/or comprehensively understood (Bryman, 2007). The study aim is to investigate the perceptual level of trust and confidence that the local police enjoy among African immigrants living in Finland, in addition to the belief that race/stereotype/language barrier plays a role in African immigrants' interaction/encounter/experience with the local police. Moreover, the thesis also explored the impact of police perception on the willingness of respondents to report crimes.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were utilised in the study: the quantitative study was used to collect numerical data relating to African immigrants' level of perception of trust and confidence in the local police. Quantitative analysis also broadens our understanding of minority communities' personal experiences and perspectives 'with insight into their lived experiences and subjectivities' (Brunson & Miller, 2006; Phillips & Bowling 2003, p. 270). Qualitative analysis was considered for analysing respondents' open answers to their personal experiences and interactions with the local police.

Both methods provide an overarching understanding of not just the level of African immigrants' trust and confidence perception of the local police but also the experiences and interactions that shape these perceptions. Such insight has the potential to deepen our understanding, provoke discourses, and shape policy formulation and development in the promotion of trust and confidence between the local police and minority groups in Finland.

To further dissect the study result, Kääriäinen & Sirén's (2011) theoretical approach to police assessment was employed. This is to - in addition to the quantitative and qualitative research methods - deepen the readers' understanding of the influence of perceived fairness and unprejudiced police conduct in the building and promotion of trust and confidence between the police and minority groups.

Moreover, the understanding of these factors could lead to the formulation of policies and strategies that will aid the strengthening of cooperation and further promotion of trust and confidence-building between the police and the public (Jackson & Bradford, 2010). According to Rice (2010), the cooperation of communities (including minority groups) is important in lowering crimes and protecting societies. Furthermore, both the police and the public have a social obligation to work together to prevent crimes, ensure safety, and maintain security (Tyler & Fagan, 2010).

Among the types of research that Chandra and Hareendran (2017) itemised, this thesis work employed quantitative and qualitative methods, using an experimental approach to find out the perception of African immigrants regarding to trust and confidence in the local police in Finland.

## **4.1 Data Collection**

According to Blaikie and Priest (2019), formulating a research design that can satisfy evaluators' expectations and provide beneficial knowledge using acceptable methodological standards is one of the most important exercises of a researcher. In this study, the primary dataset was collected through the formulation of questionnaire questions in order to provide a pragmatic perception of African immigrants living in Finland.

The data analysed in this thesis consists of 30 responses from 16 questions completed by 31 respondents from four African countries: Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, and Morocco. One respondent submitted incomplete information, therefore invalidating one of the returned responses. The data result, although insufficient to make a conclusive analysis, is statistically noteworthy. The questionnaire takes approximately four minutes to complete, with the data collection process taking place between January and April 2022. Respondents were either personally approached in Entresse library in Espoo Centre or sent the links to the questionnaire (for intending participants living outside of Espoo/Uusimaa region) via emails, short message service (SMS) and social media platforms (WhatsApp and Facebook). The majority of the participants have lived in Finland for 3-5 years. The questionnaire was formulated to explore the local police trust level among African immigrants living in Finland, in addition to the experiences that shaped their views.

A closed-ended questionnaire was considered for collecting data: respondents were allowed to choose their answers from multiple-choice options. In some questions, however, participants were allowed to comment on the experiences that shaped their views in order to be able to identify the perceptual factors that are responsible and most common amongst participants.

In the study, respondents' apathy presented a significant challenge to the collection of more questionnaire answers. Out of approximately 120 distributed questionnaires, only one-fourth were returned completed. One explanation for the shortfall is the unwillingness of potential participants to complete what they referred to as a 'sensitive survey topic' that could be 'threatening' to their Finnish residency despite providing assurances that their anonymity and confidentiality are assured as a result of deliberate omission of personal identifiers from the questionnaire.

The provision of incentives, for example, monetary incentives, may have encouraged potential participants to participate and complete the survey. However, providing incentives may be counterproductive to the credibility and reliability of the survey. Moreover, there is a lack of resources to motivate the study group to participate. Thus, I decided to analyse the result of the survey after receiving 30 credible and analysable responses in 3 months of persistent distribution of the questionnaire.

To analyse the findings, tables, figures, and percentages were used. Furthermore, comments and quotes from respondents were qualitatively analysed to understand similarities and variables.

## 4.2 Data Analysis

Data from the study were digitally collected, analysed, and recorded on a personal Google account. Google Forms was used for the formulation of the questions, and distribution was done through personal distribution and the sharing of the questionnaire links with respondents.

From the study result, 56.7% of respondents have interacted, encountered, or had some form of experience with the local police in the past, while 43.3% of respondents are yet to have any form of interaction with the local police. Regarding how recent African immigrants living in Finland have interacted with the police, a slight majority of the respondents interacted with the police within the last twelve months.

*Table 1: Respondents' response to the question regarding how recently they have interacted with or encountered the local police of Finland.*

| <b>How recent is your interaction?</b> | <b>Total number of Respondents</b> | <b>No of respondents that answered the question</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|--|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Less than 6 months                     | 19                                 | 2   | 10.50%            |
| In the last 1 year                     | 19                                 | 6   | 31.60%            |
| 1-2 years ago                          | 19                                 | 2   | 10.50%            |
| More than 2 years ago                  | 19                                 | 5   | 26.30%            |
| I cannot remember                      | 19                                 | 3   | 15.80%            |
| Never                                  | 19                                 | 1   | 5.30%             |

Regarding language proficiency, 20% of respondents speak fluent Finnish, 40% are average Finnish speakers and another 40% neither speak/understand Finnish nor Swedish language. None of the respondents speaks the Swedish language.

In terms of participants' backgrounds, study data show that respondents' nationalities include Nigerians, Ghanaians, Kenyans, and one Moroccan.

Data on the education of respondents suggests that the majority of the respondents are highly educated. This indicates that respondents may be aware of the nuances, roles, and impacts of biases, stereotypes, and prejudices in their day-to-day interactions with the authorities, particularly the local police.

### 4.3 Study Result

The analysis of the survey shows that (1) African immigrants, particularly those who are yet to have an encounter or interaction with the local police (66.7%) trust and have confidence in the police (2) a slight majority of Africans (43.3%) have the perception that the local police are biased towards African minorities in Finland due to race, stereotype, or language barrier. Further evaluation of the thesis survey result using Kääriäinen & Sirén's (2011) instrumental and procedural assessment of the police indicates that both assessment approaches were evident in the result.

According to the survey result, African minorities in Finland trust and have confidence in the operational capability of the local police in preventing and solving crimes. Thus, the local police fulfil the instrumental requirements of Kääriäinen & Sirén's (2011) approach to police assessment.

On the other hand, the result also shows that respondents perceive the local police to be biased and negatively stereotypical towards them, hence representing a negative assessment of procedural trust. This indicates that despite the majority of respondents trust in police competence and capability to prevent and solve crimes, procedural questions regarding police fairness and impartiality during encounters remain prominent.

The result of the thesis is in concordance with Ellis et al. (2020) and Brunson and Miller's (2006) findings. Ellis et al. (2020, p. 348) conclude in their study of Somali Muslims in the United States and Canada that respondents experienced 'unfair treatment' yet believed that policing experiences are positive, albeit to a lesser degree. Similarly, in a study of teenage black men's encounters with the police, Brunson and Miller (2006, p. 623) found out that black teenagers in America are 'somewhat' confident about the capability of the police to prevent, solve crimes and ensure enforcement of the law, but they also maintain that the police use disproportionate power during encounters with individuals within their community.

The analysis of the comments of respondents about their interaction and experience with the local police encompassed both professionalism and impartiality, as well as negativity and unfairness. However, most of the participants believe that the local police acted professionally/ neutrally during interactions.

Similar observations were made by Ellis et al. (2020). Their data indicate that there is a nexus between police attitude and their conduct with immigrants: police prejudice resulted in negative encounters with participants while a display of impartiality led to positive experiences.

## **Respondents' Experiences with the Police**

On the principle of unfair treatment and prejudice: When respondents were asked a follow-up question about the experiences or interactions that shaped their perception of the local police, the most common denominator was 'bad experience' ascribed to their identity or race which inherently, in the minds of the local police, puts the burden of guilt on the respondents, irrespective of the situation. One respondent commented that:

*During [an] accident I have, there [they] were on the side of the Finnish driver. Even [when] it was obviously the fault if [of the] Finnish driver;*

Another respondent claimed that:

*Because of the race, they believe that some of us are criminal or do drugs, which is not so.*

In their experiences, participants associate their unfair treatment by the police with race, prejudice, and negative stereotype. The description above shows that some participants believe that they are deliberately targeted because of negative stereotypical sentiments rather than through reasonable or justifiable suspicion of the police. This finding is compatible with Mullins and Kavish's (2017) and Egharevba's (2018) studies. Police officers associate racial minorities, especially Blacks with criminality (Mullins & Kavish, 2017). In Finland, Egharevba's (2018) study of minority perception of police legitimacy showed that African minorities lived experiences with the local police are more of agitation and suspicion.

The expressed experiences of participants also show a sense of distrust and suspicion in their relationship and interaction with the police which led to their perception of negativity consistent with Tyler and Wakslak's (2004) findings on police profiling and legitimacy. Participants' perception of the local police vis-à-vis their personal experiences suggest that race plays a role in how they are treated by the police.

*I have personally experienced discrimination by the local police;*

*In my presence, a friend was discriminated against by the police;*



The comments of the respondents, albeit inexplicit on the circumstances that led to their conclusions, suggest that the local police lack the principle of neutrality and impartiality required of police officers when dealing with the public. It also explains why the majority of respondents (57.1%) believe that race/language barrier/stereotype played a role in their encounters with the local police. Moreover, the result appears to be consistent with another finding by Egharevba (2006). Egharevba's (2006) research results on the perception of the police in Turku show that some of the respondents have experienced discrimination and racism.

*I have been told stories of police discrimination by my friends;*

*I just do not trust the police;*

*Due to what I read on the news;*

Some of the respondents' comments show that their perceptions are shaped by the experiences or perceptions of others rather than personal interactions with the local police. The sharing of a narrative of police bias and prejudice within minority communities tends to exacerbate suspicion and distrust (Tyler & Huo, 2002). Furthermore, based on the comment of one of the respondents, it can be suggested that news reportage on police-minority relationships in Finland influences immigrants' perceptions.

On the principle of fairness and professionalism: A distinction exists between the unjust and prejudiced treatments that some respondents reported and the professionalism and fairness that others experienced. From the comments, the majority of respondents reported having an impartial and unbiased experience with the local police. Respondents' comments revolve around the calmness and politeness of officers during their encounters. All the participants that reported having unbiased interactions with the police had personal experiences. Thus, they formed their perceptions based on individual experiences rather than from the influence of narratives from friends as compared to participants that formed their negative perceptions of the police based on the narratives and experiences of others.

*They were not biased;*

*Neutral;*

*The interaction was calm.*

*Interactive, educative and politeness;*

*They displayed some level of professionalism and empathy under the circumstance;*

*My interaction with the local police has been fair and just*

Respondents emphasised that their experiences of the police reflect the professionalism and principle of impartiality expected of the police. These participants' experiences appear to have positively influenced the ratings of their encounters with the police (62.1% of participants rate their interactions with the police above the average of five where 10 is the highest maximum value). The positive rating of the police appears to contrast with Egharevba's (2006; 2011) research findings. Egharevba's (2006; 2011) research findings suggest that the African immigrants' perception of the Finnish police is affected by cultural differences and the negative encounters most of them have heard in their country of origin, hence their perception of the Finnish police is more of bias and unfairness.

*to some extent, I want to believe I am safe or rather feel safe if I happen to have an encounter with the local police.*

One respondent believed in the operational capability and impartiality of the police to respond to policing matters. However, despite being optimistic, the participant expressed doubts and uncertainty that such an encounter may exhibit. This shows that participants' perception rather than personal experiences plays a crucial role in how the local police are viewed.

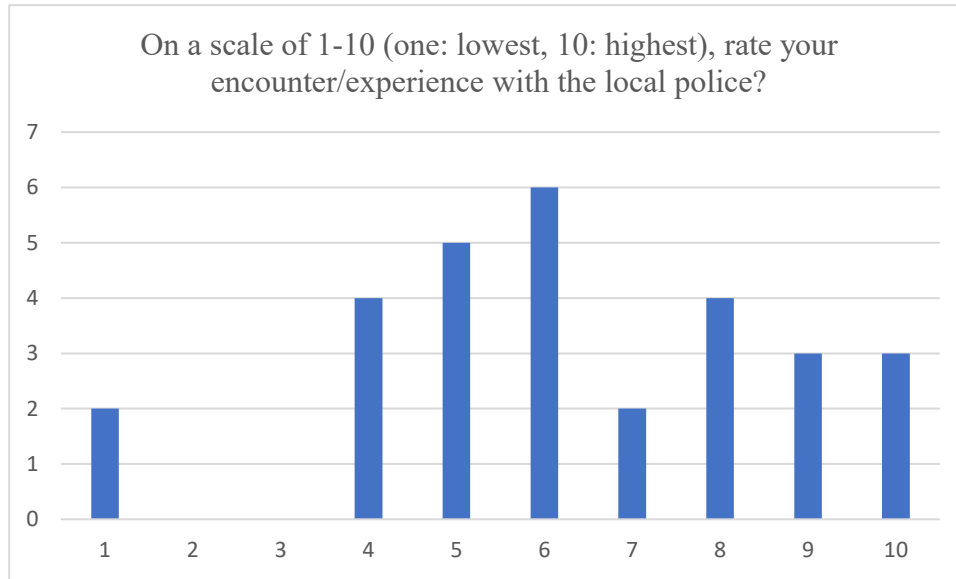
Quantitative analysis of the result shows that 57.1% of participants believe that race, language barrier and stereotype play a role in their interactions with the local police, against 25% who disagree that their background had any influence on their experience with the police. The remaining 16.7% were uncertain about the role their cultural background plays in their interaction with the police. The result also suggests that respondents believe in the capability of the police to respond to their policing emergencies irrespective of their background. The majority of respondents (15 of 30 participants representing 50% of total respondents) agree that their perception of the police does not affect their willingness to report crimes as against 10 or 33.3% of respondents that believed their perception may affect their desire to report crimes to the police. 5 or 16.7% of participants were indeterminate.

Table 2: *Quantitative Analysis of the Survey*

|   | Total Respondents | Percentages |
|---|-------------------|-------------|
| Do you speak/understand either Finnish or Swedish fluently?   |                   |             |
| Yes   | 6                 | 20%         |
| No  | 12                | 40%         |
| Speak but not fluently  | 12                | 40%         |
| Have you had any interaction/encounter/experience with the police in the past?  |                   |             |
| Yes   | 17                | 56.7%       |
| No  | 13                | 43.4%       |
| Do you trust/have confidence in the local police of Finland?  |                   |             |
| Yes   | 16                | 66.7%       |
| No  | 5                 | 20.8%       |
| Prefer not to say   | 3                 | 12.5%       |
| Do you think or share the perception that the local police are biased towards African immigrants in Finland?          |                   |             |
| Yes   | 13                | 43.3%       |
| No  | 10                | 33.3%       |
| Prefer not to say   | 7                 | 23.3%       |
| Do you think race/stereotype/language barrier played a role in your interaction/encounter/experience with the police? |                   |             |
| Yes   | 16                | 57.1%       |
| No  | 7                 | 25%         |
| Maybe   | 5                 | 17.9%       |
| Does your perception of the local Finnish police affect your willingness to report crime?                             |                   |             |
| Yes   | 10                | 33.3%       |
| No  | 15                | 50%         |
| Not Sure  | 5                 | 16.7%       |

When respondents were asked to rate their encounter(s)/experience(s) with the local police on a scale of one to 10, a slight majority (20.7%) of respondents rated the police above average 6. Only six of the 29 respondents believed that the local police performed below their expectations.

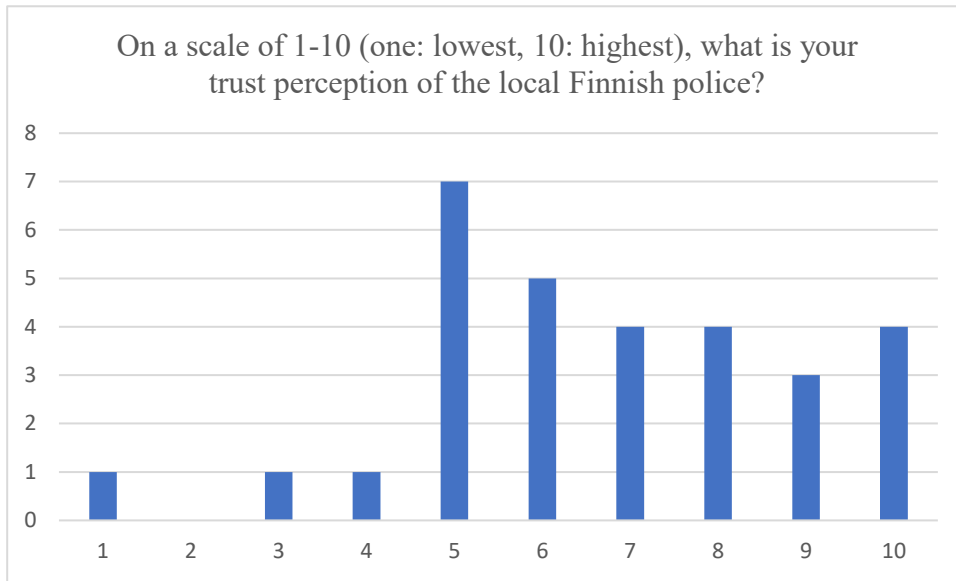
Figure 2: African immigrants' rating of their encounter(s)/experience(s) with the local police.



When respondents were asked a follow-up question about the experiences that motivated their specific rating of the local police, respondents' answers include:

The local police trust perception was also scrutinised on the rating scale by respondents. Respondents were asked to rate their perception of trust in the local police from one to 10. 23.3% of respondents rated the police as average (a scale rating of 5) in terms of their trust in the police. Three respondents, representing 9.9% of the total number of respondents believed that the police are untrustworthy. On the other hand, 27 respondents agree (to varying degrees) that the local police can be trusted.

Figure 3: African immigrants trust perception rating of the local Finnish police



Question regarding the role of race/stereotype/language barrier was also posed to respondents to understand if they believed that these features played a role in their interaction with the local police. From the result, a slight majority, representing 57.1% of respondents thought racial bias (race/stereotype/language barrier, etc.) played a role in their experience with the local police. In contrast, 25% of respondents disagreed that racial elements had anything to do with their interaction with the local police while 17.9% were unsure if elements of their race had anything to do with their experiences with the police.

More importantly, the study intends to understand the influence of African immigrants' perception of the local police on their willingness to report crimes, thus the last question from the questionnaire probed into whether individual perception affects the disposition to report crimes to the authorities. 50% of respondents believed that their perception of the local police does not in any way affect their willingness to report crimes. On the other hand, 33.3% of respondents believed that their perception does affect their willingness to report crimes.

In terms of participants' backgrounds, study data show that respondents' nationalities include Nigerians, Ghanaians, Kenyans, and one Moroccan. From the data received, more than half of the respondents were Nigerians representing 70% of the total number of respondents. Other respondents include Ghanaians (16.6%), Kenyans (6.6%), one Moroccan (3.3%), and one undetermined country of origin.

*Table 3: Nationality distribution of respondents*

| <b>Respondents' nationality</b> | <b>Total number of respondents</b> | <b>No of Respondents that answered the question</b> | <b>Percentage</b> |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Nigerians                       | 30                                 | 21  | 70%               |
| Kenyans                         | 30                                 | 2   | 6.6%              |
| Ghanaians                       | 30                                 | 5   | 16.6%             |
| Moroccan                        | 30                                 | 1   | 3.3%              |
| Undetermined                    | 30                                 | 1   | 3.3%              |

Regarding language proficiency, 20% of respondents speak fluent Finnish, 40% are average Finnish speakers while another 40% neither speak/understand Finnish nor Swedish language. None of the respondents speak Swedish language.

From the study result, it can be deduced that a fair majority (66.7%) of African immigrants living in Finland trust and have confidence in the police despite concerns that the local police are biased towards them. Also interesting is the realisation that – as the study result suggest – notwithstanding their perception of the local police, 50% of respondents do not see their perception as a hindrance to reporting crimes to the local police while a significant percentage (33.3%) of respondents think that their perception will affect their willingness to report crime to the local police.

## 4.4 Validity of the Survey

The survey result largely depends on the sincerity, trustworthiness, and correctness of the respondents' description of their perceptions and experiences that the survey result relied upon. The study questionnaire was created on Google Forms and the link to the questionnaire was shared directly with individuals with African backgrounds. The link was also posted and shared with African immigrant groups on social media platforms (WhatsApp and Facebook) with an annotation that states the objective of the study and the target group.

At first, the questionnaire was formulated to capture, at least, one form of respondents' personal information or identity in the form of emails or other personal identifiers (gender, age, city, etc). However, the understanding and realisation that respondents were cautious and reluctant to complete the questionnaire - due to its perceived sensitive social nature - led to the jettisoning of my 'logic of anticipation' (Blaikie & Priest, 2019; Purpose of the Book section, para. 4).

According to Blaikie and Priest (2019), the logic of anticipation details the planning of how a study or research will be conducted. However, they noted that due to unexpected challenges or new knowledge that are observed as the research progresses, the logic of anticipation can be modified.

Consequently, questions that may potentially lead to the identification of respondents or encourage apathy towards completing the questionnaire were withdrawn. Subsequently, respondents were assured of their privacy and anonymity in order to build mutual trust and allow respondents to express their genuine opinions without fear. As Hardin (2004) posited, trust relationships must fundamentally satisfy defined mutual interest between the trustor and the trustee – and in the case of this thesis survey – the privacy and anonymity of the respondents are important preconditions for completing the questionnaire. These measures, however, may affect the reliability of the survey result.

In addition, the number of respondents in the survey was insufficient to conclusively analyse different trends relating to their experiences and the location and circumstances that led to their encounters with the police. Furthermore, there was limited time for the collection of results (January – April) which was also compounded by apathy on the part of respondents.

To understand the level of respondents' knowledge about human rights, Finnish law, and societal norms, and to circumvent asking direct questions regarding the age and immigration status of respondents, questions relating to the level of education and the number of years that respondents have lived in Finland were asked. Without these measures, respondents, some of whom are personally known were unwilling to complete the questionnaire. Hence, the modification of the questions to encourage potential respondents to consider answering and completing the questionnaire. Despite these efforts, only 30 respondents completed and returned the questionnaire out of over hundred that was expected. The insufficient number of returns may also affect the credibility of the survey result.

Lack of trust by African immigrants when it comes to discussing sensitive social issues, particularly a theme focusing on public authorities' attitudes toward minorities in Finland is another limitation. The observation of the presence of such sentiment necessitated the design of the survey questions in a way that personal identifiers like email addresses or age are not mandated in filling the questionnaire. Notwithstanding these measures and assurances, some African immigrants who promised to fill out the questionnaire failed to do so. Moreover, a lack of sincerity in answering the questions by respondents may also affect the validity of the survey result.

Despite the limpid sense of uneasiness and suspicion that was palpably observed in some respondents after reading the questionnaire title, ironically, many agreed that such a survey is important in the discourse of police-minority relationships. Furthermore, many agreed that such a study will help in raising awareness, deepen our understanding, further debates, and help in influencing policymaking regarding police-minority relationships in Finland.



## 5 Conclusions and Discussion

The objective of the thesis was to understand the perceptual level of trust and confidence of the local police among African immigrants living in Finland. Researchers believe that, in general, police performance can effectively be assessed through the understanding of public trust and confidence in police activities and operations. Hence, the building of trust is a germane strategy for the police to maintain public order, safety, and social cohesion. It is also critical for preventing crimes and promoting cooperation between the police and the citizens, particularly in the relationship between the police and the minority population who views the police with disdain and suspicion (Decker, 1981, Weitzer, 2014).

To maintain trust, the police must be seen to be professional, impartial, unprejudiced and non-partisan. Thus, police performance can be measured through the public's perception of trust and confidence. This thesis study suggests that African immigrants living in Finland trust the police largely based on instrumental considerations, that is, the competency of the police to effectively intervene in security emergency situations involving African immigrants.

Procedurally, the result indicates that African immigrants are less trustful of the local police's impartiality. However, in comparison with previous studies regarding police-minority relationships in Finland (Pitkänen & Kouki, 2002; Egharevba, 2003, 2004a, Egharevba & White, 2007; Keskinen et al., 2018), the study suggests that the perception of trust in the local police has improved in the area of procedural fairness.

The inherent sentiment of police prejudice expressed by African immigrants in this thesis survey was also observed in the regression analysis of minority groups in California. Tyler and Huo (2002) concluded that minorities in California are less trustful of the authorities and, therefore, more unwilling to disclose supposed procedural unfairness with legal authorities for onward consideration. Such belief, according to Tyler and Huo (2002), encourages the sharing of the perception that the authorities are biased toward minorities compared to the dominant group.

Such a tendency was also observed in this study. Some respondents' comments suggest that their perceptions were shaped by the narratives of their friends and the media rather than their interactions with the local police.

The findings in this thesis are also related to the hypotheses of Smith (1986) and Egharevba (2011). Individuals that belong to a closely-knit racial/cultural group influence the perception of others from the group through the narratives of their personal encounters (Smith, 1986; Egharevba, 2011). There is a need for the police in Finland to collaborate with minority groups to promote trust and confidence and reduce the perception of bias that a lack of interaction, media and friends' narratives have elevated.

Notwithstanding the influence of the media and friends, studies also suggest that minority groups' sentiments about police bias and racial prejudice are not unfounded, as individuals of minority groups are susceptible to both the police and courts' racially biased judgments (Cole, 1999). Police employment of minorities is one way of reducing distrust and suspicion. In addition, it will expose the police to cultural differences and relations while restoring trust and confidence in the unprejudiced and impartiality of the authorities. However, as observed in Ellis et al. (2020) findings, ethnic affinity with the police does not necessarily translate to a higher level of trust or confidence in police service.

Most of the participants in this study associated their unfair treatment by the local police with prejudice, bias, and race rather than any reasonable suspicion of crimes. Training on race and multicultural relations should be given priority in the police education curriculum to discourage unprofessionalism and ethical malpractices and encourage the promotion of trust and confidence among minority groups in Finland. Moreover, procedural transparency and accountability should be encouraged to enhance the legitimacy of the police.

Study data on respondents' level of education shows that majority of the respondents are highly educated, suggesting that participants are likely aware of the nuances of bias and prejudice vis-à-vis their interactions with the authorities, particularly the local police.

In the past, there have been allegations of racial profiling against the police by independent and government reports in Finland. One study found that 40% of ethnic/racial minorities in Finland have either been profiled or know someone who had fallen victim to racial profiling (Keskinen et al., 2018). The Finnish Non-Discrimination Ombudsman has also suggested that cases of ethnic profiling of minority groups are underreported.

Despite these reports, the result of this thesis shows that majority of African immigrants in Finland have a high level of trust [perception] in the police. In addition, African immigrants' experiences with the local police have largely been positive. The majority of the participants were satisfied with their

experiences with the police. Improvements in police-minority relationship in Finland, as the study suggests, may be due in part, to improved cultural diversity and renewed police awareness. Furthermore, improvements in economic conditions, as witnessed in the past few years may have also played a role. As Pitkänen & Kouki (2002) noted, a vibrant economy appears to have a connection with increased immigrant tolerance, while, in contrast, a sluggish economy decreases immigrants' acceptance.

Between 2011 and 2021, unemployment in Finland steadily decreased, albeit there are vicissitudes between the years. Largely, there have been increased employment and employment opportunities which may, in part, be responsible for the increased level of tolerance that immigrants have experienced from the Finnish society, including Finnish authorities.

Quantitative data from the study, however limited, shows that almost half of the participants have had no interaction with the police. The infrequent interaction between the police and minorities was also observed in Pitkänen & Kouki (2002) and Egharevba & White's (2007) research findings. This suggests that African immigrants' perceptions of the local police in Finland are largely influenced by background experiences [police attitudes in their country of origin] (Egharevba 2003, 2004a & 2011, p. 3), the media or the experiences of family and friends (Tyler & Huo, 2002). Such an interactive gap may contribute significantly to the mutual suspicion and prejudice that exists between the police and African immigrants (Egharevba & White, 2007).

All in all, the study shows that despite African immigrants' concerns about the procedural justification and fairness of the local Finnish police, African immigrants living in Finland have a positive perception of trust and confidence in the police. The study also shows that media narratives and cultural affinity influence African immigrants' perception of the local police. Furthermore, this study's result on the perceptual level of trust and confidence of African immigrants in the local Finnish police suggests that proposals toward promoting collaborative policing programmes between the police and minority groups in Finland will be positively impactful. The result of the police-minority engagement, dialogue, and cooperation will not only aid in crime prevention and reduction but also help in improving police procedural fairness irrespective of race, colour, sex, language, religion, opinion, origin, or birth, as enshrined in the Constitution of Finland and the Non-Discrimination Act.

## 6 Ideas for Future Research

It will be interesting to study and understand how minority groups' social affinity and interrelationships affect their perception of the police. Is misconduct by the police exaggerated in minority communities due to the biased perceptions of minority groups (beliefs of persecution, systemic discrimination, media influence, etc.) or such perceptions are indeed statistically significant and unjustifiable compared to dominant groups?

One other area of interest is the understanding of how minorities in the police influence the larger minority communities in society. Are they seen as part of the 'biased' system that is, by default, 'against them'; Or are they seen as confidence-boosting, trust-reassuring police minorities capable of reinvigorating their belief in the justness of society and fostering a new sense of belonging in the society?

On the part of the police, what are the role of race, culture (and subcultures), and group affiliations (left-, right-wing ideologies, etc.) in the study of police culture, that is, affinity and loyalty to their colleagues rather than to the society they are meant to serve? I believe that the police culture of affinity needs to be explored to understand their impact on the operational (mal)practices of the police. Further studies in this regard may also help to understand in-depth how police characteristic loyalty is formed and sustained within and outside the police fraternity.

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## Appendix

### African Immigrants' Police Trust and Confidence Perception in Finland

Note: No personal information is collected or stored, and the questions are completely anonymous. Also, feel free to ignore/leave blank the questions you do not want to answer.

1. Where are you originally from?
2. What is your mother tongue?
3. Do you speak either Finnish or Swedish fluently?
4. Which of the two languages?
  - a) Finnish
  - b) Swedish
5. What is your level of education?
  - a) High School Graduate
  - b) Technical School Graduate
  - c) Bachelor's or Master's Degree Holder
  - d) Other qualifications
6. For how long have you been living in Finland?
  - a) Less than 6 months
  - b) 1-2 years
  - c) 3-5 years
  - d) 6-9 years
  - e) Over 10 years
7. Have you had any interaction/encounter/experience with the police in the past?
  - a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) Not Sure
8. If yes, how recent is your interaction/encounter/experience with the police?
  - a) Less than 6 months
  - b) In the last 1 year

- c) 1-2 years
  - d) More than 2 years ago
  - e) I cannot remember
  - f) Never
9. Do you trust/have confidence in the local police of Finland?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) Prefer not to say
10. On a scale of 1-10 (one: lowest, 10: highest), rate your encounter/experience with the local police?
11. What informs your answer?
12. Do you think or share the perception that the local police are biased towards African immigrants in Finland?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) Prefer not to say
13. What informs your answer?
14. Do you think race/stereotype/language barrier played a role in your interaction/encounter/experience with the police?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) Maybe
15. On a scale of 1-10 (one: lowest, 10: highest), what is your trust perception of the local Finnish police?
16. Does your perception of the local Finnish police affect your willingness to report crime?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
  - c) Not sure