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Anti-Police Movement Survey

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Previous Literature Review

The police have recently come under much public watch and criticism due to many highly publicized incidents involving the excessive use of force towards unarmed black individuals. During the difficult conversations regarding law enforcement that have come as a result, there has been a growing movement to punish the police as a whole for these incidents, namely the defund the police movement. This movement calls for taking funds that would normally be distributed to the police and instead reallocating them to different departments, such as social services as an example. The public outrage and backlash directed toward police have led to changes within police departments associated with these incidents involving the excessive use of force and within police departments as a whole throughout the country. These anti-police movements have called into question the role of police in our society and how we as a society should better hold members of the police accountable. The questions, growing distrust, and loss of faith in the police by the public likely has far-reaching impacts on officers. This study will focus on the self-reported impact of the recent anti-police movements on officers' satisfaction, stress, perceived hostility from the public, and ultimately their thoughts on whether the career path they have chosen is still right for them.

The role of the police has been and continues to be a very complex topic. The position of police in a democratic society should hold the priority of protecting innate rights that citizens automatically possess from being a citizen (Nalla, 2009). On top of that, their overarching duty is to maintain law and order within their communities by the order of their government. They must represent this "highly symbolic right" of serving the government and community by ensuring that fundamental rights are enforced while simultaneously carrying out the duties associated with their jobs effectively and correctly (Alain and Baril, 2005). However, police as individuals and

as a whole can often fall short of these lofty ideals. Previous research has found many cops to be characterized as being negative and cynical (Talarico and Swanson, 1982). On top of this, a majority of police have been found to hold views that are considered "conservative, authoritarian, and anomic" (Talarico and Swanson, 1982). Many officers even report having attitudes of disappointment and frustration when entering their job, mainly from the perspective of recruits (Alain and Baril, 2005). This disappointment may yield feelings of powerlessness or ineffectiveness as an officer. On the other hand, there is a consensus about the perception cops have of their own role as an officer in America; their main motivation is to fight delinquency and crime. They also wish to preserve the order of the public (Alain and Baril, 2005).

However, these attitudes and perceptions depend on and vary based off of a plethora of factors, the first of which being race. After establishing the fact that work-related attitudes of law enforcement officials stem from factors being values, personality, and beliefs they carried before entering the criminal justice field, it can be inferred that officers of different races have differing attitudes because of their diverse cultures (Sun, 2003). Furthermore, black individuals already have a heightened chance of being involved with the criminal justice system, specifically with more experiences of discrimination, and therefore black officers are more likely to have an idea of uniformly enforcing the law, rather than selectively (Sun, 2003). This may also be a contributing factor for why black and Latino officers have a better ability to work with people from their community who are angry towards criminal justice officials (Kakar, 2003). Overall, because of different backgrounds and cultures, race is a factor that can affect differences in attitudes of police officers.

Another important influence on officer job attitudes and perceptions is gender. While men and women have both been deemed to handle the duties of police officers equally, there are

differences in how the different genders view their role. Officers who identify as male take a more reactive approach in policing while their female counterparts adopt a more proactive, or interactive, methodology (Kakar, 2002). This means that women officers avoid escalation, solve disputes, and are less likely to arrest (Kakar, 2002). They are also more communicative while on duty.

The level of education, alongside of experience and rank, of police officers may additionally affect their attitudes towards their job roles. While education may not be the most prominent factor, its significance could have serious implications for the criminal justice field. Those with higher levels of education perceive different expectations for their behaviors. They believe in more ethical practices and maintain better attitudes towards the rules they must follow in enforcing the law and have enhanced "flexibility" in doing so (Brooks et al., 1993). Their level of education, however, does not serve as an effect for how cynical they may be, but officers with higher levels of education did have a more positive outlook on the communities they served. Furthermore, experience is an indicator of police attitudes. This holds especially true for attitudes regarding "citizen support, morale, and the belief in the appropriate role" (Brooks et al., 1993). Those with more experience do not believe they are so much as crime fighters, but rather a service provider. They are also found to be less cynical overall (Brooks et al., 1993). Branching off this idea of length of experience, rank has an effect on attitudes as well. Those of higher rank, especially more experienced officers of higher ranks, are less skeptical towards their jobs and the communities (Brooks et al., 1993).

Subsequently, where an officer works regarding their agency and community influences attitudes and perceptions as well. As noted by Sun (2003), departmental views and strategies can change how officers regard their discretion in enforcing the law, and the roles of the department

dictate how an officer carries out their duties. For example, departments can demand their officers to take different approaches, such as a watchman method, entailing an officer to step in solely when necessary, or a legalistic tactic, which is more rigorous (Talarico and Swanson, 1982). These attitudes ultimately have an effect on how they carry out their jobs, such as with more involvement or less involvement, or more or less violence. Moreover, agencies that are more professional have less hostile attitudes (Sun, 2003). In addition to the agency, communities themselves act as a crucial determinant as for police perceptions. If the police believe their communities view them as a legitimate authority and more positively, then they will have a more positive outlook on their job in serving this community. However, if they perceive their communities as hostile, they will "band together" in fighting crime with a more reactive approach (Sun, 2003). On the other hand, if the officers serve communities with members that are similar to them, they will be more sympathetic because they will identify with these community members.

Finally, job satisfaction possesses an important influencing factor in officer attitudes. There exists a positive correlation between job satisfaction and positive perceptions towards their profession (Greene, 1989). These positive attitudes are translated to the job by orienting their attitudes towards cooperation and service-providing. Greene (1989) argues that job satisfaction is key for law enforcement officials to have these positive attitudes that affect their jobs. Job satisfaction is achieved through decreasing stress and increasing the commitment towards policing as an occupation. If this can be demonstrated, then it has great potential to improve the field of policing.

Now that these factors contributing to changes and differences in police attitudes have been accounted for, it is beneficial to look at recent changes in police attitudes towards their jobs

after instances of police brutality and its effect overall. The police are currently very controversial, and this phenomenon has been entitled the "war on cops" (Nix et al., 2018). These officers do believe that de-policing is true and is in fact being implemented as a coping mechanism (Nix et al., 2018). They have a more hesitant attitude towards some of their duties in fear of being the next department or officer under intense public scrutiny and as a result are taking less proactive measures and views on their role. This can be demonstrated by the reduction of arrests in Baltimore after what happened to Ferguson in Missouri. This can be seen after the killing of George Floyd as well; officers have described that they are frustrated with their profession and that specific officers are a "disgrace," "sickening," "disgusting," and "bullies" who turn the job into a "race issue" (Davich, 2020). However, officers detail their duties as protecting those who are unable to protect themselves. They also understand that changes must be made but believe everyone must work together to achieve such a goal and that the whole criminal justice system must be changed, not merely the police.

Police attitudes and perceptions towards their jobs and their definitions of their roles are extremely significant as they can hold major consequences and implications for society. Perceptions hold more importance than opinions towards officers and play a critical role in their social behavior, and police are "extremely sensitive and defensive about public criticism," implying that officers may be more hostile or cynical when they perceive their communities to hold these attitudes towards them (Talarico and Swanson, 1982). Officers who hold a more cynical view are also more likely to use force and to exhibit deviant behavior (Brooks et al., 1993). These attitudes essentially hold great power in crime control policy, or their discretion in enforcing the law. This holds true as well for the change from proactive to reactive policing due to recent scrutiny from police brutality. There is some evidence to suggest that criminals will feel

"emboldened" as the police are being viewed as less and less legitimate (Nix et al., 2018). At this point in time, many are looking for solutions to change policing to make the system more just as well as decreasing the amount of deaths of black individuals. Police may experience burnout, too, as a result of perceptions of them by their communities. This burnout can also lead to aggressive tendencies in their behaviors (Queiros et al., 2013). This means that not only can police perceptions of their job affect their behaviors, but so can those of community members. The attitudes of police officers themselves overall can highlight some issues in addition to suggesting changes to improve this aspect of the criminal justice system.

Overall, in current times of immense public watch and scrutiny of the police, it is important to create a common definition of the duties of an officer. When comparing that to their attitudes and perceptions, some aspects do not line up between the two. Certain factors can serve as major influences on such attitudes, including race, gender, education level, experience, rank, agency, community, and job satisfaction. More recently, though, it is especially crucial to examine aspects of policing that have changed due to instances of brutality. These attitudes and perceptions of law enforcement officials on their job are absolutely vital as they affect how the police carry out their duties, and in times of looking for change, their attitudes are a factor that can be altered in order to render the criminal justice system, in terms of the police, more fair.

Current Study

In the current study, the focus is on the attitudes and perceptions of police officers towards their overall job as well as their role as law enforcement officials. Specifically, these concepts will be examined since the recent anti-police movements and protests in the wake of the events regarding George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. With these events having occurred very recently, little to no literature or past studies have previously examined the effects of these specific movements and protests on police officers themselves and how their perceptions may have been impacted towards their job. This research is concerned with determining how police officers from both state and county law enforcement agencies in the Midwest view and define their job roles and how their definitions of their positions may have changed since the recent public scrutiny and criticism of policing. This study will therefore examine the consequences of these movements on police officers through the use of a survey in terms of officer satisfaction, stress, perceived hostility from the public, and if they have thought about leaving their jobs. Its significance lies in its ability to gain the insight of the officers to understand their perspectives and to possibly make changes in policing in the upcoming future.

Research Questions

The overarching inquiry in this research is the consequences of the recent anti-police movements and protests on police officers. This includes, more specifically, the impact of these movements and protests on how police officers not only view their jobs, but also how it affects them during their work. Important aspects to examine in particular in terms of this are satisfaction, stress, hostility faced on the job, and ultimately if this leads them to want to leave

their jobs. Each of these concepts is associated with other variables that could have an influencing role, which will be discussed below.

Based on recent events, the satisfaction of law enforcement agency officials may have been impacted. Different departments have different rules and attitudes towards policing overall, as pointed out by Sun (2003), therefore the location and/or jurisdiction of different departments may have impacted officers' reactions to these anti-police movements, which could have affected their satisfaction. Officers are also more satisfied with their jobs when they have positive perceptions towards their professions (Greene, 1989). Officers at separate agencies may have different perceptions due to these anti-police movements and protests. Furthermore, satisfaction may have changed from the protests and movements, which may have impacted those with different amounts of years of experience or ranks.

The stress levels of the officers also might have been influenced by the recent movements and protests. Different departments once again may have an effect on this as well because they each have different ideas of how to carry out the job of a police officer, and this could further increase their stress (Brooks et al., 1993). Rank and experience can also influence how the officers experience the stress that has resulted from these recent protests and movements. Those with more experience and higher ranks see themselves as service providers and are less critical towards their position (Brooks et al, 1993). It can therefore be predicted that officers with higher experience and ranks may perceive themselves to not be as stressed than less experienced officers or those with a lower rank.

Another consequence of the anti-police movements and protests is that communities may be more hostile towards their law enforcement agency officials. How the officers perceive and respond to this hostility may be affected by their communities. Communities that are similar to

the officers will make the officers feel more sympathy towards them and therefore perceive less hostility (Sun, 2003). Because the law enforcement agencies in this study are in different locations, the department at which the officers are located may have an impact on how hostility is perceived. The number of years of experience can also play a role in responses to hostility. Experience on the job affects their attitudes on "citizen support and morale" (Brooks et al., 1993), with those with more experience associated with a more positive outlook on their communities and citizen support.

Whether an officer wants to leave their job or not would be influenced by all these variables combined. Their satisfaction, stress levels, and perceptions on hostility can all drive officers to wish to quit their jobs all together. If an officer has a change in their satisfaction, they may not want to continue with their job. Additionally, if they are too stressed at work, they may decide that it is not worth staying with their department or as an officer as a whole. Police have been found to be particularly sensitive to criticisms from the public according to Talarico and Swanson (1982), so that explains why perceived hostility can be another factor leading an officer to potentially wish to leave their job.

Data

These research questions will be tested by utilizing data collected from the Anti-Police Movement Survey. The Anti-Police Movement Survey consisted of an online, anonymous questionnaire on Qualtrics answered by police officers. It included questions that were both open- and close-ended regarding their thoughts, perceptions, and attitudes about the anti-police movements and protests and, more importantly, how it impacted their attitudes and opinions towards their jobs. Both state and county law enforcement agencies participated, and 105 of their officers responded in total.

Measures

Outcome Variables

Each of the variables of satisfaction, stress, hostility, and leaving their jobs will be measured in this survey through questions associated with them. For satisfaction, these questions include: "How satisfied are you with your job?" with response choices being "Not satisfied," "Slightly satisfied," "Moderately satisfied," and "Very satisfied," and "Do you feel that the recent protests and the anti-police movements have affected your satisfaction with your job?" with answer options being "Yes" or "No." Another question additionally inquires about their attitudes before the anti-police movement protests versus afterwards. As for stress, this survey asks about their current stress levels, with response options being "Not stressed at all," "Slightly stressed," "Moderately stressed," and "Very stressed." Respondents are also asked if they felt as if their stress has increased specifically due to these anti-police movements and protests. In terms of hostility, a question that will measure this is "Have you felt more tension or hostility from your community since the recent protests and anti-police movements?" and are also prompted to

provide specific examples that cause them to feel one way or the other. Finally, law enforcement officials are asked if they have thoughts about leaving their jobs due to the recent movements and protests.

Predictor Variables

Each of these variables will be examined by comparing them to the responses provided for the questions, asking about their rank, what agency for which they work, as well as how many years they have worked as a police officer. As for rank, respondents were asked the question "Which category best entails your position?" with response choices being "Deputy/Officer," "Sergeant," "Lieutenant," "Captain," and "Other (higher than listed)." However, the last three options were combined during the process of coding as there were too few respondents in each of those categories to obtain a representative sample. The question asking about the agency was "Which of the following law enforcement agencies do you currently work for?" with response options including the choice of either county or state law enforcement agencies. As for years of experience, the question "How many years have you worked as a police officer?" was asked, with options including "0-5," "6-11," "12-17," "18-24," "25-31," and "More than 31." By creating these subgroup analyses, the research questions can be tested to see if these characteristics have an impact on the variables. Table 1, below, describes the results of these questions.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics		(N=105)
Variable	Mean or N	%
Gender		
Male	85	80.95%
Female	19	18.10%
Other	1	00.95%
Race		
White	93	88.57%

	Black/African American	3	2.86%
	Asian	2	1.90%
	Hispanic/Latino	1	00.95%
	A combination of 1+ races	1	00.95%
	Other	5	4.76%
Position			
	Deputy/Officer	57	54.29%
	Sergeant	36	34.29%
	Lieutenant or higher	12	11.43%
Years Worked			
	0-5	21	20.00%
	6-11	20	19.05%
	12-17	9	8.57%
	18-24	33	31.43%
	25-31	11	10.48%
	More than 31	11	10.48%
Agency			
	County Law	47	45.19%
	State Law	57	54.81%

Graphs from the results from each of the questions inquired will additionally be provided below.

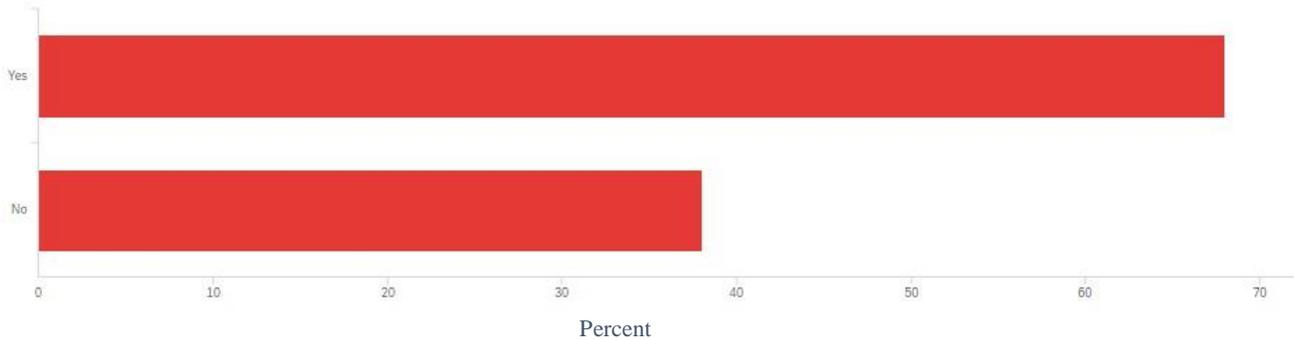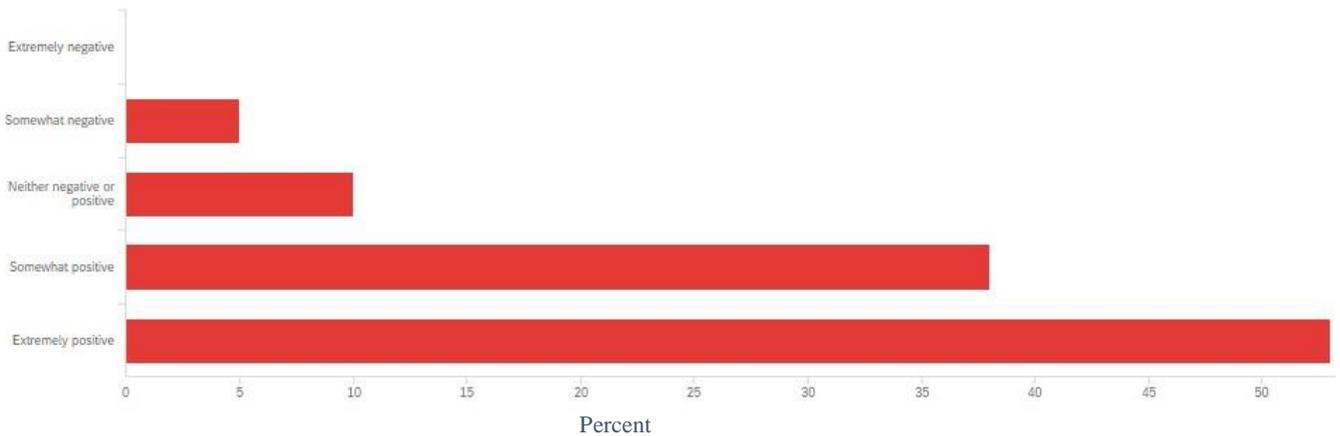*Satisfaction*

How Satisfied are you with your job?
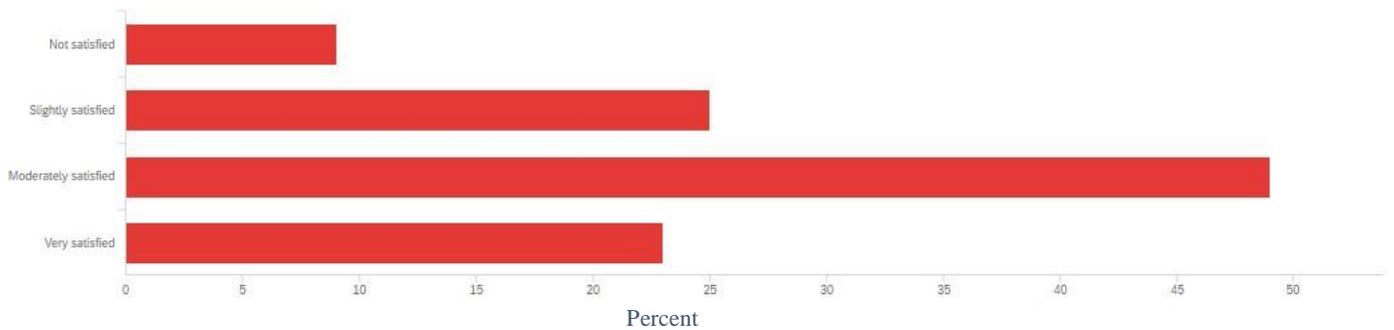
Do you feel as if the recent protests and the anti-police movements have affected your satisfaction with your job?
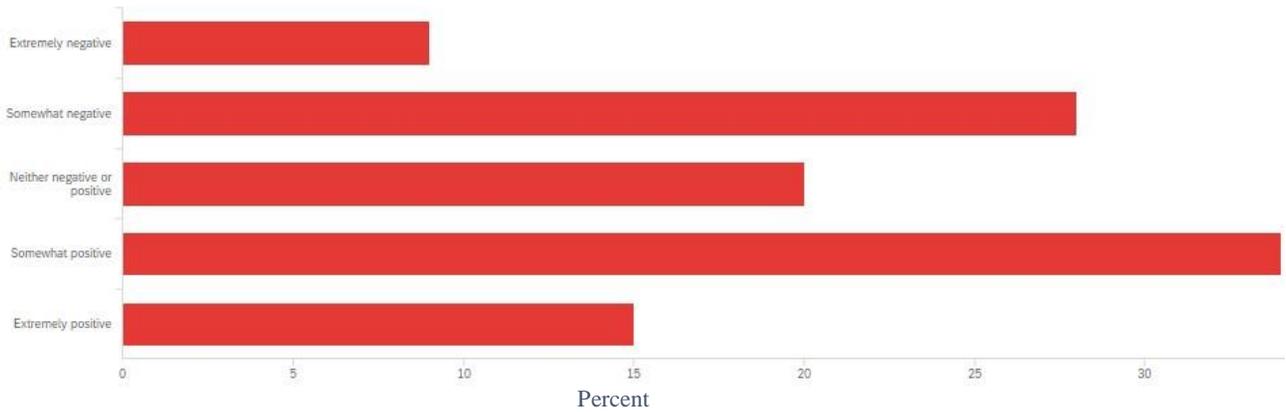

Which of the following best describes your attitude towards your job **before** the recent protests and anti-police movements began (prior to 2020)?

Which of the following describes your attitude towards your job **after** the recent protests and anti-police movements began (since June of 2020)?

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Stress

How would you define your current stress levels at work?
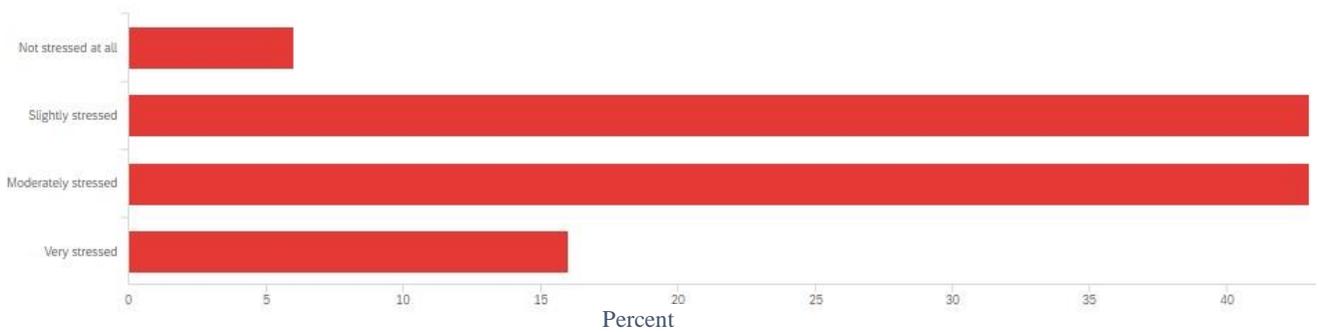
Do you feel that your stress levels have increased at work in wake of recent protests relating to police misuse of force and racial inequality (Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, Jacob Blake, etc.) or the growing anti-police/defund the police movements?

Thoughts about leaving job

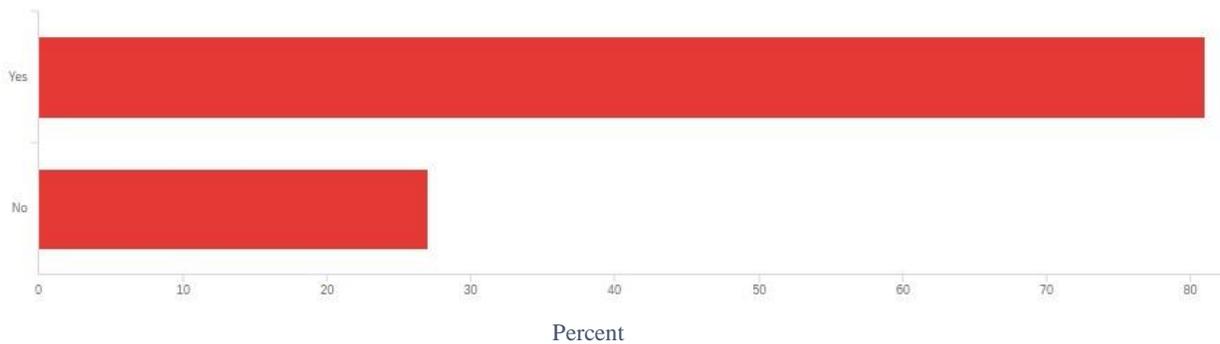Have you thought about leaving your job due to these protests and anti-police movements?
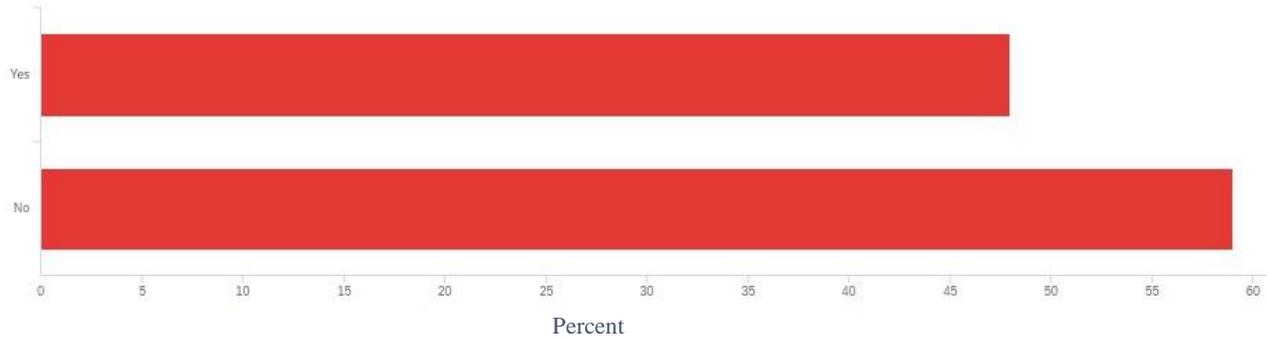
Perceived hostility

Have you felt more tension or hostility from your community since the recent protests and anti-police movements?
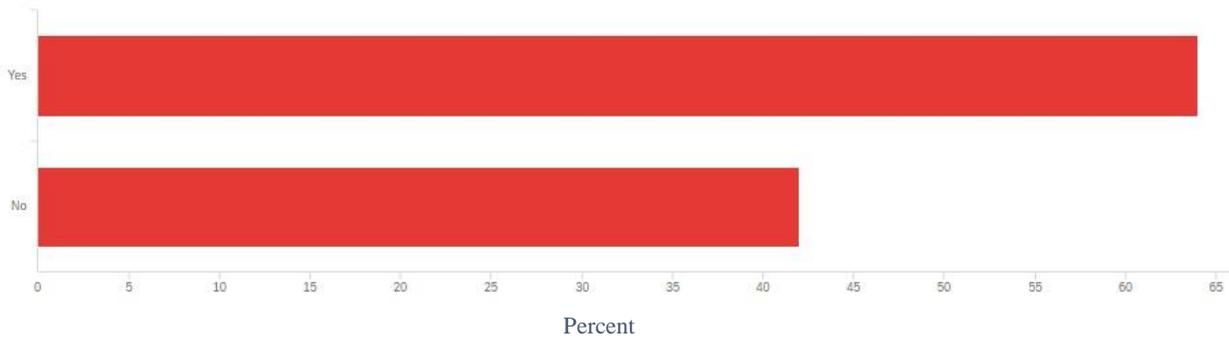
Training

Has your department implemented any new training or policies related to de-escalation or use of force since the recent protests and anti-police movements?
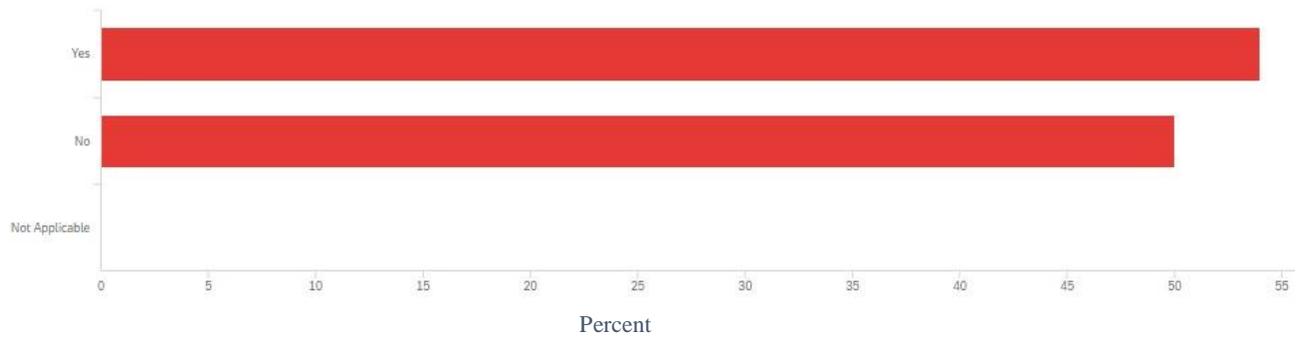
Impact on role of officer

Do you feel as if the recent protests and anti-police movements have impacted you personally as a police officer?
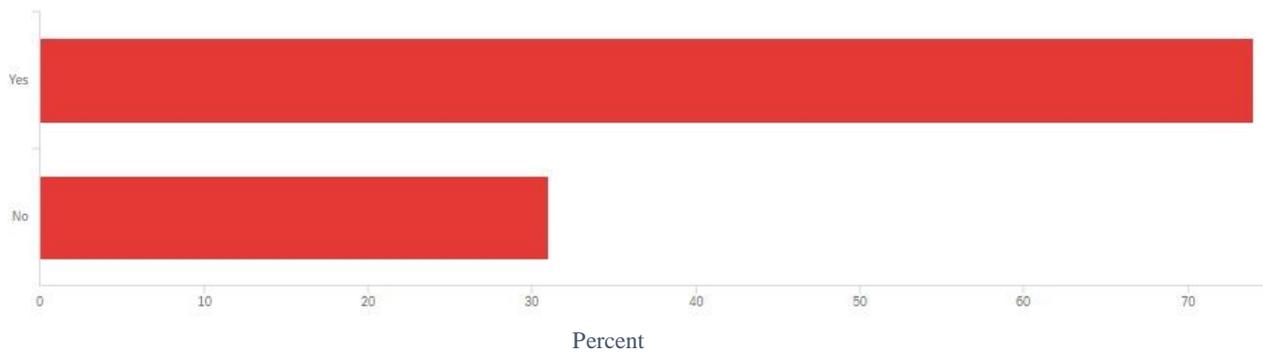
If so, please choose which best describes the impact this movement has had on you as an officer.
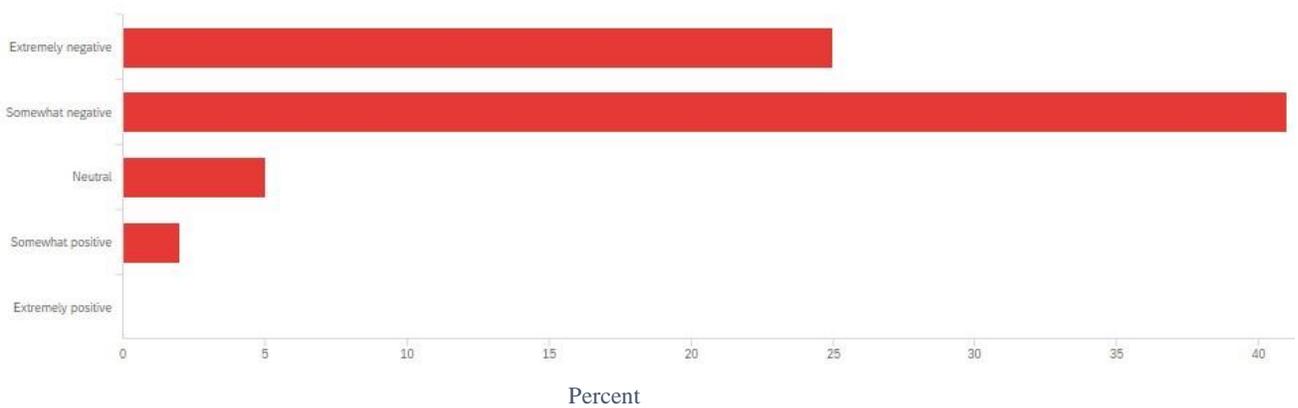
Have the recent protests and anti-police movements impacted or changed your view of your role as a police officer?
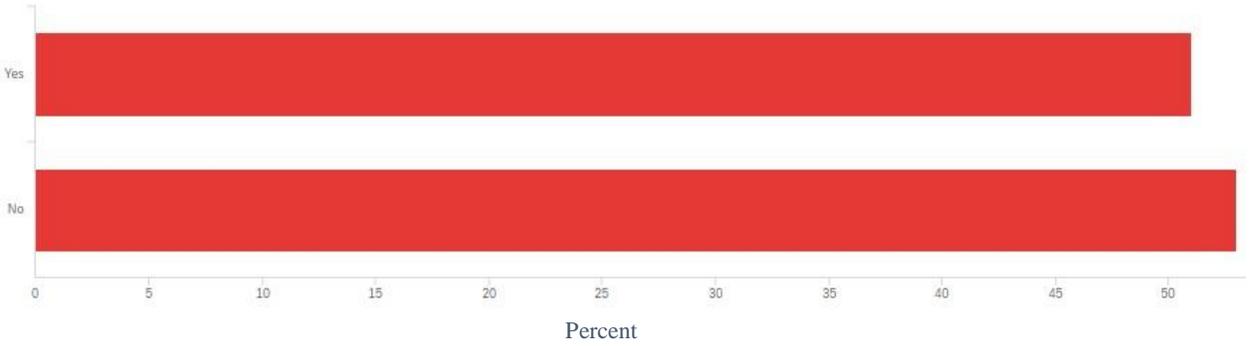
Results

Firstly, satisfaction is examined by comparing the results of the question asking if the protests have affected the satisfaction of the respondents by the responses of the questions inquiring rank, amount of years worked, and department.

As can be seen in Table 2, the majority of each rank perceived the anti-police movements and protests as to have affected their satisfaction with their jobs. This was most significant for sergeants in particular.

Satisfaction

Table 2. Rank and if Protests Affected Satisfaction

	Satisfaction				
	Yes			No	
Rank	f	%		f	%
Deputy/Officer	34	60		23	40
Sergeant	26	72		10	28
Lieutenant or higher	8	67		4	33
Total	68	65.00		37	35.00

Next, Table 3 describes if how much experience an officer has impacted their perceptions on if the protests affected their job satisfaction. While the majority of respondents of each rank reported that their satisfaction was impacted, the categories in which this was most significant was those with 18-24 years of experience, then 6-11 years. The protests and movements had a moderate effect on the satisfaction for those with 0-5 years, 12-17 years, and 31 or more years.

Table 3. Years Worked and if Protests Affected Satisfaction

| | Satisfaction | | | | |
| | Yes | | | No | |
Years	f	%		f	%
0-5	12	57		9	43
6-11	14	70		6	30
12-17	5	56		4	44
18-24	26	79		7	21
25-31	5	45		6	55
31+	6	55		5	45
Total	68	65.00		37	35.00

The satisfaction of officers based off of the anti-police movements and protests was finally compared to their respective departments. Each department had the majority of officers who responded report that the protests did affect their satisfaction. However, this was shown to be true more so for state law enforcement agencies than for county law enforcement.

Table 4. Department and if Protests Affected Satisfaction

| | Satisfaction | | | | |
| | Yes | | | No | |
Dept	f	%		f	%
County	28	60		19	40
State	39	68		18	32
Total	67	64.00		37	36.00

Stress

The next variable measured was the stress of the officers through the question that asked if their stress had increased due to the recent anti-police movements and protests. Like satisfaction, this was compared with the rank, experience, and department of the respondents.

Table 5 portrays if officers experienced an increase in stress by each rank. All ranks reported that their stress did increase, and it was equally significant for each rank, with 74% of

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deputies or officers, 75% of sergeants, and 75% of lieutenants or higher ranks all stating that they

felt as if their stress levels have heightened.

Table 5. Rank and if Stress Increased

	Stress Increase				
	Yes			No	
Rank	f	%		f	%
Deputy/Officer	42	74		15	26
Sergeant	27	75		9	25
Lieutenant or higher	9	75		3	25
Total	78	74.00		27	26.00

Results from Table 6 show if the amount of years an officer worked had an impact on

perceptions of an increase in stress from the recent movements and protests. While all years of

experience reported having an increase in stress, those with 0-5 years and 18-24 years had a

larger proportion who felt this stress increase.

Table 6. Years Worked and if Stress Increased

	Stress Increase				
	Yes			No	
Years	f	%		f	%
0-5	17	81		4	19
6-11	13	65		7	35
12-17	5	56		4	44
18-24	28	85		5	15
25-31	7	64		4	36
31+	8	73		3	27
Total	78	74.00		27	26.00

Each department had the majority of their officers say that their stress increased, but

those in state law enforcement reported this more than those in county law enforcement.

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Table 7. Department and if Stress Increased

| | Stress Increase | | | | |
| | Yes | | | No | |
Dept	f	%		f	%
County	32	68		15	32
State	45	79		12	21
Total	77	74.00		27	36.00

Hostility

Beyond their stress and satisfaction, officers may have perceived their communities to be more hostile towards them after the anti-police movements and protests. This section details how if they feel if their communities have been more hostile or tense compares to their rank, experience, and department.

Table 8 presents the results on how the rank of the officer impacted their perceptions on hostility from community members. Deputies and officers along with sergeants mainly felt as if their communities were more hostile towards them. However, those who identified as a lieutenant or higher did not report to have felt this tension to the same degree as their counterparts of lower ranks.

Table 8. Rank and Perceptions on Hostility

| | Hostility | | | | |
| | Yes | | | No | |
Rank	f	%		f	%
Deputy/Officer	35	61		22	39
Sergeant	23	64		13	36
Lieutenant or higher	5	42		7	58
Total	63	60.00		42	40.00

As for experience, respondents were more evenly split in this category. Categories of 12-17 years and 18-24 years saw the majority of their respondents as perceiving more hostility from their communities while all other experience groups did not feel this same tension.

Table 9. Years Worked and Perceptions on Hostility

	Hostility				
	Yes			No	
Years	f	%		f	%
0-5	12	33		9	67
6-11	16	45		4	55
12-17	5	67		4	33
18-24	21	52		12	48
25-31	3	36		8	64
31+	6	27		5	73
Total	63	60.00		42	40.00

In terms of perceptions of hostility and the department, both departments had the majority of respondents who thought that their communities were more hostile. However, this is more prevalent for county law enforcement, with 70% of officers responding "Yes," rather than 53% of state law officers.

Table 10. Department and Perceptions on Hostility

	Hostility				
	Yes			No	
Dept	f	%		f	%
County	33	70		14	30
State	30	53		27	47
Total	63	61.00		41	39.00

Overall, most respondents reported having felt an increase in hostility and tension from the communities that they serve. When asked about why specifically they felt this way, the most common answers were because of the media coverage, specific comments that citizens made to

them, the actions of their friends or family, and the feeling of being a scapegoat in general. Some answers that they gave demonstrate this. In terms of the media, some responses given were "Corrupt media portrayal of police" and "Based on the way certain incidents are reported in the major media, it feels as if our profession is no longer respected." Some officers felt more hostility because of the citizens themselves, saying "The majority of people I interact with openly express their distrust in law enforcement. Prior to these cases, I did not experience many outspoken individuals," "I encounter more people who want to challenge my authority and refuse my verbal commands," and "Negative comments towards us daily." Many have even reported that they felt this from friends and family as well. These officers responded to this question stating, "My children's friends make rude comments," "I've been harassed and targeted by for discrimination and ridicule by acquaintances who knew my profession," and "My own daughter's comments and postings." One last common answer was that they felt like a scapegoat for events relating to those of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. Some examples of this include: "Feeling like we are all labeled as bad guys," "Police are always the scapegoats for issues we have no control over," and "I'm being labeled as a racist, murderer, power hungry, tyrant, etc. based off my occupation."

Leaving their Job

Lastly, all of these topics could lead an officer to potentially think about leaving their job. Officers were asked if they thought about quitting their jobs due to the anti-police movements and protests, and the answers from this question were compared by their rank, experience, as well as department.

Table 11 shows patterns between rank and thoughts about leaving their jobs. The majority of officers did not have thoughts about leaving their jobs. However, sergeants were the

only rank who mainly did think about leaving, but it was only 58% of them. For lieutenants and higher, very few thought about leaving at all.

Table 11. Officer Rank and Thoughts about Leaving their Job

| | Thoughts about Leaving | | | | |
| | Yes | | | No | |
Rank	f	%		f	%
Deputy/Officer	22	39		35	61
Sergeant	21	58		15	42
Lieutenant or higher	3	25		9	75
Total	46	44.00		59	56.00

As for years of experience, officers were pretty evenly split across each category. The officers with 12-17 and 18-24 years were the only ones with most of them thinking about leaving their jobs, but it was not a vast majority. The officers with the most years of experience, or 31 or over, were those least likely to think about quitting.

Table 12. Years Worked and Thoughts about Leaving their Job

| | Thoughts about Leaving | | | | |
| | Yes | | | No | |
Years	f	%		f	%
0-5	7	33		14	67
6-11	9	45		11	55
12-17	6	67		3	33
18-24	17	52		16	48
25-31	4	36		7	64
31+	3	27		8	73
Total	46	44.00		59	56.00

As for differences between departments, those part of county law enforcement were less likely to report having thoughts of leaving their jobs due to the anti-police movements and

protests, as exemplified by Table 13. However, the majority of respondents from each

department did not have these thoughts overall.

Table 13. Department and Thoughts about Leaving their Job

	Thoughts about Leaving				
	Yes			No	
Dept	f	%		f	%
County	18	38		29	62
State	27	47		30	53
Total	45	43.00		59	57.00

Discussion and Conclusions

The police have been heavily criticized and under much public scrutiny because of many recent publicized incidents of excessive use of force towards unarmed individuals who are disproportionately people of color. There is a growing majority of the population who even wishes to punish the police as a whole for these actions, which is seen mainly through the defund the police movement along with its protests. This public outcry has put police departments and the officers working within them under much pressure, leading some to make changes within their departments. With these changes and the media coverage associated with these incidents of police misuse of force, law enforcement officials may be confronted with making reflections about their own jobs. This study has therefore served to measure the perceptions and attitudes of those working in law enforcement hold towards their positions and if the recent anti-police movements and protests have made a difference on them. Little to no previous research has been conducted that examines the thoughts of police officers on this movement so it contributes to the literature in this field. The significance of this research and the findings associated with it is its gain of the insight of officers, who hold much discretion in law enforcement, and it therefore has the ability to help make changes to policing as a result.

The findings from this study provide support for the fact that police officers have, in fact, been impacted by the recent anti-police movements and protests that have occurred as a result of incidents such as those associated with George Floyd or Breonna Taylor. The majority of officers who participated in this study described their attitude as being a law enforcement official before these incidents as somewhat or extremely positive. However, when asked about their attitudes after these incidents and resulting anti-police movements and protests, their answers shifted to mostly being somewhat positive or somewhat negative, with some even indicating that

their viewpoint was extremely negative. Not only was their overall attitude towards their job impacted, but they also provided other information that leads to key takeaways about specific aspects about their jobs, such as satisfaction, stress, perceived hostility from the community, and thoughts about leaving their job.

In terms of satisfaction, most officers are currently slightly to moderately satisfied with their jobs. However, the recent anti-police movements and protests did have an impact on the job satisfaction of the vast majority of officers. When examining this more specifically, sergeants had their satisfaction most impacted by these movements, along with officers with lower to middle amounts of years of experience. While the majority of officers at both departments reported that their satisfaction on the job changed, the department itself did not seem to make a difference. Many officers find it oftentimes difficult to enforce laws because they are either afraid to do so in certain areas or want to be overly careful so as to not become the next department scrutinized by the media, all of which contribute to lowering their satisfaction and potentially increasing officer burnout.

Additionally, most of the officers reported facing slight to moderate stress, leaning more on the end of having higher levels of stress as more reported being extremely stressed rather than not stressed at all. The anti-police movements and protests did influence this as well because the large majority of respondents stated that they did see an increase in stress since they began. This holds true for all ranks, but especially those with the least number of years of experience and those in state law enforcement agencies. Officers who report being stressed feel this way because they sense that they are constantly being watched very carefully and are sometimes afraid of how the community will react to decisions they make or how they enforce the law.

The anti-police movements and protests have also played a role in the impact of officer perceptions on hostility from the community. The majority overall felt that there was more tension or hostility coming from their communities. Those identifying as a lower to middle rank, deputy/officer or sergeant, those with years of experience falling in the middle of their peers at 12-17 or 18-24 years, and those in county law enforcement respectively all felt this the most. They had the perceptions that they were the scapegoat for these tragic incidents. On top of this, they felt as if they were labeled by community members as being a tyrant or enjoying the power that comes with their jobs, which perpetuated the overall tension. Some were unable to put it into words with exact examples but instead thought the vibe was more hostile as a whole. Furthermore, many officers sensed more hostility due to the outward expressions of certain individuals towards them. Many reported that community members have been much more likely to speak out negatively about the police towards them when they are on duty, or even that they receive these comments daily. This even occurs to certain officers off-duty as well, saying that they are targeted by acquaintances or community members that recognize them. Others have felt as if they need to be more careful, in terms of being politically correct, when they speak to community members while working, or that they are distrusted by the public overall. It can be difficult for them to enforce laws when they feel as if they are not a legitimate authority according to their communities.

Despite all these circumstances, the satisfaction and stress levels along with the newfound hostility brought by the recent anti-police movements and protests did not have enough of an impact to drive the majority of the officers to want to leave their jobs. For certain groups, such as sergeants and those with 12-17 or 18-24 years of experience, the thought about quitting was most prevalent. As for the rest of the officers, although there were some from each

category that thought about leaving, the vast majority did not. Many have shown to be cynical towards the anti-police movements and protests but ultimately believe that they have to continue to do the right thing on their jobs to prove the public wrong and they enjoy their jobs enough overall to stay with it.

Before concluding this study, though, it is important to recognize the limitations of it and to make recommendations for future research. The department of the officers could have had a more significant effect on officers; however, only a couple law enforcement agencies from the same region participated in this study. It is difficult to say whether or not the departments had an impact on officers because the officers in this study came from mostly the same areas. However, another department was asked to participate but declined. Furthermore, another limitation is that while the results showed that the majority of officers did not think about leaving their jobs, those who did think about quitting had probably done so by this point, which could have slightly changed the results, depending on if anyone had quit or not due to the effects of the anti-police movements and protests.

Future research should continue to expand on the findings of this study. Including more law enforcement agencies from throughout the country would be beneficial as departments from different locations have their own unique cultures and therefore probably would have had different approaches or responses to these movements and protests all together. Additionally, future research conducted on this topic should further explore the main topics examined in this study – satisfaction, stress, perceived hostility, and thoughts about leaving their jobs. It should look more into exactly what aspects of the movements and protests increased their stress or decreased their satisfaction, or even examine more specifically the hostility they face. In knowing that police officers are experiencing these feelings and perceptions towards their jobs,

research should also aim to help solve these issues, such as the consequences that result from these movements like stress or hostility, that they face on the job.

Overall, the recent anti-police movements and protests resulting from incidents involving the excessive use of force by police towards unarmed black individuals have impacted police officers and their perceptions about their jobs. Specifically, their views about their satisfaction from their jobs, stress levels at work, hostility from communities, and thoughts about leaving their jobs were all influenced by these movements and protests. Even though they had an overall decrease in satisfaction and heightened stress and tensions from community members, they, for the most part, did not think about leaving their jobs. The implications of this research exemplify that police face new issues and stressors from the recent movements and protests that affect them daily at work and new changes in policing must be made to accommodate for this.

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