

ABSTRACT

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND POLICE MISCONDUCT: A CASE STUDY OF ORGANIZERS' PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY-BASED WORK

By

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The research was an exploratory qualitative study of community organizing around the issue of police misconduct with an emphasis on Know Your Rights workshops. The study focused on community organizers' perceptions of: (1) organizing goals, (2) program effectiveness, and (3) identification of successes and challenges. This study was based upon open-ended interviews with six key informants who were organizers of Know Your Rights or related community-based strategies addressing police misconduct.

Because police brutality affected populations from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and marginalized racial and ethnic communities, research into community response to police brutality was relevant to social work practice. Insight from this study may help social workers understand macro practice in the area of community education and organizing around issues of police misconduct. Goals ranged from the more immediate benefits of education about rights to the broader goal of building empowered, organized communities against police and state violence.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND POLICE MISCONDUCT: A CASE STUDY OF
ORGANIZERS' PERCEPTIONS OF COMMUNITY-BASED WORK

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In the late summer of 2014, tensions ricocheted throughout the nation from Ferguson, Missouri, as protestors demanded justice for Michael Brown, another unarmed African American youth died at the hands of a law enforcement personnel. However, such public outcries only echoed a legacy of police brutality against people of color in the United States. Ample amounts of research have shown that there are racial and socioeconomic disparities in who are targets of police misconduct (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Kane, 2005; Lersch, 1998; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004).

Previous research revealed that Black and Brown males from low socioeconomic backgrounds tend to be victims of police violence and misconduct (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Kane, 2005; Lersch, 1998; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004). According to 2003-2009 data on reported Arrest-Related Deaths (ARD) from the U.S. Department of Justice's Deaths in Custody Reporting Program (DCRP), the national number of ARD was 4,813, with 6 in 10 deaths resulting from homicide by law enforcement personnel (Burch, 2011). Of 4,813 ARD, 42% were White, 32% were African American, and 20% Latino (Burch, 2011). However, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2014) data, in 2013 African Americans made up 13% of the United States

population, while Latinos made up 17% of the United States population, which marks the overrepresentations of African American and Latino casualties (U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).

In a study by the National Police Misconduct Statistics and Reporting Project on Police Brutality (NPMSRP), cited in Chaney and Robertson's (2013) research, there were 5,986 reports of police misconduct between April 2009 and June 2010. Of 5,986 cases, about 6% resulted in fatalities (Chaney & Robertson, 2013). However, of the police officers charged for police brutality, only 33% of police were convicted (Chaney & Robertson, 2013). This low figure suggested that despite various incidents of police shooting of unarmed civilians throughout the nation, the law enforcement and justice system lacked internal accountability for incidents of police misconduct and violence (Kane, 2005; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005).

The targeting of people of color, coupled with the lack of police accountability, had significant psychosocial consequences within communities of color. According to Taylor (2010), victims of police misconduct experienced psychological distress, anxiety and paranoia. In addition to dealing with the issues and stresses of living within low socioeconomic neighborhoods, people of color also suffered from systematic racism in the form of racial profiling and police brutality (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Kane, 2005; Lersch, 1998, Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004). The lack of accountability within law enforcement and lack of reprisal within the judicial system have resulted in deep-rooted distrust and cynicism toward these institutions within communities of color in low socioeconomic neighborhoods (Kane, 2005; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005).

Despite law enforcement's lack of accountability and the judicial system's lack of reprisal for cases of police brutality, victims of police violence, and, by extension their whole community, are blamed by law enforcement officials, the media, and politicians for being the provocateurs of the very police violence that affect their daily lives (Ahmed, 2014; Alterman & Richardson, 2014; Badger, 2014; Chapman, 2014; Collins, 2014; Kohn, 2014; Kondrath, 2014; Lund, 2014; Mulla, 2014; Wing, 2014). This blaming-the-victim sentiment asserted that communities of color's supposed criminality and behavior are to blame for the presence of police violence within their communities, despite the statistics showing that Whites are more likely to engage in drug and violent crime (Alexander, 2011; Chapman, 2014; Kohn, 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2011).

Those who adopted the blaming-the-victim sentiment tend to cite the rate of black-on-black crime as another justification to place blame on the African American community for the root of their victimization, despite statistics showing the same rate of white-on-white crime (Chapman, 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). The blaming-the-victim sentiment failed to acknowledge the low rates of prosecution for criminal police misconduct charges (Cato Institute, 2010; Chaney & Robertson, 2013). Further, the blaming-the-victim sentiment neglected the existence of community organization within disenfranchised communities historically to present day, that are dedicated to not only challenge police brutality, but also other community issues, such as poverty, gang violence, affordable housing, and other social-political inequities.

Communities and professionals have formed organizations, such as Cop Watch, Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN), Venice Justice Committee, Coalition to Stop LAPD Spying, Youth Justice Coalition, and the National Lawyers

Guild, to name a few within Los Angeles, to respond to the lack of accountability for police misconduct. For example, LACAN used video surveillance to observe and document police interactions with community members in order to document signs of police brutality and excessive use of force (Stuart, 2011). Various social justice organizations, such as Copwatch Santa Ana (2014), theorize that an empowered community is more equipped to deal with a number of social issues that affect marginalized communities, including police brutality. To increase community capacity to resist police brutality, these organizations have instituted Know Your Rights forums and workshops to educate the public on their legal rights when interacting with the police (Berkeley Copwatch, 2009; Copwatch Santa Ana, 2014, LACAN, n.d.).

Purpose of Case Study

The research was an exploratory qualitative case study of community education and organizing around the issue of police misconduct with an emphasis on Know Your Rights activities. The study focused on community educator/organizer perceptions of (1) organizing goals, (2) program effectiveness and (3) identification of successes and challenges.

Research questions were: What are the goals behind Know Your Rights workshops and other related programs? What are the outcomes of the organizing efforts and how do these match the goals? What are the successes and challenges of Know Your Rights and other related programs in helping community participants address or prevent police brutality?

Multicultural Relevance

Various studies have shown the race and class bias within the criminal justice system (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Kane, 2005; Lersch, 1998; Taylor, 2010). African Americans were 12 times more likely to be pulled over by a police officer and experience physical force in the encounter (Taylor, 2010). Victims of police brutality and misconduct can develop psychological distress and anxiety (Taylor, 2010). Such targeting of people of color and its detrimental psychological effects on people of color reflected the racism within the institution of law enforcement and criminal justice system (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Kane, 2005; Lersch, 1998, Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004). Therefore, research into community response against police brutality and misconduct is important to address one of many critical issues affecting clients of color, particularly within African American and Latino communities.

Social Work Relevance

Because police brutality affected clients from lower socioeconomic background, research into community responses to police brutality was relevant to social work practice (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Kane, 2005; Lersch, 1998, Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005; McElvain & Kposowa, 2004). Insight from this study can help social workers understand macro practice in the area of community education and organizing around issues of police misconduct. Social workers can use knowledge from this study to develop more effective macro practice with regard to civil rights education, generally, and civil rights to prevent police misconduct, more specifically. Further, social workers can work with current community organizers to bridge social work and community organizing work, and continue to strengthen social work practice and community

organizing strategies. It is particularly important to assess and improve resources for clients who live in neighborhoods with high levels of police activities and misconduct to minimize the multiple levels of harm that can arise from police misconduct and tensions between citizens and law enforcement.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Police Brutality Defined

Babovic (2000) defined brutality as inhumane, cruel, and violent behavior. He further posited that police were given the institutional right to exert brutality and force in some circumstances. However, the distinction between brutality and the supposedly legitimate use of force has become a source of contention in public debates regarding police policies, particularly within vulnerable poor communities and communities of color. Critics have argued that control over such distinctions have been systematically given to the police, the perpetrators of police brutality (Babovic, 2000).

In a study of Los Angeles Police Department's Rampart scandal that occurred in the late 1990s, Grant (2003) argued that police corruption and misconduct needed to be analyzed within the context of police as an institutionalized power within the United States as opposed to individualized terms of "a few rotten apples." Although the formal mandate of the police was "to protect and serve," the frequency and similarities of urban police scandals suggested that police violence was legitimized under the rule of law upheld by the justice system (Grant, 2003). The common occurrence of police scandals that defied procedural laws in favor of a "code of silence," presented evidence that violence was part of the legitimized police system, itself (Babovic, 2000; Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Grant, 2003; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005). Because administrators

tend to neglect the disciplinary process in misconduct cases, internal disciplinary actions against offending officers were rare because such actions would identify and challenge police brutality as a systematic problem (Babovic, 2000).

Media and Public Perceptions of Police Brutality

News media and filmic depictions of police have helped to shape the public's perception of police corruption and scandal (Grant, 2003; Linnermann, Wall, & Green, 2014). According to the Grant (2003) study, the public was more likely to view the police as corrupt if the police were depicted similarly to street thugs within the news. Hollywood films have portrayed police scandals through depictions of police breaking of procedural rules such as not reading Miranda Rights and illegal searches and seizures (Grant, 2003). However, film depictions tend to individualize corruption as caused by a few corrupt individuals who break criminal laws for their own gains. Such depictions, according to Grant (2003), were not consistent with the off-screen, real world trend of police corruption which involves the systemic violation of the procedural laws that were created to protect citizens' civil rights. Such media depictions fail to capture police corruption as an institution of legitimized violence (Grant, 2003; Linnemann, Wall, & Green 2014).

Racial divides existed in public perception of police violence (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Weitzer & Tuch, 2004). A qualitative study by Taylor (2010) showed that African American males did not feel that the media adequately covered the issue of police misconduct. In a recent study by the Pew Research Center (2014), African Americans were twice more likely than White Americans to state that the issues of race needs to be discussed in regard to the police shooting of unarmed Michael Brown in Ferguson,

Missouri. In this same study, 47% of White Americans believed that the issue of race was getting too much attention (Pew Research Center, 2014). Sixty-five percent of African Americans versus 33% of White Americans thought that the police have gone too far in responding to the protests aftermath of the shooting (Pew Research Center, 2014). Fifty-two percent of White Americans versus 18% of African Americans were confident in the investigations of the shooting (Pew Research Center, 2014).

The disparity between African American and White perceptions of media coverage of race and police brutality and trust in the criminal justice system showed that there may be a racial disparity in perceived experience as potential targets of police brutality or misconduct (Pew Research Center, 2014). Taylor (2010) argued that this lack of police misconduct coverage, and, by extension, historical lack of discussion of race within police brutality cases, was reflective of the systematic tendency of the police to dismiss incidents of misconduct.

Studies have shown that police misconduct and brutality have created a negative perception of law enforcement and increased paranoia among citizens, especially among African American men (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Taylor, 2010). African American men have reported that they are racially profiled as “thugs” or “criminals” by police officers, and various studies have shown the disproportionate targeting of Black men by law enforcement (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005; Petrocelli, Piquero, & Smith, 2003; Taylor, 2010). Such feelings of distrust induced by police racial profiling of Black males can further compromise police legitimacy within structurally disadvantaged communities (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005; Taylor, 2010).

Structural Disadvantage and Race as Contributing Factors

A study by Kane (2005) found that, in precincts marked by extreme structural disadvantage, high rates of overly aggressive police enforcement practices and police misconduct predicted high rates of violent crimes. Local conditions of structural disadvantage marked by poverty and joblessness often intersect with racial segregation and stratification. According to a study by Petrocelli et al. (2003) of traffic stops by police in Richmond, California, differential crime rates within the city and the density of the African American population influenced the numbers of stops the police made. Although the police frequently stopped and searched African American motorists, a study by Petrocelli et al. found that police making such stops did not tend to find evidence to warrant arrests. Thus, stop rates were higher than the arrest rates.

Police practices commonly known as “racial profiling” disproportionately target African Americans regardless of their involvement in crime or delinquency (Antonovics & Knight, 2004; Brunson & Miller, 2006a, 2006b; Cordner, Williams, & Velasco, 2002; Tomaskovic-Devey, Mason, & Zingraff, 2004). Some scholars linked aggressive police practices and subsequent lapses in police legitimacy with the increase in violent crime rates within extremely low socioeconomic precincts (Kane, 2005; Lersch, 1998; Terrill & Reisig, 2003). These same studies found no relationship between police misconduct, police legitimacy, and violent crime rates in higher socioeconomic precincts (Kane, 2005; Lersch, 1998).

Conflict and Racial Threat Theories

According to Lersch (1998), conflict theory argued that the law enforcement system serves to protect the interests of those who hold political, economic, and cultural

power and resources within the United States. Thus, police brutality and racial profiling have been practiced within low socioeconomic neighborhood in order to keep surveillance and social control over less powerful groups (Carmichael & Kent, 2014; Holmes, Smith, Freng, & Munoz, 2008; Kent & Jacobs, 2005; Lersch, 1998). General public perception of increased threat caused by a population rise in people of color coupled with the increase in income gap influenced cities to hire more police officers to strengthen the enforcement of social control (Carmichael & Kent, 2014; Holmes et al., 2008; Kent & Jacobs, 2005; McCarthy, Ren, & Zhao, 2012; Stucky, 2005).

The support of racial threat theory and conflict theory explained why people of color, particularly African Americans and Latinos, have been disproportionately targeted by police abuses, such as indiscriminate and widespread “stops and frisks,” regular patterns of disrespectful treatment, and frequent use of excessive or deadly force (Fagan & Davies, 2000; Kane, 2002; Mastrofski, Reisig, & McClusky, 2002; Smith & Holmes, 2003; Terrill & Reisig, 2003). Conflict theory, generally, and racial threat theory, specifically, served to explain how increased racial composition of a city can lead to increased social control efforts at the municipal or state level (Carmichael & Kent, 2014; Smith & Holmes, 2003).

Within the context of economic, racial, and political segregation, African Americans and Latinos tend to be the victims of excessive police force (Bhimji, 2013; Fagan & Davies, 2000; Kane, 2002; Mastrofski et al., 2002; Smith & Holmes, 2003; Terrill & Reisig, 2003). A prominent theme raised in scholarship informed by racial threat theory and conflict theory included the increasing militarization of local police forces (Bhimji, 2013). According to *The Nation* (Salisbury, 2012) and *The Washington*

Post (Priest & Arkin, 2010), the Department of Homeland Security allocated around \$30 to \$40 billion for training programs and equipment upgrades to the local police departments (Bhimji, 2013). In one example, Salisbury (2012) noted that California's Orange County police departments procured a fleet of seven armored vehicles and around 30 to 40 pounds of military gear including ballistic helmets, bulletproof vests, and military grade ammunition (Kim, 2012).

The Broken Window theory, widely credited for the support of policing policies that encouraged racial profiling, also served as an example of policy manifestations of the conflict theory and racial threat theory (Duran, 2009, Stuart, 2011). Drawing from the Broken Window theory, Los Angeles's Safer Cities Initiative of 2006 operated from the rationale that minor forms of lawlessness, such as drunkenness, littering, or panhandling, can introduce more criminal activities if left unchecked (Sridhar, 2006; Stuart, 2011). This well-publicized theory justified increased police presence within the Skid Row area in Los Angeles, which was mostly comprised of homeless, low-income, African American residents (Stuart, 2011). Local community organizers countered with the claim that Safer Cities was a veiled attempt to facilitate unwarranted detainments and searches of the community's predominately African American, low-income, or homeless residents (Stuart, 2011).

Another example of local policing policies that encouraged racial profiling included Denver's gang lists that disproportionately consisted of the city's Latino and African American residents. This was despite the fact that 82.8% of Denver's population was White and that White supremacist gang members constituted a significant group within Denver's majority White population (Duran, 2009).

Police Institutional Accountability to Communities

Studies from Kane (2005) and Klinger (2012) argued that it is crucial that police meet procedural protocols and remain accountable when instances of misconduct occur. Because members of low socioeconomic communities already feel marginalized from dominant society, they may respond most negatively to police misconduct and brutality (Kane, 2005). It is critical that the police who are responsible for preventing instances of misconduct, remain accountable and follow procedural justice expectations. Police strategies that comply with procedural justice policies and actually respond to the community needs without excessive aggression can mitigate against heightened community-police tensions (Kane, 2005; Klinger, 2012; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005).

In a 2006 study of San Francisco Police Department's policies regarding police interaction with civilians showed that clear policies and appropriate training can result in lower numbers of substantiated complaints of police misconduct (Kinnaird, 2007). The San Francisco Police Department policies included enforcement of a strict police recruitment protocol that excluded candidates who have a history of violence, in addition to in-service sensitivity and diversity trainings, and early system response measures. Explicit guidance and training initiatives on the use of force and special population training, in addition to concise and clear policies, were the best practices to decrease the number of complaints against police (Kinnaird, 2007; Klinger, 2012). Responses from African American participants in another study echoed the need for more diversity training, more community involvement, and more systemic accountability among the police (Taylor, 2010).

Community Level Hostilities Against the Police

Kane (2005) argued that the correlations between police violence and misconduct and high rates of violent crimes pointed to the importance of formal institutions in low socioeconomic communities. Within these communities, public informal control, such as the “code of the streets” or “stop snitching” mandates, have had strong influence over public life (Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Kane, 2005). Some African American participants in a study suggested that community members also need to monitor their attitudes and behaviors when approached by a police officer (Taylor, 2010). Another study suggested that African Americans tend to display non-cooperative behavior toward the police which can prompt police brutality (Reisig, Mastrofski, Terrill, & McClusky, 2004).

Scholarship that focused on cultural characteristics of marginalized communities, particularly within African American communities, as a cause of police misconduct are challenged by studies that attributed feelings of hostility to the history of over-policing within poor communities of color. Due to the history of over-policing within poor communities of color, marginalized communities have developed a deep seated distrust in the police as a social institution (Brunson & Miller, 2006a, 2006b; Kane, 2005; Warren, 2011). Rather than being the cause of excessive police force, civilian non-compliance can be the result of police misconduct at the onset of the interaction (Terrill, 2003). Previous research has shown that even when police behavior was controlled for within the methods of research, male citizens and citizens of color were more likely to show compliance, especially within encounters between White officers and civilians of color (Brunson & Miller, 2006a).

Community Policing

Brief History of Community Policing

Community policing evolved out of the mid 1990s, after the passage of 42 U.S.C. § 14141 Cause of Action, which was part of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994. The Cause of Action code made it unlawful for governmental authority, such as law enforcement officers, to administer juvenile justice in a manner that deprived incarcerated juveniles of rights, privileges, or immunities protected by the United States Constitution (Legal Information Institute, n.d.). This statute also authorized the Attorney General to perform investigations into alleged police misconduct reports and hold police departments accountable for police abuse and misconduct (Ferrandino, 2014; Simmons, 2008). Due to the lack of adequate judicial intervention, community policing also emerged as a call for greater community engagement and as a way for communities to keep police departments accountable for instances of abuse and misconduct (Kim, 2001; Roussell & Gascon, 2014).

Goals of Community Policing

The goals of community policing were to enhance police performance, to lower crime rates, and to increase police legitimacy (Ferrandino, 2014; Kappeler, 2009; Kim, 2001; Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Residents' and law enforcement's shared interest in social order can foster cooperation between the community and the police department in order to build a growing history and collective understanding of best police practices (Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Through reorienting police missions toward meeting community needs and sharing power with the community, the police can develop trust with the community as opposed to imposing their authority onto the community

(Kappeler, 2009). As result, communities with more effective forms of community policing can be more willing to cooperate with the police for the shared goals of social order and lower crime rates (Kappeler, 2009). This emphasis on shared and democratic participation by community members is opposed to the traditional model or government-centered approach of policing marked by hierarchy, command, and control (Ferrandino, 2014).

Community policing also seeked to promote democratic involvement of community members by coproducing a synthesis of community and police concerns (Kappeler, 2009; Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Through community-police coproduction of concerns, community policing can provide a method of checks and balances to police discretionary authority in order to hold police accountable for discriminatory practices and other forms of police misconduct (Kim, 2001). The checking of police discretionary authority required the community's consent to acceptable and desirable police practices in order to ensure democratic representations of community interests and concerns (Kappeler, 2009; Kim, 2001; Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Thus, community policing required police departments to engage and cooperate with the community to solve conditions that caused crime within the community (Kappeler, 2009). Police departments that aim to implement community policing need to promote the empowerment of the community, rather than dictating the community through police force (Kappeler, 2009).

Community Policing Tools and Structures

The implementation of effective community policing was based on a skillful combination of philosophical, organizational and personnel, strategic and programmatic principles (Kappeler, 2009). The core philosophy of community policing integrates

broad police functions and community needs. It took into account community input, concern for people, relationships of trust, shared power, creativity, and demographic and cultural variations within neighborhoods (Kappeler, 2009). A shift to community policing may require police to shift their organizational missions and to decentralize their hierarchical organizational structure, personalizing their service to community needs and cultures (Kappeler, 2009). Therefore, strategies to implement community policing have included a shared geographic focus and sense of ownership with its residents, direct face-to-face contact and a focus on prevention (Kappeler, 2009). Community policing philosophy and strategies have been implemented into programs that reorient police operations to focus on problem solving, situational crime prevention, and the promotion of community engagement.

Community policing had been operationalized through the use of a set of tools that maintained a network of information and support within the community (Ferrandino, 2014; Roussell & Gascon, 2014). In practice, according to Ferrandino, this set of varied tools can be refined based on the needs of the agency or local community coalitions. Tools of community policing for the police have included: problem-oriented policing, the dissemination of public information, obtaining community-oriented grants, social regulation, contracting with local institutions, and social marketing (Ferrandino, 2014). These tools have also ensured that police departments utilize available resources within the community to implement community policing programs in a cost-efficient manner (Ferrandino, 2014). Thus, community policing can be best practiced within a local context in order to maintain a local community network of resources. Collaborations with local universities can keep track of measured outcomes of community policing tools that

promote community needs and ensure community involvement in the policing process (Ferrandino, 2014).

Community policing had been typically structured through periodic meetings between community members, police officers and precinct commanders in order to keep in touch with community concerns and coproduce policing strategies (Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Within a community-police meeting, coproduction had involve community members voicing issues that are appropriate for police intervention, while police interpret the importance of the issues and negotiate strategies for response (Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Police departments have also provided platforms for elected community experts to represent the community's collective concerns (Roussell & Gascon, 2014).

Limitations of Community Policing Models

Community policing programs tend to meet with resistance from both the police department and the community during its implementation process. When implemented without an open-system orientation that enabled self-help within the community, community policing can become a vaguely defined concept with limited implementation within police departments (Ferrandino, 2014). Further, programs with no clear goals and limited community involvement often experience resistance both within the police department and within the community (Ferrandino, 2014; Kim, 2001; Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Resistance also tends to happen when police executives or administrators are reluctant to limit their own structural power in order to negotiate with stakeholders within the department and within the community (Ferrandino, 2014). Ferrandino argued for the emphasis on community policing as a set of tools. Through that lens, community

policing can focus on easing the implementation process instead of focusing solely on programs, citizens, or line-officers. By utilizing tools that rely on community input and community resources, police departments can meet their goals of social control while lowering crime rates in partnership with the community (Ferrandino, 2014; Roussell & Gascon, 2014).

Even with shared interests and a set of tools facilitating community input, differences in power between the police and the community prevailed. As legal brokers who hold institutional power, the police department has control over the terms of engagement and the power of definition of best police practices within these community-police meetings (Roussell & Gascon, 2014). This can contradict community policing goals of community empowerment through the sharing of power (Kappeler, 2009). Limitations exist when these platforms for community input are contained within the power structure of the police department and social hierarchy that privileged dominant voices within the community (Kim, 2001; Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Although the police departments and community policing literature have touted community partnership through community-police meetings, negotiations still exist within the confines of police control that tend to exclude poor people's and people of color's perspectives (Kim, 2001; Roussell & Gascon, 2014). The police may have an institutional interest in community engagement to maintain their legitimacy, but they still take the role of legal brokers and institutional authority figures (Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Due to their role as legal brokers, the police ultimately decides which issues are worthy of police intervention (Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Meanwhile, residents have limited roles assigned to them as civilians (Roussell & Gascon, 2014).

Although community policing calls for democratic community consent, the stakeholders who are marginalized, such as people who experience homelessness or people who experience poverty, hold minimal social and political power to participate in the process of coproducing appropriate policing practices (Kim, 2001). Further, police has more power to resist institutional narratives of police practices without consequences. On the contrary, residents have limited power to challenge institutional narratives in their limited roles as civilians (Roussell & Gascon, 2014).

The police department also has power in the electoral process to institutionalize select residents as local experts to maintain the platform for complaints (Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Thus, most community policing models have tended to maintain systematic political and social power dynamics in which the interests of less powerful community members, often those who are poor and people of color, have been left out of the community policing process (Kim, 2001). These marginalized community stakeholders are also those who were most likely to be targets of police misconduct (Kim, 2001).

Suggested Improvements for Community Policing

The literature on community policing makes several suggestions regarding ways to improve community policing both conceptually and practically. Suggested improvements in community policing include the decentralization of police departments' power and incorporation of self-help community networks (Kappeler, 2009; Kim, 2001; Ferrandino, 2014). Ferrandino argued that community policing programs require the adoption of community development theories that address conflict, technical assistance, self-help and awareness of the need for systemic changes over time. Instead of a top-

down model of community policing, he suggested that administrators are required to be accountable decision-makers who maintain community networks instead of a bureaucratic control of police officers and civilians. Within Ferrandino's model of community policing, administrators need to consider feedback within community networks in order to negotiate and persuade stakeholders within the department to comply with community policing protocols and to effectively implement community policing tools.

The literature argued that community policing needs to diverge from the traditional model of command and control within a hierarchal structure, but instead form a self-helping community network based on negotiation and persuasion (Ferrandino, 2014). Kappeler (2009) also argued for the decentralization of police services and the reorientation of patrol officers to work closely with community members to solve their problems. Within this new model, arrests and incarceration can be seen as temporary means to address community issue. Community policing tools, such as managing community networks and relationships, should be prioritized over the arrests and incarceration to address community problems (Kappeler, 2009).

Suggested improvements of community policing also include the reinforcement of citizen review boards. The legitimacy of community policing depends on continued community-police meetings that addressed community concerns and goals of the police department (Roussell & Gascon, 2014). Legitimate community policing required the representations of people of color and people who experience poverty, whose perspectives are often excluded from the political process as a whole (Kim, 2001). Exclusion of community members in the decision making process to ensure police

accountability has consistently failed to follow democratic principles, thus undermining community-police relationship and police legitimacy within the community (Simmons, 2008).

Kim (2001) addressed this issue of representation by calling for the reinforcement of civilian review boards and the creation of civilian advisory councils whose members are elected through preference voting methods that ensure proportional representations. Civilian review boards would serve as processing centers and adjudicative tribunals for civilian complaints against the police (Kim, 2001). The purpose of civilian review boards would be to address civilian complaints and help police administrators monitor the conduct of their officers, keeping police discretionary power in check while maintaining police legitimacy within the community (Kim, 2001). Civilian advisory councils have addressed these limitations of community policing by promoting the principles of democratic governance through civilian participation in the development and implementation of local police policies that facilitate public scrutiny of policing practices (Kim, 2001).

Community Responses to Police Brutality

Mass Mobilization and Protests

Existing research on community responses to police brutality tend to focus on mass protests, prompted by fatal shootings of unarmed citizens, as a political tactic the local community used to demand accountability from the police (Bhimji, 2013). Protests existed within a historical context of community resistance, both nonviolent and militant, against police brutality within African American and Latino communities in the United States as early as 1846 (Duran, 2009). According to Bhimji (2013) and King (2011),

mass protests against police brutality existed within the cultural, political, economic and social context of racism, segregation, and inequality against people of color and people who experience poverty within the United States. Further, the mobilization of Latinos and African Americans against police brutality reflected the political development of victimized communities within United States political context, which prompted communities to call for more immediate, political expressions in the form of protests against police brutality (Bhimji, 2013; King, 2011).

Community organizing in response to police misconduct operated under the rationale of community empowerment through self-advocacy and self-determination to solve their own problems. For example, former gang members from Denver not only critically analyzed police department racial profiling through the use of gang list, but addressed the issue of gang involvement by educating youth on their community's culture and history as a source of empowerment (Duran, 2009). Cultural and political consciousness, such as the awareness of racism and social inequality, not only contextualized police brutality within a historical, economic, political and social context, but also strengthened the community by countering gang involvement (Duran, 2009; King, 2011).

This political rationale for community empowerment goes hand in hand with the political development of the community through the development of the community's capacity to effectively respond to everyday violence and institutional inequality expressed and upheld by police brutality (King, 2011). Drawing from past community responses against police brutality, and by extension, a historical analysis of institutional racism and inequality in the form of the criminal justice system, activists built

community-based structures and strategies based upon a political framework of urban resistance and community empowerment fueled by social criticism, practices of self-help, and mass demonstration (Duran, 2009). Further, contemporary community organizations against police brutality often form alliances across racial and ethnic groups from various economic background to stage demonstrations and public forums against systemic police department abuses, such as racial profiling policies (Duran, 2009). Organizers incorporated diverse forms of protests in order to form solidarity between diverse populations within the community also to sustain their collective action (Bhimji, 2013).

However, mass demonstrations against police brutality, both armed and nonviolent, tended to result in more police killings and violence. Due to the institutional monopoly over force granted to law enforcement by the state, the police had the power to exert violence against protestors under the guise of promoting safety and keeping order (Bhimji, 2013). Further, community organizations supporting protest strategies also lacked resources to sustain their collective actions (Bhimji, 2013). Community organizers tended to be of lower socioeconomic status, falling outside the scope of supposed professional and paid advocates. Therefore, they often lacked the economic resources to take time away from work to engage in sustained protest (Bhimji, 2013).

Legalist Responses

Historically within the African American community, community leaders have adopted a narrative of respectability to build discipline and legitimacy to counter the issues of racial violence and police brutality. Black religious leadership during the early 20th century appealed to Victorian values of respectability, religiosity, self-restraint, and proper manners as a way to prove their worthiness under the protection of the law against

police brutality (King, 2011). Through the strategy of legalism, the community continued to appeal to state actors to address issues of police brutality and infringement on civil rights by demonstrating the community's respect for law and order and faith in the justice system (King, 2011). Proponents of the strategy of legalism have also tried to deracialize criminality by viewing criminality as a normalized aspect of all populations and community institutions (King, 2011). To uphold notion of respectability and lawfulness, black leaders tended to criminalize the African American community's armed self-defense efforts against racial violence, preferring strategies that complied with respect for law and order (King, 2011).

A tactic of community response to police brutality still included these forms of legalism by appealing to institutional power and laws. For example, victimized community members are encouraged to file complaints of police abuse to the police department (Duran, 2009). Community organizers either attend City Council meetings or meet with city officials to inform them about the problems of police misconduct and brutality (Bhimji, 2013; Duran, 2009). By appealing to the city's District Attorney and Police Commissioner, community leaders have continued to hope that these state entities will respond, discipline police departments, and sanction offending officers (King, 2011).

Studies of community organizing have found that community members who seek institutional redress tend to be met with disregard or intimidation (Duran, 2009; King, 2011). Further, anti-police brutality organizers often lack media, political and social legitimacy which has resulted in the ineffectiveness of appealing to legal and institutional means of addressing police brutality (Bhimji, 2013; Duran, 2009; King, 2011; Stuart, 2011).

Community-Run Journalism

Community organizers have also utilized journalism and the media to contextualize the issue of police brutality within the context of structural inequality (Bhimji, 2013). For example, organizers in Anaheim, California created award winning blogs to counter negative mainstream media mischaracterization of protestors and to historicize the protest against police brutality within a political and social context of racism and inequality (Bhimji, 2013). Residents from diverse ethnic, gender, age, and educational background came together to organize media campaigns by speaking at City Council meetings and holding press conferences in front of Anaheim City Hall to gather support beyond the city (Bhimji, 2013).

Community-run journalism has also been a way for the community to legitimize the struggles of poor and working class communities of color against police brutality (Bhimji, 2013; King, 2011). Historically, community-run journalism has played an important role in shaping community discourse about police brutality, discussions which would otherwise be left out of mainstream journalism (King, 2011). Further, community-run journalism has renewed the community's faith in the political process by encouraging mass nonviolent participation and community self-empowerment (King, 2011).

Grassroots Organizations

Another community response tactic included the formation of grassroots organizations, aimed to document abusive police conduct to provide legal evidence for court prosecution of offending officer (Stuart, 2011). For example, the LACAN has opposed police misconduct through civil litigation, providing assistance in criminal defense, and public relations campaign (Stuart, 2011). LACAN's organizing in Los

Angeles' Skid Row opposed police misconduct by documenting police behaviors within the community (Stuart, 2011). LACAN members developed what was called "catching officers slipping," a tactic of recording police interactions in order to prevent later police's reinterpretation of video evidence during court proceedings (Stuart, 2011).

The "catching officers slipping" tactic highlighted police abusive behavior and focused on relevant past events regarding police misconduct. These strategies also provided larger contextual factors regarding police abuse of power that would have been left off-camera (Stuart, 2011). LACAN's tactic of "catching officers slipping" also utilized the officer's institutional authority as expert witnesses, by using the officer's statements or actions to support LACAN's contextualization of video evidence and claims of police brutality (Stuart, 2011). Although LACAN's tactics have yielded some legal victories, the police department's defense team began to implement counterstrategies to deflect and reappropriate LACAN's tactics and claims-making abilities (Stuart, 2011). Police department's counterstrategies, in turn, made video evidence unusable in court by LACAN (Stuart, 2011).

Armed Self-Defense

Armed self-defense has been historically used as a community response against police brutality and racist violence by both African American and Latino communities (Duran, 2009; King, 2011). During the 1920s, when state-sanctioned violence and racial violence against African Americans within Harlem were rampant, armed self-defense was one of the responses that the community adopted (King, 2011). When urban Chicanos during the 1960s and early 1970s felt that they not only lacked protection from the police departments, but were also targeted by the criminal justice system, armed

resistance was one community response (Duran, 2009). However, armed resistance has tended to perpetuate more police violence as the police department used community violence as legal justification for more police surveillance, brutality, and killings (Duran, 2009). Since the Civil Rights Movement, armed self-defense had declined in today's movement against police brutality in favor of urban resistance in the form of community empowerment, self-help, and mass demonstration (Duran, 2009).

Know Your Rights Workshops and Campaigns

Know Your Rights: A Multi-Movement Strategy

Despite the prevalence of Know Your Rights workshops and campaigns in response to police brutality, no literature exists on this form of community response to police misconduct. Very limited scholarship addressing Know Your Rights workshops pointed to instances where Know Your Rights has been utilized as a community-based educational strategy within labor rights, immigrant rights, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Questioning (LGBTQQ) rights, and among survivors of intimate violence (Barry, Camp Johnson, Kleim, & Martin, 2012; Charney, Gonzalez, Kennedy, Leader, & Perry, 2010; Mananzala, Munshi, Qurashi, Redfield, & Spade, 2010; Marshal, 2000; Stein, 2005). Within these various community empowerment and civil rights movements, Know Your Rights workshops were justified under a community-centered and client-centered rationale. The underlying premise was that genuine social change and solutions to pressing social issues must be developed and implemented by the affected population or community members themselves (Charney et al., 2010; Mananzala et al., 2010; Marshal, 2000; Stein, 2005). However, these workshops have tended to be facilitated by or have been part of services offered by law students or legal professionals

who are committed to social justice issues and community empowerment, but who are not members of the community that they serve (Barry et al., 2012; Charney et al., 2010; Mananzala et al., 2010; Marshall, 2000; Stein, 2005).

Effectiveness of Know Your Rights Workshops

In the literature, Know Your Rights workshops often supplement the overall goal of systemic policy changes through the promotion of community education, collective critical analysis of pressing issues, and self-advocacy campaigns (Barry et al., 2012; Charney et al., 2010; Mananzala et al., 2010; Marshall, 2000; Stein, 2005). Operating within a community organizing rationale, Know Your Rights workshops have become part of a repertoire of tactics for affected population or community members to come together, critically dialogue about common problems, and receive information and advice from experts. This has been one strategy within a larger process to educate and train community members to advocate for themselves within the larger political system (Barry et al., 2012; Charney et al., 2010; Mananzala et al., 2010; Marshall, 2000; Stein, 2005).

For example, in the low-wage immigrant workers' rights movement, the Workplace Project in Long Island was an independent legal center created by a legal professional to combat the exploitation of immigrant workers from Latin America (Stein, 2005). Although the Workplace Project yielded some legal victories for individual immigrant workers, legal solutions came in conflict with community organizing efforts for long-term systemic change (Stein, 2005). This case study found that workers who sought legal aid tended to be dependent on legal solutions. Thus, they became less inclined to continue their mobilizing efforts after they won their legal battle against their respective employers (Stein, 2005). To motivate workers to participate in self-advocacy

for long-term change, the Workplace Project implemented a nine-week popular education course to educate workers on the history of labor organizing and immigration laws, in addition to the current rights of immigrant workers (Stein, 2005). Through the community education course, the Workplace Project was able to achieve the goal of empowering workers to self-advocate and campaign for the enactment of the Unpaid Wages Prohibition Act of 1997, which increased penalties to employers for the violation of wage laws (Stein, 2005).

Similar to the immigrant workers' movement, a Know Your Rights workshop was used by an anti-gentrification campaign in East Palo Alto, a low-income African American neighborhood adjacent to Stanford University. The Know Your Rights workshop was used as a way to encourage diverse community members to come together and discuss the issue of redevelopment that would displace both residents and local small business owners (Marshall, 2000). In addition to educating residents on their relocation rights and benefits, Know Your Rights workshops became an avenue for Latino tenants and African American business owners to come together, critically dialogue about the city's redevelopment plan, and form the Community United for a Better East Palo in order to campaign the city government to reject the redevelopment plans (Marshall, 2000). In this case, Know Your Rights workshops were conducted by legal professionals to empower the community to access the political process through the process of self-help and self-advocacy on issues of housing within their community (Marshall, 2000). In addition to lending their knowledge to social justice issues, these professionals and experts attempted to analyze their privileged position by collaborating with the community and attempted to carve out spaces for community members to become leaders

of their own movement (Barry et al., 2012; Charney et al., 2010; Mananzala et al., 2010; Marshall, 2000; Stein, 2005).

To meet the needs of the youths they served, the Peter Cicchino Youth Project (PCYP), an organization that serves LGBTQQ youths under the age of 24, developed Know Your Rights workshops for youths who engaged in sex survival trade and other quality of life or survival crimes (Mananzala et al., 2010). Issues that affected LGBTQQ youth who experienced homelessness intersected with other poverty-related conditions, in addition to exposure to police abuse and brutality, as these youth were heavily under police surveillance due to their engagement in sex survival trade (Mananzala et al., 2010). However, challenges emerged when early coalition work failed to shift power to the youth who were most affected by these policy changes and issues of police brutality (Mananzala et al., 2010). To address these challenges, PCYP not only included the youth's knowledge and information to update their Know Your Rights workshops, but also expanded community education to include a leadership building program that encouraged youths to participate in coalition building, self-advocacy and systemic change work (Mananzala et al., 2010).

Benefits of Know Your Rights Workshops to Providers

In addition to providing resources, both legal and non-legal, Know Your Rights workshops can promote active dialogue with community members, thus helping providers learn about community problems based on the community's own knowledge and experiences (Barry et al., 2012; Charney et al., 2010; Mananzala et al., 2010; Marshall, 2000; Stein, 2005). For example, a law school community legal education project aimed to create dialogues within the Muslim community regarding issues of

intimate partner violence (Barry et al., 2012). Law students collaborated with an emergency safe house to provide Know Your Rights workshops to safe house's participants who were united by shared experience of intimate partner violence (Barry et al., 2012). Law students also implemented a Domestic Violence Outreach Project within the Muslim Community that discussed cultural and religious issues surrounding intimate partner violence, in addition to educating the community on related legal rights (Barry et al., 2012). Law students were careful to include Muslim cultural and religious specific content within their workshops and allowed participants to define power and control within Islamic religious and cultural context (Barry et al., 2012). Further, law students offered tools that catered to problems identified by the participants, implemented assessments to ensure that the program addressed community needs, and provided follow-up activities to ensure progress to effectively address those needs (Barry et al., 2012). By centering community legal education workshops on the Muslim community, law students ensured the legitimacy and effectiveness of their program within that community (Barry et al., 2012).

The one study that addressed Know Your Rights workshops as a response to police brutality looked at a panel discussion led by activists who organized against stop-and-frisk police procedures (Charney et al., 2010). Within activism against stop-and-frisk procedures, the Know Your Rights workshop was part of the repertoire of community organizing tactics. Community members most affected by police abuse formed the People's Justice Coalition for Community Control and Police Accountability to document police misconduct and provided Know Your Rights workshops and offered other legal services (Charney et al., 2010). The Know Your Rights workshop focused on

young people targeted by stop-and-frisk policies in order to teach young people ways to escape and survive police encounters as safely as possible (Charney et al., 2010).

One objective of these Know Your Rights workshops was to provide some form of protections, although limited, for youth to navigate the enormous power differences between the them and the police. As one Know Your Rights organizer stated in the study, the police's state-granted authority afforded them the legitimacy to be taken more seriously in court (Charney et al., 2010). Even if the police violated citizen's rights, they could still win in court proceedings (Charney et al., 2010). Know Your Rights workshops also had a post-police encounter objective of teaching youths to avoid further self-criminalization in the case that they were arrested (Charney et al., 2010). By remembering the organization's phone number, the youth could use this to access an attorney for legal advice on how not to criminalize themselves (Charney et al., 2010). Although Know Your Rights tactics were successful in achieving the two identified objectives, they were not successful in addressing the overall issue of illegal stop-and-frisk practices implemented by the police (Charney et al., 2010).

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

Research Design

This study used a qualitative, exploratory case study design that utilized an open-ended interview guide. The researcher used snowball sampling to recruit community members or facilitators of Know Your Rights or related activities addressing police misconduct. Participants were recruited from among researcher contacts and at community meetings and events regarding police brutality and misconduct in Los Angeles County and Orange County.

The researcher used the grounded theory approach to examine the interview transcripts and draw common themes and conclusions (Richards & Morse, 2013). Grounded theory allowed for the redirecting of systematic analytical strategies as new empirical processes were discovered during the process of data collection and data analysis, thus allowing flexibility in the research process (Charmaz, 2008). The grounded theory approach required the researcher to minimize preconceived theoretical and empirical biases and to remain open to findings emerging from the data (Charmaz, 2008).

Sample

This study used snowball and convenience sampling to recruit participants. All participants were over 18-year-old. Participants were community organizers who were

providers of Know Your Rights workshops or had worked or were working with community organizations designed to combat police brutality or misconduct. Due to the time constraints of the research project and the nature of the hard to reach population of anti-police brutality organizers, a total of six participants were recruited and interviewed.

The researcher attended community workshops and trainings regarding police brutality or misconduct in Los Angeles and Orange counties for recruitment. After the meeting ended, the researcher approached the providers at the meetings or workshops in-person and informed these potential participants about the purpose of the study, expectations of the participants and participants' right to confidentiality. The researcher also used convenience sampling by contacting acquaintances and colleagues who are community organizers to see if they knew other organizers who met the research criteria, who might be interested in participating in the research. The researcher used snowball sampling by giving recruitment flyers with contact information (see Appendix B) to acquaintances and other research participants to pass on to individuals and organizations that fit the research criteria.

During the recruitment process, the researcher introduced herself as a Master of Social Work student at California State University, Long Beach, seeking to interview organizers who work to challenge police brutality for her master's thesis (see Appendix A for oral script). The researcher also explained that participation was voluntary. The researcher then handed out a flyer with her contact information to interested participants in order for them to contact her for an interview (see Appendix B for recruitment flyer). The participants then set up the date, time, and location with the researcher for an in-

person interview. At the request of one of the participants, the researcher also conducted an interview via phone.

Prior to interviewing, participants signed a consent form, indicating that they understood the purpose of the study, their rights to confidentiality and that they were voluntarily participating in this study (see Appendix C for consent form). With participants' permissions, the researcher audio taped the interview and later transcribed the interviews verbatim. Each interview lasted between 35 minutes and an hour and a half.

Instrument

The semi-structured interview guide included a series of open-ended questions that addressed current community responses, intended goals of responses, challenges to responding, successes of responding, and suggestions for improving the responses (see Appendix D for the interview guide).

Analysis

The researcher used the grounded theory method to analyze the transcribed data from the interviews. Grounded theory aims to draw theory through analyzing the data (Richards & Morse, 2013). The grounded theory approach minimizes preconceived ideas about the research questions and data in order to allow data collection and analysis processes to inform each other (Charmaz, 2008). Thus, the researcher remained open to varied understandings of data to draw analytic themes and posit research findings (Charmaz, 2008; Richard & Morse, 2013).

The researcher transcribed the interview recordings and reviewed all the transcripts to find emergent data characteristics according to the language that the

participants used. The researcher then created codes to describe the data characteristics. In accordance with the grounded theory approach to research data analysis, the researcher analyzed the data and paid attention to how participants' responses related or contrasted to each other to synthesize an integrated theory (Richards & Morse, 2013). The researcher then built upon initial codes to create common themes, such as recurrent experiences or narratives, from the participants' responses to the open-ended questions. Keeping the research questions in mind, the researcher identified any patterns to draw conclusions based on the common categories and themes from community organizers' interview responses.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

This chapter details the analysis of findings gathered for this exploratory qualitative case study of organizers' perceptions of Know Your Rights activities addressing police brutality and misconduct. The first section summarizes the demographic characteristics of the participants. The second section presents emerging themes from the data.

Demographic of Key Informants

This research was based upon interviews of six key informants who were organizers in community-based organizations addressing police brutality and misconduct. Each specifically organized or facilitated what are known as Know Your Rights trainings which invite community members to learn about strategies to intervene in and prevent situations of police brutality and misconduct.

Table 1 shows the demographic breakdown of the participants or key informants. Participants' ages ranged from 22 to 50 years, with a mean age of 32 years. Four of the participants identified as male, one as female, and one as gender-nonconforming. Of the six participants, one identified as Filipino-American, two identified as indigenous (Purépecha and Mixtec), one as mixed race (Black, Filipino, Blackfoot indigenous, Mayan, Portuguese, and Spanish), one as Mexican, and one as White. Four of the

participants were currently residing in Los Angeles County, while two lived in Orange County, California.

TABLE 1. Demographic Characteristics of Key Informants (*N* = 6)

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Age		
20-29	3	50%
30-39	2	33%
40-49	0	0%
50-59	1	17%
Gender		
Female	1	17%
Male	4	67%
Gender-nonconforming	1	17%
Race/Ethnicity		
Filipino-American	1	17%
Indigenous	2	33%
Mexican	1	17%
Mixed race	1	17%
White	1	17%
Geographic location of residence		
LA County	4	67%
Orange County	2	33%
Originally from the location of organizing		
yes	6	100%
no	0	0%

Participants organized within a variety of neighborhoods such as Venice, South Central, Echo Park, Downtown Los Angeles, and Koreatown, all within Los Angeles County. Participants all organized within the neighborhood they grew up in and eventually expanded to other cities via community invitations. However, one participant reported that they were forced to move into different neighborhoods due to the city's gentrification policies. Both of the two participants who organized in Santa Ana in

Orange County reported growing up within the city, but expanded their organizing activities to cities such as Irvine, Long Beach, Los Angeles, and as far as Oakland. Organizers' years of experience range from 3 to 30 years of organizing, with a mean of 12 years.

Themes

The following section will explore the themes that emerged from the interview data. Themes included participant motivation for Know Your Rights organizing, goals of Know Your Rights organizing, outcomes of Know Your Rights organizing, and challenges to Know Your Rights organizing.

Motivations for Organizing

This section identified participants' motivations for organizing Know Your Rights workshops as part of the broader movement against police misconduct and brutality, detailing the events that triggered their organizing activities or the rationale to why they found Know Your Rights organizing important. Although this was not among the original research questions, the analysis found that this theme emerged in all interviews and was a factor in understanding organizer perceptions of Know Your Rights organizing.

TABLE 2. Motivations for Organizing (*N* = 6)

Variables	<i>f</i> *	%
Empower vulnerable populations	6	100%
Local policies/structural inequity	5	83%
Check and balance on police discretion	4	67%
Personal experience	2	67%

*Participants responded to more than one category

Empower vulnerable populations. The most cited motivation for organizing Know Your Rights workshops was to empower vulnerable populations, such as youth and individuals who are undocumented, within the community from being victimized by the police for not knowing their rights ($n=6$). This motivation was often linked to the witnessing of incidents in which vulnerable community members such as youth or undocumented individuals who they believed would have benefited from Know Your Rights knowledge. These participants shared their belief that empowerment through knowledge and skills about their rights may have prevented these incidents from occurring.

For example, Participants 1 and 2 reflected that their organizing was motivated by the need to empower youth. They reported incidents where the lack of knowledge among youth about their rights when approached by the police resulted in self-incrimination or the inadvertent incrimination of other youth.

Participant 1. [Y]ou should know [about your rights] when dealing with the police because a lot of young people in particular, like everyone I guess, don't know that you don't have to talk to the police or [if you do,] you incriminate yourself a lot of times.

Participant 2. Often times, they'll [the police] ask these twelve-year-olds few questions, the kid will say, "yeah, I might know this one person." And they're like, "Oh, this person's in a gang, so you're in the gang by association" and put the kid in the gang database.

With regard to the undocumented community, Participants 2, 4, and 5 showed concern about undocumented immigrants being further victimized for not being aware that they do have rights despite their status.

Participant 5. There are always stories of police...abusing people's rights especially if its like people in the undocumented community. And I've always heard stories that are like, police not following protocol with undocumented folks

and that is just because [the undocumented folks] didn't know, so that's what made me want to, you know, make sure [as someone who is also undocumented] what my rights are.

Local policies/structural inequality. Know Your Rights organizers also referred to local government policies or local conditions reflecting structural inequality that not only failed to take community needs into consideration but could also translate into more police harassment on the ground level for community members ($n=5$). These issues included gentrification, the violation of tenant rights, efforts to impose gang injunctions, and the targeting of undocumented immigrant communities through police checkpoints. Participants linked these local policies to increases in police surveillance and police targeting of people of color, thereby, tying Know Your Rights strategies to organizing around these other related areas of concern.

Participant 2. That's how [Cop Watch and Know Your Rights] started...alert from different organizations together to campaign against the [gang] injunctions or doing Know Your Rights trainings.

Participant 4. Right now, we are, I am not sure if you are aware, a couple blocks down they [the City of Santa Ana] are trying to build an injunction and a lot of the community have actually experienced a lot of police intimidations, usually when a lot of cops are showing up and patrolling the area.

Participant 2 also pointed to an example of gang injunctions as an abuse of power by the Los Angeles County District Attorney that motivated the need for greater community control over local law enforcement.

Participant 2. [The City of LA] went past the necessity of going through court and implementing this gang injunction. It was established without the knowledge of the community behind closed doors...[District Attorney Mike Feuer] was just kind of filibustering at one of these kinda community forums, not really attending to any of the community concerns with the injunction..and people called him out on that and said that it sounds like [Mike Feuer] already established that [he's] going to have this gang injunction regardless of how much community support we have in backing [opposition to gang injunctions].

Participant 4 identified the police department's exploitative practice of targeting low-income drivers who were undocumented at purported DUI checkpoints. This policy prompted more community members, including the participant, to come out and support anti-police misconduct organization.

Participant 6 identified his personal and professional experience working within affected populations within subsidized housing and tenant unions. He later worked as a public defender, witnessing many instances of police abuse of Black and Latino men both within the community and within the justice system. These experiences promoted his involvement with anti-police brutality organizing both within the community and within the legal system.

Participant 6. Working with tenants union as an organizer dealing primarily with housing issues, what I've learned is, particularly for [predominately Black and Latino] young men who lived there. The sons of most of the organizers who I worked with who were moms...their sons and their brothers and boyfriends and husbands and fathers, to some extent, were constantly being harassed by the police.

Providing checks and balances over police authority. Participants also reported the need for Know Your Rights workshops as providing checks and balances over police discretionary power and lack of institutional accountability ($n=4$).

Participant 1. [Because the police] make and break their own laws...and do things that are illegal all the time, [Know Your Rights is necessary for] stopping police brutality from happening in general.

Participant 6. When I got out of law school, I became a public defender, and that there is pretty much the front line to the civil rights movement, defending the rights of the individual, and through the individual, [the rights of] society as a whole...against all these types of violations...[Y]ou [as a public defender] are there as a check on the police. You are there to conduct a more thorough and hardy investigation. You are there to make sure they are not hiding stuff. You are there to challenge the reasons for the accusation and crime.

Participant 4 recalled the lack of any checks and balances when addressing the incident between his younger sister and her harassment by six police officers. When they tried to file a complaint within the school administration, they were discouraged by the school administrators. This participant's inability to find any recourse for what he understood to be an act of violation against his younger sister by law enforcement prompted him to become involved in Know Your Rights and other anti-police brutality organizing.

Participant 4. We ended up coming to the school to report it, and they said they couldn't do anything. And then we went to the chief [of] police to see what we could do about it, and he told us that our rights were limited when we confronted the police...[W]e went to the school board and talked about it, and they pretty much...told my parents that they didn't want any of this to get out of hand and that they didn't want any of us to get hurt. But it was like, why are we going to get hurt if we're just trying to bring this up? So it was like a threat at the same time, between the school and the police.

The vulnerability of the undocumented community to threats of deportations, which made filing complaints against instances of police brutality and misconduct dangerous, also prompted Participants 2, 4, and 5 to become involved in anti-police brutality organizing as a way to provide checks and balances on police discretionary authority. For example, Participant 4 recalled an incident when the police department took advantage of the loophole within the Trust Act in order to call on the Immigrations Custom Enforcement (ICE) to arrest and deport an undocumented man who was on his way to his court hearing regarding police brutality against him.

Personal experience. Finally, two participants reported personal experience with some form of police harassment or brutality as a motivation for anti-police brutality organizing ($n=2$). These incidents included their own experiences or those suffered by family members or close community members.

Participant 4. I wasn't really into it [Cop Watching and Know Your Rights organizing] until I was running into a lot of police harassments, especially with my little sisters... [M]y little sisters, they started getting harassed by school police officers... [The cop] pulled us over and...we ended up recording the cop that was pulling over my little sister [who was eleven-year-old]. He ended up telling off on my little sister and he ended up calling cops, there was like six cops on the scene.

According to Participant 5, mothers of the victims of police shooting in Anaheim have been leading anti-police violence actions within the community.

Participant 5. Though their sons have passed away, they still want to do something about police brutality and make sure that the issue is always out there, because there is people going through it [police violence and shootings] all the time.

Personal experience living in a neighborhood affected by police brutality also prompted a participant to become involve in anti-police brutality organizing and Know Your Rights trainings. One story he related was about a neighbor who was severely beaten by police who were part of a special police unit targeting gang activity.

Participant 6. There used to be a [police] gang there called CRASH. The acronym was Community Resources Against Street Hoodlum...They were like a paramilitary organization. The police as a whole was to some extent a paramilitary organization, but CRASH was even more so...[T]hey used very aggressive tactics and in putting down who they perceived as gangs...[There was] one particular incident when I got out of college...Gary was a guy in the neighborhood who was in his 30's, who had never been involved with a gang, who maybe got a little in trouble when he was younger, but he has a very good reputation in the neighborhood...and CRASH had driven through the neighborhood. They had already jacked up and beat up one guy, and they came up to Gary...went up behind him and said something to him...[H]e didn't jump out of the way quick enough and one of the cops circled around and they all jumped out and they just got on him, beating the hell out of him, beating him and

handcuffed him and kicked him...And this was happening in the middle of the day...range from 8 to 15 cops on this one guy.

Goals of Know Your Rights Organizing

This section presents the perceived goals of Know Your Rights organizing (see Table 4). These activities were seen as serving multiple purposes within an overall framework of addressing police brutality and misconduct.

TABLE 3. Goals of Know Your Rights Organizing ($N = 6$)

Variable	f^*	%
Educate communities on their rights	6	100%
Safety during police encounter	6	100%
Decentralize anti-police brutality organizing	4	67%
Build alternative institutions	4	67%
Protect from self-incrimination	3	50%
Expose police violence	3	50%

*Participants responded to more than one variable.

Educate communities on their rights. Each participant cited a goal of Know Your Rights and anti-police brutality organizing as a way to educate the community on their rights with regard to police abuse and violence ($n=6$). Participants cited the immediate goal of educating community members on their rights with law enforcement. Education was also seen way to facilitate critical analysis and discussion on broader policies and legislation that would affect the community including and extending beyond the issue of law enforcement.

Within the category of rights education is the need debunk myths, such as the myth that the police are legally obligated to read Miranda rights before making an arrest,

so that the public has a better understanding of their rights in order to make better decisions when approached by the police.

The goal of community empowerment also includes linkages between education on more immediate rights, broader knowledge of the workings of the criminal justice system and the ways that rights knowledge can bring legal and political power to community members.

Participant 5. One of my main goals is to let other people know about what their rights are, and that they can ask questions, and they can just affirm their rights with the officers and not be scared of it. And that is the only way you can assure yourself that you won't be taken advantage of, is by asserting rights.

Participant 2. There are some kind of police that are fearful of legal retaliation, so you use that for your advantage. And then in court, you said you evoked all your rights, maybe you have kind of a legal standing...there are different ways to which people use Know Your Rights as a kind of leverage in favor of people who are experiencing a lot of police violence in their communities.

Safety during police encounter. Another goal is to ensure the safety of the community, whether they are cop watching or not, by using knowledge of rights to safely handle an encounter with a police officer ($n=6$). Specifically, participants reported that Know Your Rights workshop content aimed to prevent violence against vulnerable community members, and especially affected youth, by educating them on how to handle themselves in a dignified manner and deescalate the encounter when they are approached by the police.

Participant 2. When you're doing cop watch or even if you're an individual and you know your rights, when you start evoking particular rights like your rights to an attorney, to not want to have to say anything unless you have an attorney present. Evoking those can often really help you and can help other people...to make sure again no one's rights are being violated.

Likewise, another purpose of knowing one's rights is to limit the time one interacts with the police in order to minimize the risk of the encounter escalating into violence. These include specific instructions for community members when encountering the police such as not making sudden movements or taking other actions that might exacerbate the police encounter, especially if they are alone.

Provide protections from self-incrimination. With a better understanding of rights, the public can also be more informed on the available legal resources, such as the benefit of having a free public defender as oppose to a costly private attorney with questionable legal skills and knowledge within criminal court. Protections from law enforcement extends to the level of the court where rights knowledge can help to avoid self-incrimination ($n=3$).

Participant 6. [Know Your Rights is about] how to protect your rights...not how to get beat up, but it's also about how to protect and assert your rights to not be detained unlawfully, you know, but being confessionally coerced.

Expose level of police violence. Another goal of Know Your Rights and cop watching is to expose the level of police violence within the community ($n=3$).

Participant 2. Liberalism tends to work within the framework that we have been given and that we have rights, we should evoke [our rights]. But I know that other people who use that as a way to expose certain truths and certain absurdity of established law and order...because I've seen some people evoke their [constitutional] rights and then the police will disregard that completely...it exposes the absurdity of who has the power to grant rights.

Participant 1. [The goal of Know Your Right is to] defend [community members] not only in the court system, but also a way to document and expose what is going on in the community and expose individual cops as well as the institution of the police as a whole.

Thus, Know Your Rights activities can provide further documentation of a more underlying system of oppression, one in which even the laws that are meant to uphold citizen rights can be exposed as false.

Decentralize anti-police brutality organizing. Another reported goal was to ensure that anti-police brutality organizing was decentralized. Know Your Rights activities were meant to provide opportunities for community members to create their own anti-police brutality and cop watch organizations, thereby promoting local leadership and organizational capacity ($n=4$).

Participant 2. We try to decentralize [cop watch organizing] as much as possible so [community members] don't rely on us solely...[T]his is something that you can do without the help of an "organizer" or someone who is in a position to call themselves such. You know, you could just be a regular person and help out that way.

Participant 1. I think the role or goal is not be a vanguard organization where we feel like we are going to fight *for* people, but try to get people to support the training resources and skills building so that they can start their own cop watching within their own community.

Participant 6. We do have the right and the moral obligation to stand up for ourselves. The idea that we are in it together, right?...That idea of building a network of non-violent, peaceful resistance based on the idea of solidarity, of looking out for each other.

Participants 1, 2, and 4 voiced concern that the anti-police brutality movement not be limited to activist students. Instead, participants aimed for Know Your Rights and other related activities such as cop watching to be accessible and accountable to the community. In this way, communities could possess and make sense of their own experience in order to create self-help strategies and protect each other from police violence.

Create alternative, autonomous institutions. By extension, another long term goal was for the community to create alternative, autonomous institutions that could replace the current system of capitalism and state power that foster police violence and other forms of oppressions ($n=4$).

Participant 4. For our group, goals are not necessarily teaching people rights, but more like trying to build an autonomous community with our own community, and not relying on external governmental forces to control how we live...and not rely on non-profit organizations and other governmental forms of help that are themselves perpetuating other forms of inequality [by not addressing the roots of the issues that affect communities].

Participant 1. [With community autonomy,] eventually the police will become obsolete, and we wouldn't have that kind of terrorism, and they wouldn't be allowed to murder you in the community without any consequences.

Outcomes of Know Your Rights Organizing

This section details the perceived outcomes of Know Your Rights. The outcomes of Know Your Rights appeared most visibly in the prevention of police violence in individual situations of police-community encounters and in the implementation of cop watching as a closely related component of Know Your Rights (see Table 7).

Deter police violence. Participants report that majority of the time, the police would back off and let people go when rights were evoked or when there is a cop watcher present ($n=6$). Know Your Rights in addition to the tactic of filming police encounters have helped deterred some violence escalation with the police.

Participant 2. Since we were starting to do cop watching in like, maybe early 2012, we noticed that there was a kind of hindrance of police escalation, police surveillance on the streets. And a lot of people in the community were like, very thankful for that to us. And sometimes they would come and knock, the kids would knock on our door like, "help! There's police outside and they're harassing us." And we'll come out.

Participant 5. The police behavior [at checkpoints] has been better, because we have been able to organize ourselves better too. We noticed they are not as harsh on the driver anymore. There's been times that we have been reporting police incidents and police actions with community members, and I've seen that the police will just let the person go and not be so rough on them...as opposed to what would have happened if we hadn't been there recording that.

Participant 3. Difficult to say whether [Know Your Rights] is a positive or is it an increase of better community [and police] relations...I would say I have noticed, maybe, lower reporting [of negative police interactions] to me from the youths that I would with...I wouldn't say a lot, but it's just less frequent, but that could also be because I have less interaction with the youths that I work with.

Participant 6. Often, the success is in holding the line...things haven't gotten worse, police have backed off a little bit, and we're still here.

TABLE 4. Outcomes of Know Your Rights Organizing ($N = 6$)

Variable	f^*	%
Deter police violence	6	100%
Empower vulnerable communities	6	100%
Increase anti-police brutality involvement	5	83%
Increase community capacity for self-help	4	67%

*Participants responded to more than one variable.

Empower vulnerable communities. According to participant perceptions, Know Your Rights did achieve the goal of empowering vulnerable populations, such as youth, helping them feel more confident when handling an encounter with the police ($n=6$).

Participant 1 felt that knowing one's rights could be threatening to a police officer, and "makes [the police] think twice before messing with you."

Participant 2. Sometimes, people who know their rights to a tee will completely talk their way out of an engagement or out of an arrest entirely based on [them knowing their rights].

Participant 1. Even though we let them know that it might not work all the time, it's still allowing young people feel more confident when interacting with police and not incriminating themselves. And seeing the police stand down, I think it

shifts power too, like push back and enforce our rights. We see a power shift into the hands of the people, where it should be.

Participant 3. I think [Know Your Rights] have affected [the youth] positively, because the youth we are working with in urban areas, there is not sense that the police can do whatever they want, you know. I mean, yeah, [the youth] do understand there is laws and there are consequences of what they are doing but...I think [Know Your Rights] have been effective in creating a sense of empowerment of all the youth we are working with.

Participant accounts stated that as community members keep asserting their rights, police officers may, in many cases, eventually comply with the law.

Increase anti-police brutality involvement. According to the participants, Know Your Rights, along with other cop watching activities such as filming police interactions, have helped facilitate a community-centered anti-police brutality movement across Southern California ($n=5$). Communities from different cities, from Orange County to the Inland Empire, from Downtown Los Angeles to Long Beach to Irvine, have invited organizers to come and facilitate Know Your Rights workshops as a way to jump start their own anti-police brutality organization.

Participant 5. When we get more requests, like after the [Know Your Rights] workshop, usually more requests for other locations to do workshops, because the audience will say, "Oh, this will be helpful to other people, why not have one here at this location."

Participant 6. Even if it is a handful of kids in a room who never realized that they had these rights, and learn that, and maybe they tell their friends and pass it on and keep that knowledge [of rights] alive because nobody remembers that we are supposed to have rights.

Know Your Rights activities resulted in an increase in local communities starting their own anti-police brutality and cop watch organizing.

Participant 4. The community themselves started coming when [the police] had checkpoints near their neighborhoods. They would actually come out and warn the people. They would stay there until like two or three in the morning. ...like,

actually people are standing up and seeing you organize yourself...and they themselves taking actions and doing direct action by, pretty much, protecting their neighborhood.

Participant 5. The [Know Your Rights] meeting will be like 45 minutes, and it ends up taking longer just because there is so much to get into...but every moment is very useful because it's something that people didn't know before, and because it is something new, they are going to go back and talk to other people about it.

Participant 6. People will come in with their citations and a crew of volunteer lawyers and a crew of community volunteers, some of them are homeless themselves...We've helped people avoid warrants and keep them out of jail...Maybe we are holding the line a little bit...A lot of the success is just providing some basic relief for people, providing some element of hope and trying to make sure things don't get worse.

Participants also shared that Know Your Rights organizing resulted in a better grasp of rights and legal knowledge that translated into stronger organizing efforts without the pressure of the police and other hostile state institutions.

Participant 6. One organization that I worked was getting cracked down by the police and the court, but not anymore. There is a lot of factors to it, and I would like to think one factor is that they got good legal representation and advice, and I've been part of that.

Increase community capacity for self-help. Another reported outcome was increased community self-help that was fostered through direct actions against police misconduct and other discriminatory policies, such as the direct action against police checkpoints ($n=4$). Community success in these areas provided more motivation for communities to continue building their capacity for resistance to violence and self-protection. In some cases, this expanded to other areas of solidarity and the meeting of community needs.

Participant 5. There are cases of community policing, like little pockets of it...there's a real tight-knit community where something happens, say someone passes away, that community will hold fundraisers. They'll talk to each other and

help each other out. So if there is a fundraiser for someone, this neighbor will bring this dish and you know. That's real community policing. That's accountability for your own community.

Self-help efforts were made to create community-run programs based on community needs assessment. Participant 1 reported a food program that has fed around 300 families every weekend. Other participants felt that education has changed the cultural norm of individualism and helplessness, prompting community members to organize different ways to ensure a safer community.

Participant 2. I feel like I have a pretty well-established community... after we put in all those efforts together, and we are still meeting up about some of these issues of gentrification, gang injunctions, and rising rents. People are still working against that. I know that there's still a lot of work to be done... But what comes after doing all this work is bridging those relationships and building more relationships to create networks against displacement so it has been helpful.

Participant 5. Because we all have been working with each other for so long now, that we all kind of know how we all work. We have friendly relationships too, so that helps with organizing because we trust each other.

Challenges to Know Your Rights Organizing and Achieving Goals

This section details the challenges and barriers to implementing Know Your Rights and achieving goals (see Table 8).

TABLE 5. Challenges of Know Your Rights Organizing ($N = 6$)

Variable	f^*	%
Police discretion	4	67%
Hard to measure impact	2	33%
Limited to student activists	2	33%
Personal/daily obligations	2	33%

*Participants responded to more than one variable.

Police discretion. Some police officers do fear legal retaliation from their victims, but the success of Know Your Rights and cop watching in terms of deterring police violence depended on the type of officer encountered ($n=4$). In some cases, police became more aggressive towards someone who is trying to assert their rights.

Participant 4. If you end up trying to, like, pretty much practice your rights...[the police] would be really aggressive toward you, and they would really try to dominate you, pretty much try to use force against you, or verbal or emotional, or psychological...where they can coerce you to do what they want you to do.

Certain police officers arrested individuals for filming the encounter.

Participant 2. Some people have gotten arrested for just filming the police, and again, you have every right to film the police. But sometimes, they will adjust the law according to their situation, and be like, "Oh, you're interfering with this investigation, so now I'm going to arrest you"...that kinda breaks the façade of...the First Amendment rights, freedom of press...the right to film that interaction.

As result, participants identified that police discretion over the law posed challenges. This was apparent when the police prevented Participant 2 from filming police interactions meant to provide checks and balances on police power. Further, sometimes the police officer used the very presence of the cop watcher to justify an arrest.

Hard to measure impact. Effectiveness of achieving the goals was hard to measure, especially when the goals of building an empowered community require long-term, perpetual efforts ($n=2$). Additionally, the level of negative interactions between community members, such as the youth and police officers were difficult to measure.

Participant 3. The only thing that may be a little difficult to engage would be how [the youth] would implement [the knowledge of their rights] in real life situations, because I don't know...whether it's effective or not.

Limited to student activists. Two participants expressed that there have not been enough efforts on their part to ensure that organizing efforts are not limited to student organizing spaces or among self-proclaimed activists ($n=2$).

Participant 1. I think activists tend to have this approach that they are going to “save” people. They have their savior complex, instead of working with people and seeing that they already have power.

Personal/daily obligations. Personal obligations also made it difficult to take part in organizing activities ($n=2$).

Participant 4. For me, it’s trying to balance everything out...I go to school, I have like two jobs, and I do organizing. So I guess sometimes it’s really hard to be able to accommodate everything and sometimes have time to organize too.

These personal difficulties reflected the lack of resources, such as time, money, and energy, which anti-police brutality organizers often faced. They also reflected structural inequalities between organizers and the police. These difficulties deterred more people from committing themselves to organizing, even if the issue did affect them.

Participant 6. Well, there is not enough of us. There is not enough people organizing. The lack of resources...the other side [i.e., stakeholders who have invested interest in militarizing the police] has all the money and all the guns. Plain and simple, they run the legal system, and you know, they’ve got the money and the entrenched interests...in a system that answers to money, and we don’t have it.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to conduct an exploratory qualitative study of community education and organizing around the issue of police misconduct with an emphasis on Know Your Rights activities. The study was based upon interviews with six Know Your Rights organizers based upon their experiences with Know Your Rights trainings and their activities addressing police brutality and misconduct. Findings addressed participant motivation for Know Your Rights organizing, goals of Know Your Rights organizing, outcomes of Know Your Rights organizing, and challenges to Know Your Rights organizing.

Discussion

Despite the familiarity of Know Your Rights workshops in anti-police brutality organizing, little or no scholarship has examined the character of the work, its organizers, its beneficiaries, or its outcomes. This exploratory case study focused on the experiences, attitudes and perceptions of six Know Your Rights organizers in the Los Angeles and Orange County area to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities of organizing intended to empower vulnerable communities to challenge police brutality and misconduct.

Interviews revealed the everyday occurrence of police surveillance, harassment of community members including children, and the targeting of communities of color,

youth, immigrants and the homeless. Examples of police misconduct aligned with the literature on local racial profiling by the police especially with regard to gang-related activities (Duran, 2009), police misconduct against individuals experiencing homelessness (Stuart, 2011), and excessive targeting of African American and Latino communities (Bhimiji, 2013; Fagan & Davies, 2000; Kane, 2002; Matrofski, et al., 2002; Smith & Holmes, 2003; Terrill & Reisig, 2003).

The primary findings, however, offer new insights into Know Your Rights and other anti-police brutality activities, a topic that has received scant attention in the literature (Charney, et al., 2010). Not surprisingly, organizers identified the education of communities vulnerable to violence as their primary motivation for organizing and the anticipated goal of this activity. Other goals ranged from the more immediate benefits of education about rights to pragmatic skills to de-escalate tensions in police encounters and to reduce the potential risks of self-incrimination in the case of arrest and detention.

Research findings also identified that Know Your Rights workshops aimed to provide checks and balances on police discretionary authority, as a means to keep police departments accountable. Perceived patterns of police abuse of authority, structural inequalities in the powers of law enforcement versus those of the community and the lack of institutional accountability reflect the scholarship reporting police misconduct as a systemic problem (Babovic, 2000; Chaney & Robertson, 2013; Grant, 2003; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2004). In order to challenge these abuses, organizers and community members used Know Your Rights Education and the acts of exercising these rights to enforce these procedural laws themselves. Creating strategies to safely handle a police

encounter both in the streets and in the judicial courts served to provide protective measures that police in targeted communities failed to maintain.

Organizers were also aware of the tendency for anti-police organizing to become the arena of the political elite. A few explicitly discussed more ambitious goals for community autonomy and the ability to attain self-determination through self-policing. The realities, however, often fell short of these ideals. Lack of resources, busy lives especially among people with little means and great structural disadvantages contributed to identified challenges.

Participants were able to enumerate successful outcomes from their organizing that matched their goals. They recounted events in which community members deflected police violence, gained confidence in new knowledge about rights and strategies, and organized community members to protect those targeted by the police. They also expressed limited achievement in broader goals to gain more autonomy within communities.

The organizers also saw their Know Your Rights work as important tools to challenge other related policies such as gang injunctions, police checkpoints, and gentrification. They viewed these policies as veiled means to increase police surveillance and discretionary authority within oppressed communities. In line with the literature on conflict theory and racial threat (Carmichael & Kent, 2014; Lersch, 1998), the participants perceived such local policies to be based upon structural inequalities and to target poor communities of color. Whereas the formal institutions of law enforcement and the judicial system have created a history of distrust among poor, communities of color (Brunson & Miller, 2006a, 2006b; Kane, 2005; Warren, 2011), Know Your Rights

activities and the broader movement of which they are a part appear to be legitimate community-based attempts to address the gaps and failures of formal institutions.

Limitations

One of the limitations in this research was the use of a small sample. Due to the hard to reach population of anti-police brutality organizers and the time limit of this thesis project, the researcher recognizes that the results of this study are not generalizable to the whole anti-police brutality organizing community. Further, the results of the study are also not generalizable to other communities outside of the Los Angeles and Orange County areas. Limitations of this study also include interviewer bias and subjectivity.

Need for Further Research

Due to the importance of the issue of police brutality and misconduct particularly in communities of color, research in this area is critically needed. Although this issue is critical to the greater society, it particularly impacts vulnerable, oppressed populations, such as undocumented community members, youths of color, and the homeless community, those identified as the intended beneficiaries of Know Your Rights workshops and trainings.

As communities work to empower and protect themselves from police violence, this exploratory case study regarding the effectiveness and usefulness of Know Your Rights activities, a primary strategy for community-based responses, is timely. Further research will benefit the primary targets of police violence and the practice and research community interested in eliminating police abuse.

Implications for Social Work Practice and Policy

This exploratory qualitative case study aims to fill the research gap on community responses to police brutality by focusing more narrowly on Know Your Rights organizing. Participants of this study revealed important insights into their motivations and goals for organizing, the successes of community responses to police brutality and the challenges they face as they try to reach their goals. Research into community responses to police brutality is important to social work as it most directly impacts the most vulnerable populations including those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, marginalized racial and ethnic communities, immigrants and individuals experiencing homelessness.

Insight from this study is crucial for social workers to have a better understanding of macro practice in the area of community education and organizing around issues of police misconduct. Through a more comprehensive understanding of community organizing, social workers can develop improved resources for clients who live in neighborhoods with high level of police surveillance in order to minimize the multiple levels of harm that can arise from police misconduct and tensions with law enforcement.

This research is relevant to the social work profession's commitment to social justice. Understanding grassroots community organizers' efforts and perspectives as they relate to anti-police brutality organizing, and, by extension, their critical analysis of structural issues and solutions, is crucial to culturally-competent micro and macro-level practice. Their emphasis on individual and community-level self-determination also contributes to social work practice and policy that respects these values. Further, by understanding the social, cultural, political, and economic historical context of police

brutality, social workers can also challenge mainstream narratives regarding issues of police brutality, such as victim-blaming, that can further victimize the affected communities or underestimate the impact of these forms of structural violence.

Through understanding the challenges organizers face, in terms of barriers posed by federal, state, or local policies, social workers can be allies in advocating against policies that further increase police discretionary power and, thereby, undermine community safety and self-determination. Social workers can act to leverage additional pressure against state policies that have failed to give room to community voices and concerns. Likewise, social workers can help ease the stress of organizing by advocating for more community resources and spaces in order to expand platforms for community voices within the policy making process.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
ORAL SCRIPT

Hello, my name is Nhi Dang, and I'm currently a student at CSU Long Beach. I am doing a community-centered thesis research project for my master of social work program, and hope to interview organizers who work to combat police brutality within the community. The purpose of this research is to explore the goals and effects of educating the public on their rights as a community respond to police brutality. This study will also explore community organizers' goals and perceptions of the successes and challenges that come with organizing around the issue of police brutality and educating the community on their rights when stopped by the police.

I want to learn more about organizers' strategies and ways communities have responded to police brutality, such as facilitating "Know Your Rights" workshops. I am also interested in learning more about the successes and challenges that comes with empowering the community on how to protect themselves against police brutality. I hope that the knowledge generated by this research can be helpful as a way to document strategies and resources available within the community.

To ensure that this research accessible, I plan to disseminate the results with community organizations that work around the issue of police brutality.

If you agree to be part of the study, you will be answering question in a one-on-one interview. The interview would last a maximum of 90 minutes. Participation is voluntary, and if you are interested, here is my contact information and we can agree on a date, time, and location we can meet.

APPENDIX B
RECRUITMENT FLYER

COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS NEEDED!

ARE YOU:

- WORKING CLOSELY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY ON THE ISSUE OF POLICE BRUTALITY OR MISCONDUCT?
- PRESENTING OR HAVE PRESENTED “KNOW YOUR RIGHTS” WORKSHOPS ON POLICE BRUTALITY OR MISCONDUCT?
- WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE LA COUNTY OR THE OC?
- AGE 18 AND OVER?

I WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO YOU!

I invite you to participate in a study to increase awareness on the issue of police brutality and misconduct within LA County and the OC

Your participation in this brief interview can help social workers and other concerned advocates aid current community responses to police brutality and meet the needs of communities who have experienced police brutality and misconduct.

If you are interested in participating, please give contact me at:

Nhi Dang
(XXX) XXX-XXX

Or

XXX@student.csulb.edu

Your participation is voluntary.
Interviews are 1 to 1.5 hours.

This study is part of my thesis for the Master of Social Work program at California State University, Long Beach

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you.

APPENDIX C
CONSENT FORM

Consent to Participate in Research: Community Responses to Police Misconduct and Brutality

Introduction and Purpose

My name is Nhi Dang. I am a graduate student at California State University, Long Beach, working with my thesis advisor, Professor Mimi Kim, in the School of Social Work.

I would like to invite you to take part in my research study, which concerns the anti-police brutality movement, its successes and limitations as a community response to police brutality. The project welcomes you as an organizer, who works to combat police brutality within the community, to share your reflections on current resources and responses to police brutality, the context of such responses, the outcome from such responses, and its impact on the community.

Procedures. Our interview will take approximately one hour to an hour and a half. With your permission, the interview will be recorded using a digital recorder. If you agree to being audiotaped, but feel uncomfortable at any time during the interview, I can turn off the recorder at your request. If you do not like to be audio taped, I will take handwritten notes throughout the interview. You are free to see these notes if you desire. Given the time constraint, you will not be able to review, erase, or edit the audio tapes. The tapes will be destroyed right after transcription.

We will also take periodic breaks. Please feel free to request a break at any time.

Benefits. There is not direct benefit to you from taking part in this study. It is hoped that this interview and research project can make contributions to our understanding of community responses to the important issues of police brutality.

Possible risks or discomforts. Recalling events and sharing opinions regarding your experiences in anti-police brutality work could possibly lead to discomfort. There may be concerns about your confidentiality, given that the questions are about your experience with organizing around the issue of police misconduct and brutality. Please note that you are free at any time to decline answering any question or halt further participation in this interview.

Confidentiality. Your interview responses will be handled confidentially. If results of this study are published or presented, individual names and other personally identifiable information will not be used. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

All audio recordings, notes, and transcripts will be kept in a locked box. The tapes/digital files of the recordings will be destroyed upon transcription. When the research is

completed, I may save the recordings, notes, and transcripts for future research done by myself. I will retain these records for up to three years from November 2015, after the study is over. Only my thesis advisor, Mimi Kim, and I have access to the raw data files.

Compensation. Participants will not be paid for taking part in this study.

Rights. Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You are free to decline to take part in the project. You can decline to answer any questions and are free to stop taking part in the project at any time. Whether or not you choose to participate in the research and whether or not you choose to answer a question or continue participating in the project, there will be no penalty to you or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

For more information. If you have further questions or want more information, you can contact Nhi Dang at nhi.dang@student.csulb.edu or call/text at 626-315-4961. If you have any question regarding the study, you can also contact my thesis advisor: Mimi Kim at mimi.kim@csulb.edu. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant in this study, please contact the Office of Research & Sponsored Programs at 562-985-5314 or email ORSP-Compliance@csulb.edu.

Consent to Participate. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep for your own records. If you wish to participate in this study, please sign and date below.

Participant's signature

Date

Participant's name (please print)

If you agree to be audio taped, please sign and date below.

Participant's signature

Date

Participant's name (please print)

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What are some of the community education or organizing regarding police brutality of which you have been involved?
 - a. What are the goals behind these strategies?
 - b. What are the goals behind “Know Your Rights” activities (if different)?
 - c. How did the campaign or organizing effort start?
 - d. Who is your target population?
2. Looking specifically at Know Your Rights (or similar) activities, do you think you have been able to reach these goals? Explain.
 - a. How can you tell when you have reached that goal?
 - b. How has educational activities or organizing affected the target population?
3. What have been the outcomes (of Know Your Rights strategies) on community-police relations and behaviors?
 - a. Does the outcome match the goals? How? How not?
4. How effective do you think these strategies have been?
 - a. What are some things that have affected your effectiveness?
 - b. What have been challenges?
5. Do you think there are any needed improvements to Know Your Rights activities? Explain.
 - a. How can organizers go about improving those aspects of the educational efforts?
6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

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