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## Perceived Level Of Use Of Force By Police: The Impact Of Video Mode Of Delivery

Higinio G. Reyes

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PERCEIVED LEVEL OF USE OF FORCE BY POLICE: THE IMPACT OF VIDEO MODE  
OF DELIVERY

A Thesis

by

HIGINIO GUILLERMO REYES JR.

Submitted to Texas A&M International University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

May 2018

Major Subject: Criminal Justice

Perceived Level of Use of Force by Police: The Impact of Videos based on Mode of Delivery

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Approved as to style and content by:

Chair of Committee,	Kate Houston
Committee Members,	Marcus Ynalvez
	Thomas T. Zawisza
	Fei Luo
Head of Department,	Lynne Manganaro

May 2018

Major Subject: Criminal Justice

**ABSTRACT**

Perceived Level of Use of Force by Police: The Impact of Video Mode of Delivery

(May 2018)

Higinio Guillermo Reyes Jr., B.S. Criminal Justice, Texas A&M International University;  
A.A.S Criminal Justice, Laredo Community College;

Chair of Committee: Dr. Kate Houston

Law enforcement officers have been entrusted for over 200 years to protect and serve our communities and citizens. Although this trust has been placed in the hands of our most highly braved citizens, it seems that such entrustment can be violated by law enforcement officers when conducting an arrest. Throughout the years there have been incidents where the trust placed in law enforcement officers has been tested. Furthermore, as has been seen in recent months, sometimes violation of this trust leads to brutality and fatal officer-involved shooting incidents. This research investigated whether an arrest is viewed differently by our citizens in light of these incidents of police brutality documented in the media. The central aim of this thesis was to investigate whether a muting of the audio on a video depicting police brutality, as the media often does when showing such footage, affects the level of perceived violence. Furthermore, another aim of this thesis was to investigate whether higher levels of education impacts ratings of the justifiability of perceived violence. This research data revealed that there was a statistical significant association when audio was present or absent, but revealed no statistical significant association throughout education year level.

## DEDICATION

To those fallen first responders on the line of duty, who paid the ultimate sacrifice in protecting our freedom as law enforcement or with military service.

Especially, to my fallen brother Lance Corporal Brandon T. Lara, who I had the pleasure of having under my charge in the United States Marine Corps during Operation Iraqi Freedom July 19, 2009.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and for most I want to thank my committee chair, Dr. Kate Houston, for her guidance and mentorship throughout this research.

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Further, without the cooperation of the participants and panel members this experimental research wouldn't have been possible, Thank you.

Most importantly, thank you to my family and friends for their unconditional support throughout my educational path.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Citizens within all communities, not just minority communities, entrust law enforcement professionals to protect them and to serve them. According to Cooper (1997), society's outlook towards law enforcement officers has transformed from concepts of hefty, domineering physical characteristics of a police officer, to an individual that possesses a diversity of skills (i.e. positive personality, great mental strength, and effective communications) capable of rendering a positive outcome to dangerous situations. In support of this public perception, our law enforcement officers obtain certification through a rigorous education course. However, recent publicly documented cases of police brutality towards the general public suggest that certain law enforcement officers detour from the path of protecting and serving their communities. The spate of protests and violent riots in the wake of these incidents demonstrate that the trust which citizens place in law enforcement officers has been highly jeopardized due to the violence that certain officers utilize when conducting an arrest, raising high concern within advocacy groups, academics, politicians and law enforcement regarding the extent and future of these practices (Schafer, Carter & Katz-Bannister, 2004).

In the infamous police brutality case on March 3, 1991, Mr. Rodney King was brutally assaulted by officers after a vehicular high speed chase (Riordan, 1994). Upon Mr. King exiting his vehicle the police officers deployed a Taser and stuck him with their batons, arguing that he failed to follow the police officers' commands (Riordan, 1994).

However, the crucial difference between past cases and the Rodney King case was an 81

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This thesis follows the model of *Law and Human Behavior*.

second video tape depicting the altercation with audio recording (Loftus & Rosenwald, 1993).

The video tape documenting the incident was transmitted through media outlets nationwide (Loftus & Rosenwald, 1993). In spite of the video evidence however, and in a pattern still observed in more recent cases, the officers involved were acquitted of nearly all charges (i.e. all civil rights violations) (Loftus & Rosenwald, 1993). The media documented how the outcome of Mr. King's trial impacted the African American community in Los Angeles, California; in response to the courts verdict acquitting the police officers, the community erupted in riots and protests. The federal courts later convicted the police officers involved in Mr. King's civil rights violations (Staff, 2017).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Although police brutality has been a somewhat persistent issue, which has recently been highlighted by our media, there is still a distinct lack of understanding of why such brutality is occurring. One possible theory suggests that law enforcement officers may be more inclined to resort to a higher level of force on suspects who reside in low income communities, as well as neighborhoods with higher possibilities of criminal activities (Terrill & Reisig, 2003). However, as most law enforcement officers are equipped with the tools within a level of force continuum (from non-lethal to lethal tools) to enable them to safely conduct an arrest or detention, questions remain as to why some officers appear to opt for lethal tools, straight for the very far end of the spectrum. Hall et al. (2013) highlights the level of force continuum at law enforcement officer's disposal as: physical control by pressure points or stunning techniques, suspect takedowns by arm bars or sweeps, and impact weapons (i.e. Oleoresin Capsicum (OC), Taser's and batons). Although police officers are able to use more than one tool, given the decision they are faced with officers tend to respond with one level of force higher than the level of resistance the

subject is showing (i.e. if the subject has a bat or metal rod the police officer will respond with a level higher such as a Taser, OC or even handgun, see Hall et al. 2013).

One possible explanation could be the level of fear which police officers have to deal with regarding their safety during arrests. For example, during the time period when the police brutality against Mr. King occurred, the tension and conflicts between the minority community and law enforcement were at an all-time high, with police and minority citizens often viewed as being at opposite sides of the field of justice, resulting in an “us versus them” viewpoint (Johnson, Farrell & Guinn, 1997). This fear-based atmosphere may have contributed to the circumstances surrounding the Rodney King incident: while Mr. King was exhibiting non-aggressive behavior, he was African American and was continuously struck with an impact weapon (baton) by police officers.

Incidents where law enforcement officers were deemed as using excessive force, from Chicago Riots of 1919 and the Watts’s riots of 1965, to the Miami riots of 1980 and the Rodney King incident, paved a road of reform among the law enforcement community. In light of these scenarios, law enforcement officers were required to undergo increased training with regards to their use of force (Pate & Fridell, 1993). Pate and Fridell (1993) illustrated within their research that law enforcement agencies began implementing academy training, continuous in-service training, field training programs, as well as programs which emphasize the importance of verbalization and human interaction skills rather than physical force to handle less severe situations.

Unfortunately, although almost two decades have passed since the Rodney King incident, tension among citizens and law enforcement officers continues to be unpredictable. May (2014) argues that law enforcement officers use of force strains, if not outweighs, the bond between the

community and their respective law enforcement agencies. In addition to the rigorous implementation of police department policies in an attempt to regulate the use of force, law enforcement officers are continuously placed in peculiar and dangerous situations in which crucial decisions need to be quickly made (May, 2014). For example, imagine a scenario where a law enforcement officer conducts a traffic stop. While approaching the vehicle to make contact with the suspect, the police officer notices the driver is rapidly reaching towards the passenger side. The officer is faced with making a critical life-or-death decision of whether to draw his handgun or not because the officer isn't aware of what the subject is reaching for and whether his life is in immediate danger.

The decision by the officer in this scenario could result in unnecessarily escalating the situation (officer draws a handgun when the target was simply retrieving his insurance documentation), or could result in the officer unnecessarily putting his life at risk if the target was reaching for a weapon. The fear experienced in such a scenario by the officer may be a crucial aspect of whether the scenario resolves peacefully or with a fatality.

### **Overview of the Research**

This experimental research is to illustrate that certain factors can affect the perception of how citizens view a law enforcement officer's use of force when conducting an arrest. If the ways in which the general public view police use of force can be further understood, then we can begin to develop better community relations and training programs for law enforcement officers.

The methodology for this thesis is largely based upon the work of Levin and Thomas (1997) which highlighted the concern of police officers use of force while arresting either white or black subjects. Levin and Thomas (1997) video recorded three staged arrest attempting to re-create the "Rodney King effect" where the arrest was viewed and recorded by bystanders.

Additionally, the three video recorded arrests were shown to a viewer (judge) one at a time (Levin & Thomas, 1997). The scenario arrests were conducted by members of the university campus security force who apprehended the volunteer subjects (Levin & Thomas, 1997).

After analyzing Levin and Thomas (1997), both strengths and weaknesses were contained within the research conducted that will be addressed within this experimental research. A weakness within Levin and Thomas (1997) is that the arrests themselves were conducted by university campus security officers, not police officers. Although on most university campuses security forces are managed by retired law enforcement officers (Levin & Thomas, 1997), the relevant type of use of force training received by retired law enforcement officers is outdated by years, if not decades. Therefore, raising concerns as to the generalizability of these findings to the current use of force incidents reported by the media.

This experimental research will attempt to conceptually replicate the methodology of Levin and Thomas (1997), while also addressing the issues with external validity within Levin and Thomas' (1997) research, specifically with regards to the stimuli videos. Instead of recreating a police arrest video by using university campus security officers, this study will consist of examining actual law enforcement officers conducting an arrest or detention of a subject.

Thereafter, the video footage will be viewed by university undergraduate students. Level of education will be measured to investigate whether it impacts judgments of use of force and legality of action. Furthermore, context will be manipulated by including or excluding the audio feed, as is often done when said videos are utilized by the media, in order to potentially skew the public opinion as to culpability of the officer, and the effect of this on perception of brutality or legality will be measured.



Given the highlights of the objective of the research, the following section will illustrate the factors of police brutality.

### **Factors that may Influence Perceptions of Police Brutality**

One possible factor to assist in understanding police brutality could be the concept of masculinity. Within our Western culture masculinity utilizing militarization has become a fundamental ideology (Higate & Hopton, 2004). Additionally, the presence of female police officers is still substantially lower than male officers. In the past three decades increases in the numbers of female police officers has only been supported via affirmative action policies, resulting in similar outcomes as minorities face in law enforcement agencies: small increases (Sklansky, 2006). Given that female officers make up approximately 9% of local police departments with approximately 100 officers, and 15% of local police departments with greater than 100 officers, the police force in general is still male dominated (Langton, 2010). The masculinity culture within the police force persists relatively unchecked.

Given the male dominance in law enforcement, the masculinity ideology may be associated with the excessive utilization of force among law enforcement officers while executing an arrest of an offender. As noted by Sklansky (2006), regardless of gender, the job of being a police officer shapes the person not the other way around in essence, blue is blue. Furthermore, females within a male dominated profession are under intense pressure to “fit in” and practices and behaviors engaged in to gain and maintain acceptance by fellow male counterparts can be of great impact on the masculinity of the work force (Smith & Holmes, 2003). Thus, even when female officers are concerned, masculinity within law enforcement agencies may continue to be a factor. Under this conceptualization, although law enforcement officers possibly utilize force to apprehend an offender out of necessity, such actions may be

viewed as a positive aspect of a male (Liddle, 1996). Thus, more force, or even excessive force, may be viewed with increased positivity and “maleness”.

Yet another factor which is likely to have a large role in police brutality incidents is the decision making process of the officer(s) involved. Criminal incidents in which use of force decisions have been made by law enforcement officers not only increase the likelihood of criminal and civil liability, but also result in the creation of new policy. As defined by Reiss (1980), decision theory is based on a sequence of choice making that impacts the action (i.e. decision) taken by the individual, or in this case, by the police officers. For instance, the United States Supreme Court has delivered rulings in regards to the level of force law enforcement officers can utilize in certain situations. One example is the case of *Graham v Connor* (1989) reported by May (2014), where a police officer encountered a passenger in a vehicle suffering from a diabetic emergency.

However, the officer improperly assessed the situation and determined that the passenger was intoxicated. In this case, the law enforcement officer failed to listen to the occupants of the vehicle who communicated that Graham was a diabetic and not intoxicated. Unfortunately, due to the officer’s incorrect assumption, the officer decided to use excessive force on Graham, which resulted in Graham sustaining injuries. The United States Supreme Court later determined the use of force in this context was an ‘*objectively reasonable*’ need to be met when handling with individuals (May, 2014).

“Objectively reasonableness” refers to a police officer making a decision or determination on a situation based on the facts or evidence at hand. For example, a police officer cannot stop or detain any citizen merely on the officer’s prejudice or subjective beliefs; the officer needs to have factors or reasonable suspicion to conduct the detention (May, 2014).

That decision making process of police officers during incidents may result in excessive use of force can be best illustrated by the Binder/ Scharf Model, which highlights four phases which an officer goes through during an encounter with a suspect (Scharf & Binder, 1983). The four phases pointed out by Scharf and Binder (1983), are: anticipation, entry and initial contact, information exchange, and final frame. The first phase is affected by the manner in which the officer encounters the initial response (i.e. via dispatch, or observation); the second phase is impacted as soon the police officer enters the scene or makes contact with the suspect; the third phase is determined by how the communication is transferred or conducted between the officer and suspect, and lastly, the fourth phase is the response used by the police officer, which is argued to be based on the information gathered by the officer in the first three phases (Fridell & Binder, 1992). Interestingly, throughout the decision making process law enforcement officers are vested with discretion, given that the majority of citizen encounters with the police are conducted without supervision (Alpert, MacDonald & Dunham, 2005; Walker, 1993).

The final factor that is typically considered in use of force discussions is that of race, specifically minorities. The recent documented cases of police brutality have tended to be white police officers “against” African American suspects/victims. Thus, race seems to be a crucial factor in these incidents. Prenzler, Porter and Alpert (2013) argue that minorities are more prone to being targeted by law enforcement officers than any other category of individual, due to occupying geographical locations which are considered high crime areas.

There is a concern that in high crime environments, the officer is influenced to resort to increased use of force due to a perceived increase of the threat level to their personal safety (Terrill & Reisig, 2003). Therefore, suspects encountered in high crime locations are more likely to experience increased use of force, potentially accounting for the strong role that race

seemingly plays in police brutality cases. (Terrill & Reisig, 2003). Moreover, the interaction between law enforcement officers and citizens are processed through the lenses of racial profiling (Reitzel, Rice & Piquero, 2004). However, as the factors of geographical location and race appear to be intrinsically linked, it is hard to ever pose, let alone answer, a question of whether police brutality has more to do with the geographical location of the encounter or with the race of the suspect, or a mixture of the two.

Categorization as a member of a minority occurs not only by an individual's ethnicity or race, but also by characteristics of the neighborhood of residence, such as low income or in poverty (Payne & Gainey, 2007). The perceptions of lower income neighborhoods are that they are prevalent with illegal activity, thus stereotyping such neighborhoods as unsafe (Crank et al., 2003). Hence, it is unsurprising that the perception of unsafe neighborhoods impacts a law enforcement officer's attitude and, ultimately, their decision making (Crank, Giacomazzi, & Heck, 2003; Priest & Carter, 1999).

Researchers have often utilized conflict theory to address the disparity between police and minorities. Conflict theory points out that laws are utilized by those in authoritative groups in society to maintain their best interest. This is done by distinguishing those whom are dangerous to society, such as minorities, the poor etc., from those who are not. Law enforcement officers, as entities of these laws, are therefore necessarily at a disparity and in conflict with individuals categorized as a threat to the greater society, irrespective of the usefulness or accuracy of such a categorization (Petrocelli, Piquero & Smith, 2003).

Holmes (2000) argues that a belief in equal justice as a political tenet seems to be highly viewed within the United States. However, increasingly minorities and racial groups continually

have to seek, and may even have to take extra steps to receive “equal justice” from our bureaucratic justice organizations (Holmes, 2000).

### **Moving the Use of Force discussion into the lab: Education Level, and Audio vs. Silence**

Levin and Thomas (1997) measured police brutality via two dimensions: violence and legality. In line with Levin and Thomas (1997), violence will be categorized in the current research as “justifiable”, “moderate” and “excessive” force, which is utilized by the police officer while conducting an arrest or detention. Measuring violence as justifiable, moderate or excessive use of force allows the viewer to determine the force used by the police officer without the need of the sample to have knowledge regarding the legality of the act. With this in mind, and in keeping with the extant literature, the term “excessive” will encompass these various key words: unlawful, unnecessary, and abusive (Bouza, 1990).

Various entities govern the level of force that a law enforcement officer can use when apprehending or detaining a suspect such as, United States Supreme Court, individual states, federal laws, state laws, and department polices, (Texas Criminal and Traffic Law Manual, 2017). For example, the United States Supreme Court decision in *Graham Connor* (1989) ruled that law enforcement officers needs to be “*objectively reasonable*” in determining the level of force used, which can be perceived as violence if abused. In addition, the “*totality of circumstances*” rule was established by the United States Supreme Court decision in *Illinois v. Gates* (1993), where no single factor is suggested or used in the determination of the use of force, but rather that one must consider all the facts they have on hand. Hence, reasonableness can be determined if another officer or individual with the same level of training, knowledge, and experience would have acted the same way if placed with the same “*totality of circumstances*” and being “*objectively reasonable*”.

Indeed, one criticism is that the distinction between justifiable, moderate and excessive force imposed on a suspect is difficult to assess. However, with regards to Texas, the home state of this research, the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure provides guidance towards the level of force Texas licensed peace officers (certified police officers) are able to utilize in effecting an arrest. Notably, all reasonable means are permitted in effecting an arrest, but no greater force shall be imposed on the detention or arrest of the accused unless it is ultimately necessary (Texas Criminal and Traffic Law Manual, 2017). Thus, the use of force is justified by law enforcement officers while making a detention or arrest, or protecting a third party (i.e. citizens, police officers etc.), only if the force is necessary.

However, from the public perspective, the level of force a law enforcement officer uses in conducting an arrest or detention can be influenced by the level of education the viewer holds.

### **Educational Levels**

According to the extant literature, the more education a student possesses the more mature in nature, knowledgeable about civil education and societal issues, as well as more likely to participate with expressing their point of views they become (Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Galston, 2001; Schultz et al. 2003). In contrast, as illustrated by Galston (2001), higher education on civil and political areas of study are declining within institutions, raising concerns among political scientists. During a three-decade survey conducted by the University of California, Los Angeles, a significant decrease in political and civil engagement by the student population was observed (Galston, 2001). The lack of awareness among the students was argued to be related to the increases of technology or social media outlets; younger adults are more inclined to gain their knowledge from new media outlets (i.e. Facebook, internet, etc.) compared to traditional newspaper and television (Bennett 1997; Sax et al. 1998, 1999; Natl. Assoc. Secr. State 1999;

Rahn, 1999). Furthermore, political and civic life encompasses every generation with higher education, which in turn increases maturity levels in young adults (Galston, 2001).

In essence, minority lower class adolescents as compared to upper class adolescents, have a higher level of maturity (compared to those who do not have an immediate family member with higher education such as a father or a mother with a college degree; see Selman, 1980). Pupil's social moral interaction is molded by educational institutions, promoting social moral enhancement as described by Cognitive developmental theorists (Kohlberg, 1984; Rest, 1979; Tuiel, 1966). Therefore, it would appear that educational institutions are fundamental in the maturity and character development of students (Berkowitz, 2002). According to Selman et al. (1997), youth's interactions with others correlate with their maturity level; hence increasing social interaction (i.e. participation). The maturity level of students tends to increase in four year intervals; maturity level is affected by higher educational level (Schultz, Selman, La Russo, 2003).

Indeed, the level of societal participation of citizens increases with political and higher education (Galston, 2001). Importantly, the level of societal participation among student's increases significantly between high school freshmen through senior years; ultimately continuing to increase as they progress with their education in college (Sax et al. 1998, 1999). As mentioned by Carpini and Keeter (1996), a citizen's formal education sparks their self-interest in the manner they participate or share their view points on political issues. The argument becomes that if citizens lack basic knowledge in regards to social issues, it would be difficult for them to assess the situation rationally and thus participate (Galston, 2001). Upper lever education institutions (e.g. universities and colleges) provide a broad range of service learning

environments, which tends to be more likely to generate student participation in society (Astin et al. 2000).

Thus, given that education level appears to influence maturity and civic engagement, can it also influence the perception of police use of force? According to Lam (2000), organizational learning, higher education and development of professional and personal socialization skills are considered *Levels of Education*. In order to investigate this question, the educational level of participants will be manipulated across all levels of undergraduate students from Texas A&M International University, ranging from freshmen to senior's students.

Utilizing the four undergraduate levels will provide a broad range of knowledge as their education level increases. Popkin and Dimock (2000) determined that college students rank higher in knowledge of social issues compared to those with high school level of education only. Indeed, social formality is influenced by the level of education a person possesses; the higher the education the more knowledgeable they become (Galston, 2001).

The breakdown of the *Levels of Education* independent variables (freshman, sophomore, junior and senior) student classification will be fully explained within the proposed research.

### **Audio Inclusion**

Violence and threats can be verbal as well as physical. However, there is currently no federal policy mandating audio recording by police of any interactions they have with the general public, with the Washington Post claiming that 80% of police dash cameras are missing audio feeds (Balko, 2016). Furthermore, there are documented court cases whereupon police statements of arrests have been questioned and found to differ substantially from audio records made of the arrest (Schmadeke, 2015). While testifying on a drug arrest four Chicago police officers were found to have lied under oath, after the traffic stop video depicted information



contrary to their testimony (Schmadeke, 2015). Therefore, one question, this research seeks to answer is whether viewing an incident without the audio feed will affect the decision making and judgment of police use of force.

As illustrated by Marmolin (1991), the term multimedia can be misleading since it is not utilized to indicate the existence of multiple sources of media. Instead, the term multimedia refers to multiple sensors working together to process a stimulus such as video and audio (Marmolin, 1991). According to Sundar (2000), who cited the work of Unnava, Bunkrant and Erevelles, highlighting that an individual that views different types of modalities (video, audio and text) tend to encode each modality as they perceive the information. Thus the implementation of picture with audio may increase the memory of the content being depicted on the broadcasted news (Reese, 1984).

In order to investigate this question, participants in this research will be presented with videos depicting police use of force which either have an intact audio track, or which have had the audio track removed. Dual coding theory suggests that as there are two types of cognitive stimuli being delivered (i.e. the audio and picture image), this creates a double dose of information, resulting in a stronger memory compared to when one stimuli (i.e. picture image) is presented in isolation (without audio) (Paivio, 1986). Sundar (2000) found that when multimedia is composed of a dynamic mixture of sensors, the participants engage better with the multimedia system, thus potentially increasing their ability to better discriminate whether the level of force utilized was excessive or justifiable.

According to Steuer (1994), the vividness of stimuli is of great importance. The vividness of the modalities delivered affects the sensory concept of the viewer (Steuer, 1994). However, to the best of the author's knowledge, different modality of presentation (audio and visual vs. visual

only) has yet to be investigated with respect to judgments and decision making regarding police use of force. As arrest videos may be silent (without audio) and/or may be presented by the media without a functioning audio track (e.g. due to profane language deemed inappropriate for TV audiences), understanding how an audio track influences judgments and decision making in these contexts is not only timely, but is also potentially of great import.

### **Research Objective**

The main objective of this research was to investigate perceptions of police brutality and whether there are any mitigating factors, such as level of education, or whether the sound track is removed, which may alter these perceptions. This experimental research will begin to fill in the gaps within our criminal justice literature and help to shed light on the highly topical issue of police brutality. This research can impact the rising issues within our society and law enforcement by contributing empirical evidence to the conversations around use of force incidents.

### **Research Questions**

The three research questions that this experimental research will attempt to address are the following:

RQ1: Does level of education impact the perceived justifiability of violence?

RQ2: Does mode of delivery impact the perceived justifiability of violence?

RQ3: Do level of education and mode of delivery interact to influence the perceived justifiability of violence perpetrated by police?

The experimental research will attempt to address are the following hypothesis:

### **Core Hypothesis**

The core hypothesis for this research is, “Educational level and method of delivery interact to influence perceptions of the justifiability of violence exerted by police during arrests.”

This core hypothesis translates to the following specific hypotheses.

H<sub>1</sub>: As a participant’s level of education increases they will judge the use of force by police officers to be increasingly excessive.

H<sub>2</sub>: Violence depicted in videos without audio will be judged as less excessive than when the same violence/video is shown with the audio track intact.

H<sub>3</sub>: Level of education and mode of delivery interact to influence perceived level of violence by Police, such that at higher levels of education the presence of the audio track may have less influence over their judgment of the excessiveness of the use of force, but at lower levels of education, students will continue to rate the videos without audio as less excessive than those with audio.

Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework that was employed to investigate these hypotheses.

## CHAPTER II

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND SAMPLING STRATEGY

Figure 2.1. Theoretical Framework

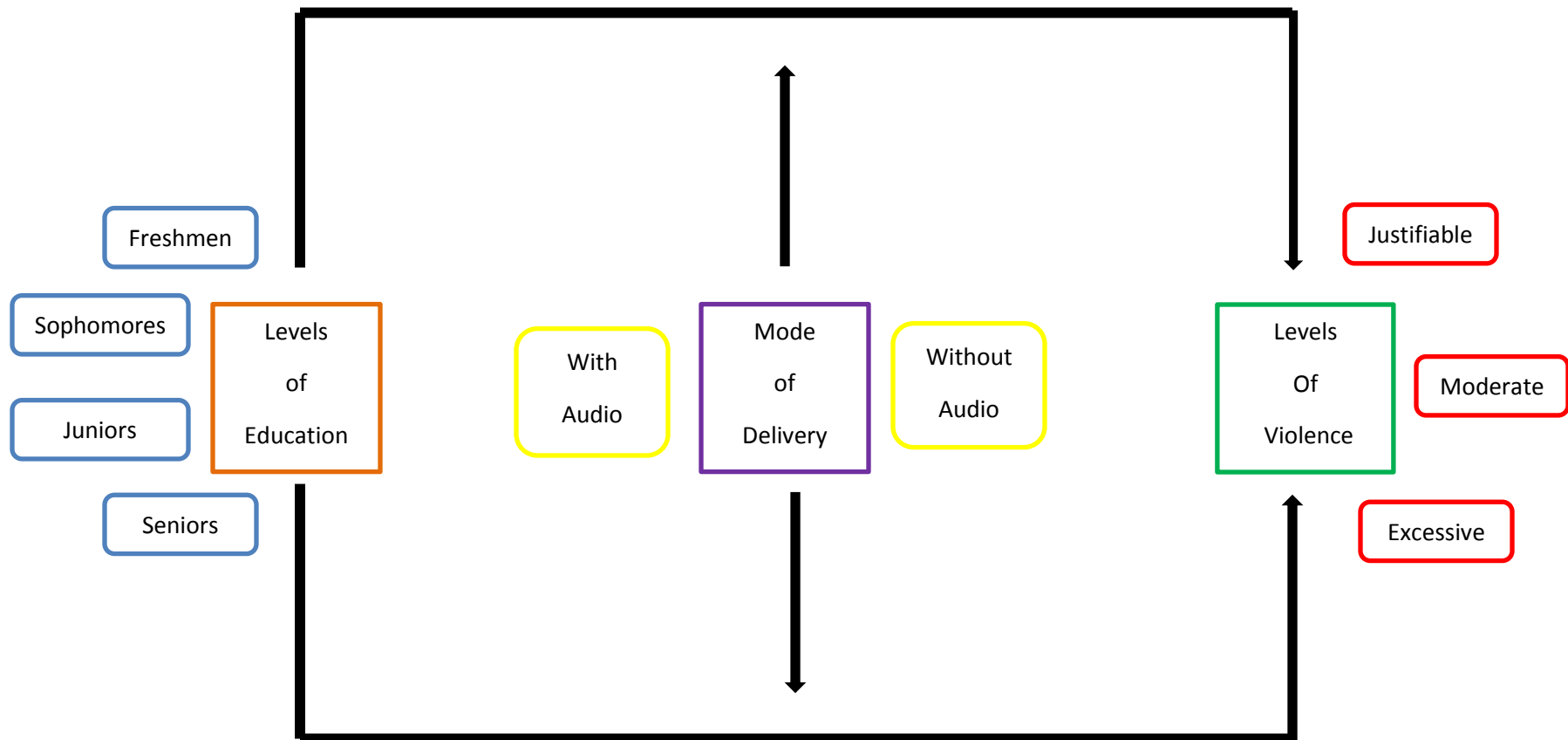


Figure 2.1. Theoretical Framework. Squares on top in orange denote the Level of Education. Squares on top in purple denote the Mode of Delivery. Squares on top in green denote the Levels of Use of Force. They are connected by branches illustrating how the experimental research will be conducted.

Figure 2.1 illustrates the theoretical model for this study. The left concept of Figure 1 shows the independent variable *Level of Education*.

During this research, *Levels of Education* was defined as an organization that provides a higher level of education post (High School or GED graduate), professional career and socialization development (Lam, 2000). *Levels of Education* was broken down into four sub-dimensions (year classification) gathered from Texas A&M International University, a local post-secondary institution in Laredo, Texas.

In this experimental research, the *method of delivery* is a construct and an independent variable which has two categories, namely, (1) arrest footage with audio, (0) arrest footage without audio. The construct to the right of Figure 1 illustrates the dependent construct violence. For this experimental research, *violence* had three categories, namely: (1) justifiable, (2) moderate, and (3) excessive.

A 4 x 2 factorial experimental design was employed. The two factors in this design are level of education and mode of delivery. The independent variables consisted of the four Levels of Educational (TAMIU undergraduate students: freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior) and two methods of Mode of Delivery (with audio and without audio).

Figure 2.2. Sampling plan simplifies the breakdown of Texas A&M International University undergraduate students enrolled in Fall, 2015. Rectangle on the below in blue denote the entire population size. Squares on below in green denote the total number of students per educational year level.

Additionally, the squares in purple denote the ideal total sample size per educational year level. Squares in yellow denote the ideal sub-sample size between arrest video condition either

with or without audio. They are connected by branches through the processing tree, which illustrates where stratified random sampling occurred.

**Sampling Plan and Sample Size**

**Figure 2.2. Sampling Plan and Sample Size**

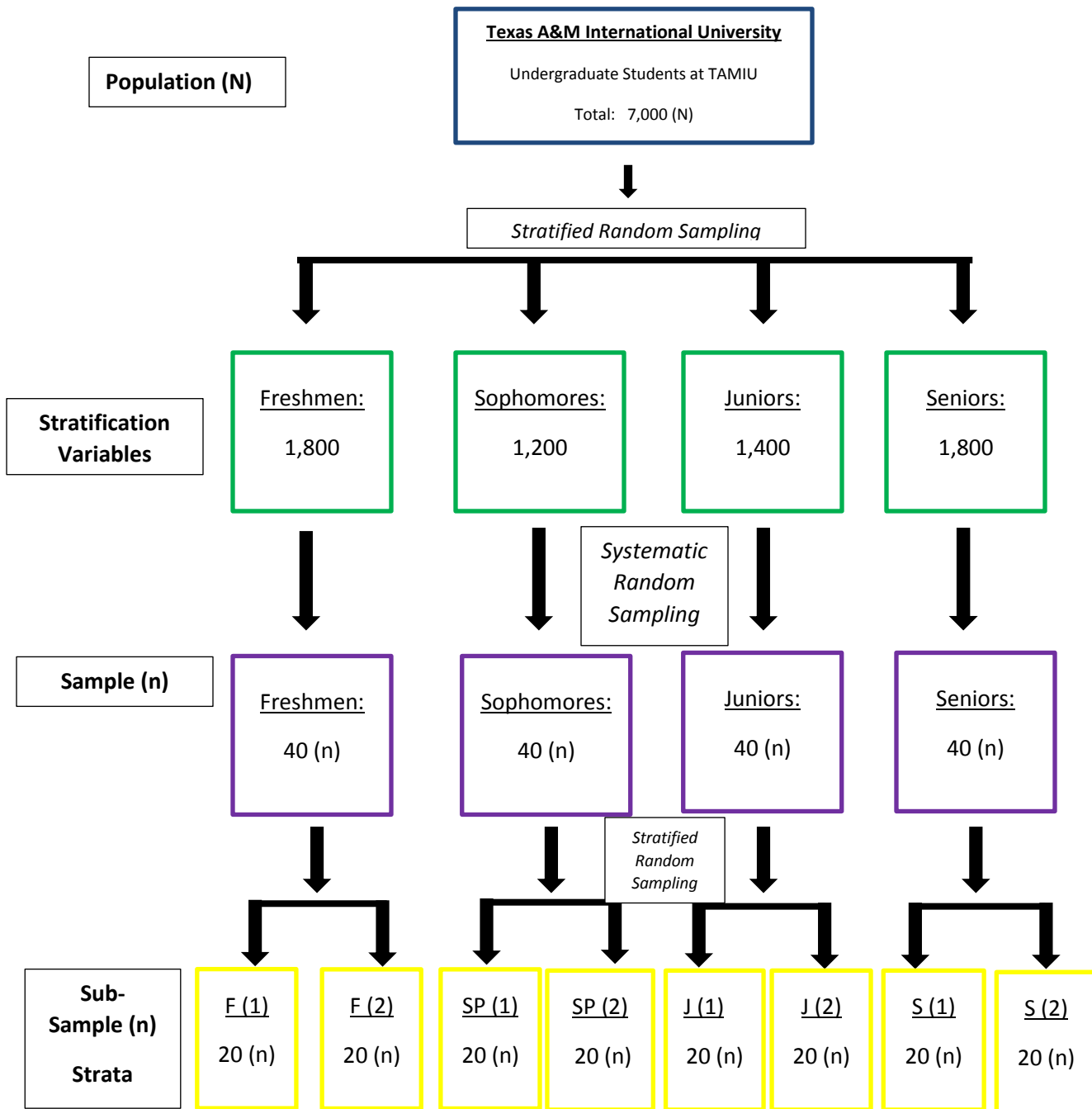


Figure 2.2. depicts the breakdown of the participants within this experimental study, with *stratified random sampling* and *systematic random sampling* imposed only to the independent variables within the concept of *levels of education* in four sub-dimensions.

### **Participants**

Moreover, the development of *strata* was based upon categorization of students enrolled at Texas A&M International University (undergraduate students). These *strata* were comprised of the various undergraduate year levels of freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors, which students were enrolled in at Texas A&M International University.

Upon participation in the survey study extra credit was offered to the students based on the discretion of the professor, as well as credit to those undergraduate students in need of a partial fulfillment of a class requirement. Notably, based on Texas A&M International University enrollment statistics for Fall 2015, the following numbers were gathered: 7,000 students were registered and classified as undergraduate students (i.e. all majors are included).

The stratification consisted of 1,800 students classified as freshmen, 1,200 were classified as sophomores, 1,400 were classified as juniors and 1,800 were classified as seniors. Moreover, *systematic random sampling* results in a sample population (N) breakdown of the following four-year level of education (i.e. freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors) strata containing a total of forty (40) undergraduate students.

Therefore, after generating a sample list of the forty (40) sample (n) participants, there remained a stratified random sampling with two additional sub-groups within the sample (n) population.

Unfortunately, after further consideration the sampling strategy identified in Figure 2.2, while ideal, was infeasible for the purposes of a Master's Thesis.

### **Adaptation of the Sampling Strategy – A New Sample**

After consultation with University officials it was decided that the planned stratification of Education Level would be extremely time consuming and could add an additional year on to the length of the thesis research. Therefore, TAMU's participant pool, SONA System, was identified as a viable alternative. SONA System is an online cloud-based research management tool, where potential research participants create a free account and then select research to participate in from a list of available research opportunities.

In this way, SONA System offers random assignment to conditions of the available participants, but does not facilitate stratification of the Education Level variable, as had been initially proposed. The total number of participants registered in the SONA System for Fall 2017, was 1,721 across all year levels (Freshmen to Seniors).



**CHAPTER III**  
**METHODOLOGY**

**Figure 2.3. Revised Sampling Strategy across Education and Audio/No Audio Conditions**

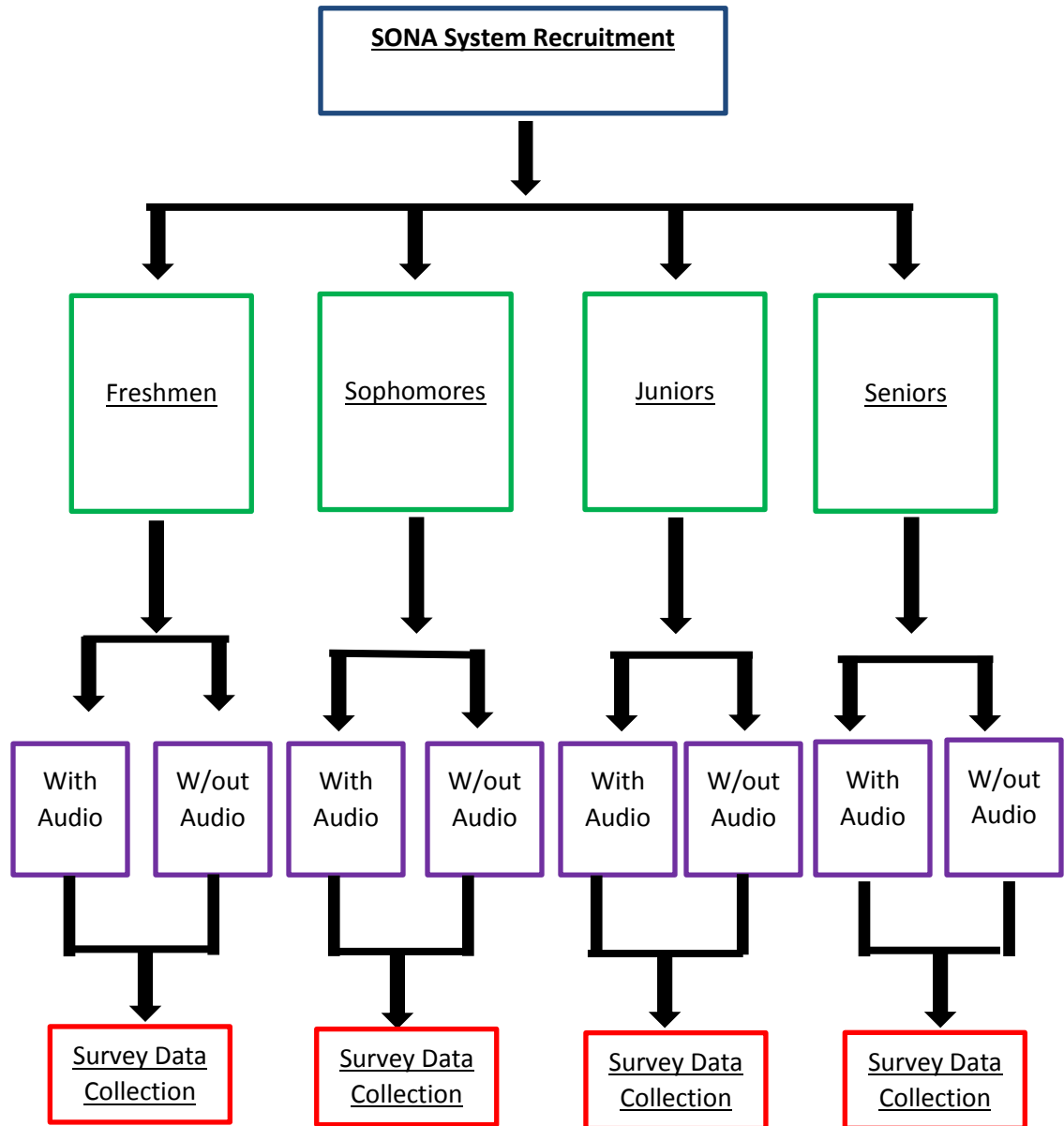


Figure 2.3. Video arrangement simplifies the breakdown of the arrest video. Rectangle on the top in blue denotes the participant recruitment platform which was utilized in this research.

Squares on top in green denote the students across each education year level at TAMIU who are

registered on SONA System. Rectangles on top in purple demonstrate that participants across all education year levels will be presented with the arrest video condition either with or without audio. Rectangles on the bottom in red denote the survey data collection for each educational year and video audio condition level. They are connected by branches through the processing tree to illustrate the flow of the research procedure.

### **Arrest Videos**

Figure 2.3 depicts the administration of this experimental study, which was conducted through the online program “Survey Monkey”. The participation in this experimental study is solely on a volunteer bases. The administration of the arrest video shown to each single participant were delivered upon accessing the surveys. All arrest video utilized within the experimental study are of the same video quality and clarity to increase internal validity. The video footage length ranged approximately from 180 seconds through 300 seconds, each depicting a law enforcement officer conducting an arrest or detention.

### **Experimental Design -Addressing Threats to Validity**

There are twelve threats which can affect the *validity* of an experiment (Levin & Thomas, 1997).

#### **Internal Validity**

One of those threats consists of *maturation/fatigue effect*, which affects the *internal validity* of the research when the respondents are affected in a physiological and psychological state (Levin & Thomas, 1997). For example, the duration of the test administration from showing of the videos to the completion of the questionnaires, can be to prolonged such that it affects the participants interest in the research.

In this experimental research, this threat to internal validity was taken into account and addressed in multiple ways. Firstly, the research questionnaire and videos were all selected so as not to be overly long. Secondly, all of the arrest videos were selected so that they are of a similar length as possible; to ensure that participants can accurately gauge how long the research is taking them. Finally, the study was hosted in a neutral and convenient manner for the participants: it was run online.

The survey was made accessible to participants through “Survey Monkey”, which allowed them to participate in their own time, in the comfort of their own homes. Furthermore, by utilizing Survey Monkey for experiment administration, it ensures the experiment is *double-blind*, which means that neither the respondent nor the experimental administrator have knowledge of the purpose of the experiment, thus reducing the potential for bias, which is another threat to internal validity (i.e. if those administering the research know the hypotheses, they might inadvertently influence the results to support the hypotheses).

### **Ethical Consideration**

According to Neuman (2011), placing participants in situations (i.e. making prejudges decisions) during an experimental research can be construed as *unethical*. In order to ensure that the participants will not be victims of unethical social settings, the participants will be required to fill an informed consent form (*see Appendix A*), in which it will state that the proposed research is based on a voluntary basis and they can withdraw from the study at any moment. Additionally, all experimental materials and protocols received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from Texas A&M International University. Finally, during the *double-blind experiment* aspect in the administration of the video assessment by neutral administrators, in order to diminish the

*unethical* dilemma both the respondents and neutral administrators were debriefed regarding the full purpose and explanation of the research.

### **Mundane Realism**

An external validity threat within the study of Levin and Thomas (1997) was *mundane realism*, where the utilization of university security campus participants portraying the role of an actual law enforcement officer's conducting and arrest. The *external validity* of Levin and Thomas (1997), was weak given that university security campus officers duties or mindset are not the same as actual patrol officers in which their life are at constant edge. For this reason, the current research utilized actual arrest video footage by patrol officers. The utilization of actual patrol officers' arrest videos increases the *external validity* of this research design.

### **Experimental Mortality**

Notably, another *internal validity* threat that can affect this research is the threat of *experimental mortality*. For example, this type of *internal validity* threat can occur within research of this nature, if the videos administered are not regulated in length or duration. Although, such threat cannot be one hundred percent preventable given the "real-world" nature of the stimuli used, video selection criteria was regulated so that no video was less than 60 seconds, or longer than 120 seconds and all videos had the same clarity. By keeping the arrest videos within this time frame the respondents and participants are less likely to stop viewing the videos in order to take restrooms breaks or have personal errands to run and thus having to leave the administration session, therefore this selection criteria increased *internal validity*.

### **Maturation**

Maturation is a concern within any research which exposes participants to multiple, similar stimuli and requires they make a decision. Within this research, the concern is that

participants may make relative instead of absolute judgments about the use of the force shown in the videos (e.g. is video 2 more excessive than video 1, rather than, is video 2 excessive).

Therefore, the perception of the respondents towards the police officers level of force could have been influenced by the previous arrest video shown or by comparing each police officer's level of force between all five arrest videos.

Unfortunately, methodological controls such as counterbalancing are ineffective in resolving this issue. The issue of maturation is covered further in the Discussion section of this Thesis.

### **Threats to Reliability**

According to Neuman (2011), *reliability* can be affected by the *stability reliability* and *representative reliability*. *Stability reliability* is when such research is required to conduct retesting or re-administration of the experiment and *representative reliability* is when different types of subpopulations respond the same way as the subpopulation of the research conducted (Neuman, 2011). Unfortunately, this concern cannot be addressed within the current research as it requires replication by other researchers, in a different location.

However, it is of concern here because, to the best of the author's knowledge, this is the first experiment to address these research questions, and thus our conclusions must be tempered by that knowledge due to the issues created by concerns of stability and representative reliability. In consideration of this threat to *reliability* it would be recommended for this research to be replicated in more diverse groups of populations.

Further, *representative reliability* may be hindered due to the majority of the subpopulations being Hispanic, therefore if this research was conducted in a more diverse

environment of races (i.e. White, Hispanic, African American, Filipino, and Asians etc.) it would increase the reliability of this research dramatically.

### **Materials**

This experimental research was conducted with materials gathered from various sources. Material consisted of locating five arrest video from YouTube, the VLC multimedia player and online Survey Monkey account, as well as a set questionnaires tailored to both participants (Appendices A) and panel members (Appendices B). The implementation of each material is broken down in greater detail within the respective section it was utilize in below.

### **Video Editing**

The current research utilized five arrest videos, which were only edited to remove the audio from all five arrest videos for the no-audio condition. The removal of the audio of all five arrest video was achieved by utilizing the “VLC media player” an open source cross-platform multimedia player and converter program.

All five arrest videos were reconfigured with the VLC program, deleting the audio portion from the arrest videos. By removing the audio portion with the VLC program, this ensured experimental control of stimuli, but ensuring that participants in both conditions are exposed to the same material and the only factor that differs is the presence or absence of the audio feed, thus s in turn increasing external validity.

### **Survey Study Types**

In order to ensure true randomization to condition, two separate experiments were created on Survey Monkey – one for the audio condition, and one for the no-audio condition. The entire number of arrest videos that were shown within this experiment study was a total of five arrest videos broken down in to different surveys.

The two experimental conditions were run in two separate survey studies (i.e. Police Use of Force Survey -Audio and Police Use of Force Survey – No Audio) to better facilitate the distribution of the arrest videos. Both surveys contained the same five arrest videos, with the only difference being the deletion of audio in one survey study, as well as the same questionnaire's asked from each participant.

The breakdown of the delivery of the arrest video was as follows: each grade level (n) (i.e. 40 (n) participants) was divided into the two-subsample (n) (i.e. subgroup freshmen (1) and subgroup freshmen (2)). The subgroups took the following structure: Subgroup (1) Police Use of Force Survey- Audio with arrest videos number one (#1) though arrest video five (#5) which were delivered with audio. Subgroup (2) Police Use of Force Survey- No Audio were assigned arrest videos number one (#1) though arrest video five (#5) which were be delivered without audio.

This research design affords a fully-crossed factorial design, whereupon every video and modality of video appears within every grade classification (i.e. freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior) by cross-delivering each arrest video both modes of delivery to each classification level (i.e. with audio and without audio).

### **Variables & Measures**

This section will describe the variables and measures utilized throughout this research.

#### **Independent Variables**

The independent variables consisted of the year classification gathered from a total population from Texas A&M International University. The four categories of year levels were measured on an ordinal scale illustrating the following breakdown: (1) freshmen, (2) sophomores, (3) juniors, and (4) seniors' undergraduate students.

The following section illustrates the moderating variables and dependent variables within this research.

### **Moderating Variable**

The moderating variable within the study consists of the mode of delivery (i.e. with audio and without audio) of the arrest videos. The mode of delivery consists of categories, arrest video with audio and arrest video without audio. To measure the delivery of the arrest videos, whether the delivery method affects the participant's previewed level of violence. The arrest video were measured in an ordinal method will assigned (0) to arrest videos with audio and (1) to arrest videos without audio.

### **Dependent Variable**

The participants rated the arrest videos violence level on ordinal Likert scale consisting of the following: Justifiable Force 0-3, Moderate Force 4-6, and Excessive Force 7-10.

The measurement of the dependent variable *Violence* was measured by justifiable force<sup>1</sup>, moderate force<sup>2</sup>, and excessive force<sup>3</sup>. In order to determine the level of violence within the arrest videos the following scale was observed: the lower the rating of the video denotes the less force the police officer used and the greater the rating the participants rate the arrest video the more excessive force the police officer used. The three definitions provided by the expert panel members in measuring the level of violence used by the police officer show the following: common terms necessary<sup>4</sup> and reasonable<sup>5</sup>. These terms vary amongst each law enforcement

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<sup>1</sup> Justifiable Force: is classified as the necessary force used to control the situation or persons.

<sup>2</sup> Moderate Force: is classified as the use of greater and reasonable force to take control of the situation or persons.

<sup>3</sup> Excessive Force: is classified as the use of unnecessary or unreasonable force to take control of a situation or persons.

<sup>4</sup> Black's Law dictionary defines necessary force as the amount of force to protect oneself or property.

<sup>5</sup> Black's Law dictionary defines reasonable force as appropriate to protect oneself or property.



officer knowledge, training and experience. Placing the discretion on the law enforcement personnel when considering in using some sort of force.

### **Arrest Video Synopsis**

This section contains the descriptions of the arrest videos that were implemented in both audio conditions in this research.

#### **Arrest video 1: With and Without Audio**

During the traffic stop law enforcement officers continued to verbally instruct the passengers of the vehicle “to get out” and “down on the floor”. The police officers used aggressive and insulting language while giving the commands.

Additionally, one police officer seemed to be overly aggressive and kicked a passenger on the head for not laying down on the floor. That same police officer dragged the driver out of the vehicle and tossed him into the street. The police officers maintained their duty weapons drawn during the entire traffic stop, until all four suspects were placed in handcuffs.

#### **Arrest video 2: With and Without Audio**

During the arrest video depicts law enforcement officers attempting to escort a Hispanic male out of his residence. The suspect continues to verbally state that he’s not resisting arrest and if let go he would exit the residence.

Furthermore, a family member mentions that the suspect isn’t resisting arrest throughout the entire video. Three police officers attempted to place the suspect in handcuffs and started sticking the suspect. A minor family member got involved as was also placed in custody. The officers seemed to be in a fist fight with the suspect after not being able to subdue the suspect.

#### **Arrest video 3: With and Without Audio**

A Hispanic male seemed to claim that the police officer was using police brutality for being search unreasonable. The suspect refused to be searched. The police officer forced the

suspect to the ground and placed him in an arm-bar takedown. While on the ground the police officer gave aggressive and insulting command for the suspect to comply.

Additionally, upon backup police officers arrived they grabbed the suspect and placed him in custody. The incident was witnessed by onlookers who appeared to support the suspects argument.

#### **Arrest video 4: With and Without Audio**

Law enforcement officers responded to a male with a knife and swinging an object that appeared to be a “baseball bat”. The police officers continued to use verbal command towards to the suspect to “put the knife down”. The law enforcement officers used their patrol unit speaker while giving the verbal commands, upon excessive repetition and suspect not complying with the officer’s commands. The police officers used less than lethal force shooting the suspect with “bean bags” from their shotgun. The police offices were able to take the suspect into custody.

#### **Arrest video 5: With and Without Audio**

Police officer conducted a traffic stop for a seatbelt violation. The male driver of the vehicle exits the vehicle. The police officer instructs the suspect to display his driver license. The driver of the vehicle reaches into his vehicle for his driver license. At this time the police officer shoots the driver of the vehicle several times, hitting the male driver. Further, the driver of the vehicle continued to remain calm and apologies to the police officer for reaching for his driver license. The driver was provided medical attention at the scene.

#### **Data collection Method**

The utilization of *experimental design* created a solid foundation within this study.

#### **Procedure**

The participants signed up to one of the two condition studies either police arrest video with audio or police arrest videos without audio. The participants signed up to participate in the

experimental research study through an electronic computer and browsing the SONA System website for TAMIU, which led them to Survey Monkey. Upon, enrolling into Survey Monkey and selecting either one of the two studies, all participants had to read and acknowledge the participants consent form.

Further, participant would answer a series of demographic questions, as well as be expose to view five police arrest videos. All participants after viewing the arrest video would answer a series of questions relating to the level of force, they considered the law enforcement officer used. Additionally, all the participants were asked to rate the acceptability of techniques, that law enforcement officer utilize when effecting an arrest or detention.

### **Panel**

Levin and Thomas (1997) research consisted of a panel of college graduates which was selected to view several videos and range them in levels of police brutality. The categorization of the arrest video footages within this experimental research, a four-member panel was selected to arrange the arrest videos. In order to increase *external validity* within this experimental study, four members from the community with criminal justice and law enforcement experience were selected to categories the arrest videos. The four-member panel comprised of individuals with law enforcement experienced as a Texas Peace officers, Federal government, Juvenile Probations and Criminal Justice educators.

The panel was comprised of two male members, whom law enforcement combined added up to over sixty years of active service ranging from patrol division, narcotics, administrative, as well as academia teaching experience. The two female member of the panel, experience ranged from the correctional system, Juvenile Probations, as well as academia teaching experience. The four members panel pre-categories the arrest videos in three dimensions of level of use of force.

The three categories the arrest videos were pre-classified by the four-member panel were justified force, moderate force and excessive force.

### Panel Ratings

Table 3.1 shows the responses provided by four expert panel members. As for arrest video 1, two panel members rated the force used by the law enforcement officer as justifiable force with (25%) and moderate force with (25%), whereas the other two panel members rated the police officer's forces as excessive force with (50%). Thus, a different pattern arises for arrest video 2. Within video 2, three panel members rated the law enforcement officer as justifiable force with 75% (compared to one panel member rating the police officers force as moderate force with 25%). As for arrest video 3, it was a 50/ 50 split rating were the panel members rated the police officer both justifiable force and moderate force. The panel members rated the level of force the police officer used in video 4, as justifiable force with (75%) and excessive force with (25%). As per arrest video 5, there was a unanimous decision where the all 4 panel members rated the police officer force as excessive force with (100%).

**Table 3.1. Panel Ratings**

Panel Ratings:	Use of Force		
	Justifiable % / (n)	Moderate % / (n)	Excessive % / (n)
Arrest Video 1	25 (1)	25 (1)	50 (2)
Arrest Video 2	75 (3)	25 (1)	0 (0)
Arrest Video 3	50 (2)	50 (2)	0 (0)
Arrest Video 4	75 (3)	0 (0)	25 (1)
Arrest Video 5	0 (0)	0 (0)	100 (4)

Table 3.1. Ratings of justifiable level of force depicted in arrest videos, by panel members

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

For this research, the aim was to conduct analysis on the data which would facilitate investigations of interactions and main effects. Unfortunately, the response rate across the different levels of education at the TAMIU campus was far below what was expected. This resulted in uneven cells across the four education levels. Uneven cell sizes violate many assumptions of statistical tests that rely on frequency data, such as Chi-Square and Hierarchical Log-linear analysis, thus rendering any statistical result unreliable.

In order to overcome this issue, the cell sizes were equaled out by calculating the lowest level of response in an education level, and selecting the first respondents in the other education levels up to that number. Unfortunately, this selection procedure resulted in a substantial reduction of the sample size, which then made the sample too low to perform nested regression techniques such as hierarchical-log linear analysis and multi-level modeling techniques.

These analysis limitations will be addressed in the discussion as future directions for this field of research. As a consequence, to these data collection limitations, the analysis strategy is limited to Chi-square analysis as these are frequency data.

#### **Participants/Sample Demographics**

A total of 140 Texas A&M International University undergraduate students participated across both modalities “With Audio” and “Without Audio” conditions. Unfortunately, the duration of the arrest video and time management of the online survey within Survey Monkey, required participants to complete the survey’s in 10 minutes at a minimum.

A total of 15 participants were removed from the final dataset due to completing the online survey within 9:59 minutes or less; resulting in a sample of 125 participants eligible for analysis.

Given factors of race and gender are often discussed as possible factors affecting our perceptions of police brutality, the demographic data from our sample is presented first. Table 4.1 shows that females comprised majority of the participants in the entire study with a total of 102 respondents (99.2%) out of the 125 participants.

The remainder of the respondents categorized themselves as 22 (17.5%) male and 1 (.8%) didn't classified themselves as male, female or transgender. Out of the 125 total participants 113 (90.4%) self-identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. A total of 6 (4.8%) respondents indicated they were white, with 1 (.8%) participant identified themselves as Black or African American. The remainder of the participants self-identified themselves as Biracial/Multiracial with 5 (4%). The majority of the 125 participants indicated their preferred language to be English with 104 (83.2%).

Secondly, 16 (12.8%) respondents self-identified as preferred language to be Spanish, with 5 (4%) participants preferring another language rather than English and Spanish. As can also be seen, Table 4.1 highlights the ages for those the 125 participants who partook in the online Survey Monkey study. Overwhelming, 54 (43.2%) of the participants who participated ranged from 18-21 years of age out of the 125 total participants. The next two age categories with majority of the respondents were 22-25 years for age with 40 (32%) participants and 26-29 years of age with 16 (12.8%) participants. The remainder 15 participants fell within the ranges of 30-33 years of age with 6.4%, 34-37 years of age with 1.6%, 38-41 years of age with 1.6%, 42-45 years of age with 1.6% as well as 45 years and up with .8%.

Below is the breakdown of the respondents who participated within demographics.

**Table 4.1. Demographics**

Demographic Variable	n	Percentage / %
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	22	17.6
Female	102	81.6
Neither	1	.8
<b>Race/ Ethnicity</b>		
Black or African American	1	.8
Hispanic or Latino	113	90.4
White	6	4.8
Biracial/ Multiracial	5	4
<b>Preferred Language</b>		
English	104	83.2
Spanish	16	12.8
Other	5	4
<b>Age</b>		
18 – 21 years of age	54	43.2
22 – 25 years of age	40	32
26 – 29 years of age	16	12.8
30 – 33 years of age	8	6.4
34 – 37 years of age	2	1.6
38 – 41 years of age	2	1.6
42 – 45 years of age	2	1.6
Greater than 45 years of age	1	.8
<b>Political Views</b>		
Very Conservative	2	1.6
Not so strong Conservative	22	17.6
Conservative	28	22.4
Liberal	47	37.6
Not so strong Liberal	22	17.6
Very Liberal	3	2.4

Table 4.1. Ratings of demographics from all participants, either with audio or without audio conditions

The participants who participated in the online Survey Monkey study were also asked to indicate their political views, where only 124 participants out of the total 125 participants responded.

### **Political Views**

Table 4.1 shows majority of the respondents self-identified themselves as liberal with 47 (37.6%) out of the 124 participants (compared to 22.4% of the participants identified as conservative). Moreover, the other categories for liberal participated as 22 (17.6%) as not so strong liberal (compared to 2.4% of the participants as very liberal). For those remaining participants, 22 (17.6%) respondent being not so strong conservative (compared to 1.6% of the participants as very conservative). Further, participants answered questions relating towards their political affiliation. As Table 4.2 shows the total number of participants responded almost evenly throughout the categories provided, Independent leaning democrat held majority of the responses with 38 (30.4%) of the total participants. Moreover, out of the 125 participants not so strong democrat shows 22 (17.6%) of the participants and strong democrat with 15 (12%) of the respondents. However, 28 (22.4%) of the participants indicated they were pure independent, whereas for the category of independent leaning republican indicated 10 (8%) of the participants. The remainder of the 11 (8.8%) of the participants classified themselves as not so strong republican within the study.

### **Income, Citizenship and Military Service**

Table 4.2 shows that only 124 participants out of the 125 who participated in the study provided a response to their household income. The table 4.2 indicates that there seem to be an even distribution throughout the categories provided to the participants. Although, out of the 125



participants 36 (28.8%) respondents indicated their household income was between \$10,001-\$30,000. The category with the least respondent was the category with more than \$100,001 with 3 (2.4%) participants. The remainder of the participants self-identified their household income to be between \$30,001- \$50,000 with 25 (20%) participants (compared to 21.6% of the participants responding to having a household income of under \$10,000). The other two categories depict 20 (16%) of the participants falling within \$50,001- \$70,000, whereas 13 (10.4%) of the participants identifying having a household income of \$70,001- \$100,000.

Furthermore, out of the 125 total participant's majority of the respondents being United States citizen with 119 (95.2%). For the other 4.8% of the participants who participated in the online Survey Monkey study indicated being from a foreign country. Finally, out of the 125 participants only 124 responded to the question relating to any military service. Table 4.2 indicates that majority of the participants didn't service in the military with 121 (97.6%). The other 3 (2.4%) of the participants indicated having served in a military capacity. Additionally, table 4.2 shows that those 3 (2.4%) of participants who served in the military, were part of a combat deployment (being exposed to small arms fire, improvise explosive devices (IEDs), vehicle bombs and indirect fire (motors)).

### **Sample Summary**

In summary, the sample recruited ended up being majority female, as well as overwhelmingly Hispanic or Latino. The recruited sample dominate age was between 18 years of age through 25 years of age, with English being the preferred language. The political views of the sample were mainly Liberal, whereas for political affiliation either leaning or being Democrat. Overwhelming, majority of the recruited sample were United States citizens, with a

majority ranging with a household income of \$30,000 or under. Lastly, a handful of the participants had served in the military with some sort of combat relation exposure.

**Table 4.2. Extended Demographics**

Demographics:	n	Percentage / %
<b>Political Affiliation</b>		
Strong Democrat	15	12
Not so strong Democrat	22	17.6
Independent Leaning Democrat	38	30.4
Pure Independent	28	22.4
Independent leaning Republican	10	8
Not so strong Republican	11	8.8
<b>Household income</b>		
Under \$10,000	27	21.6
\$10,001 - \$30,000	36	28.8
\$30,001 - \$50,000	25	20
\$50,001 - \$70,000	20	16
\$70,001 - \$100,000	13	10.4
More than \$100,000	3	2.4
<b>Citizenship</b>		
United States	119	95.2
Other	6	4.8
<b>U.S. Military</b>		
Yes	3	2.4
No	121	96.8
<b>Military Combat Deployment</b>		
Yes	3	2.4
No	11	8.8
Did not serve	107	85.6

Table 4.2. Ratings of demographics from all participants, either with audio or without audio conditions

Frequency of responses that the violence depicted was justifiable, moderate, or excessive, are analyzed across audio and no audio conditions to investigate whether the muting of the audio feed, as often happens in media depictions of police brutality, or may occur due to many body worn cameras not having audio, or the officer failing to turn on audio recording, may affect perceptions of the severity of the violence perpetrated.

## Videos

Analysis of responses to the videos involved frequency data illustrated in the following text.

### Video 1

Overall 95 (76%) out of 125 participants rated the use of force used by the law enforcement officer as excessive force. Also, out of the 125 participants 22 (17.6%) rated the police officers force moderate force, whereas 8 (6.4%) of the participants viewed the force as justifiable. As shown in Table 4.3, 77 (61.6%) of the 125 students participated in the “With Audio” condition, whereas 48 (38.4%) students engaged in the “Without Audio” condition. A Chi-square analysis revealed a significant relationship between the rating of use of force, whether the video was viewed with or without audio:  $\chi^2(2) = 6.299, p = .043$ , Cramér’s  $\phi' = .224$ . Out of the 77 (61.6%) of the participants within the “With Audio” condition, majority of participants who viewed the video with audio responded that the force depicted in the arrest video was excessive (70.1%), whereas 19.5% responded that the force was moderate, and 10.4% that the use of force was justifiable. For the no-audio condition, a similar pattern emerged: the majority of respondents indicated that the use of force in video 1 was excessive (85.4%). However, in comparison to the participants who viewed the video with the audio track, the non-audio participants responded in a different manner to the other response options: only 14.6%

indicated that they thought the violence was moderate (compared to 19.5% of the with audio participants), and 0 % of no-audio participants responded that the use of force was justified (in comparison to 10.4% of respondents in the audio condition who gave this response). It would appear that for video 1, the significant effect of the presence or absence of the audio track is influencing the ratings of justifiable and moderate use of force, rather than excessive use of force.

## **Video 2**

Out of the 125 students who participated in the online survey, only 124 students completed the questionnaire for video 2. The video rating depicts 59 (47.6%) of the participants rated the use of force used by law enforcement officer as excessive force. Whereas, out of the 124 participants 27 (21.8%) rated the force used by police officer as moderate force and 38 (30.6%) indicated the force used by law enforcement officers was justifiable force. As shown in Table 4.3, 76 (61.3%) of the 124 students participated in the “With Audio” condition, with 48 (38.7%) participated in the “Without Audio” condition. A Chi-square analysis revealed statistical significant relationship between the rating of use of force, whether viewed with or without audio:  $\chi^2(2) = 16.536, p < .001$ , Cramér’s  $\phi' = .365$ . From within the “With Audio” condition (60.5%) participants responded that the force used by police officer in the video was excessive force, whereas (21.1%) responded that the force was moderate, and (18.4%) indicated the force was justifiable. On the other hand, within the no-audio condition the opposite pattern emerged: the majority of the respondents indicated that the use of force in video 2 was justifiable with (50%). Although, in comparison to the respondent within both modalities, participants within the audio condition indicated the following: only 60.5% indicated the force used in the video was excessive (compared to 27.1% of the without audio participants); 21.1% of the participants rated

the force moderate (compared to 22.9% of the without audio respondents), and with 18.4% of the participants viewed the force justifiable (compared to 50% of the without audio respondents).

Video 2 appears to indicate that the presence or absence of audio sound is influencing the ratings of excessive and justifiable force, rather than moderate use of force.

### **Video 3**

Moreover, as with video 2 out of the 125 students who participated in the online survey, only 124 students completed the questionnaire for video 3. Overall 61 (49.2%) out of the 124 participant's, rated the use of force used by police officer as excessive force within video 3. For the additional level of use of force within video 3, 37 (29.8%) of the participants viewed the force used by the law enforcement officer as moderate, whereas 26 (21%) of the participants rated the force as justifiable. As illustrated in Table 4.3, 76 (61.3%) of the 124 student participated in the "With Audio" condition, with 48 (38.7%) students participated in the "Without Audio" condition. A Chi-square analysis was conducted revealing that there was no statistically association between the rating of use of force, whether the video was viewed with or without audio:  $\chi^2(2) = 5.008, p = .082$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .201$ . Indeed, for the audio condition, 76 (61.3%) of the respondents within the "With Audio" condition, majority of the participants rated to force use by the police officer as excessive (56.6%), whereas 27.6% of the respondents viewed the force as moderate and 15.8% of the participants rated the force as justifiable. The no-audio condition, illustrated a similar rating throughout the level of force used by the law enforcement officer in the video. The respondents within the video viewed the level of force as follows: 37.5% as excessive force use by the police officer, whereas 33.3% as moderate force and 29.2% viewed the force as justifiable. However, in comparison to the respondent who participated in the non-audio condition, the audio condition participants rated the in a different manner: with 37.5%

indicated that the force was excessive (compared to 56.6% of the with audio participants); 33.3% of the respondents viewed the force as moderate (compared to 27.6% of the respondents in the audio condition was moderate) and 29% of the no-audio participants rated the use of force as justifiable (compared to 15.8% of the respondents in the audio condition). Within video 3, appear to have no significant effect whether audio was present or absent within the video.

#### **Video 4**

Out of the 125 students who participated in the online survey, only 124 students completed the questionnaire for video 4. The overall rating of the video depicts 81 (65.3%) out of the 124 respondents viewed the use of force utilized by the law enforcement officer as justifiable. In addition, out of the 124 participants 20 (16.1%) responded to the law enforcement officer force used as moderate, whereas 23 (18.5%) of the participants viewed the level of force use by the police officer as excessive. As highlighted in Table 4.3, 77 (62.1%) of the 125 students participated in the “With Audio” condition, and 47 (37.9) students participated in the “Without Audio” condition. A Chi-square analysis was performed revealing that there was no statistically significant relationship between the rating of use of force, whether the video was viewed with or without audio:  $\chi^2(2) = .255, p = .880$ , Cramér’s  $\phi = .045$ . In addition, for the audio condition, out of the 77 (62.1%) of the participant’s majority who viewed the video responded that the force used by the police officer was justifiable (63.6%), whereas 16.9% responded that the force was moderate, and 19.5% rated the force as excessive. Out of the 47 (37.9%) of the participants, who responded to the no-audio condition, showed a similar pattern: the majority of the respondents viewed the force use by the law enforcement officer as justifiable (68.1%). Furthermore, in comparing the additional options between with audio and without audio condition were rated as follows: only 16.9% of the participants in the audio condition

viewed the force as moderate (compared to 14.9% of the without audio respondents), whereas 19.5% of the audio condition participants rated the force used by the police officer as excessive (compared to 17% of the without audio respondents). Given, the responses by the participants it appeared to have no significant effect on the level of use of force used by the law enforcement officer in video 4.

### **Video 5**

Out of the 125 students who participated in the online survey, only 124 students completed the questionnaire for video 5. Overall 60 (48.4%) out of the 125 participants viewed the use of force utilize by the law enforcement officer as excessive. Also, out of the 124 participants 42 (33.9%) rated the police officer force as moderate, whereas 22 (17.7%) of the respondents viewed the force as justifiable. As illustrated in Table 4.3, 77 (62.1%) of the 124 participated in the “With Audio” condition, and 47 (37.9%) of the respondents engaged in the “Without Audio” condition. A Chi-square analysis revealed a significant relationship between the rating of use of force, whether the video was viewed with or without audio:  $\chi^2(2) = 28.448, p < .001$ , Cramér’s  $\phi^2 = .479$ . Out of the 77 (62.1%) of the participant within the “With Audio” condition, majority of the respondents rated the force as excessive (66.2%), whereas 26% of the respondents rated the force moderate, and 7.8% of the participants viewed the force of the law enforcement officer as justifiable. Furthermore, for the non-audio condition, majority of the respondent indicated the force used by the police officer was moderate (46.8%), with 19.1% of the respondent rating the force used as excessive, and 34% of the participants viewed the force as justifiable. The difference with the options given to the respondent was illustrated as follows: within the audio condition (66.2%) of the participants rated the force excessive (compared to 19.1% of the respondents for non-audio), and the audio condition the responded rated the video

justifiable (7.8%) (compared to 34% of the no audio condition). It appears that for video 5, the significant effect of audio and no audio in an arrest video is influencing the excessive and justifiable force, rather than moderate use of force.

**Table 4.3. Level of Force across Audio Conditions**

Arrest Video	Audio Condition:	Use of Force		
		Justifiable % / (n)	Moderate % / (n)	Excessive % / (n)
Arrest Video 1	Audio	10.4 (8)	19.5 (15)	70.1 (54)
	No Audio	0 (0)	14.6 (7)	85.4 (41)
Arrest Video 2	Audio	18.4 (14)	21.1 (16)	60.5 (46)
	No Audio	50 (24)	22.9 (11)	27.1 (13)
Arrest Video 3	Audio	15.8 (12)	27.6 (21)	56.6 (43)
	No Audio	29.2 (14)	33.3 (16)	37.5 (18)
Arrest Video 4	Audio	63.6 (49)	16.9 (13)	19.5 (15)
	No Audio	68.1 (32)	14.9 (7)	17 (8)
Arrest Video 5	Audio	7.8 (6)	26 (20)	66.2 (51)
	No Audio	34 (16)	46.8 (22)	19.1 (9)

$\chi^2$  test results shown for statistically significant data  
 Arrest Video 1:  $\chi^2(2) = 6.299, p = .043$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .224$   
 Arrest Video 2:  $\chi^2(2) = 16.536, p < .001$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .365$   
 Arrest Video 5:  $\chi^2(2) = 28.448, p < .001$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .479$

In continuation, the previous table illustrates the comparison between both audio conditions.

### Summary of Audio vs. No Audio Analysis

In summary, for the videos where the audio feed had a significant effect on ratings, the effect tended to be that arrest videos with audio present the participants rating the level of force



used by the law enforcement officers as excessive force, but when the audio feed was not present, the same videos were rated as justifiable force.

Although, the arrest videos with no significant effect, the participant's ratings still revealed that the force used by the police officer was either moderate force or justifiable force, but not meeting excessive force.

### **Education**

As education level may influence the perceptions of the justifiability of the use of violence when conducting an arrest, the aim was to recruit participants in even numbers across all education levels. Table 4.4 shows the breakdown of the 125 participant who participated in the online survey by educational year level.

Overwhelmingly, the majority of the participants indicated their educational year level as a University Senior with 63 (50.4%) out of the 125 participants. Whereas, 38 (30.4%) indicated their educational year level as University Junior. As for the other 19.2% of participants, 14 (11.4%) responded being University Sophomores compared to 10 (8%) who indicated they were University freshmen.

As mentioned previously, due to these uneven cell sizes and small sample sizes, certain of the planned analyses were not possible. First, this research presents the analysis of education level and justifiability with the full sample. Then, this research equated the cell sizes across education level to demonstrate the statistical impact of uneven cell sizes on the analysis of frequency data.

Unfortunately, due to uneven cell sizes analysis of a possible interaction with audio conditions was not statistically possible without violating cell size assumptions and thus undermining the validity and reliability of the analyses.

The following section shows the comparing among the education levels and video use of force rated by the respondents.

### **Education Level & Video Rating**

The results among education level and video rating are depicted below.

#### **Video 1**

Table 4.4 shows A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2(6) = 5.608, p = .468$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .150$ . Hence, across the freshmen category majority of the respondent rated the force excessive with 70% (compared to justifiable with 10%). The same trend was notes throughout the rest of the educational year level, with 71.4% of sophomores rated the force as excessive, but 0% viewed the force used by the officer as justifiable force.

Additionally, juniors rated the police officer force as excessive with 86.8% (compared to seniors who rated the force use by the police officer as excessive force with 71.4%) Thus, throughout all of the four educational year level categories the responses for moderate force was within 20%, except for juniors who rated the moderate force with 7.9%. Although, the participants viewed the police officer force approximately the same throughout a level of force, except within the educational year of juniors, were it received 0% within the justifiable force.

#### **Video 2**

Table 4.4 shows the analysis for video 2, where a Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2(6) = 8.137, p = .228$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .181$ . As for the responses given by the participants within their respective educational year level two out of the four levels held majority of the responses as excessive which were freshmen and junior, but except for the sophomore and senior year level

which had and nearly equal distribution throughout the three levels of forces. For the sophomore year level, 35.7% was the rating for both excessive force and justifiable force, with 28.6% as moderate force.

The distribution for the senior year level was 41.3% excessive and 39.7% justifiable force, with the rest resting with moderate force at 19%. For freshmen the rating for excessive force was 70% (compared to the rest of the respondent who viewed the level of force used by the police officer as justifiable force with 10% and 20% as moderate force). Though, juniors had majority of their respondents view the police officer force as excessive force with 56.8%, there was a slight difference within justifiable force with 18.9% and moderate force with 24.3%.

### **Video 3**

Table 4.4 depicts the results of video 3, and shows a Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2 (6) = 6.802, p = .340, \text{Cramér's } \phi^2 = .166$ . Given, the ratings amongst the participants within each educational year levels, three out of the four rated the force used by the law enforcement officers as excessive force with 50% out of those who responded (except for the educational year level sophomore, which respondent still held majority of the respondents as excessive force with 42.9%).

As for the moderate level of force compared across the educational year levels seem to range from 21% through 32.3%, with the exception of the freshmen year level who rated the force with 50%. In regards, for the justifiable force the only educational year level, which didn't rate the force used by the law enforcement officer as justifiable was the freshmen category. The rest of the educational year level rated the police officer force as justifiable with 35.7% for

sophomores and 26.3% for juniors (compared to only 17.7% of seniors viewed the law enforcement officer level of force as justifiable force).

#### **Video 4**

Table 4.4 shows the analysis of video 4, where a Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2(6) = 1.712, p = .944$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .083$ . The ratings for the justifiable force, within each educational year level range from 61.9% of seniors and through 71.4% of sophomores. Also, 70% of freshmen rated the force justifiable force (compared to 67.6% of juniors who viewed the police officers force as justifiable force).

Additionally, for the level of force moderate had a total of 10% for freshmen it was less than the ratings for excessive force with 20%. Though sophomores rated the police officers force as excessive force with 21.4% (compared to 7.1% who rated the police officers force as moderate force). However, for the educational year level seniors there was 19% respondent who participants viewed the force used by the police officer in video 4 as both moderate and excessive force (compared to 61.9% of seniors who rated the police offices force as justifiable force).. The same pattern was shown by the junior year level with 16.2% of respondents for both moderate and excessive force, but for justifiable force senior responded with 67.6%.

#### **Video 5**

Table 4.4 highlights the comparing of education level and level of force used by law enforcement officer within Video 5 among the four educational year levels. A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2(6) = 1.331, p = .970$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .073$ . Out of the 124 participant, 63 (50.8%) self-responded being seniors, where 37 (29.8%) reported as juniors (in comparison the

remainder 19.4% of the participants, were 11.3% sophomores and 8.1% freshmen in education year level).

Furthermore, table 6.1 shows that three out of the four educational year levels rated the force used by the police officer excessive with over 50% out of its total respondents these categories are freshmen, sophomores and juniors, but for seniors it was slightly under with 44.4% out of its total participants. As for the responses for the moderate force use by the police officer freshmen rated the force as 30% (compared to 28.6% of sophomores who viewed the police officer force as moderate force). Junior rated the force as moderate force with 29.7% (compared to 38.1% of seniors who rated the police officer force as moderate force). Though the responses for the category justifiable force were below 20% for freshmen the lowest was percentage was for sophomores with 14.3%. Further, juniors and seniors had an almost equal responses rate, were juniors viewed the force used by the police officer as justifiable force with 18.9% (compared to seniors with 17.5%).

### **Altered Education & Level of Force Rating**

In the comparison between educational year level and the video ratings, there was an uneven number of respondent per education year level. In order to ensure each education strata had an even number of participants, the first ten respondents for each education year level were selected. The remainder of the eighty-five participants, were removed when comparing educational year level and level of force within each arrest video, resulting in a sample size of 40 participants.

#### **Video 1**

As shown in Table 4.5. A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2 (6) = 3.704, p = .717$ ,

Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .215$ . For the moderate force had a total of 27.5% of the respondents and 5% rating the force use by the law enforcement officer as justifiable force.

**Table 4.4. Level of Force across All Education**

	Education Year	Justifiable % / (n)	Use of Force	
			Moderate % / (n)	Excessive % / (n)
Arrest Video 1				
	Freshmen	10 (1)	20 (2)	70 (7)
	Sophomore	0 (0)	28.6 (4)	71.4 (10)
	Junior	5.3 (2)	7.9 (3)	86.8 (33)
	Senior	7.9 (5)	20.6 (13)	71.4 (45)
Arrest Video 2				
	Freshmen	10 (1)	20 (2)	70 (7)
	Sophomore	35.7 (5)	28.6 (4)	35.7 (5)
	Junior	18.9 (7)	24.3 (9)	56.8 (21)
	Senior	39.7 (25)	19 (12)	41.3 (26)
Arrest Video 3				
	Freshmen	0 (0)	50 (5)	50 (5)
	Sophomore	35.7 (5)	21.4 (3)	42.9 (6)
	Junior	26.3 (10)	23.7 (9)	50 (19)
	Senior	17.7 (11)	32.3 (20)	50 (31)
Arrest Video 4				
	Freshmen	70 (7)	10 (1)	20 (2)
	Sophomore	71.4 (10)	7.1 (1)	21.4 (3)
	Junior	67.6 (25)	16.2 (6)	16.2 (6)
	Senior	61.9 (39)	19 (12)	19 (12)
Arrest Video 5				
	Freshmen	20 (2)	30 (3)	50 (5)
	Sophomore	14.3 (2)	28.6 (4)	57.1 (8)
	Junior	18.9 (7)	29.7 (11)	51.4 (19)
	Senior	17.5 (11)	38.1 (24)	44.4 (28)

$\chi^2$  test results are not shown due to no statistically significant data

Table 4.1 shows that majority of the respondent within each educational year level rated the force as excessive force, with 50% through 80% of the participants. Furthermore, as for moderate force compared across educational year level, the participant's responses ranged from

20% through 40% within their respective category. Out of the 10% of the total participants who rated the force as justifiable force, self-reported being freshmen and senior with 10% each (compared to 0% for both sophomores and juniors).

### **Video 2**

Table 4.5 shows a Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2(6) = 7.242, p = .299$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .305$ . Out of the 59% of the respondents who viewed the force as excessive with two educational year levels had the same number of participants with 70%, of freshmen and seniors (compared to 50% of sophomores and 44.4% of juniors). As shown in table 4.2, for educational year level 44% of junior's rated the violence as moderate, compared to 20% of freshmen and 20% of sophomores except for senior with 0%. As for the justifiable force, table 4.5 shows that 30% of sophomores and seniors categorized the violence as justifiable, whereas only 10% of freshmen and 11.1% of junior made the same decision.

### **Video 3**

As shown in Table 4.5, a Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2(6) = 9.533, p = .146$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .345$ . For excessive force, across educational year level 80% was reported by seniors and 60% by sophomore (compared to 50% for both freshmen and junior year level). Additionally, moderate force received the same rating as excessive force within 50% of its total participants (compared to justifiable force with 0%). Further, sophomore rated moderate force with 30% out of the total responded (compared 10% who viewed the force justifiable force). The remainder 50% of the participants for juniors rates the force used by the police officer as 20%

moderate and 30% justifiable force (compared to seniors who rated the force 0% moderate and 15% justifiable force).

#### **Video 4**

A Chi-square was conducted with the data provided by Table 4.5, which the analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2(6) = 2.457, p = .873$ , Cramér's  $\phi' = .175$ . The breakdown of the participants who rated the force justifiable across the education year level range from 60% through 80% of respondents within their educational year category. Seventy percent of freshmen and senior year level participants rated the force as justifiable compared to 80% of sophomores and 60% of juniors. As for moderate force, out of the 12.5% of the total participants 2.5% corresponded to three out of the four educational level (except senior year level which held 5% of the total respondents). However, excessive force had two educational year levels with the same total responded with 2.5% out of its total participants, which were seniors and sophomores (compared to 5% who self-reported being freshmen and 7.5% juniors).

#### **Video 5**

Table 4.5 illustrates data that resulted in the following, Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of use of force, given the education year levels:  $\chi^2(6) = 3.040, p = .804$ , Cramér's  $\phi' = .195$ . Out of the 25 participants who reported the force being excessive force, 70% reported being juniors and seniors (compared to 60% of the respondent being sophomores and 50% freshmen). Additionally, 20% of both sophomores and juniors (compared to freshmen and seniors with a 30% each) rated the use of force as moderate. Given, that 5 participants considered the force used in the video was justifiable both freshmen and



sophomore had a total of 20% each and juniors with 10% out of its total participants (compared to seniors with a 0%).

### **Summarized Effects of Education Level and The Justifiability of the Use of Force**

In summary, there was no significant relationship given the respondents ratings of the arrest videos across educational year level. Although, there was not significant association either both audio condition, majority of the participant's responses throughout for the videos either with audio present or absent, were overwhelmingly moderate force or excessive force. With regard to the altered educational year level analysis there continued to be a similar pattern of no statistical association between level of force and educational year level, either with audio or without audio.

### **Comparison of Panel Ratings and Participant Ratings**

Table 4.6 shows that 95 (76%) out of the 125 participants rated the force used by the law enforcement officer in the video 1 as excessive force (compared to 50% of the panels ratings in Table 3.1). Whereas, for moderate for the panel ratings were 25% (compared to 17.6% of the participants who rated the force used by the police officers as moderate force shown in Table 5.18). Further, the panel members rated the level of force used by the law enforcement officer in video 1 as 25% justifiable force (compared to 6.4% the participants, who rated the force as justifiable force in Table 4.6). Thus, comparing the panel's ratings, with the responses ratings provided in Table 3.1, depicts that excessive force held majority of the respondent's ratings with 47.6% (compared to 0% of the panel rating who rated the level of force use by the law enforcement officer as excessive force).

Though, the panel ratings differ within justifiable force with 75% (compared to 30.6% of the respondents rating the force use by the police officer as justifiable force) and the panel

members rated the police officer force as moderate force with 25% (compared to 21.8% of respondents who rated the force used by the police officer as moderate force). As for the responses provided by the panel members in Video 3, there was a 50/50 split rating with justifiable force and moderate force (compared to the participant's responses were there was almost an equal distribution with 21% as justifiable force, 29.8% as moderate force and the remainder 49.2% as excessive force).

**Table 4.5. Level of Force across Altered Education**

Education Year	Use of Force		
	Justifiable % / (n)	Moderate % / (n)	Excessive % / (n)
<b>Arrest Video 1</b>			
Freshmen	10 (1)	20 (2)	70 (7)
Sophomore	0 (0)	20 (2)	80 (8)
Junior	0 (0)	30 (3)	70 (7)
Senior	10 (1)	40 (4)	50 (5)
<b>Arrest Video 2</b>			
Freshmen	10 (1)	20 (2)	70 (7)
Sophomore	30 (3)	20 (2)	50 (5)
Junior	11.1 (1)	44.4 (4)	44.4 (4)
Senior	30 (3)	0 (0)	70 (7)
<b>Arrest Video 3</b>			
Freshmen	0 (0)	50 (5)	50 (5)
Sophomore	10 (1)	30 (3)	60 (6)
Junior	30 (3)	20 (2)	50 (5)
Senior	20 (2)	0 (0)	80 (8)
<b>Arrest Video 4</b>			
Freshmen	70 (7)	10 (1)	20 (2)
Sophomore	80 (8)	10 (1)	10 (1)
Junior	60 (6)	10 (1)	30 (3)
Senior	70 (7)	20 (2)	10 (1)
<b>Arrest Video 5</b>			
Freshmen	20 (2)	30 (3)	50 (5)
Sophomore	20 (2)	20 (2)	60 (6)
Junior	10 (1)	20 (2)	70 (7)
Senior	0 (0)	30 (3)	70 (7)

$\chi^2$  test results are not shown due to no statistically significant data

Overwhelming, out of the 124 participants who responded to the level of force used by the police officer in Video 4, rated the force as justifiable force with 65.3% (compared to 75% of the panel member's responses, who rated the level of force use by the police officer as justifiable force). But there was difference with the responses provided by the participants in moderate force with 16.1% (compared to the panel members with 0% viewing the force by the police officer as moderate force).

Overall, majority of the participants rated the force used by the law enforcement officers in the video 5 as excessive force with 48.4% and 33.9% as moderate force, with the rest of the participants rating the police officer as justifiable force with 17.7%). But in comparing those ratings with the responses provided by the expert panel members, there was a drastic difference. The panel members all rated the law enforcement officer force in the video 5 as excessive force with 100%.

### **Level of Force**

Overall 117 (93.6%) out of the 125 respondents in Table 4.7, indicated that law enforcement officers using "verbal commands" as a level of force is acceptable in some cases (compared to 6.4% of the respondents who suggested it was unacceptable in some cases). A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = 2.031, p = .566$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .127$ .

Overwhelmingly, majority of the respondents who partook were senior in year level with 63 50.4% (compared to 8% freshmen. The other two educational year level were evenly distributed with 11.2% of the respondent indicated being sophomore and 30.4% juniors.

Table 4.7 indicates a total of 124 participant's respondent out of the 125 who partook in the online survey with 102 (82.3%) rating police officers using "arm-bar takedowns" as a level of force acceptable in some cases (compared to 17.7% of participants indicating it's unacceptable in some cases).

A Chi-square analysis was conducted and no significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = 1.511, p = .680$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .110$ . A total of 62 (50%) of the participants were seniors who comprised majority of the respondents (compared to 8.1% who indicated they were freshmen). The remainder of the respondents fell within sophomore year level with 11.3% and junior in year level with 30.6%.

**Table 4.6. Level of Force All Arrest Videos**

Respondents Ratings:	Justifiable % / (n)	Use of Force Moderate % / (n)	Excessive % / (n)
Arrest Video 1			
Participant	6.4 (8)	17.6 (22)	76 (95)
Panel	25 (1)	25 (1)	50 (2)
Arrest Video 2			
Participant	30 (38)	21.8 (27)	47.6 (59)
Panel	75 (3)	25 (1)	0 (0)
Arrest Video 3			
Participant	21 (26)	29.8 (37)	49.2 (61)
Panel	50 (2)	50 (2)	0 (0)
Arrest Video 4			
Participant	65.3 (81)	16.1 (20)	18.5 (23)
Panel	75 (3)	0 (0)	25 (1)
Arrest Video 5			
Participant	17.7 (22)	33.9 (42)	48.4 (60)
Panel	0 (0)	0 (0)	100 (4)

$\chi^2$  test results shown for statistically significant data  
 Arrest Video 1:  $\chi^2(2) = 6.299, p = .043$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .224$   
 Arrest Video 2:  $\chi^2(2) = 16.536, p < .001$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .365$   
 Arrest Video 5:  $\chi^2(2) = 28.448, p < .001$ , Cramér's  $\phi = .479$

Table 4.7 shows that majority of the 125 participants indicated that law enforcement officers using “striking with punches” as a level of force was unacceptable in all cases with 85 participants at 68% (compared to 32% of respondents rating the force acceptable in all cases). A Chi-square analysis revealed a significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = 8.869, p = .031$ , Cramér’s  $\phi' = .266$ . Educational year level seems to have an impact on the rating of the level of force with 63 (50.4%) of the respondents being seniors (compared to 8% of the respondents were freshmen). Additionally, 32% of the senior respondents rated the level of force as unacceptable in all cases (compared to 18.4% of the senior who rated the level of force as acceptable in all cases).

Thus, 11.2% of the respondents indicated their educational year level as sophomore (compared to 30.4% participants being juniors). Out of the 38 junior respondents 25.6% indicated the level of force was unacceptable in all cases (compared to 4.8% who rated the level of force acceptable in all cases).

Table 4.7 depicts 91 (72.8%) out of the 125 participants rated the level of force “striking with kicks” by law enforcement officers as unacceptable in all cases (compared to 27.2% who indicated the level of force being acceptable in all cases). A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = 5.733, p = .125$ , Cramér’s  $\phi' = .214$ .

Additionally, majority of the participants indicated their educational year level as seniors with 63 (50.4%) out of the 125 participants. Within the educational year level senior 32.8% of the students indicated the level of force being unacceptable in all cases (compared with 17.6%

who rated the level of force as acceptable in all cases). A total of 30.4% of the participants indicated their educational year level as juniors (compared to 11.2% being sophomores).

Table 4.7 shows that out of the 125 participants only 122 responded to the question regarding the level of force for police officers utilizing “baton strikes” in effect an arrest. Out of those 122 participants 52 (42.6%) indicated using “baton strikes” as unacceptable in all cases (compared to 70 (57.4%) respondent that utilizing “baton strikes” in effecting an arrest as acceptable in all cases). A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = .775, p = .855, \text{Cramér's } \phi' = .080$ .

Within the educational level majority of the respondents were seniors with 50% and the least being freshmen with 8.2% (the other two educational categories were evenly distributed with 11.5% being sophomore and 30.3% juniors). As for the education year level senior 37% of the students indicated the level of force was acceptable in all cases (compared to 19.7% responded to the level of force being unacceptable in all cases). For the junior education year level 16.4% of the students rated the level being acceptable in all cases (compared to 13.9% who indicated the level of force being unacceptable in all cases). The respondent for the educational year level sophomore showed a 50/50 response ratio within level of force being acceptable and unacceptable in all cases.

Table 4.7 shows that 124 out of the 125 participants provided a response regarding the level of force “using Taser or Electronic device” used in effecting an arrest by law enforcement officers. Overwhelming, majority of the participants who responded to the question indicated that utilizing a Taser or electronic device as acceptable in all cases with 107 (86.3%) (compared to 13.7% who respondent using such level of force as unacceptable in all cases). A Chi-square

analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = 7.656, p = .054$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .248$ . Additionally, out of the 107 participants who rated the level of force as acceptable in all cases majority of those respondents were seniors with 46%. As for the education year level junior held a total of 38 (30.6%) of the total participants with 25.8% rating using Taser or electronic devices as acceptable in all cases (compared to 4.8% who indicated the level of force as unacceptable in all cases). Thus, the education year level for freshmen had almost a 50/50 rating in regards to the acceptability of the force with 4.8% rating the force acceptable (compared to 3.2% rating the level of force as unacceptable in all cases). Table 4.8 illustrates that majority of the respondents with 110 (88%) out of the 125 participants view the use of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) or pepper spray use by law enforcement officers in effecting an arrest was acceptable (compared to 12% viewed the level of force as unacceptable). A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = 1.801, p = .615$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .120$ . Of the 50.4% of senior participants, 45.6% indicated the level of force is acceptable in all cases (compared to 4.8% who indicated the force being unacceptable).

Further, out of those 30.4% who responded as juniors as an educational year level, 25.6% viewed the level of force as acceptable (compared to 4.8% who respondent as unacceptable). As for the educational year level sophomore 10.4% out of the 11.2% indicated the level of force as acceptable (compared to .8% rating the level of force as unacceptable). As for the freshmen education year level seem to have the same trend as majority of its respondents indicating the use of OC or pepper spray by law enforcement officers as acceptable with 6.4% (compared to 1.6% rating the level of force as unacceptable).

Furthermore, during the research survey the participants illustrated the following views over the level of force utilize by law enforcement officers.

**Table 4.7. Level of Force Acceptability**

Level of Force	Education Level	Acceptability	
		Acceptable % / (n)	Unacceptable % / (n)
Verbal Commands			
	Freshmen	100 (10)	0.0 (0)
	Sophomores	100 (14)	0.0 (0)
	Juniors	92.1 (35)	7.9 (3)
	Seniors	92.1 (58)	7.9 (5)
Arm-bar Takedowns			
	Freshmen	80 (8)	20 (2)
	Sophomores	85.7 (12)	14.3 (2)
	Juniors	76.3 (29)	23.7 (9)
	Seniors	85.5 (53)	14.5 (9)
Striking with Punches			
	Freshmen	60 (6)	40 (4)
	Sophomores	35.7 (5)	64.3 (9)
	Juniors	15.8 (6)	84.2 (32)
	Seniors	36.5 (23)	63.5 (40)
Striking with Kicks			
	Freshmen	30 (3)	70 (7)
	Sophomores	28.6 (4)	71.4 (10)
	Juniors	13.2 (5)	86.8 (33)
	Seniors	34.9 (22)	65.1 (41)
Striking with Baton			
	Freshmen	60 (6)	40 (4)
	Sophomores	50 (7)	50 (7)
	Juniors	54.1 (20)	45.9 (17)
	Seniors	60.7 (37)	39.3 (24)
Using Taser or Electronic Devices			
	Freshmen	60 (6)	40 (4)
	Sophomores	85.7 (12)	14.3 (2)
	Juniors	84.2 (32)	15.8 (6)
	Seniors	91.9 (57)	8.1 (5)

$\chi^2$  test results shown for statistically significant data; Striking with Punches:  $\chi^2 (3) = 8.869, p = .031$ , Cramér's  $\phi^2 = .266$



Table 4.8 highlights that majority of the respondents viewed the level of force by law enforcement officers using a knife in effecting an arrest as unacceptable in all cases with 104 (83.2%) out of the 125 participants (compared to 21 (16.8%) who rated the use of a knife in effecting an arrest as acceptable). A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = .354, p = .950$ , Cramér's  $\phi' = .053$ . Out of the 63 respondents who indicated their education year level as seniors 42.4% rated the level as unacceptable in all cases (compared to 8% who suggested the force as acceptable in all cases).

The other three educational year levels seem to show as similar trend. For the education year level junior who had a total of 38 respondents (25.6%) indicated the level of force as acceptable, whereas (4.8%) indicated the force was unacceptable in all cases. A total of 11.2% participants who respondent indicated their education year level was sophomore, where 8.8% rated the use of a knife as unacceptable (compared to 2.4% who rated the level of force as acceptable in effecting an arrest). Lastly, as for the education year level freshmen held 10 (8%) out of the 125 participants. The freshmen education year level majority rated the level of force as unacceptable in effecting an arrest as 6.4% (compared to 1.6% of its respondent who rated the force acceptable).

Table 4.8 shows that out of the 125 participants who participated in the online survey 89 (71.2%) indicated that police officers in using a gun (shooting a suspect) as acceptable (compared to 28.85 who viewed that level of force as unacceptable). A Chi-square analysis revealed no significant relationship between the rating of educational year level and level of force either acceptable or unacceptable in all cases:  $\chi^2(3) = .714, p = .870$ , Cramér's  $\phi' = .076$ . Out of the 63 participants who indicated their education year level as senior's majority viewed

the use of a gun as acceptable with 46 (36.8%) (compared to 17 (13.6%) who viewed using a gun as unacceptable). As for the education year level junior 21.6% out of the 30.4% participants indicated the use of a gun as acceptable (compared to 8.8% who suggested the use of a gun as unacceptable). As for the education year level sophomore who had a total of 11.2% out of the 125 participants, 8% indicated the use of a gun was acceptable (compared to 3.2% who rated the use of a gun as unacceptable in all cases). Lastly, for the education level freshmen 8% out the 125 participants, 4.8% indicated the force was acceptable in all cases (compared to 3.2% who indicated the use of a gun was unacceptable in all cases).

**Table 4.8. Extended Level of Force Acceptability**

Level of Force	Education Level	Acceptability	
		Acceptable % / (n)	Unacceptable % / (n)
Using OC/ Pepper Spray	Freshmen	80 (8)	20 (2)
	Sophomores	92.9 (13)	7.1 (1)
	Juniors	84.2 (32)	15.8 (6)
	Seniors	90.5 (57)	9.5 (6)
Using a Knife	Freshmen	20 (2)	80 (8)
	Sophomores	21.4 (3)	78.6 (11)
	Juniors	15.8 (6)	84.2 (32)
	Seniors	15.9 (10)	84.1 (53)
Using a Gun	Freshmen	60 (6)	40 (4)
	Sophomores	71.4 (10)	28.6 (4)
	Juniors	71.1 (27)	28.9 (11)
	Seniors	73 (46)	27 (17)

$\chi^2$  test results are not shown due to no statistically significant data

Table 4.9 gives an insight on the acceptability of the techniques that law enforcement officers utilize within their force continuum. Overwhelming, techniques with over eighty percent for acceptable in all cases were techniques that are viewed as less aggressive, compared to those

of unacceptable in all cases that can result in a permanent physical effect. Majority of the respondents rated verbal commands as acceptable in all cases with 93.6%, as well as arm-bar takedowns with 82.3%. Though techniques where law enforcement officers resort to striking were viewed as unacceptable in all cases. As shown in Table 6.3, striking with punches was rated 68%, as well as striking with punches was rated 72.8%. The only technique that was rated with a less than a 10% difference was striking with a baton, were acceptable in all cases received 57.4% by respondents (compared to unacceptable in all cases with 42.6%). As for techniques involving the use of electrical devices or Taser with (86.3%) and OC spray/ Pepper Spray with (88%), were viewed by respondents as acceptable in all cases. Thus, the use of a knife was viewed as unacceptable in all cases with 83.2% (compared with the use of a gun, which was viewed as acceptable in all cases with 71.2%).

**Table 4.9. Total Acceptability of Level of Force**

Level of Force	Acceptability	
	Acceptable % / (n)	Unacceptable % / (n)
Verbal Commands	93.6 (117)	6.4 (8)
Arm-bar Takedowns	82.3 (102)	17.7 (22)
Striking with Punches	32 (40)	68 (85)
Striking with Kicks	27.2 (34)	72.8 (91)
Striking with Baton	57.4 (70)	42.6 (52)
Using Taser or Electronic Devices	86.3 (107)	13.7 (17)
Using OC/ Pepper Spray	88 (110)	12 (15)
Using a Knife	16.8 (21)	83.2 (104)
Using a Gun	71.2 (89)	28.8 (36)

$\chi^2$  test results are not shown due to no statistically significant data

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Summary Overview

There has been a recent focus in the media for showing video recordings of police use of force during arrest. At times, the audio footage is muted, possibly because the officer failed to record audio, or due to the use of profane language not suitable for a general audience. Regardless of the reason, removing the audio track reduces the contextual information available to the audience. The focus of this research was to investigate whether the removal of the audio track for such videos alters the perception of the video. Specifically, this research aimed to investigate whether the perceived level of force (categorized as justifiable force, moderate force or excessive force) used by a law enforcement officer in effecting an arrest or detention, changes depending on whether the audio track was present or removed. In addition, this research aimed to investigate whether education level may also play a role in how we perceive the justifiability of violence. Previous research has shown that with increasing education levels, societal participation also increases (Carpini & Keeter, 1996; Galston, 2001; Schultz et al. 2003). More specifically, as education levels increase, will the perceptions of the justifiability of the use of force also change?

The data indicated that there was a significant association between when audio was present or absent for 3 out of the 5 videos presented to the participants, which means we can reject the null hypothesis: there was a significant relationship between the presence or absence of audio track in the arrest videos shown in the experimental research. The three arrest videos that revealed a significant association illustrated different ratings among the three levels of force used by law enforcement officers. For arrest video 1, the removal of audio track from the arrest video

significantly increased the perceptions of law enforcement officer's forces used was viewed as excessive force with 70.1% for audio and 85.4% for no audio. The relationship between audio and no audio in arrest video 1, influenced the participant's rates for justifiable force with 10.4% for audio present and 0% for no audio (compared to moderate force audio present with 19.5% and no audio with 14.6%).

The data gathered for arrest video 2, also revealed that there was a significant relationship between audio tracks present or absent. The significant was noted in the aspect where audio was present showed 60.5% excessiveness compared to when audio track was absent revealed a 50% as justifiable force used by the police officer. Arrest video 5, revealed a significant association with 66.2% excessive force for the audio track (compared to the no audio ratings with 34% as justifiable force). Further, as for the police officer use of moderate force received 46.8% for no audio track (compared to 26% for the audio track within arrest video 5). Thus, for arrest video 3 and video 4 there was not significant association between the audio condition and level of force used by the law enforcement officer. Though for the arrest videos which indicated a significant relationship, the level of force used by the police officer received different ratings. But highlights the aspect of presence and absence of audio feeds within an arrest video, does influence the viewers perceived level of force used by the police officer.

The statistical data also indicated no significant relationship between educational year level and the perceived level of force utilized by the police officer. The non-significant difference observed for the education data must be interpreted with caution however; given the lower than expected sample size, there is likely a statistical power issue in the data, and thus this finding may be a Type II error (the incorrect acceptance of the null hypotheses when it is false).

Although total participation collapsed across the four education year levels was substantial, unfortunately far fewer Freshmen and Sophomores responded to the recruitment efforts for this research than Juniors and Seniors. This resulted in a very uneven sample size when sample was categorized by educational year strata. For Freshmen participants, the total sample size was only ten participants, whereas 63 Seniors participated. Running statistical analysis with such uneven cell sizes violates many assumptions of frequency-based statistical analysis.

However, equating the cell sizes results in a sample of 10 participants per cell, which dramatically inflates the likelihood of a Type II error due to insufficient statistical power. Therefore, the statistical analysis was run both ways for Education Level, with the entire sample of 125 participants, and with a reduced sample of 40. Neither analysis revealed a significant relationship between educational year levels and level of force the police's officers exerted in the arrest video. The statistical analysis indicated that the participants rated the arrest videos either as moderate force and excessive force. Suggesting the police officers use of force was above justifiable force, but not deeming excessive force. The potential for a Type II error in the Education findings will be addressed in the limitations and in the future directions sections of this discussion.

Demographics data were gathered and can shed light in additional avenues which can affect law enforcement officers use of force incidents. As previously discussed the concept of masculinity may play a role in the perpetration of excessive use of force within arrest procedures (Higate & Hopton, 2004). Within this experimental research, the majority of the participants were female (81.6%), with only 17.6% of the sample reporting as males. Thus, the overwhelming number of female participants could have skewed the response rates towards more

excessive force, due to having a higher chance of victimization and mothering nature. As Fitzgerald (1993) illustrated that 1 out of every 2 females during their academic or workplace would experience a form of harassment. The likelihood of female victimization may result in female participants judging the use of force as more excessive than males possibly would.

A further factor previously identified as affecting use of excessive force was race (Prenzler, Porter & Alpert, 2013). The majority of the participants (90.4%) self-reported as being Hispanic or Latino in the current sample, consistent with the demographics of Laredo, Texas. Reitzel, Rice and Piquero (2004) argued that minority races (i.e. Hispanics and Blacks) are least satisfied with their interactions with law enforcement personnel.

Further, Payne and Gainey (2007) indicate that the attitude towards law enforcement officers is affected by race/ ethnicity, and it tends to negatively alter the interaction with police officers. Furthermore, a previous negative law enforcement encounter could affect future perceptions towards police officers, as individuals who have previously had negative encounters with Police, either due to racial issues or legal issues, may be likely to disliked State Police (Correia et al. 1996). As Hispanic/Latino is seen as a minority race, and the literature suggests that minorities are more likely to have negative interactions with law enforcement (Prenzler, Porter & Alpert, 2013), this may have had an effect on the ratings in the current data.

Furthermore, all of the five subjects being arrested or restrained in the arrest videos utilized for this research belonged to a minority race (i.e. Hispanic and Black). The race/ ethnicity of the arresting officers within all the five videos were either White or Asian. As the analysis revealed that majority of the participant's self-reported being from Hispanic or Latino origin with 90.4%, this results in our participants having greater similarity to the perpetrators than with the officers. Therefore, it is possible that the participants could have been leaning into

conclusions by favoring individuals of their ethnicity/ race, especially due to the increased tensions with negative law enforcement headlines towards minorities becoming increasingly common.

In essence, the overwhelming representation of Hispanic or Latino participants, rated three arrest videos as excessive force, and the other two arrest videos were viewed justifiable force and moderate force, possible due to their feeling more affinity with the suspects, than the arresting officers. Also, in respect towards demographics of political affiliation, the majority of the participants (60%) reported being Democrat of some sort (Democrat, strong Democrat or not so strong Democrat). Galston (2001) points out that political knowledge influences individuals to fall on a spectrum of either support or opposition towards specific social issues, particularly those related to social justice and violence. Given the affiliation between minorities and Democratic views, it raises the question, if demographics of Hispanic or Latino's and political affiliation, may not be giving an accurate representation of feelings towards police violence, thus affecting the reliability of these experimental research?

One of the aims of this research was to highlight whether removing the audio feed from videos of law enforcement officers affecting an arrest or detention videos influences the viewers' perceived level of force. The police officers' videos occurred in an era of social media outlet where concerns of de-militarizing law enforcement practices may become a concern (Pyrooz et al. 2016). These data suggest that, at the very least, removal and/or presence of audio track within a law enforcement officer arrest or detention video can influence the perceived justifiability of the violence depicted in such videos, which is of especial concern in the social media broadcast of such videos.



Additionally, data was also collected on the acceptability of techniques or use of equipment against suspects, by law enforcement officers. The ratings on the acceptability of the force continuum that law enforcement officers use in conducting an arrest, revealed that techniques that cause less physical impairment were viewed as acceptable in all cases. Law enforcement officers are trained to respond to a critical incident and resorting to either the escalation or de-escalation of force (Siddle, 2005). Law enforcement officers are trained to respond with one of the two theories of control, the total control theory and one plus one theory (Siddle, 2005). The total control theory suggest an impact weapon can be used to take control of a subject in an level of resistance, whereas the one plus one theory trains the law enforcement officer in using one level of force higher than the level of resistance use by the subject (Siddle, 2005).

Thus, verbal commands and arm-bar takedowns were viewed as acceptable in all cases with overall eighty percent rating. Though for techniques where law enforcement officer resort to striking with punches or striking with kicks, were rated as unacceptable in all cases. Although, given the subject level of resistance, participants viewed the use of an electronic device or Taser and OC spray techniques as acceptable, with over eighty-eight percent. As illustrated by Siddle (2005) when a police officer is faced with a deadly force encounter, the police officers are trained to respond with deadly force (using a knife or using a gun). Findings from the current research suggest that the use of a knife was rated as unacceptable in all cases with 83.3% (compared to using a gun which was viewed as acceptable in all cases with 71.2%). This raises concern relating to the type of training law enforcement officers are receiving as cadets and during in-service, as well as whether law enforcement officers stop enforcing the laws, and following their safety protocols, in order to increase positive relationship with citizens? The

answer would be no, law enforcement should continue to enforce the laws, but rather change the manner in which they enforce those laws. The manner in which law enforcement officers enforce the laws, can be measured by the type of training they receive. These training can consist of crisis intervention training, human interaction skills, defensive tactics, and legal issues in relating to escalation and de-escalation of violence during arrest events.

### **Implications**

The main implications within this research are with regards to the massive media sources at the disposal of citizens. Social media serves as a form of informing the public of incidents that occur throughout the nation or across the world. The increase in police-involved shooting events across the nation can negatively impact the public trust towards law enforcement officers, especially those of disadvantage groups as minorities or lower income (Kane, 2005).

Thus, in such a situation where an arrest video may be shown to the public via social media it is often the case that the audio track is absent due to the profanity or inappropriate language for national television. The results of this experimental research suggest that arrest videos should always be shown with an intact audio track, as without it, the perceived level of violence changes, and often it is perceived as less excessive.

A further implication with the muting of audio in an arrest video would be in the case of arrest video being used as evidence in police brutality cases. Reform is currently underway to removing federal oversights of policing, specifically dealing with police brutality incidents (Pendergrass, 2017). This reform is going to put a greater responsibility on prosecutors by acting in a professional and non-bias way when dealing with a law enforcement officer on trial (Pendergrass, 2017). So several strategies the attorney could use in attempt to influencing the perception of the jury or judge regarding the justifiability of the violence used by the police

officer, could be simply by muting the audio of an arrest video. The simple act of muting the audio feed can, at the very least, alter the audience's perception of the violence, and at the most severe, possibly persuade the audience to view the police officer's use of force as justifiable.

These implications could be addressed by establishing policies requiring law enforcement agencies, who are equipped with video cameras or body cameras, to require all video recording to also contain an audio track. Further, the dilemma of law enforcement officer fearing of profanity language being recorded, could be to simply "beep out" the profane words for use in the media. However, in the court room it could be important to show the entirety of the footage and audio track, even if it contains profanity. Thus, establishing certain mandatory policies can serve both the law enforcement officer and the citizens they encounter on a daily basis.

### **Limitations**

One severe limitation of this research was in respect to the volume of data collected on education level. Although the research was advertised equally to participants across all levels of education, the response rate differed greatly between years of education. Juniors and Seniors were far more likely to engage with the research than Freshmen and Sophomores. The result was that when the cell sizes were equated for statistical comparison, the sample reduced from 125 to 40 participants. Given the restraint of a Master's degree timeframe, the sample obtained was the one utilized for data analysis.

However, during the course of this process other methods of participant recruitment have been explored to be utilized in future research. For example, a more appropriate and reliable form of sampling would be to conduct this research as a longitudinal data collection. Hence, future research can initially recruit a sample within their first year of undergraduate studies with a pre-test and track those same participants throughout their educational year level with a re-test

every year to compare whether their individual responses change over time. A larger sample size would facilitate a greater depth of statistical analysis on the topic of how education level may influence perceptions of the justifiability of police use of force. It stands that future experimental research in the perceptions of arrest video violence need to be expanded especially among a community-sample and across educational year levels. Research of this nature would be greatly beneficial in investigating whether educational level does impact the perceived justifiability of level of force use by a police officer.

A further potentially limiting factor to this experimental design concerns the unescapable issue of participants making relative, rather than absolutely judgments regarding the use of force in each video. Due to the sequential delivery of the five arrest videos, which were shown one after another to the respondents, the participants may have made judgments about the severity/justifiability of the force utilized in comparison to the video immediately preceding the current video, rather than judging each video in isolation. Although there is no way to remove this possibility completely, without limiting participant stimuli exposure to one arrest video, (e.g. even counterbalancing the order of presentation would do little to remove the possibility of relative judgments) there steps that can be taken to attempt to reduce this potential in future iterations of this research design. For example, in addition to the current practice of instructing participants to consider each video by itself, researchers could also implement a break between the arrest videos being shown.

Additionally, during this experimental research it has been noted that majority of the participants were females, as well as of a minority race/ethnicity. These demographics raise another question in regards to majority and minority group's population, within the geographical location of the experimental research. Would there have been a different response rating on the

arrest video, if this experimental research was hosted in a location where the majority of the respondent classified themselves as White?

### **Future Directions**

A potential area of research expansion is within the arena of social media engagement. As noted by Pyrooz et al. (2016) the lifestyle of Americans is impacted by crime. Also the level of educational attainment has also been shown to shape the participation of those with civil and social issues (Galston, 2001). With regards to today's youth they interacting at a higher rate with electronic social media than they do with conventional media (i.e. Cable and television news networks). After an unarmed African American who was eighteen-year-old, Michael Brown was shot and killed by a law enforcement officer on a Saturday afternoon in Ferguson a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri (Halpern, 2015; Rosenfeld, 2015). As other recent law enforcement officer's shootings or excessive force incidents, was broadcasted through social media, sparking an overwhelming 30 million hits were recorded in Google with the term "Ferguson shooting" (Pyrooz et al. 2016). The Ferguson Effect is classified as the increase in law enforcement officer shootings that occurred after Michael Brown's shooting (Pyrooz, et. al 2016). Although the FBI's crime statistics show a decrease of crime since the early 1930s (Blumstein & Wallman, 2006; Fagan, Zimring, & Kim, 1998), the recent increase of law enforcement officer involved shootings across the nation indicate a trend otherwise. Focusing on crime rates of larger cities within the United States, in order to determine if there was a "Ferguson Effect", Pyrooz et al. (2016) concluded that there was no correlation between the Ferguson shooting and increases of law enforcement shootings. However, Pyrooz et al. (2016) is only one study and thus provides an interesting avenue for replication and extension.

A further extension of this line of research would be to evaluate Police training manuals as well as departmental policies and common practice procedures. For example, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) has set requirements of continuing education courses for license peace officers to complete in order to maintain an issued peace officer license active (an issued peace officer license is granted to every police officer after completing the Basic Police Officer Course in a Law Enforcement Academy and successfully passing the State exam). The mandated continuing education courses consist of 80 hours every four year training cycle and 40 hours every training unit two years. Interesting research questions could investigate the impact of such training, for example: do officer involved shootings increase as time-from-training increases? What training is given regarding the circumstances of use of force? How much fear based training is implemented regarding use of force? What race are the suspects in the use of force training examples?

There is much too still understand about the use of force by police: from the law enforcement side many questions remain regarding how these incidents happen, is this an institutional issue such as a training failure, or an individual differences issue with regards to the management of stress? In other words, how much of the blame can be attributed to individual differences compared to short-comings in training practices. From the general public side, much remains misunderstood in how we interpret and judge the use of force by police officers. The current data suggests that by removing a key contextual aspect, the audio feed, we perceive the use of force as excessive, whereas when we view the same videos with the audio feed we judge them as depicting a justifiable use of force. In relation to the level of education a person holds, data suggests that it has no relationship on the perceived level of force the police officer. This

has implications for the care in which the media needs to take with regards to the presentation of such videos, and the audio recording policies of police forces.

## **Conclusion**

Due to the findings with audio and without audio arrest videos, it was revealed that there was a significant association between them, with three out of the five videos being rated as excessive force when audio is present, but justifiable when audio was absent. The three videos that showed significant association were Video 1, Video 2 and Video 5, where majority of the respondents rated the force used by law enforcement officers as excessive force compared to justifiable or moderate force. Moreover, the experimental research also revealed that there was no significant association between educational year level and perceived level of force use by a police officer in effecting an arrest.

The statistical data of no significant association between educational year level and level of force used by an officer, could be due to the experiments low sample size within each educational year level, thus making this an unreliable statistical result. However, for future research there are measures that can be implemented to generate more participants. The recruitment of a more diverse gender participation, can be obtained by limiting the total number of each category. Thus, the replication of this research should take into consideration the expansion of race/ ethnicity and gender in the sample. The Rodney King incident was the first video of its kind depicting police brutality and gaining mass media coverage, erupting in tension between law enforcement and the community. Nowadays, social media is still showing police use of force arrest video and have the ability of manipulating the audio context.

This research has begun to shed light on the potential for an audience's perception of the justifiability of use of force by police officers effecting an arrest, to be influenced depending on

whether the audio feed is present or absent. At the very least, these data suggest to us the malleability of perceptions and judgments, and serve to motivate future research in the area as we seek to understand, and thus tackle, the issue of police use of force.



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## APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Participants Consent Form

*Carefully read and consider the below information before considering to participate in the mention research.*

**Research Name:** Educational Levels affect perception of Law Enforcement Officer Arrest by Mode of Delivery

**Researcher Name:** Higinio Guillermo Reyes Jr.

**Study Procedure:** Spend approximately 20 minutes duration, to view two videos and rate them

**Risks:** Participants will not be exposed to any outdoor hazards and will be debriefed after the conclusion of the research.

**Compensation:** Participants will be given incentives throughout the administration process.

**Participation and Withdraw:** The participant has read the procedure and risks of this research and voluntarily volunteers to part take in the research study. Additionally, the participant can withdraw from the study at any time desired.

**Contact:** If the participant has any question concerning the ethical or criminal aspect of the research they can feel free to contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) coordinator, Dr. Kate Houston at (956) 326-2630 or by email at: [kate.houston@tamiu.edu](mailto:kate.houston@tamiu.edu).

**Agreement:** The participant has been made aware fully aware of the implications of research in which they are about to participate. The participant has also been made aware of the length of the research which consist of a full years since its first test administered. By signing below the participant voluntary volunteer to partake in the research.

Participant Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B: Participants Survey Questionnaire

### **Informed Consent Agreement**

The purpose of this study is to identify if audio or no audio within an arrest video alters the perceived level of violence. The participants have to be currently enrolled as a student within Texas A&M International University.

You will be ask to respond to a series of questions about your beliefs and perceived level of violence on the studies arrest videos. The survey should take no more than 15 through 20 minutes of your time.

Your responses to this survey will be anonymous; the survey will not contain information that will personally identify you. Only the principal investigator and the student researcher will have access to the data, and data will only be described in aggregate form. All data will be stored in a password protected electronic format. Survey Monkey's privacy policy can be accessed here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/policy/privacy-policy/>

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary; you may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this research study, you may withdraw at any time. You will not receive any compensation for you participation.

No physical, psychological, or emotional risks are associated with this study. A potential benefit is that you will contribute to the researchers' goals of having a better understanding of how audio or no audio on an arrest video can impact an individuals perceived level of violence.

If you have any questions or concerns now or later, you may contact Dr. Kate Houston (Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice) at [kate.houston@tamiu.edu](mailto:kate.houston@tamiu.edu) or at (956) 326-2630.

1) Do you agree to participate in this study? Selecting the "I AGREE to part participate" option below indicates that:

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are currently enrolled at Texas A&M International University

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by selecting the "I choose NOT to participate" option.

- a) I AGREE to participate
- b) I choose NOT to participate



- 2) What is your current level of education?
  - a) Freshmen
  - b) Sophomore
  - c) Junior
  - d) Senior
  
- 3) What is your gender?
  - a) Male
  - b) Female
  - c) Transgender
  - d) I do not identify as male, female or transgender
  
- 4) What is your race/ethnicity?
  - a) American Indian or Alaska Native
  - b) Black or African American
  - c) Hispanic or Latino
  - d) Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - e) White
  - f) Biracial/ Multiracial
  
- 5) What is your prefer language?
  - a) English
  - b) Spanish
  - c) Other
  
- 6) What is your age?
  - a) 18 - 21 years of age
  - b) 22 – 25 years of age
  - c) 26 – 29 years of age
  - d) 30 – 33 years of age
  - e) 34 – 37 years of age
  - f) 38 – 41 years of age
  - g) 42 – 45 years of age
  - h) Greater than 45 years of age

- 7) Your political views tend to be:
- a) Very Conservative
  - b) Not so strong Conservative
  - c) Conservative
  - d) Liberal
  - e) Not so strong Liberal
  - f) Very Liberal
- 8) How would you generally identify yourself on the following respect to political affiliation?
- a) Strong Democrat
  - b) Not so strong Democrat
  - c) Independent leaning Democrat
  - d) Pure Independent
  - e) Independent leaning Republican
  - f) Not so strong Republican
  - g) Strong Republican
- 9) Which of the following is your approximate household income?
- a) Under \$10,000
  - b) \$10,001 - \$30,000
  - c) \$30,001 - \$50,000
  - d) \$50,001 - \$70,000
  - e) \$70,001 - \$100,000
  - f) More than \$100,001
- 10) Are you a U.S. citizen?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
- 11) Have you ever served in the U.S. military?
- a) Yes
  - b) No
- 12) Please indicate if you were in a combat deployment?  
By indicating “yes”, you experienced the following: small arms fire, improvise explosive device, vehicle bombs, indirect fire (motors).
- a) Yes
  - b) No

- 13) Do you have **any** affiliation with Law Enforcement?  
By indicating “yes”, you have family members, friends or acquaintances in a law enforcement capacity, participate in law enforcement organizations.
- a) Yes  
b) No
- 14) Have you **ever been arrest or detain** by the police?
- a) Yes  
b) No
- 15) Have you **ever been a victim** of police brutality?
- a) Yes  
b) No
- 16) Have you **ever witness someone** being arrested or abuse by the police?
- a) Yes  
b) No
- 17) What is your **current view** towards Law Enforcement?
- a) Positive  
b) Negative  
c) Neutral
- 18) Please indicate whether you believe each of the following techniques is either “Acceptable in some cases” or “Unacceptable in all cases” with respect to effecting an arrest or apprehend a suspect:
- |                                    | <u>Acceptable in some cases</u> | <u>Unacceptable in all cases</u> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| a) Verbal commands                 | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| b) Arm-bar Takedowns               | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| c) Striking with punches           | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| d) Striking with knees             | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| e) Striking with Kicks             | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| f) Striking with Baton             | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| g) Using Taser or Electric devices | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| h) Using “OC” or Pepper Spray      | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| i) Using a Knife                   | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| j) Using a Gun “shooting”          | <input type="checkbox"/>        | <input type="checkbox"/>         |

19) Arrest video #1 rating?

a) Justifiable force

b) Moderate Force

c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

20) Arrest video #2 rating?

a) Justifiable force

b) Moderate Force

c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

21) Arrest video #3 rating?

a) Justifiable force

b) Moderate Force

c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

22) Arrest video #4 rating?

a) Justifiable force

b) Moderate Force

c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

23) Arrest video #5 rating?

a) Justifiable force

b) Moderate Force

c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Appendix C: Panel Arrest Videos Rating

1) Approximate number of years of law enforcement / criminal justice experience?

- a) Less than 10 years
- b) 11 – 20 years
- c) 21 - 30 years
- d) More than 31 years

2) Law Enforcement career status?

- a) Active
- b) Retired

3) Law enforcement career experience?

- a) Local (i.e. police department, sheriff office etc.)
- b) State government (i.e. Texas DPS, Game Warden, etc.)
- c) Federal government (i.e. U.S. Border Patrol, etc.)

4) Current law enforcement or criminal justice position?

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) Your current age?

- a) 25 – 35 years
- b) 36 – 45 years
- c) 46 – 55 years
- d) 55 years and older

6) Gender?

- a) Male
- b) Female

7) Arrest video #1 rating?

- a) Justifiable force
- b) Moderate Force
- c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8) Arrest video #2 rating?

- a) Justifiable force
- b) Moderate Force
- c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

9) Arrest video #3 rating?

- a) Justifiable force
- b) Moderate Force
- c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

10) Arrest video #4 rating?

a) Justifiable force                      b) Moderate Force                      c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11) Arrest video #5 rating?

a) Justifiable force                      b) Moderate Force                      c) Excessive Force

Brief explanation, why? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12) Please provide a brief definition as you perceive the following level of forces:

Justifiable Force: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Moderate Force: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Excessive Force: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D: Institutional Review Board Approval Letter



**TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**  
A Member of The Texas A&M University System

Institutional Review Board - IRB

April 10, 2017

Dear Dr. Kate Houston,

The Texas A&M International University IRB has approved your protocol #2017-04-05, titled *Level of Use of Force on Arrest Videos Varies Based on Level of Education and Mode of Delivery*.

This approval is effective April 10, 2017 to April 9, 2018. After this date you must resubmit your protocol for review to continue the study.

Please notify the IRB committee of any changes/advertisements. All changes must be reviewed by the IRB committee before ANY change to the protocol may be made.

Concerning document retention: human research documents must be retained for a minimum of 3 years after completion of the study. For many journals it is three years after publication date. Please check with the journal/funding agency that you submit to regarding their specific rules.

Concerning Human Research training please make sure that you complete the required training, and retain documentation of that training. For more information see <http://www.tamtu.edu/irb/> and click on training. Please also review the attached letter concerning documentation of human research.

As always if there are any questions regarding Human Research please let us know and we will do our best to assist you.

Sincerely,

Jennifer M. Coronado, Ph.D.  
IRB Chair – TAMTU  
Dean of the Graduate School  
irb@tamtu.edu // 956.326.3060



## VITA

Name: Higinio Guillermo Reyes Jr.

Email Address: [higinio.g.reyes.jr@gmail.com](mailto:higinio.g.reyes.jr@gmail.com)

Education: B.A., Criminal Justice, Texas A&M International University, Aug. 2015, GPA: 3.25

A.A.S., Criminal Justice, Laredo Community College, December 2012, GPA: 3.25

Major Field of Specialization: Criminal Justice

### Work Experience:

- August 2015- Present: LCC Regional Law Enforcement Academy, Academy Instructor
- August 2016- Present: Webb County Attorney's Office, capacity of Investigator
- October 2014- Present: Webb County Constables Pct. 3, Deputy Constable, Part-time
- April 2014- August 2015: LCC Regional Law Enforcement Academy, Adjunct Instructor
- May 2013- October 2014: Webb County Sheriff's Office, Deputy Sheriff, Full-time
- February 2005- March 2013: United States Marine Corps, Sergeant of Marines

### Military:

- Marksmanship Coach Course Instructor (Firearms)
- Marine Corps Martial Arts- Brown Belt
- Helicopter Rope Suspension Techniques Master (Rappelling & Fast Rope Instructor)
- Staff Noncommissioned Officer Career Distance Education Program
- Tactical Combat Casualty Care Course (Mass Injury Care)

### Law Enforcement:

- S.W.A.T. Certified- Basic
- Cross Fit- Level 1 Trainer (CF-L1)
- Personal Defense Spray (OC) Instructor
- American Red Cross- First Aid/ CPR/ AED Instructor
- National Academy of Sports Medicine- Corrective Exercise Specialist
- USA Weightlifting- Sport Performance Coach Certification
- Peace Officer Certified- Intermediate- TCOLE
- PPCT Defensive Tactics Instructor
- GLOCK Armor Certified
- CrossFit Mobility Trainer and CrossFit Rowing Trainer
- PPCT Ground Avoidance Ground Escape Instructor
- Mix Martial Arts discipline- Goshin Jutsu Karate- Green Belt
- IALEFI Firearms Master Instructor
- Stonewall Tactical Adaptive Response Defensive Tactics Instructor
- Instructor Proficiency- TCOLE
- Firearms Instructor Proficiency- TCOLE
- Mental Health Officer Certification- TCOLE
- Sexual Assault/Family Violence Investigator Certification- TCOLE
- CrossFit Level 2 Trainer (CF-L2)