Controlling police (excessive) force: The American case

Zakir Gül[1]
Hakan Hekim[2]
Ramazan Terkeşli[3]

Abstract

This article addresses the issue of police abuse of power, particularly police use of excessive force. Since the misuse of force by police is considered a problem, some entity must discover a way to control and prevent the illegal use of coercive power. Unlike most of the previous studies on the use of excessive force, this study uses a path analysis. However, not all the findings are consistent with the prior studies and hypotheses. In general, findings indicate that training may be a useful tool in terms of decreasing the use of excessive force, thereby reducing civilians' injuries and citizens' complaints. The results show that ethics training in the academy is significantly related to the use of excessive force. Further, it was found that community-oriented policing training in the academy was associated with the citizens' complaints. A national (secondary) data, collected from the law enforcement agencies in the United States are used to explore the research questions.

Keywords: Police; excessive force; civilian injuries; citizen complaints; police training; psychiatrist or psychologist.

1. Introduction

Police use of force has been a major focus among many scholars (Adams, 1999; Alpert & Dunham, 1999; Lersch & Mieczkowskie, 1996; Fyfe, 1988, 1996; Kleinig, 1990, 1996; Pate & Fridell, 1993; Hunt, 1985; Bayley & Garofalo, 1989; Reiss, 1967) who study policing because it may have an outcome that results in injury to citizens. The current study continues this focus, as the use of excessive force by police officers continues to be both a timely topic and a serious problem for police and the citizenry. In addition to exploring this problem, this study will focus on efforts

---

[1] Ph.D., Turkish National Police Academy, zakirgul@gmail.com
[2] Ph.D., Turkish National Police Academy, hhekim@egm.gov.tr
[3] Ph.D., Turkish National Police, rterkesli@egm.gov.tr

designed to control and inevitably reduce the use of excessive force by police.

There are several ways to control and prevent unnecessary force. One method is training that is believed to make the officers act in a professional and socially acceptable manner. It is hypothesized that training may decrease the number of incidents of excessive force and citizen complaints. With regards to police training, several questions may be posed: Which of the following courses in police training have the most important impact on the officers' use of force: Code of Ethics, Human Relations, Legal Training, or Community-Oriented Policing? Does it differ whether the above-mentioned training courses are mandatory or optional? Also, does the amount of time spent in a training session (ethical, human relations, legal, community oriented policing) have any impact on the use of force by officers?

To answer these questions, this study examines the relationship between police training and police use of force. More clearly, it examines whether training affects the use of force in terms of civilian injuries and citizen complaints. In a general sense, it is hypothesized that the more training the officers have, the less they use force, and the less the officers use force, the fewer incidents of civilians get injured and the fewer complaints they get for the use of excessive force. Antony M. Pate and Lorie E. Fridell's national data (1993), collected from the law enforcement departments in the United States are used to test the hypotheses.

2. Literature review

The concept of police use of force is discussed and criticized frequently by scholars. One of the explanations for frequency of discussion might be the negative consequences associated with the use of excessive force by law enforcement officials. Again, such consequences are experienced by both the police and the community, most notably as mistrust of the police, small scale disturbances, and at times full blown riots. It affects not only the police and citizenry, but society as a whole by causing disturbances or riots (Fyfe, 1988; Smith, 1994). Friedrich (1980) and Tennenbaum (1994) note that the misuse of force by police officers has significant consequences for the individuals involved and for the society as a whole. Further, even governments get shaken when such incidents erupt.

Most of the previous research regarding the use of excessive force by police has focused primarily on the use of deadly force. However, the current study examines the use of excessive force in a general sense, and further, defines and considers every kind of force that is excessively or

unnecessarily used.

Garner, Buchanan, Shade, and Hepburn (1996) conducted a study in Phoenix, Arizona and measured the amount of force used by and against police officers. They found that the use of force in the research area was infrequent. Garner and Maxwell (1999) analyzed these data and found that "excessive force was typically but not necessarily associated with more severe forms of force that could or do result in injury or death" (p.30). It was also found that most arrests did not involve any kind of force and the use of weapons was infrequent in adult arrests.

Bayley and Garofalo (1989) conducted a research in New York City and focused on the use of force in police-citizen encounters in general, and the actions and results of the patrol officers in particular. It was found that such violence was rare, and that the serious injuries were few in such police-public encounters. Although the data were not formed to analyze the effects of training, some important implications were stated here, as well:

> Officers need to be trained to avoid obvious provocations, such as using insulting language and acting without listening. Police training must focus on the fact that physical conflict is a rare event…Officers soon learn that every tour is not a war and every call for service not a crisis. *Police officers must be trained for war but prepared for peace* (pp. 20-21, *emphasis added*).

Scrivner (1992, 1994) conducted research about controlling the excessive use of force by surveying the psychologists who identify officers at risk for excessive force. In controlling the excessive use problem, the importance of the role of the police psychologist both to the individual and the department was expressed. In addition, it was found that by and large police departments do not consistently use agency psychologists as a resource, but rather to protect themselves from the liability of charges of negligence.

2.1. Types of use of force

Kleinig (1996) asserts the necessity of the police to develop some low-and middle- range coercive techniques in order to reach the ends when no other chances are left. Accordingly, "[i]t may not be easy to develop techniques or devices that will be free from risk or abuse" (p.107). Simply stated, there is not a device or technique that is 100 percent free-of-risk. So, there is always a risk of injury when force is used.

Four types of use of force are discussed in this study each of which is very common in police operations and practices: chemical agents, batons, dog attack/bites, and vehicle ramming/pursuit. The chemical agents are considered to be more effective and less likely to cause permanent damage when compared to other control devices (Kleinig, 1996). They "play a prominent

role in most modern use of force policies" (Smith & Alpert, 2000, p. 234). They are very easy to use and effective in riots, demonstrations, or mobs. Moreover, chemical agents are considered to be cheaper than most of the other tools/methods, as well. Nowicki (1993) found that neither the officers nor suspects were injured in the use of pepper spray. Moreover, Gauvin (1995) found a significant decrease in the injuries of both the officers and suspects after the use of pepper spray.

Batons are less risky when compared to firearms, and more frequently used than the firearms, but they may still leave permanent injuries on the citizens. Kleinig (1996) says that, "[o]fficers need to be trained in their use, in how and when to use them. But an equally serious concern is their unnecessary use" (p. 104).

Police dogs are used in many different areas of the police profession, and sometimes a single dog may do some jobs that are equal to a few officers'. However, the police dogs may cause serious injuries, including psychological effects, which might be permanent (Kleinig, 1996), as well. Two incidents concerning dog use by the police are as follow: In the first example the dog killed the suspect (*Robinette v. Barnes, 1988*), and in the second, the dog injured the suspect's arm (*Chew v. Gates, 1990*). Even in these events, the Court made an explanation in favor of the use of police dogs.

Although, every police department has its own definition for vehicle ramming, it is defined in the current study as, "[t]he deliberate act of impacting a violator's vehicle with another vehicle to functionally damage or otherwise force the violator's vehicle to stop" (Utah Risk Management Mutual Association Website, 2003). Vehicle ramming or pursuits is one of the debatable types of force discussed by other researchers, as sometimes the consequences are deadly, or costly to property. There may be some situational factors those that may increase the use of force level (Adams, 1999). In a car chase, for example, the escape of the suspect may provoke the officer. Moreover if the officer is alone, or if there is an audience, the officer might use the force more frequently (Adams, 1999). Kleinig (1996) suggests that the pursuit of an escaping vehicle should be done for public safety, security purposes, but not done arbitrarily. It is also stated that due to its high risk, such pursuit should be considered whether it is justifiable or not. Kleinig (1996) asserts that "Pursuits involving police cars kill and maim more people each year than police firearms" (p.117).

2.2. Why is the use of force a problem?

Civilians' injuries and citizens' complaints are two important indicators of measuring the use of excessive force by the police. As scrutiny persists, one of the goals of police officers should be to prevent or lessen the improper use of force and decrease the number of complaints and injuries.

289

Gül, Z., Hekim, H., & Terkesli, R. (2013). Controlling police (excessive) force: The American case. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, *10*(2), 285-304.

Such a goal will never be accomplished 100 percent of the time, but ideally, the police should work hard to minimize the use of (excessive) force as much as possible (Adams, 1999).

2.2.1. Civilians get wounded

Even though the percentage of the use of force in police-public confrontations is small (Adams, 1999), and in that small part the injury to citizens is infrequent (Bayley & Garofalo, 1989), the issue always attract many parties and people.

Sometimes injury is unavoidable as the use of force itself may be injurious after a certain level. For example, in an arrest situation, if the arrestee resists or attacks the officer(s), more force than the resistance should be applied to overcome the resistance. Alpert and Dunham (1999) found that injuries of the suspects increase "only minimally as the amount of force used by the police increases relative to the amount of resistance" (p.58).

The four use of force variables (chemical agents, batons, dog attacks, vehicle ramming) are examined in several studies. In almost all the studies, outcomes of injury are found, even though the rate is low. Payne and Fenske (1996) examined some studies regarding pursuits and noted that injuries occurred rarely. In 'dog attacks' there are injuries (Alpert & Dunham, 1999) some of which are discussed in the previous section. One additional example is in the case of *Kerr v. City of West Palm Beach (1989)* in which the verdict was given against the police dog and police. Similarly, when 'chemical agents' were used several injuries (Gauvin, 1995) and even deaths occurred (i.e., Angelo Darcel Robinson, died of pepper spray in 1993).

2.2.2. Citizen complaints

Citizen complaints are quite important in terms of protection of the victim's rights as well as police-community relations. As indicated, "One measure of the quality of the relationship between the police and the public is complaints against officers" (Kessler, 1999, p. 334). There are two different ways to look at the complaints. First, complaints against officers are perceived as signs of the use of excessive force, and used to identify potential problem officers. Second, complaints are also viewed as indicators of officer productivity and may be the products of hardworking officer (Terrill, 2002; Lersch & Mieczkowski, 1996). The disparity of these interpretations suggests that this issue will remain unresolved.

Nevertheless, the complaints are believed to have been changed depending on the use of force and the control of the force. For instance, as indicated, "Whereas the administrative action taken by a department may affect officers' behavior, the department's reputation may affect citizens'

rates of reporting misconduct" (Lersch, 1998, p. 86). It is also said that there are several factors that affect some of the citizens' decisions on reporting police misbehavior. These are presented as:

> …lack of confidence in the ability of the police to monitor their fellow officers; complaint procedures that are intimidating, complicated, or otherwise difficult to follow; or, if the citizen has a history of criminal activity, the desire not to draw additional attention from law enforcement official (1998, p. 86).

Brandl and his colleagues (2001). found that the younger officers received more complaints than the older ones and the female officers were less likely to receive citizens' complaints of excessive force. However, neither the race nor the level of education had any effect on the complaints of excessive force. It was also found that the strongest result was the relationship between the arrests and complaints. More clearly, the more arrests the officers made, the more complaints they received.

Terrill and McCluskey (2002) compared the high-complaint officers to low-complaint officers in order to see the difference in their behaviors. It was found that, the high complaint officers were more likely to use physical force than the others. Further, the high-complaint officers were more active in several duties. It was concluded that, "It appears here that, in some respects, both conceptions of the citizen complaint (as a productivity indicator and as an indicator of behavioral propensity) are partially supported" (2002, p. 152). In other words, complaints may give either the idea of the 'problem officer' or 'hardworking officer' concept. However, the complaints are not a perfect measure of satisfaction of police service, because people do not always complain when they are unhappy and they may complain even when the police perform their duties in the proper manner. It is then expected that the complaints vary in terms of measurement, and that ultimately complaints may not be a very accurate and reliable measure of police misconduct. However, these measures may be a reasonable indicator of citizen dissatisfaction.

2.3. Training

According to Van Maanen (1989), "[t]he first real contact with the police subculture occurs at the academy" (p.94), and it has a significant influence on the cadets (Ness, 1991). Therefore, it should be sufficient and proficient. Simply stated, the purpose of the training is to sufficiently train the officers to carry out their job (Jamieson, Suren, & Knapp, 2000; Ness, 1991). In addition, with the training it is aimed to reduce or minimize injuries (Alpert & Dunham, 1999).

Law enforcement training is more complex due to the job's association with different events, many of which pose complicated dilemmas for an effective resolution. "Thus, the police, as officers

of the law, must be prepared to use force under circumstances in which its rationale is often morally, legally, and practically ambiguous" (Hunt, 1985, p. 338). In addition, training should be taken seriously and sensitively "because training in any organization reflects personnel effectiveness" (Meadows, 1985, p. 199). Niehaus (1997) claims that, "[t]he test of any police training is its effectiveness on the street" (p. 103).

Kaminski and Sorensen (1995) found that, "[o]fficers with four or more years of college education were less likely to be injured when attacked than officers with less than four years of college experience" (p. 27). This might be because of greater caution or foresight. As indicated, "[a] high number of complaints may indicate poor communication skills or the need for better training and restraint, or the allegations of malpractice may be part and parcel of being a tough and aggressive police officer" (Lersch & Mieczkowskie, 1996, p. 38).

Weisburd, Greenspan, Hamilton, Williams, and Bryant (2000) surveyed police officers regarding police abuse of authority. It was found that most of the officers surveyed, especially the ones who had taken interpersonal skills or relations and ethics training believed that "training and education are effective methods for reducing police abuse" (p. 12) of power.

Training is represented by four types of training in this study: Code of Ethics, Legal Training, Human Relations, and Community Oriented Policing. The basis for the ethics training is the 'code of ethics', which is variously defined and existed in a great number of formats (Kleinig, 1996). Ethics is defined as "a set of moral principles or values" (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 1993); Kleinig says, "A code may help to crystallize issues and provide criteria for wise decision-making" (1996, p. 246).

Without knowing the rules, regulations, and policies, the police officer is nothing, but a threat to anyone as she/he carries a gun among the citizens and innocents. Further, it would be unreasonable to expect the officers to enforce the law without knowing the law, and irrational to expect them to differentiate the law-abiding citizen and a law-violating criminal without knowing the principles of the policy. Legal training makes the officer learn to what extent they could use force by learning the constitutional rights. Moreover, she/he will get the knowledge of the law and its philosophy, courts and cases, as well as procedure and proceedings.

In today's policing world, it is realized that the public and its support are very crucial for effective policing. One of the cornerstones of that new style of policing is effective human relations. Every police officer has to have the skills to communicate and establish good relations with the

citizens. Such a need to human relations training is much more necessary in a diverse community. Human Relations (Skill) training is one of the most important courses necessary in establishing better police-citizen relations, because, for instance, even police do not use excessive force frequently; they may still get complaints due to the inappropriate attitudes of police, from citizens and bad human relations.

Kessler (1999) summarizes the main purpose of the community policing as follows, "Community policing has emerged as an approach to establish better relationships with the community in order to improve service through cooperative efforts" (p.333). A logical explanation for the connection of the community oriented policing and citizen complaints is given as,

> If officers mistreat people, people will be dissatisfied; they will be more critical of police service, and they will file more complaints. If community policing is effective in teaching officers to establish better relationships with the community, then citizens will be less critical of police service, and there will be fewer complaints for mistreatment (p. 338).

Weisburd et al. (2000) found that about one-half (50.9 %) of the officers in their study said that, "community policing reduced the number of incidents involving excessive force, and 42.2 percent thought that it decreased the seriousness of incidents" (p. 8).

This study consists of police training variables, types of police use of force and outcome variables. The model (Figure 1) demonstrates the hypothesized relationships and directions of the variables in general. Simply stated, the training courses may affect the outcome variables both through the use of force (intervening) variables and directly. In other words, this model implies and understanding of a path analysis, which is a causal model that the independent variables may have two types of causal effects (direct and indirect) on the dependent variable(s) (McClendon, 1994).

Figure 1: General diagram of the study
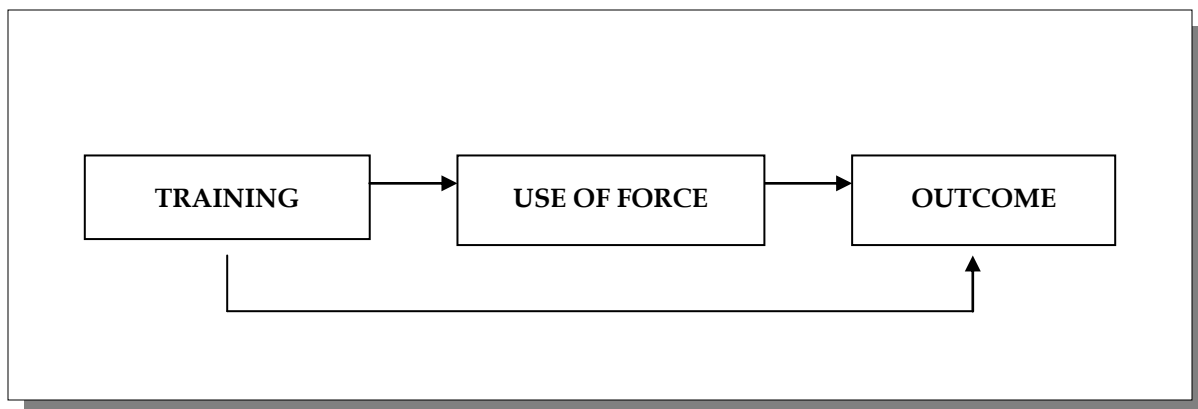
3. Statistical analysis and findings

To test the hypotheses Pate and Fridell's national survey data on 'Police Use of Force: Citizen Complaints and Legal Consequences' are used. Inter-University Consortium distributes the data for Political and Social Research (ICPSR 6274). The units of analyses are the law enforcement agencies in the U.S., of which are, "municipal police departments, county sheriff's departments, and county police departments…Of the 1697 agencies that were asked to complete the questionnaire, 1,111 or 65.5 percent responded" (Pate & Fridell, 1995, p. 130).

Path analysis, which is a causal model that has two types of causal effects (direct and indirect) that the independent variables may have on the dependent variable(s) (McClendon 1994), is used to test the relationships in this study. Thus, the direct and indirect effects of the independent variables through the intervening variables to the dependent variable(s) could be obtained with this model.

The first regression model tested the relationship between training and chemical agents. On the average, police agencies had 7.40 incidents of chemical gas with a standard deviation of 35.573. The variables affecting the number of incidents of chemical use are total sworn personnel and the community-oriented policing course (number of hours) given in the academy. The more total sworn personnel the more incidents of police use of chemical agents. The more hours spent in community-oriented policing training, the higher number of incidents of police use of chemical agents. This result is contrary to the hypotheses and expectations, because, the community-oriented policing philosophy is expected to help decrease the idea of the use of force and increase awareness for non-use of force approaches. Further, in larger departments, the incidents of the use of chemical agents will increase when the number of hours of community-oriented policing training increases in academy. No other variables of training are significantly related to the use of chemical agents.

On the average, police agencies had 5.57 incidents of use of batons. The standard deviation is 18.105. The larger the departments are, the more incidents where batons were used. The only significant variable is total sworn personnel, which is also one of the control variables. None of the other variables are significant. Therefore, the rival hypothesis or the null hypotheses for the training variables are accepted. A possible reason that no significant relationships (except with total sworn personnel) were found, could be attributed to the missing data, as it has the highest number of missing cases among the variables in this study. As a percentage, 63.9 percent of the cases are missing. However, the F shows the equation is significant.

On the average, police agencies had 4.49 incidents of dog attacks or bites with a standard deviation of 15.294. The larger the department, the more incidents of dog attacks or bites occurs. Further, if the departments have psychiatrist or psychologist on staff, the more incidents of dog attacks or bites. None of the other variables are significantly related. Since both of the significant variables are control variables, the rival hypotheses are accepted. Further, the null-hypotheses for the training variables are also accepted. The F value confirms that the equation is significant, and.

On the average, police agencies had .40 incidents of vehicle ramming with a standard deviation of 3.313. The larger the departments, the more incidents of vehicle ramming occur. If departments do not have a psychiatrist or psychologist available, the number of incidents of vehicle ramming increases. The more hours of human relations training in the academy, the fewer incidents of vehicle ramming occur. This finding is consistent with the research hypotheses, as it is expected that the more hours of human relations training given, the more the officers apply non-force solutions. However, the more hours of legal training in the academy, the more incidents of vehicle ramming by Police. This result is contrary to the hypotheses and the intent of the training. It is highly possible that when the officers have a solid understanding of legal issues, they feel more confident when applying the use of force. Another explanation could be the content of the legal training given in the academy. It may not be sufficient enough to give the officers a full understanding of when and how to use vehicle ramming in an appropriate manner. In larger departments, the number of incidents of vehicle ramming decreases when officers have more hours of human relations training, whereas it increases when officers have more hours of legal training. The F shows that the equation is significant (p<.000).

Table 1: Final regression analysis for *civilians get wounded*

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Standard Error	Beta		
(Constant)	-.347	.097		-3.577	.000
CHEMICAL AGENTS	.011	.003	.139	3.184	.002
DOG ATTACKS	.023	.010	.110	2.331	.021
CODE OF ETHICS (academy)	-.028	.012	-.095	-2.420	.017
COP (academy)	.044	.005	.424	8.798	.000
COP OPTIONAL (in-service)	.332	.131	.099	2.545	.012
TOTAL SWORN PERSONNEL	.002	.000	.496	8.647	.000
PSYCHOLOGIST-PSYCHIATRIST ON STAFF YES	-1.189	.263	-.191	-4.527	.000

R^2: .768   SEE: .760   F: 75.506   P<.000

Table 1 presents the significant relationships for this equation. On the average, police agencies had .30 incidents of civilian injuries with a standard deviation of 1.543. Just two of the use force variables are significantly associated with the dependent variable. They are both positively related. Clearly, the more chemical agents used, or when dogs attack the more incidents of civilian injuries. The number of injuries increases in larger departments and decreases when the departments have a shrink (psychiatrist or psychologist) on staff.

The more hours of ethics training in the academy, the fewer incidents of civilian injuries exist. In addition, the number of incidents reduces when the size of the department increases, but it increases when the departments have a shrink (psychologist or psychiatrist) on staff. The more hours of community-oriented policing training in the academy, the more incidents of civilians' injuries occur. Similarly, when the departments have optional community-oriented policing (in-service) training, the higher number of incidents of civilians' injuries exists. Moreover, with these two variables the number of incidents still increases when the size of the department increases, and decreases when the departments have a psychiatrist or psychologist on staff. The F statistic shows the equation is significant, and 77 % of the variance is explained (see R square).

Table 2: Final regression analysis for _total citizen complaints_

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Standard Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.836	1.000		1.836	.068
CHEMICAL AGENTS	.621	.048	.641	12.929	.000
BATONS	.196	.075	.119	2.624	.010
VEHICLE RAMMING	-3.113	1.341	-.090	-2.322	.022
COMMUNITY -ORIENTED POLICING (academy)	-.474	.061	-.367	-7.701	.000
COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING MANDATORY(in-service)	5.689	1.698	.132	3.350	.001
TOTAL SWORN PERSONNEL	.016	.003	.294	5.869	.000
PSYCHOLOGIST-PSYCHIATRIST ON STAFF YES	19.673	3.371	.244	5.837	.000

R^2: .783   SEE: 9.435   F: 76.166   P<.000

Table 2 examines the variables significantly associated with the frequency of citizen complaints. On the average, police agencies had 8.83 incidents of citizen complaints with a standard deviation of 19.780. According to the table, three of the force variables are significantly related to

this dependent variable. Two of them are positively related, whereas the third one is negatively associated. The more chemical agents and batons used the more citizen complaints the departments get. The more vehicle ramming used the fewer citizen complaints the departments get. When the size of the departments increases; the number of citizen complaints increases with the use of chemical agents and batons, and decreases with the use of vehicle ramming.

The more hours of community-oriented policing training in the academy, the fewer citizen complaints the departments get. However, when departments have mandatory community-oriented policing (in-service training), the higher number of citizen complaints the departments get. When the departments have psychiatrist or psychologist on staff, the more citizen complaints they get. The F shows that the equation is significant with the probability level of .000, and further, 78 % of the variance is explained (see R square).

Table 3: Total effects of significant variables on *civilians get wounded*

Independent Variables	Causal		
	Direct	Indirect	Total
Chemical Agents	.139	-	.139
Dog Attacks or Bites	.110	-	.110
Ethics Training (hours in the academy)	-.095	-	-.095
Community-Oriented Policing (hours in the academy)	.424	.017	.441
Community-Oriented Policing (optional in-service training)	.099	-	.099
Total Sworn Personnel	.496	063	.559
Psychologist or Psychiatrist on Staff Yes	.191	.028	-.163

Table 3 presents the direct and indirect effects of the significant independent variables. According to the table, community-oriented policing training (in hours) in the academy is the only training variable that has an indirect effect on the outcome variable of 'Civilians Wounded.' However, it is a positive effect, which is contrary to what is expected, but parallel with the direct effect. So, as a result, it is found that the more hours of COP training in the academy, the more incidents of civilian injuries.

In addition, two of the control variables, 'Total Sworn Personnel' and 'Psychologist-Psychiatrist on Staff', have direct and indirect effects on the dependent variable. More clearly, the departments, which have more sworn personnel, have more incidents of citizens' injuries than those, which have less population of sworn personnel. This result is consistent with the hypotheses. On the other hand, departments, which have a psychiatrist or psychologist on staff, have fewer incidents

of civilians' injuries than those, which do not have a psychiatrist or psychologist on staff. This is also consistent with the research hypotheses.

Table 4: Total effects of significant variables on *total citizen complaints*

Independent Variables	Causal		
	Direct	Indirect	Total
Chemical Agents	.641	-	.641
Batons	.119	-	.119
Vehicle Ramming	-.090	-	-.090
Human Relations (hours in the academy)	-	.0239	.0239
Legal Training (hours in the academy)	-	-.0391	-.0391
Community-Oriented Policing (hours in the academy)	-.367	.079	-.288
Community-Oriented Policing (mandatory in-service training)	.132	-	.132
Total Sworn Personnel	.294	.231	.525
Psychologist or Psychiatrist on Staff	.244	-	.244
Psychologist or Psychiatrist Available	-	.0127	.0127

Table 4 shows the direct and indirect significant variables of the equation. It is found that the majority of the academy training courses are –either positively or negatively- associated with the dependent variable of 'Citizens' Complaints'. According to the table (see Table 4), all of the academy training variables have indirect effects on the outcome variable except for ethics training. The more hours of human relations training in the academy, the more (incidents of) civilians get injured. The more hours of legal training in the academy, the fewer incidents of civilians' injuries. This result is consistent with the hypotheses. COP Training in the academy has both direct and indirect effects. Even though the indirect effect is a positive effect, which is contrary to the expected, it does not affect the total effect of the variable, which becomes a negative effect after the summation of both effects. The only significant in-service training variable is mandatory community-oriented policing training, which does not have an indirect effect.

Three of the control variables are significantly associated with the dependent variable. The total sworn personnel have both direct and indirect effects on the dependent variable: the more sworn personnel the departments have, the more citizen complaints they get. When departments have psychiatrist or psychologist available, they get more citizens' complaints than those, which do not have. However, this is contrary to the research hypotheses. Similarly, when departments have a psychiatrist or psychologist on staff they get more citizens' complaints.

Figure 2: Diagram of the significant variables
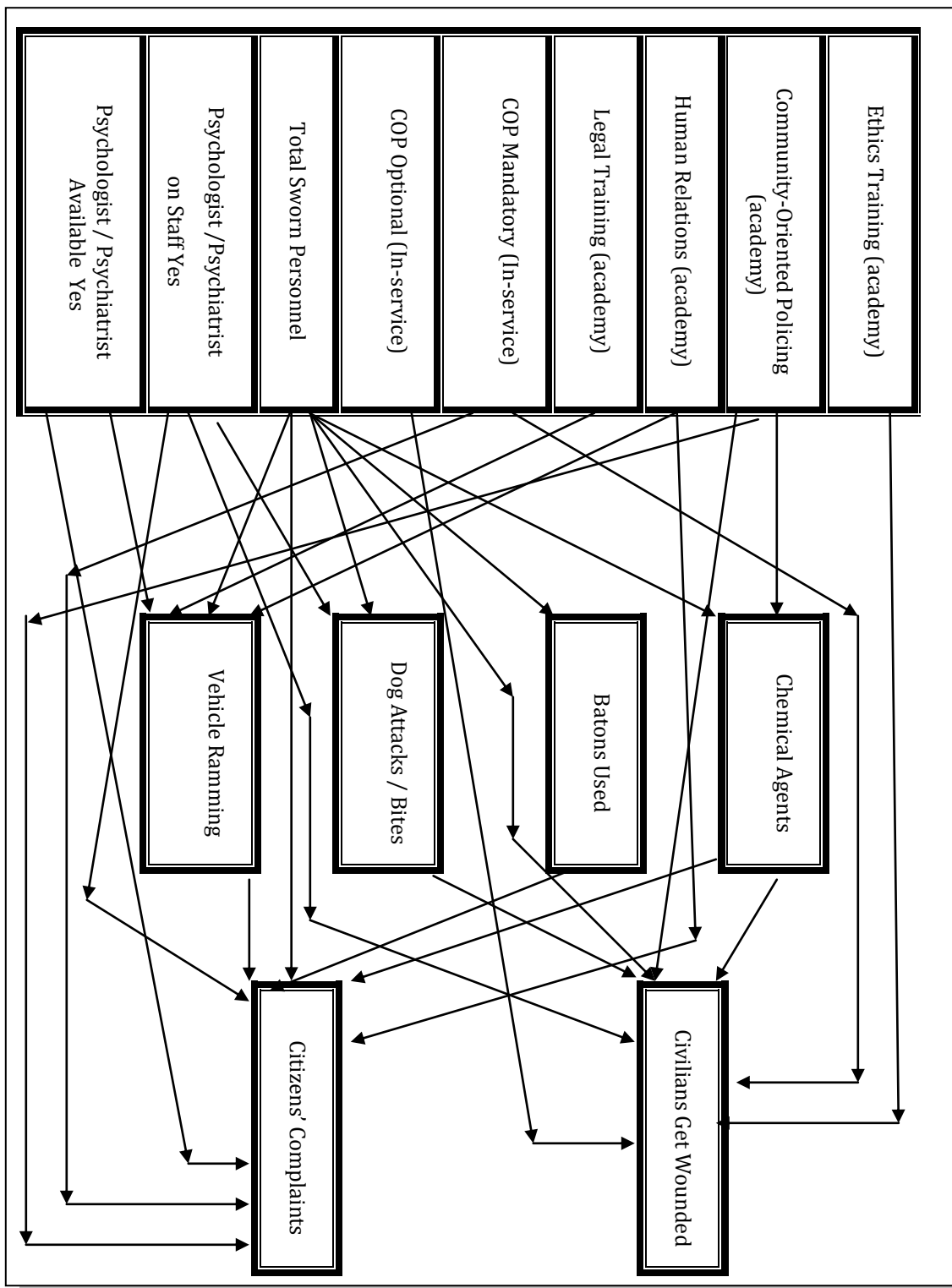
4. Discussion

The findings support the literature, as well as the hypotheses partially. Among the significant training variables, community-oriented policing in the academy has the most impact on both of the outcome variables. However, one of the relationships is positive, and the other one is negative. Among the significant force variables, the 'chemical agents' has the most impact on both the civilians' injuries and citizens' complaints. More clearly, the more the chemical agents used, the more incidents of citizens get wounded, and the more citizens' complaints the departments get. The only force variable that has a reducing effect on the citizens' complaints is the 'vehicle ramming'.

If compared to in-service training courses, it can be seen that mostly the academy training courses have significant relationships with the outcome variables, just two of the in-service training courses are significant: Mandatory community-oriented policing that is associated with citizens' complaints, and optional community-oriented policing training that is related to the civilians' injuries. Interestingly, both of the relations are positive, which are contrary to the hypotheses. An explanation for why in-service training courses have positive effect could be as follows: After the academy training, as Hunt (1985) argues, the officers may see "the contradiction between the formal world of the police academy and the informal world of the street" (p. 318), and then reject everything that was given in the academy. Because the reality is seen differently, such an officer may also reject or not accept that is given in the in-service training. In other words, the officer may probably not find the training sessions realistic and effective enough any more after the experience of the street policing. Therefore, the training should be realistic (Fyfe, 1996) as much as possible, and represent the realities of policing in the streets. Otherwise, the officers will be disappointed by seeing the different, new, real life of policing, and accordingly will cover up the academy type of policing.

In addition, some other explanations for such unexpected results of several variables could be as follows:

1. As indicated in the previous chapters, high percentage of missing data of the variables could be one of the most affecting factors on the unexpected findings of some of the variables.

2. The cadets themselves may not be well screened and recruited, and thus may be unqualified as well as characteristically unethical and violent. Such an applicant would be

trained and changed in a more difficult way comparing to the well recruited ones (Delattre, 1996).

3. The contents of the courses may not be relevant to the topic.

4. The cadets may not be well taught and prepared, and thus may not be ready to handle a complex or tough situation without using force.

5. The trainers may be experienced police officers, who truly believe in 'street policing rules' rather than the rules, regulations and principles given by the training.

6. Some training courses may motivate the officers to get more involved with the citizens; and thus may deal more with the events that may include use of force approaches by police.

7. Courses like legal training may make the officers feel more confident on some conditions and thus encourage them to use force frequently and unnecessarily.

8. Sometimes the officers may choose the easiest and quickest (the least effort principle) way (Zipf, 1949) to handle the situations, which is mostly using force rather than a non-force approach.

The findings also demonstrate that when police use force, the incidents of civilians' injuries are more likely to occur, and the citizens' complaints are more likely to be filed. Having 'psychiatrist or psychologist on staff' in the department may have a reducing effect on the civilians' injuries, and contrarily, may have an increasing effect on citizens' complaints. Similarly, when the departments have 'psychiatrists or psychologists available', the more complaints they get. Neither the variable of 'less-lethal force policy', nor 'pursuit policy' has any significant effect on the outcome variables. Therefore, it does not support the literature that claimed the restricted policies might have some impact on the reduction of the deadly force (Tennenbaum, 1994).

One another significant finding is the ethics training in the academy. It is found that when the number of hours of ethics training increases in the academy, the number of incidents of civilians' injuries decreases. This result is consistent with the hypotheses.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to assess the effects of training courses on excessive use of force in terms of civilians' injuries and citizens' complaints. It also aimed to demonstrate the problem of the use of (excessive) force and offered training as an effective and long-term means

of shaping the officers' minds and attitudes. However, as Emile Durkheim (1895) says, "There is no society that is not confronted with the problem of criminality" (p.47), similarly, this study contends that, there is no police organization that is not confronted with the problem of use of force. Because the main component of police organizations is human beings, and human beings have weaknesses and strengths, as well as temptations, which make them susceptible to flaw. It is highly possible that one or more officers become involved in any kind of illegal or unnecessary action. Therefore, a definite solution could probably not be found on terminating the use of excessive force issue of police completely, but be prevented to a certain level with effective means. That is achievable, because human beings have also fears, the ability to learn, and a tendency to change, as well as a great capacity to realize what is right and wrong.

In conclusion, hiring suitable and qualified officers, and providing a broad and continuous training, with strong and applicable policies, and also good supervision may help decrease the use of excessive force. A less-missing data to get more reliable and valid as well as better results are necessary. The current study contributes to the field by its own capability and limitations. However, still much remains to be examined and explored about police use of excessive force.

6. References

Adams, K. (1999). "What We Know About Police Use of Force" in *Use of Force by Police: Overview of National And Local Data.* Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 1999.

Alpert, G. P. & Dunham, R. G. (1999). "The Force Factor: Measuring and Assessing Police Use of Force and Suspect Resistance" in *Use of Force by Police Overview of National and Local Data.* Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ 176330.

Angelo Darcel Robinson, Report of Autopsy Examination No: ME-93-658, 8/26/1993, North Carolina.

Bayley, H. D. & Garofalo, J. (1989). "The Management of Violence by Police Patrol Officers". *Criminology:* 27(1) 1-25.

Brandl, G. S., Stroshine, M. S., & Frank, J. (2001). "Who are the complaint-prone officers? An examination of the relationship between police officers' attributes, arrest activity, assignment, and citizens' complaints about excessive force". *Journal of Criminal Justice* 29: 521-529

Chew v. Gates, 744 F. Supp. 952 (U.S., 1990, C.D. CA)

Delattre, E. J. (1996). "Character And Cops: Ethics in Policing" (3rd Edition).The AEI Press

Durkheim, E. (1996; orig. 1895). The Normal and the Pathological. in Criminological Perspectives edited by john Muncie, Eugene McLaughlin, and Mary Langan. Sage Publications: California

Friedrich, R. J. (1980). "Police Use of Force: Individuals, Situations, and Organizations". *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences (AAPSS)* 452: 82-97

Gül, Z., Hekim, H., & Terkeşli. (2013). Controlling police (excessive) force: The American case. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, *10*(2), 285-303.

Fyfe, J. J. (1988). "Police Use of Deadly Force: Research and Reform". *Justice Quarterly:* 5(2) 165-205

Fyfe, J. J. (1996). "Training to Reduce Police-Civilian Violence" in William Geller and Hans Toch (editors) *Police Violence: Understanding and Controlling Police abuse of Force. Yale University Press.*

Garner, J. & Maxwell, C. (1999). "Measuring The Amount of Force Used By and Against The Police in Six Jurisdictions" in Use of Force in by Police: An Overview of National and Local Data. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 1999. NCJ 176330

Garner, J., Buchanan, J., Shade, T., & Hepburn, J. (1996). *Understanding the Use of Force by and Against the Police.* Research in Brief, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, November 1996, NCJ 158614

Gauvin, R. (1995). "Oleoresin Capsicum Spray: A Progress Report", The ASLET Journal: 29-32.

Hunt, J. (1985)."Police Accounts of Normal Force". *Urban Life, Vol. 13 (4): 315-341*

Jamieson, L. M., Suren, A., & Knapp, J. (2000). "A Competency Analysis of Law Enforcement Training and Its Linkage to Recreation as Intervention in Youth Crime Prevention". *Journal of Criminal Justice* 28: 215-226

Kaminski, R. J. & Sorensen, D.W. M. (1995). A multivariate analysis of individual, situational, and environmental factors associated with police assault injuries. *American Journal of Police*, *14*, 3-48.

Kerr v. City of West Palm Beach, 875 F.2d 1546 (1989 U.S. 11th Circuit)

Kessler, D. A. (1999). "The Effects of Community Policing on Complaints Against Officers". *Journal of Quantitative Criminology,* Vol. 15(3): 333-372)

Kleinig, J. (1990). "Teaching and Learning Police Ethics: Competing and Complementary Approaches". *Journal of Criminal Justice* 18:pp.1-18

Kleinig, J. (1996). The Ethics of Policing. Cambridge University Press.

Lersch, K. M. (1998). "Police Misconduct and Malpractice: A Critical Analysis of Citizens' Complaints." *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management,* Vol. 21 (1): 80-96.

Lersch, K. M. & Mieckowski, T. (1996). "Who are the Problem-Prone Officers? An Analysis of Citizen Complaints". *American Journal of Police,* Vol. 3: 23-44.

McClendon, J. M. (1994). Multiple Regression and Causal Analysis. F.E. Peacock Publishers, Inc.: Itasca, Illinois

Meadows, R. J. (1985). "Police Training Strategies and the Role Perceptions of Police Recruits". *Journal of Police Science and Administration* Vol. 13 (3): 195-200.

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary (1993).Tenth Edition. Merriam-Webster, Incorporated: Springfield, Massachusetts, U.S.A

Ness, J. J. (1991). "The Relevance of Basic Law Enforcement Training-Does The Curriculum Prepare Recruits For Police Work: A Survey Study. *Journal of Criminal Justice* Vol. 19: 181-193.

Niehaus, J. (1997). "Realistic Use-of-Force Training: The Technology is in Place Today for an All-Inclusive Program". *Law and Order.* Vol. 45 (6):103-105.

Nowicki, E. (1993). "Oleoresin Capsicum: A non-lethal Force Alternative", *Law Enforcement Technology,* Vol. 20 (1): 24-27.

Pate, A. M. & Fridell, L. A. (1993)."Police Use of Force: Official Reports, Citizen Complaints, and Legal Consequences"(Final Report). Washington, DC: The Police Foundation.

Pate, A. M. & Fridell, L. (1995). Toward the uniform reporting of police use of force: Results of a national survey. Criminal Justice Review, 20, 123-145.

Gül, Z., Hekim, H., & Terkeşli. (2013). Controlling police (excessive) force: The American case. *International Journal of Human Sciences*, *10*(2), 285-303.

Payne, M. D. & Fenske, J. C. (1996). An Analysis of the Rates of Injury and Fatal Accidents in Michigan State Police Pursuits: A Michigan Emergency Response Study. *American Journal of Police, Vol. 15 (4): 95-116.*

Reiss, A. J., Jr. (1967). Studies on Crime and Law Enforcement in Major Metropolitan Areas President's Commission on law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. Field Surveys no. 3. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Robinette v. Barnes, 854 F2d 909 (6th Circuit, 1988, US)

Scrivner, E. M. (1992). Role of Police Psychology in Controlling Excessive Force in 50 Large Cities in the United States, Washington, DC: U.S. Dept. of Justice, National Institute of Justice.

Scrivner, E. M. (1994). Controlling Police Use of Excessive Force: The Role of the Police Psychologist. ASCII Text File (14 Pages). NCJ 150063.

Smith, R. M. (1994). "Integrating Community Policing and the Use of Force: Public Education, Involvement, and Accountability". *American Journal of Police,* Vol. 13 (4): 1-21.

Smith, R. M. & Alpert, G. P. (2000). "Pepper Spray: A Safe and Reasonable Response to Suspect Verbal Resistance". *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 23 (2): 233-245

Tennenbaum, A. N. (1994). "The Influence of the Garner Decision on Police Use of Deadly Force". *The Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology.* Vol. 85 (1): 241-260

Terrill, W. & McCluskey, J. (2002). "Citizen Complaints and Problem Officers: Examining Officer Behavior". *Journal of Criminal Justice* 30: 143-155

Utah Risk Management Mutual Association (URMMA). (2003) *Vehicular Pursuit Policy (Police).* *http://www.urmma.org/html/vehicle_pursuit.html*

Van Maanen, J. (1989). "Observations on the Making of Policemen", in Blumberg, A. (Editor). *The Ambivalent Force: Perspective on the Police*, 3rd edition. Holt, Rinehart & Winston: New York

Weisburd D., R., Greenspan, E., Hamilton, E., Williams, H., & Bryant, K. (2000). Police Attitudes toward Abuse of Authority: Findings from a National Study. National Institute of Justice, NCJ 181312. Washington, D.C.

Zipf, G. K. (1949). Human Behavior and the Principle of Least Effort. Addison-Wesley Press: Cambridge.