

# **Are Police Actions Towards African Americans Different from Other Races?**

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*Research implies that African Americans and other minorities experience racial disparities in their encounters with police. Their white counterparts tend to not experience any racially driven disparity. Oftentimes this research does not use different characteristics while testing for racial disparity, leaving much more to be explored when researching police encounters among minorities. I will be using data from the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics to test some of these characteristics. This study will test demographics regarding the citizens race and gender, as well as the nature of their police encounters. Using these demographics, we can find more in-depth answers regarding these characteristics and their likelihood to experience racial inequality. The findings from this research imply that racial disparity experienced not only by being involved in a police encounter, but also when put against other variables questioning necessary actions of the police and the legitimacy of the encounters.*

## **Introduction**

Racial disparity is a problem often seen in society. Despite efforts and laws put forth to eradicate racism and racially driven acts, this disparity and its presence is still prevalent in politics today. Its presence has arguably increased in recent years as people attempt to understand this problem as well as to what extent it is carried out.

Racial distrust for the government and government agencies have been around since the inception of slavery. The history around governmental distrust has gone back and forth for centuries. With slavery, slave owners were able to rely on government to support and condone racial disparities because it was considered constitutional. According to the time, African Americans did not and should not have rights. Those in the government did not care about the disparities African Americans had to face.

When slavery was abolished in 1865, African Americans would rejoice in their freedom. However, this “freedom” would lead to a new set of issues. Supreme Court case *Plessy vs. Ferguson* would set the precedent for “separate but equal” (Kizer, 2017). Segregation would

raise a generation of African Americans growing up next to white people, but not being able to interweave with them. African Americans could have the same rights as their white counterparts, but they had to exercise these rights separately from them. African Americans were still looked down upon by many, as racism was still very prevalent. This caused African Americans to be marginalized, and there was nowhere to turn to find help for the problems they were facing. African Americans were alienated and were unable to ask their own government for assistance in the injustice they were forced to endure every day. Police were violent towards them, and people treated them as second-class citizens. The government stood its ground that separate but equal was constitutional, leaving African Americans in the dust and allowing them to face great prejudice (Siff, 2016).

In 1954's *Brown vs. Board of Education*, the Supreme Court reversed its previous *Plessy vs. Ferguson* decision, claiming that "separate but equal" had no place in public education. Following this, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 would outlaw all segregation at the state and federal level. Although this was a huge win for African Americans, systemic racism would continue to show its face moving into the future. The perception of African Americans as lesser than would carry on through generations. This perception is one that would take decades to progress, and many argue how much progress has been made in changing racially driven tendencies (Kizer, 2017)

Due to this legacy of distrust between African Americans and governmental institutions, it is no shock that this issue is still prevalent with us today. However, my focus will be on one governmental institution, law enforcement. I analyze whether the relationship between police and African Americans has changed within their encounters.

Racial issues and their place in society has interested me and stimulated me to look deeper into these issues and from where they potentially stem. I continuously wonder if law enforcement perpetuates systemic racism. I question how often, if at all, people of color, specifically African Americans are targeted by law enforcement. What effects on minority groups does this have? I pose the question, does law enforcement discriminate against African Americans?

## **Literature Review**

### **History of Discriminatory Laws**

While analyzing racial disparities it is important to understand from where racism in the law enforcement system may come. There have been several laws put into place either to revoke rights from African Americans specifically, or that have shown to create substantial inequality in their enforcement.

The United States has a history of creating laws in an attempt to control minority groups. One is the infamous war on drugs, which disproportionately affected minorities. Others include Marijuana laws, meant to target the Hispanic and African American community, Opiate laws targeted the Chinese community, and cocaine was also targeted towards African Americans. These laws would lead to a disproportionate number of minorities being arrested and incarcerated (Race and the Drug War).

One example that is difficult to ignore when studying law enforcement and racial disparities is Stop and Frisk laws. In the Supreme Court case *Terry vs. Ohio*, the Court ruled that police officers could search anyone at any time if they had reasonable suspicion that a crime was being committed. This would end up being a problem rather than a solution to one, as it yielded

very little results. It did, however, prove that minorities were more likely to be targeted in these stop and frisk tactics rather than their White counterparts (McDonald, 1977).

According to an analysis done by the New York Civil Liberties Union, nine out of ten people that were stopped for the sake of these stop and frisk laws in New York were completely innocent. Also, according to the same analysis, since these stops have been recorded, African Americans have been over 50% of all persons stopped. The data goes from 2002- the first half of 2019 and yields interesting results. The lowest percent of African Americans being stopped was in 2016 with 52%, while the lowest percent for their white counterparts was in 2017 with just 8%. The highest percent recorded for African Americans was in 2019, with 60%, while the highest percentage of white people came from 2003, 2007, and 2014 with 12% (Stop-and-Frisk Data, 2019).

These are some examples of laws put in place to control the minority population. Minimum wage laws, the Mulford legislation, Stop and Frisk, the War on Drugs all were stemmed attempts to control and limit the rights of minority groups (Race and the Drug War) (McDonald, 1977) (Ryan, 2017) (Wing, 2016).

It is difficult to ignore this data and its significance in explaining that there is reason to suspect disparities between races and police conduct. Although the implications of racial disparities are evident, and proven, this data helps set a baseline history for racial inequality and its relationship with law enforcement.

## **Previous Research**

Racism in institutions is something very often questioned. These questions have become prominent in conversations regarding police treatment towards African Americans. This issue

has been studied by many scholars. Approaches to this vary, such as looking into public surveys and opinions on law enforcement, datasets on certain laws and how they affect the public and looking into laws made specifically to incite racism towards minorities. Although all of these studies have been brought to light, there is no certain study that definitively states that law enforcement discriminates against African Americans.

Police behavior and understanding police motives has been analyzed for decades. This subject has developed extensive research, demonstrating that there is a connection between race and police conduct (Tillyer & Enger, 2013).

Although these disparities between race and police conduct have been studied relentlessly, this research still has room to grow. Studying the encounters faced is an important step forward needed for analytical understanding. However, in studying these encounters there are often misunderstandings regarding the citizens characteristics and traffic stop outcomes. As well as this, many previous studies attempted to predict the likelihood experiencing some sort of retribution such as a ticket, citation, or even arrest (Tillyer & Enger, 2013). Although these are important questions to research, these studies sometimes overlook the characteristics most influential in police encounters such as gender, age, income, and the area of the stop (Schafer, et al 2004).

It is also critical in these studies to not only look at race and police encounters. As previously mentioned, it is important to include other characteristics of the person stopped. With these combinations of citizen characteristics, we are able to understand on a deeper level the relationship between citizens and their police encounters. By looking into these other variables, we may be able to notice even more layers included in understanding police encounters (Schafer, et al., 2004). However, most studies including age as a layer yield mixed results (when studying

the likelihood of receiving a citation). Gender typically yields more consistent results when studying police encounters (Tillyer & Enger, 2013).

Previously mentioned are some misunderstandings that occur when researching racial disparities in police encounters. Part of this comes from multiple different studies seeming to yield vastly different results. There are few studies that have found that race has no effect on police encounters, in works such as *The Intersection of Racial Profiling Research and the Law*, 2008. While other reports such as Michael Smith's *Racial Profiling? A Multivariate Analysis of Police Traffic Stop Data* found that Whites were more likely than minorities to be arrested. However, the majority of reports on this topic tend to recognize differences between the race of the citizen and the results of their police encounter (Tillyer & Enger, 2013). Oftentimes these studies have not provided consistent structure to understand the relationship between race and police encounters. Some research attempts to uncover deeper issues within different governmental institutions. William P. Quigly (2012), wrote *Racism: The Crime in Criminal Justice*, which is his attempt to understand if these racial disparities are due to poor implementation of what would originally be a good system, or are an ingrained part of our state and federal criminal justice policy. His studies would conclude yes, these racial disparities are ingrained into our criminal justice system.

## **Research Hypothesis**

These previous projects use different approaches to collecting their data and utilizing those results, although it should be noted that many of these studies make the mistake of not taking certain methodological approaches that allow their data to be understood to its full capacity.

There are four different types of data collection for this specific question. These include officer reported specific purpose data, existing data sources, observational research, and citizen surveys. All have a different purpose and have pros and cons associated with them. When studying officer reported specific purpose data, it is valuable for us to receive information directly from the source but may lead to tampering with the data and questions of validity arise. While existing data sources are readily available and convenient, they do not allow the researcher to have control over the study or their desired variables. Observational research is valuable as it allows a close outside source to record unbiased data, however that data could be compromised if the police officer attempts to persuade the observer into changing the data. Citizen surveys are great for receiving public opinion, however the validity of the public's memory as well as the officers can come into question. (Schafer et al., 2004)

As previously mentioned, many mistakes can be made when studying traffic stop data and data surrounding public encounters with the police. Many things must be taken into consideration in order to utilize the data's full potential and yield real results. In order to do so, data must be more specific and allow us to ask multiple questions, rather than being general and made with haste. Some things recommended to look into include variables not often seen in these studies such as the demographics of the officer, the time of day, where the encounter occurred, what transpired, the intensity of the crime, etc. (Schafer et al., 2004).

I will predominantly be looking at the Police-Public Contact Survey, which provides insight on the important characteristics of face-to-face encounters. This study used data from a supplementary survey, the NCVS or the National Crime Victimization Survey. The Police-Public Contact Survey which is administered to respondents of the NCVS that are 16 or older. In this survey, respondents were asked about their contact with the police in the last 12 months. The



response rate of this survey was about 95% (70,959 respondents out of 74,995), which yields a large sample size (Durose, 2007).

From this survey, I analyze incidents of citizen and police contact testing variables that relate to the nature of the stop, from the perception of the respondent. I am interested in testing if race affects who will be stopped, as well as testing the respondent's beliefs regarding the legitimacy of their encounter.

## **Methods and Data**

The data used is from the 2015 Police-Public Contact Survey, collected by the United States Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. This survey provides information on the nature of police stops and encounters. This is detailed data, providing the reason for the encounters, as well as the outcome of them. The Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS) is supplementary to the National Crime Victimization Survey, an annual survey collecting data on crimes against persons twelve years or older from a sample of United States households. The PPCS is administered to respondents of the National Crime Victimization Survey. The unit of analysis in this dataset are the individuals or respondents to the PPCS.

Before I could perform any tests, I first recoded the variable RACE into 3 different values. The variable RACE originally has 20 different values measuring the race of the respondents. For these tests however I am interested in recoding to provide the values White Only, Black Only, and the other 18 values as other. The variable RACE does not account for those of Hispanic origin, but the PPCS provides a separate variable, HISP. The variable HISP shows how many respondents were of Hispanic origin. I then combined the two variables, RACE

and HISP to create a new variable, race4cats. I will also be using variable SEX as a layer in my tests. After weighting here is the frequency table on the race4cats variable.

**Table 1-Four Category Race Variable**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	White	164813491	65.0	65.0	65.0
	Black	31056164	12.2	12.2	77.2
	Hispanic	39697480	15.7	15.7	92.9
	Other	18020231	7.1	7.1	100.0
	Total	253587366	100.0	100.0	

In the PPCS, there are two variables that describe the place in which the stop occurs. This being a stop in a public place (not a vehicle), and traffic stops occurring in vehicles. The variable “V11” represents those who were stopped in a public place, while variable “V13” describes encounters that occurred while in a vehicle. I hypothesize that African Americans males and females will be stopped both in public places and in vehicles at a disproportionately higher rate than their white counterparts. For this test, I will use two crosstabulations, one with variable race4cats and V11 (Stopped in a public place) layered by the variable SEX, and the other with the same race4cats and V13 (Stopped in a motor vehicle), also layered by SEX. I will also be testing for chi-square and Phi and Cramers V.

Figure 1- Four Category Race/Stopped by Police in a Public Place by Sex

SEX (NCVS ALLOCATED SEX)			Four Category Race Variable				Total
			White	Black	Hispanic	Other	
Male	STOPPED BY POLICE IN PUBLIC PLACE - NOT VEHICLE	Yes	781951 1.0%	314070 2.2%	241043 1.2%	95573 1.1%	1432637 1.2%
		No	79801323 99.0%	13779514 97.8%	19200338 98.8%	8754548 98.9%	121535723 98.8%
	Total		80583274 100.0%	14093584 100.0%	19441381 100.0%	8850121 100.0%	122968360 100.0%
Female	STOPPED BY POLICE IN PUBLIC PLACE - NOT VEHICLE	Yes	559657 0.7%	117142 0.7%	96457 0.5%	63937 0.7%	837193 0.6%
		No	83670560 99.3%	16845439 99.3%	20159641 99.5%	9106172 99.3%	129781812 99.4%
	Total		84230217 100.0%	16962581 100.0%	20256098 100.0%	9170109 100.0%	130619005 100.0%
Total	STOPPED BY POLICE IN PUBLIC PLACE - NOT VEHICLE	Yes	1341608 0.8%	431212 1.4%	337500 0.9%	159510 0.9%	2269830 0.9%
		No	163471883 99.2%	30624953 98.6%	39359979 99.1%	17860720 99.1%	251317535 99.1%
	Total		164813491 100.0%	31056165 100.0%	39697479 100.0%	18020230 100.0%	253587365 100.0%

Male Chi Square P-Value= .000\* Phi=.037 Cramers V= .037  
 Female Chi Square P-Value= .000\* Phi =.009 Cramers V= .009  
 Total Chi Square P-Value= .000\* Phi=.020 Cramers V= .020  
 \*Significant at .05 level

Figure 2- Four Category Race/Stopped by Police while Driving a Motor Vehicle by Sex

SEX (NCVS ALLOCATED SEX)			Four Category Race Variable				Total
			White	Black	Hispanic	Other	
Male	BEEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE WHILE DRIVING A MOTOR VEHICLE	Yes	7422753 9.9%	1296367 11.1%	1524396 9.2%	836011 11.0%	11079527 10.0%
		No	67730867 90.1%	10353221 88.9%	14993430 90.8%	6759210 89.0%	99836728 90.0%
	Total		75153620 100.0%	11649588 100.0%	16517826 100.0%	7595221 100.0%	110916255 100.0%
Female	BEEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE WHILE DRIVING A MOTOR VEHICLE	Yes	5417979 7.1%	1094271 8.3%	859788 5.5%	447906 6.2%	7819944 6.9%
		No	71147205 92.9%	12124536 91.7%	14897444 94.5%	6779214 93.8%	104948399 93.1%
	Total		76565184 100.0%	13218807 100.0%	15757232 100.0%	7227120 100.0%	112768343 100.0%
Total	BEEN STOPPED BY THE POLICE WHILE DRIVING A MOTOR VEHICLE	Yes	12840732 8.5%	2390638 9.6%	2384184 7.4%	1283917 8.7%	18899471 8.4%
		No	138878072 91.5%	22477757 90.4%	29890874 92.6%	13538424 91.3%	204785127 91.6%
	Total		151718804 100.0%	24868395 100.0%	32275058 100.0%	14822341 100.0%	223684598 100.0%

Male Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.018 Cramers V= .018  
 Female Chi Square= .000\* Phi= .030 Cramers V= .030  
 Total Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.020 Cramers V= .020  
 \*Significant at .05 level

For my first crosstabulation of race4cats and V11, African American men were more than twice as likely to be stopped by police in a public place than White males. African American women were likely to be stopped in a public place at the same rate as their female White counterparts. The chi square shows significance with males and females, while the male Phi & Cramers V, .037, and female Phi and Cramers V, .009 shows a weak relationship between race, sex, and the likelihood of being stopped by police in a public place.

The second crosstabulation provided in figure 2 of variables race4cats and V13 shows African American males and females were both 1.2% more likely to be stopped by police in a motor vehicle compared to their White male and female counterparts. The chi-square test provided a significance of .000, showing a relationship between race, sex, and being stopped by police in a public place. Phi and Cramers V for males, .018, and females, .030 showing little significance between these variables.

Next, I will be testing my hypothesis that African Americans are more likely to be stopped by the police for reasons of suspicion rather than other reasons. The PPCS dataset has a variable, "V39" asking the respondent "What was the reason given for this stop? Did the police suspect you of something?" I test this using a crosstabulation with the variable "V39" and the variable race4cats layered by SEX to test the relationship between race, sex, and if the respondent was being stopped due to suspicion. I will also be testing for chi-square and Phi and Cramers V.

**Figure 3– Race Four Categories/Reason for Stop:Suspect You of Something by Sex**

SEX (NCVS ALLOCATED SEX)			Four Category Race Variable				Total
			White	Black	Hispanic	Other	
Male	REASON FOR STOP: SUSPECT YOU OF SOMETHING	Yes	155780 36.4%	71279 46.7%	58091 45.4%	10151 23.8%	295301 39.3%
		No	272298 63.6%	81449 53.3%	54868 42.9%	28101 66.0%	436716 58.1%
		Missing	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	15076 11.8%	4353 10.2%	19429 2.6%
		Total	428078 100.0%	152728 100.0%	128035 100.0%	42605 100.0%	751446 100.0%
Female	REASON FOR STOP: SUSPECT YOU OF SOMETHING	Yes	84796 26.3%	10898 23.7%	6524 20.7%	8817 31.2%	111035 25.9%
		No	234083 72.6%	35158 76.3%	25049 79.3%	19401 68.8%	313691 73.2%
		Missing	3735 1.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	3735 0.9%
		Total	322614 100.0%	46056 100.0%	31573 100.0%	28218 100.0%	428461 100.0%
Total	REASON FOR STOP: SUSPECT YOU OF SOMETHING	Yes	240576 32.0%	82177 41.3%	64615 40.5%	18968 26.8%	406336 34.4%
		No	506381 67.5%	116607 58.7%	79917 50.1%	47502 67.1%	750407 63.6%
		Missing	3735 0.5%	0 0.0%	15076 9.4%	4353 6.1%	23164 2.0%
		Total	750692 100.0%	198784 100.0%	159608 100.0%	70823 100.0%	1179907 100.0%

Male Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.330 Cramers V= .233

Female Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.073 Cramers V= .052

Total Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.257 Cramers V= .182

\*Significant at .05 level

From this test we can see African American men are stopped due to suspicion over 10% more often than White males. 46.7% of males stopped due to suspicion were African American, compared to 36.4% of White men. Hispanics were also stopped due to suspicion at a disproportionately higher rate than their white counterparts at 45.4%. White females, however, were more likely to be stopped due to suspicion than African American females. The chi-square test performed showed a value of .000, showing a high significance between race and being stopped due to suspicion. Phi and Cramers V showed results of .330 for males, and .073 for females. This shows moderate significance between males and their likelihood of being stopped

due to suspicion by race. However, Phi and Cramers V for females show low significance between these variables.

My next hypothesis that African Americans more likely to experience police encounters they believe to be illegitimate than their White counterparts. In the PPCS, “V248” is a variable that asks respondents if they believe their stop was legitimate. I will use this variable in a crosstabulation with the variable race4cats and sex to test the relationship between race, sex and the respondent's beliefs on the legitimacy of their encounter.

**Figure 4– Four Race Categories /Was Stop Legitimate by Sex**

SEX (NCVS ALLOCATED SEX)			Four Category Race Variable				Total
			White	Black	Hispanic	Other	
Male	WAS STOP LEGITIMATE	Yes	6263806 84.8%	930486 70.6%	1201620 75.8%	708469 83.5%	9104381 81.7%
		No	871549 11.8%	313743 23.8%	308309 19.4%	99148 11.7%	1592749 14.3%
	Total		7389301 100.0%	1318181 100.0%	1585949 100.0%	848407 100.0%	11141838 100.0%
Female	WAS STOP LEGITIMATE	Yes	5345230 86.5%	869257 70.9%	865565 81.0%	403289 82.0%	7483341 83.5%
		No	663543 10.7%	290415 23.7%	179306 16.8%	65414 13.3%	1198678 13.4%
	Total		6178638 100.0%	1226296 100.0%	1068212 100.0%	491831 100.0%	8964977 100.0%
Total	WAS STOP LEGITIMATE	Yes	11609036 85.6%	1799743 70.7%	2067185 77.9%	1111758 83.0%	16587722 82.5%
		No	1535092 11.3%	604158 23.7%	487615 18.4%	164562 12.3%	2791427 13.9%
	Total		13567939 100.0%	2544477 100.0%	2654161 100.0%	1340238 100.0%	20106815 100.0%

Male Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.144 Cramers V= .083

Female Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.151 Cramers V= .087

Total Chi Square= .000\* Phi= .145 Cramers V= .084

\*Significant at .05 level

This test shows that African American men and females were more likely to feel their stop was illegitimate. African American males were 12% more likely than their White male counterparts to believe their stop was not legitimate. African American females yield similar results, being 13% more likely to believe their stop was illegitimate compared to White females.

The chi-square test provided a value of .000, showing large significance between race and beliefs of police stops being illegitimate. Phi and Cramers V show a low association between the three variables.

My fifth hypothesis I will be testing is that African Americans are more likely to believe police actions were unnecessary compared to white respondents. Variable “V162” in the PPCS asks respondents if they believe police actions taken on them were necessary. I will perform a crosstabulation of variable race4cats and V162 by SEX. I will also be testing for chi-square and Phi and Cramers V.

**Figure 5– Four Race Categories/Were Police Actions Necessary by Sex**

SEX (NCVS ALLOCATED SEX)			Four Category Race Variable				Total
			White	Black	Hispanic	Other	
Male	WERE POLICE ACTIONS NECESSARY	Yes	7550 13.4%	4348 8.0%	13090 24.7%	910 10.9%	25898 15.1%
		No	48812 86.6%	49665 92.0%	39949 75.3%	7473 89.1%	145899 84.9%
	Total		56362 100.0%	54013 100.0%	53039 100.0%	8383 100.0%	171797 100.0%
Female	WERE POLICE ACTIONS NECESSARY	Yes	17658 29.2%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	17658 23.8%
		No	37504 62.0%	7909 100.0%	4882 100.0%	991 100.0%	51286 69.1%
	Total		60446 100.0%	7909 100.0%	4882 100.0%	991 100.0%	74228 100.0%
Total	WERE POLICE ACTIONS NECESSARY	Yes	25208 21.6%	4348 7.0%	13090 22.6%	910 9.7%	43556 17.7%
		No	86316 73.9%	57574 93.0%	44831 77.4%	8464 90.3%	197185 80.1%
	Total		116808 100.0%	61922 100.0%	57921 100.0%	9374 100.0%	246025 100.0%

Male Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.189 Cramers V= .189

Female Chi Square= .000\* Phi= .319 Cramers V= .226

Total Chi Square= .000\* Phi= .238 Cramers V= .168

\*Significant at .05 level

Figure 5 shows 92% of African American males believe police actions were unnecessary compared to 86.6% of White males. African American females, however, were almost 20% more likely than White females to believe police actions were unnecessary. The chi-square test

provided a value of .000, showing significance between race and believing police actions were necessary. The Phi and Cramers V provided .189 for males, and .319 for females. This means there is low levels of association between males, race, and believing police actions were necessary. The .319 result for females shows moderate levels of association for the three variables.

My last hypothesis is that African American males and females are more likely to believe that police actions taken against them are excessive. The PPCS provides variable "V163" asking if respondents believe there were unnecessary actions taken by the police in their encounter. I will again be performing a crosstabulation of variables race4cats, V163, and SEX. I will be providing Chi Square and Phi and Cramers V results.



Figure 6– Four Race Categories /Do you Feel any Actions Used were Excessive by Sex

SEX (NCVS ALLOCATED SEX)			Four Category Race Variable				Total
			White	Black	Hispanic	Other	
Male	DO YOU FEEL ANY ACTIONS USED AGAINST YOU WERE EXCESSIVE	Yes	21669	45477	31762	5089	103997
			38.4%	84.2%	59.9%	60.7%	60.5%
		No	34693	8537	21278	3295	67803
			61.6%	15.8%	40.1%	39.3%	39.5%
Total			56362	54014	53040	8384	171800
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Female	DO YOU FEEL ANY ACTIONS USED AGAINST YOU WERE EXCESSIVE	Yes	12751	3183	4882	991	21807
			21.1%	40.2%	100.0%	100.0%	29.4%
		No	42411	4727	0	0	47138
			70.2%	59.8%	0.0%	0.0%	63.5%
		Don't know	5284	0	0	0	5284
		8.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	7.1%	
Total			60446	7910	4882	991	74229
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total	DO YOU FEEL ANY ACTIONS USED AGAINST YOU WERE EXCESSIVE	Yes	34420	48660	36644	6080	125804
			29.5%	78.6%	63.3%	64.9%	51.1%
		No	77104	13264	21278	3295	114941
			66.0%	21.4%	36.7%	35.1%	46.7%
		Don't know	5284	0	0	0	5284
		4.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.1%	
Total			116808	61924	57922	9375	246029
			100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Male Chi Square= .000\* Phi= .375 Cramers V= .375  
 Female Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.480 Cramers V= .339  
 Total Chi Square= .000\* Phi=.437 Cramers V= .309  
 \*Significant at .05 level

This test shows a 45.8% difference between White males and African American males feeling actions taken against them were excessive. 38.4% of White males believe actions were excessive, compared to 84.2% of African American males. There is a 19.1% difference between African American females and White females. The Chi Square test showed a result of .000, showing significance between the three variables. The male Phi and Cramers V gave a result of .375, showing moderate significance between the variables. The female Phi and Cramers V showed .480, also showing moderate association between race, sex, and their beliefs if police actions were excessive.

## **Analysis**

Overall, results of the hypothesis showed significance between race and police actions. We can conclude from this that there is a significance between race and police actions. Evidence shows that police treat African Americans differently than their white counterparts, as well as other races. These results show large inequalities between minority respondents and white respondents, with African Americans showing the most disparities.

## **Conclusion**

The results of this study yield interesting results regarding the general hypothesis. There is evidence proving that African Americans are treated differently than other races within their police encounters. The tests proved that there is significance between all the variables used, however a few tests stand out from the rest.

The tests that yielded the most significant results were regarding the reason for the stop: being suspected of something and if police actions were excessive. The chi-square shows significance between our variables, as well as our Phi and Cramers V test. These tests also showed the greatest differences of perceived treatment by police and race. Each test provided large disparities between African Americans and their white counterparts. The test asking respondents if police actions were excessive showed the largest difference in results, with African Americans being 45.8% more likely than white counterparts to believe police actions were excessive. These tests were the two that stood out the most regarding their significance, however as previously mentioned all tests performed did show some level of significance.

All these implications support the theory that police use different actions towards people depending on their race. The largest differences tend to fall on the African American community. Each test performed proved that not only are African Americans more likely to experience different police actions than white respondents, but they were more likely than any other race.

This report is different from others in that it uses data provided by respondents and their perceptions of their police encounters. One of the reasons this issue is so difficult to study, is because it uses many ways to report data. This includes a mixture of respondent reported data, officer reported data, observational data, legal analysis, or anecdotal evidence. These different methods may implicate mixed results.

Moving forward I believe it is necessary to dig deeper into this type of data, using different layers to explain why these differences may occur. Income, area of encounter, previous encounters with police, and time are just a few layers that may add to the understanding of these disparities.

This is a difficult area to study, but an important one. However, a specific understanding of the data being used and where it comes from can yield interesting results. Different perceptions and different methodical approaches may add to the difficulty of trying to study this type of data. It is a difficult process to measure as perceptions differ and are constantly changing.

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