

REPRESENTATIVE BUREAUCRACY AND RACIAL PROFILING IN MISSOURI

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ABSTRACT

There have been inquiries regarding the extent, nature, and causes of racial profiling. Numerous studies have been and continue to explore whether and how the experience of people of color differ from those of majorities with regards to racial profiling. Likewise, there has also been interests in understanding whether people of color experience this practice due in part to the geographic area that specific police officers serves. Though this issue of staffing is at the center of this phenomena, current findings are divided, and evidence is mixed. Employing the 2013 Missouri Attorney General racial profiling annual report along with the 2013 Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics report, this current exploratory study aims to examine whether Missouri law enforcement agencies that are less racially representative of the population they serve have correspondingly higher rates of enforcement against people of color. Utilizing a total of 76 Missouri Police Departments, the researcher discovered that on a departmental level, the most expected relationships between representativeness and outcomes were not observed. However, among municipal organizations, Black representation was correlated with higher search rates for Black citizens. Likewise, positive correlations for contraband rates were observed for Hispanic representativeness. Implications for future research are discussed.

APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of College of Arts and Sciences, have examined a thesis titled “Representative Bureaucracy and Racial Profiling in Missouri,” presented by Mercy Harris Gbomina, a candidate for the Master of Science degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Racial Profiling in Traffic Stops

Historically, race has been acknowledged as playing an acute role in all aspects of life in the American society. It is, however, most evident in police-community related conversations, especially when discussing police traffic stops. Both historically and contemporarily, studies have shown color of people to be targeted and arrested at higher rates than Whites. As such, there is observable tension between the significant public belief that policing is influenced by citizens' identifying race. In addition, researchers have found that a person's race could contribute to an officer's decision to make an arrest; whereas other researchers have also shown officers' personal characteristics, such as race, to not be consistent predictors of the arrest of potential suspects (Kochel, Wilson & Mastrofski, 2011). Existing academic wisdom on the symbolic versus substantive effect of minority representation in law enforcement has laid out considerable perspectives with respect to this argument (see Ward, 2006). This debate of whether an individual's identifying race increases the probability of an arrest and/or coercive treatment from the officers, however, is not a new one, but an ongoing one that was further spawned by recent events, such as Michael Brown. The Michael Brown case was therefore foundational in raising attention contemporarily to this issue of individual officers utilizing race as a pretext to initiate traffic stops, and did so particularly for the state of Missouri.

As news reported, Michael Brown (hereinafter "Brown") and his friend Dorian Johnson (hereinafter "Johnson"), both African American, were walking down the middle of the street when Officer Darren Wilson (a White officer) drove up and ordered them to move

to the sidewalk. At this time when Officer Wilson drove up to Brown and Johnson, there was an altercation which resulted in Officer Wilson firing his gun at Brown. During this time, Johnson fled the scene, leaving Brown behind. Whether or not there was a struggle inside of the police vehicle which might have led Officer Wilson to shoot Brown, remains unclear. In fact, since the day of the incident, nobody truly knows what happened. Nonetheless, in the days leading up to the preliminary hearing, there were many indications that Brown was wrongly executed by Officer Wilson, as Brown was unarmed and seen by public perspectives as not a threat to Officer Wilson (this would have been constitutional had Brown appeared as a threat to Officer Wilson). As allegations stated, instead of Officer Wilson properly approaching and warning Brown of his wrongful act of jaywalking, Officer Wilson approached Brown with his weapon drawn. The struggle resolved with Officer Wilson shooting Brown six times, leaving him dead in the middle of the street (McLaughlin, Pearson & Capelouto, 2014). This incident, along with the latest ongoing similar events, makes police discretion as well as police legitimacy questionable among minority communities in the United States.

Consequently, there have been inquiries about the extent, nature, and causes of racial profiling in police practices. Numerous studies have explored, and continue to explore how people of color experience racial profiling compared to Whites. Such allegations of racial profiling among police agencies appeal to public attention due to the notion that an individual officer's discretion to stop and/or search potential suspects rest solely on the motorist's identifying race. Several case studies have demonstrated how individual officers choose to exercise coercive authority toward Black motorists compare to Whites, during routine traffic stops (Brunson & Weitzer, 2009 & 2011; Holmes, 2000; Kochel et al., 2011; Milner, George,

& Allison, 2016; Smith 1986; Roh & Robinson, 2009). It is worth noting that this issue of police discretion is well established in the extant literature (Bittner, 1967; Mastrofski, 2004; Lichtenberg, 2003; Terrill & Mastrofski, 2002), though the merit between unjust and fruitful discretion is left to a greater debate. Conversely, it is also worth noting that although this fine line is left at a greater debate, the Supreme Court had played a significant role at permitting such allegations to be acceptable practices amongst local police departments. For instance, consider the Supreme Court 1968 *Terry v. Ohio*, decision. This decision developed the “reasonable suspicion” (mostly known as “stop-and-frisk”) standard by ruling that the Fourth Amendment’s prohibition on “unreasonable searches and seizures” is not violated when a police officer has “reasonable suspicion” “in light of his experience” that a crime has been committed (see e.g., Correll, Park, Judd, Wittenbrink, Sadler & Keese, 2007; Epp, Maynard-Moody, & Haider-Markel, 2014; Feder, 2012; Olsen, 2016). In other words, police officers can stop and frisk any person of color who may appear suspicious based on this particular officer’s experience. In fact, this decision was further supported by the 1975 *Brignoni-Ponce* and 1996 *Whren* Supreme Court rulings, which also allowed police officers to utilize race as a pretext so long as it is not the *sole factor* in making the initial stop (Correll et al., 2007; Epp et al., 2014; Feder, 2012).

Utilizing race as a pretext for traffic stops is very problematic for police-community relations. Though this issue of race has been on the rise over the years, the Brown case magnified the overlooked seriousness of it for the state of Missouri. Empirically, there are numerous case studies of minority citizens experiencing harsh treatment due to their identifying race. Thus, even though the current study does not deal directly with this dilemma, it is a vital area of study that other researchers should target. This dilemma,

however, provides important context for the current study, which aims to explore whether the racial representativeness (hereinafter “representative bureaucracy”) of police departments and the geographical area that specific police officers serve is correlated with differential racial patterns of enforcement. Specifically, this study aims to examine whether Missouri law enforcement agencies that are less racially representative of the population they serve have correspondingly higher rates of traffic enforcement on people of color.

Many studies have illustrated that citizens’ race influences how individual police officers treat the public (Brunson & Gau, 2011; Hall, Hall & Perry, 2016; Kochel et al., 2011; Milner et al., 2016; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009). As such, significant portions of the public in the United States believe that police discretion is in fact influenced by the motorist’s race due to all the ongoing police brutality cases (DePillis, 2014; Hall et al., 2016; Maciag, 2015a; Kochel et al., 2011; Weitzer, 2015). Undeniably, we reside in a society where discretion plays a role in nearly every facet of criminal law. The criminal justice system in America permits the use of discretion widely throughout a vast array of law enforcement agencies. Accordingly, police departments, as well as individual officers, across the nation have long been accused of abusing the broad discretion that is afforded to them in traffic enforcement as a pretext for criminal investigation (see e.g., Gaines, 2006; Herbert, 1997; Lichtenberg, 2003). Since individual officers are privileged, by the criminal laws, with the power to select from the universe of violators, the abuse of power by individual officers has received and continues to gain media attention (see e.g., Lawrence, 2000; Hall et al., 2016; Milner et al., 2016; Tieger, 1971). It is worth noting that in law enforcement, there is no “typical” day in the work field. On a day to day basis, police officers are faced with an enormous range of situations with which they must deal. No two situations they encounter

are ever the same. Depending on the circumstances, officers are in the position of having to make decisions on how to handle a specific matter alone, or with little additional advice and without supervision (Halliday, LEJA 518).

This is the heart of police discretion, and depending on how far an officer goes with this power, and whether this discretion is applied evenly across demographics, there could be problems associated with such practices. Due to these privileges, which enable individual officers to execute such exercises, many citizen respondents surveyed state that a person's race influences how officers carry out their discretion (Hall et al., 2016; Kochel et al., 2011). Likewise, such exercises have resulted in a growing body of evidence demonstrating how officers' race shapes citizen's perception of fairness in the communities (Brunson & Gau, 2011; Milner et al., 2016; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009). Furthermore, extensive studies have shown that people of color, namely African-Americans (hereinafter "Blacks") are targeted suspects in police traffic stops. Despite numerous studies explaining the unlawfulness that lays within many traffic stops, —studies accounting for departments and individuals' accountability (see e.g., McDevitt, Farrell & Wolff, 2008; Walker, 2006), and controlling street-level police discretion (see e.g., Mastrofski, 2004)—there is little evidence to suggest that courts have put forth any efforts in reducing the wide spread police discretion in traffic stops (Lichtenberg, 2003). In fact, and to the contrary, recent studies have demonstrated how other state's Courts of Appeals have further allowed potential suspects' furtive-type movements to be utilized as the basis for a protective search by officers (Hall et al., 2016; Milner et al., 2016). Moreover, even though this matter of racial profiling has been surfacing for decades, there seems to be a literature gap between the empirical phenomenon of racial profiling and the representative bureaucracy theory. Consequently, this current study

aims to address this literature gap with the hope that doing so would bring new insights to the matter and encourage police administrators to seek sustainable reforms. By replicating previous studies' methodological approaches, this study hopes to shine a new light to the existing literature that would empower police administrators to address racial bias in traffic stop practices as an effort to defuse potential situations where brutality is directed toward minorities, namely Blacks.

Accordingly, combining passive representative bureaucracy theory with a suitable definition of racial profiling, this present study aims to explore whether Missouri police departments that are less racially representative of the population they serve have correspondingly higher rates of enforcement on people of color, precisely Blacks. Conversely, this study aims to explore whether police departments that are more representative of the population have less racial bias in traffic stops. Additionally, it aims to explore whether Missouri cities with less representative police departments have higher disparity indices regarding those whom police officers stopped and/or searched. This study furthermore wishes to explore whether Missouri cities with less representative police departments have correspondingly higher arrest and contraband hit rates¹ in traffic stops. Conversely, it lastly aims to explore whether Missouri cities that are more representative of the population have lower arrest and contraband hit rate in traffic stops.

The subsequent sections will provide a comprehensive review of the existing literature on racial minorities in policing and passive representative bureaucracy theory as well as racial profiling. Following the literature review, the methodology section will explain the analytical methods that were employed within this current study. The results section will

¹ In this context, contraband hit rate is defined as the rate of successful searches collected for drug contraband (*see* Harcourt, 1963)

present the findings of the analyses revealed by the methods, which will subsequently be followed by the discussion of the findings. Lastly, the conclusion will provide an overview of the current study, including its limitations and strengths. Also, addressed herein are some applicable policy implications for the state of Missouri local police departments as well as recommendations for future studies.

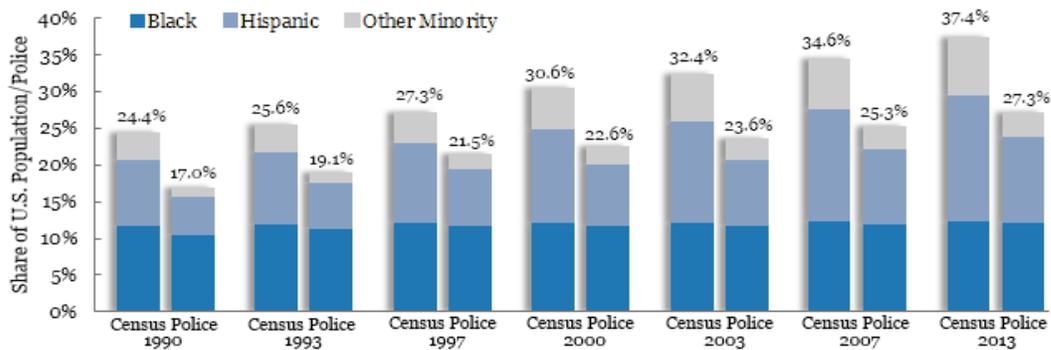
CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Racial Minorities in Policing

Though police departments have been diversifying since the 1960s, little research exists on the early development of minority police officers in the American society; although recent statistics have shown the percentage of minority police officers to be doubled between 1987 and 2013 (Bekiempis, 2015) [*see Figure 1*]. Furthermore, very little is written on the importance of incorporating diversity in the police workforce around the globe, especially in the American society. Historically, police departments discriminated against minorities because policing was predominately a white, male-dominated industry (Roberg, Novak, Cordner & Smith, 2015). Additionally, White officers policed the Black populations back in the early century as a way of maintaining and enforcing slavery laws for the Black citizens; for in so doing, the White officials were able to develop and maintain their ideology and position of racial superiority (Hawkins & Thomas, 1991). Consequently, it was not until the early 1900s when minority representation began to grow within police culture in the United States. Noteworthy, the research on Black officers is easily overlooked for it is most often embedded in studies of racial minorities in policing where Black officers' involvement is not the focal point of discussion (Morabito & Shelley, 2015), which adds to the complexity of indicating the percentage of total Black officers' involvement.

Minority Police Representation Trails U.S. Population



Police data represents national totals for local full-time sworn personnel not identified as non-Hispanic white. Source: BJS LEMAS Survey, U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Program

Figure 1. Minority Police Representation (see Maciag, 2015a)

However, racial representation only began to grow in many cities because of the pressure from communities of color. During the post-war period, for instance, there were several riots in East St. Louis, Missouri, Chicago and Detroit due to unfairness in policing of Black populations (Brunson & Gau, 2011; Hawkins & Thomas, 199; Roberg et al., 2015). Black citizens frequently complained because of the treatment they were experiencing from White police officers, therefore, they rioted for reforms (DePillis, 2014; Hawkins & Thomas, 1991; Roberg et al., 2015). Due to these riots being triggered by the incidents involving White police officers patrolling Black communities, the need to diversify police departments became the focus for public for administrators who presumed that increasing racial diversity within this field of work would improve community relations. Unfortunately, data supporting the assumptions remain at large. There have been myriad attempts testing this theory—studies accounting for the same-race and cross-race policing (Brunson & Gau, 2011; Donohue & Levitt, 2001) and determinants of citizens’ perceptions in communities as well as citizens’ race influencing how officers carry out their discretion (Kochel et al., 2011; Lasley, Larson, Kelso & Brown, 2011; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005)—with no consistent, empirical findings.

Diversifying a police department alone would most certainly not eliminate this issue of racial profiling. Considerable attention must also be given to the historical foundation of the institutional practices. Nonetheless, it is worth noting that diversifying police departments is very important for numerous reasons. First, police departments diversifying their workforce is important because not only will doing so provide better access to the community that they serve, it also allows the officers, within that community, to sense that their cultural value system, beliefs, and customs are well represented in the most visible arm of the government. In other words, officers must be able to relate to every segment of the community that they serve so that they may be able to better serve the citizens without individualized bias (Roberg et al., 2015). Secondly, diversifying the police workforce is important because doing so brings about innovations where both the citizens and the departments can work together as partners which later could lead to lesser crimes within communities and perhaps increase police legitimacy (Alderden, Farrell, Skogan & Rosenbaum, 2011; Weitzer, 2015). Furthermore, as recommendations provided by the investigations conducted by the Department of Justice¹, Missouri Attorney General² and the White House Task Force on 21st Century Policing³ underscored, increasing racial representativeness in policing is important to examine whether police departments that are already more (or less) diverse engage differentially with Black citizens during traffic enforcement. Knowing this vital information beforehand would be advantageous if

¹ The DOJ (2015) conducted their investigation on Ferguson Police Department and found that racial bias was an issue that needed to be addressed and thus recommended diversifying the force to mirror the communities was essential.

² The Missouri AG (Decker et al. 2015) made several specific recommendations to enhance racial diversity in Missouri police departments to help lessen community distrust of the police.

³ The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing (COPS, 2015) was charged by President Barack Obama with identifying best practices and offering recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust.

governmental officials want to minimize and/or stop racial profiling within police departments around the globe. Lastly, diversifying police workforce helps reduce police misconduct—including police-minority hostility and their discretion to exercise deadly force to get their point of authority across towards Blacks — that are deeply embedded within the social structure of Black communities (see for e.g., Jackson, 1989; Sampson & Wilson, 2011). Overall, having a better sense of community partnership between citizens and police departments would have a significant impact on public trust and confidence in Black communities as well as White communities, which could help strengthen police-community relations.

A Brief History of Racial Profiling in Police Traffic Stops

Dating back to the beginning of policing history, scholars and policymakers recognized that police officers were given wide latitude to handle incidents in low-visibility environments where discretion is largely free from the organizational or systemic review (Goldstein, 1960; Novak, 2009). As a result, unguided discretion was, and currently continues, to be, at the heart of most of the maladies facing policing today. At the street level, cases are handled with officers' discretion—meaning, there are many factors, such as age, race, gender, as well as economic standing—that determine the condition(s) and outcome(s) for a suspect based on the discretion of the officer (see Black, 1981; Goldstein, 1979; Rickshim & Chermak, 1993). To mitigate street-level officers' discretion, however, many scholars and policymakers have taken great interest in understanding the behavior of street level officers and in creating policies to better guide officers' behaviors (Kochel et al., 2011; Novak, 2009). Doing so could enhance police-community relations in Black communities.

Even though the representation and advancement of the leadership positions of Black officers have increased since the 1900's (Alderden et al., 2011; Bekiempis, 2015; DePillis,

2014), racial profiling and Black citizens disproportionately experiencing police prejudices remain controversial in the United States. Incidents where citizens' race influences how individual police officers treat the public are occurring more frequently within minority and disadvantaged communities (Brunson & Gau, 2011; Brunson & Weitzer, 2009 & 2011; DePillis, 2014; McLaughlin et al., 2014). As a result, there have been numerous explorations regarding the extent, nature and causes of racial profiling (Chambliss, 1994; Batton & Kadleck, 2004; Maclin, 1998; Harris, 1999; Kennedy, 1997; Smith & Petrocelli, 2001; Petrocelli, Piquero & Smith, 2003; Walker, 2001). Also, and most importantly, as Batton and Kadleck (2004) accentuated within their study, documenting the nature and extent of racial profiling is important because of the broad, sweeping consequences it has for minorities, the police, and American society in general. Therefore, as findings of several studies show that across various jurisdictions from New Jersey, Maryland, Missouri, Michigan, and California, officers disproportionately target Black drivers of official post-stop activities (Chong, 2011; Harris, 1999; Kennedy, 1997), it would be appropriate to clarify what is meant by the term *racial profiling*. Although there are numerous definitions that could be utilized to describe the term, *racial profiling*⁴ is defined herein as:

any police-initiated action that relies on the race, ethnicity, or national origin rather than the behavior of an individual who has been identified as being, or having been, engaged in criminal activity (Ramirez, McDevitt & Farrell, 2000, pp. 3).

This current study utilizes this definition because 1) it is generalizable to different police departments for it is broad enough yet specific to measure departmental data; and 2) it is parallel to Missouri's statutory definition, which defines racial profiling as the "inappropriate

⁴ See Skolnick & Fyfe (1993) and Batton & Kadleck (2004) for other suitable definitions of racial profiling.

use of race of the suspect rather than probable cause when making a decision to stop, search or arrest a motorist,” (Decker, Rosenfield & Rojek, 2015).

In his early works, Goldstein (1979) acknowledged that police officers have a great deal of discretion on the street level. He introduced his problem-oriented policing strategy for law enforcement agencies to implement as a means of addressing police discretion.

Arguably, discretion, in and of itself, may not be problematic within the justice system as studies have illustrated (see Bayley & Mendelsohn, 1968; Bittner, 1967). In fact, discretion may be desirable, or even necessary in some cases. As Bittner (1967) underscored, the capacity to use force is the core of the police role since some situations might require that force be applied to resolve a situation. Also, the criminal justice system does not have the resources to fully enforce every law violation, every time. Therefore, discretion may be necessary to assess which crimes, offenders or victims encounter the full function of the justice system (Bittner, 1967). This promotes efficiency within the justice system. Unfettered discretion, on the other hand, might be problematic, and could raise questions of equity (see Bayley, 2002) —which seems to be the prevalent debate in the Brown’s case. Accordingly, as recent ongoing events, such as the Michael Brown case, continue to occur within Black communities, allegations of racial profiling continue to be one of the most significant issues in American law enforcement today.

However, the answer to the question of whether police officers intentionally target persons because of their race is still unclear. Consequently, much research has been done to investigate whether police traffic stop practices disproportionately impact minority drivers (Brunson & Gau, 2011; Brunson & Weitzer, 2009, 2011; Chambliss, 1994; Chong, 2011; Gaines, 2006; Holmes, 2000; Novak & Chamlin, 2012; Smith & Petrocelli, 2001; Roh & Robinson., 2009). Based on previous studies, some researchers argue that police function to

control the “dangerous classes” consisting of racial minorities and the poor for they seem to exercise coercive authority toward Black offenders in primarily Black neighborhoods (Hall et al., 2016; Holmes, 2000; Smith 1986; Roh & Robinson, 2009). Moreover, some studies demonstrated that minority citizens in general, and Blacks in particular, were disproportionately stopped in traffic stops compared to Whites with their percentages in the driving-eligible population (Smith & Petrocelli, 2001; Roh & Robinson, 2009). In fact, findings from racial profiling or traffic stop studies have been consistent with respect to minorities, especially Blacks, being stopped, ticketed, and searched at a higher rate compared to Whites. For example, Roh and Robinson (2009) analyzed traffic stop data from the Houston Police Department at both micro- and macro levels. They found that Blacks were overrepresented compared to other racial and ethnic groups in traffic stops. Precisely, their macrolevel analysis found the following:

The likelihood of being stopped and being subjected to unfavorable police treatment (e.g. arrest, search, and felony charge) was greater in beats where more Blacks or Hispanics resided and/or more police force was deployed, consistent with the racial threat or minority threat hypothesis. (Roh & Robinson, 2009, pp.152)

Furthermore, Gaines (2006) conducted a study in Riverside, California, with an effort to identify evidence of racial profiling. Utilizing California’s statutory definition of racial profiling, all traffic stops from the year 2003 were examined. Specifically, the data were disaggregated into stops made by the traffic unit and stops made by patrol investigative units. Findings from these two units demonstrated new insight on the matter. Although no disparity was found in the traffic unit stops, there was minority overrepresentation in the patrol and investigative stops. Moreover, after accounting for the department’s 133 reporting districts,

Gaines (2006) discovered a significantly high correlation: race and ethnicity of those stopped were correlated with racial and ethnic suspect information from the traffic stops. Thus, it is disputable that in contrast to all other racial and ethnic groups in the United States, Blacks are disproportionately targeted suspects for traffic stops.

Moreover, myriad studies of racial profiling illustrate that Blacks are more likely than Whites to be stopped and mistreated by police officers (see e.g., Batton & Kadleck, 2004; Hall et al., 2016; Milner et al., 2016; Smith, 1986; Persico, 2002); although other studies have yet to locate any evidence of racial profiling (see e.g., Epp et al., 2014; Novak, 2004; Smith & Petrocelli, 2001). Given the extant literature on this matter, Holmes (2000) conducted his study to assess whether minorities are the primary targets of police brutality. Precisely, Holmes (2000) formulated a hypothesis to examine whether residency crime control was more likely to occur among the minority groups, namely Blacks and Hispanics. Utilizing data from three governmental sources on civil rights criminal complaints alleging police brutality by officers, Holmes (2000) discovered that the measures of the presence of threatening people—i.e., Blacks and Hispanics—corresponded with increased complaints of these violations. Moreover, this study showed that these minority groups in the Southwest cities of the United States are related positively to the average annual civil rights criminal complaints regarding police brutality (Holmes, 2000). Holmes' findings are consistent with Smith's (1986) in a sense that Blacks in predominately Black neighborhoods are most likely to experience coercive police authority.

Exploring this matter on a larger scale, Kochel et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of quantitative studies to explore the effect of suspect race on officers' decision to arrest. Employing 4,500 potential sources, the researchers analyzed their results based on 27 independent data sets that generated 40 research reports that permitted an estimate of the

effect size of the suspects' race on the probability of arrest. Parallel to the aforementioned studies' findings, their study indicated a strong consistency signifying that minority suspects are more likely to be arrested than White suspects. Precisely, their study demonstrated that depending on the method of estimation (and they utilized several methods to conclude more definitively findings), the effect size of individual's race, in terms of the increased likelihood of arrest, may vary between 1.32 and 1.52 (an odd ratio) even though the average probability of White being arrest was measured at a 0.20 significant threshold whereas Black average probability was calculated at 0.26 (Kochel et al., 2011). Focusing solely on arrest hits and doing so systematically and quantitatively, allowed the researchers to confidently draw findings that provided a better understanding of whether, when, and why race may influence police arrest practices.

Similarly, Fallik and Novak (2012) utilized data collected by a large Midwestern Police Department to investigate whether race and/or ethnicity of suspect play a significant role in officers' decision to search. Different from the Kochel et al. (2011) study, Fallik and Novak (2012) focused their study solely on officers' decision to search suspects rather than arrests. Specifically, the researchers aimed to explore whether Black and Hispanic drivers were searched at parity with nonminorities while controlling for other explanatory factors and focusing on officers' legal authority to search. Primarily, they were interested in determining the effect of drivers' race and/or ethnicity on the likelihood of being the subject of an automobile search. Employing a total number of 45,695 police-public encounters reports from the total number of 122,209 Kansas City (Missouri) Police Department surveyed reports, the researchers were able to observe that Blacks are overrepresented among searches overall as well as among searches involving greater officers' discretion to search. Moreover, their study revealed that "Blacks appear to be differentially involved in searches

because police engage minorities under characteristics consistent with searches” (Fallik & Novak, 2012, pp.159). Consequently, based on their finding along with the aforementioned studies, one can easily argue that race is a ‘risk factor’ for officers to stop, search, arrest and/or engage in both even though Fallik and Novak (2012) contended that their study did not present enough evidence to suggest race or ethnicity is a meaningful correlate of the officers’ decision-making processes.

Moreover, Epp et al. (2014) utilized an extensive survey of Kansas City drivers (a total of 2,329 drivers) to raise a contemporary argument that there is a fundamental difference which lies within policing culture that is contributing to the racial profiling phenomena. They contend that the use of investigatory stops, in particular, is an institutionalized practice that contributes to an epidemic of injustice. They utilized many different predictors while controlling for several other variables of stops along with historical norms of policing to identify an important distinction between traffic and investigatory stops⁵, which located racial disparities within contemporary policing. In conclusion, they discovered that Blacks were disproportionately targeted for investigatory stops and they were also far more likely to be pulled over than other drivers. Unlike the aforementioned studies though, Epp et al. (2014) discovered that drivers’ race was not the predictor of the potential suspect being pulled over for traffic-safety reasons. However, drivers’ race was the strongest predictor of being pulled over for investigatory stops. In addition, they discovered that how a person *drives* determines the likelihood of being pulled over for traffic-safety reasons, whereas how a person *looks* determines the likelihood of being pulled over for investigatory stops. With this new insight, it is imperative for police leaders to acknowledge that this is detrimental to police-minority relationships.

⁵ Epp et al., 2014 defines investigator stops as stops made by an officer in hope of making an arrest

Nonetheless, as cases of unlawful beating and killing of Blacks continue to rise, the issue of racial profiling remains in the public eye. Studies have shown that relations between the police and minority groups are a continuing problem in the United States (e.g., Hall et al., 2016; Maciag, 2015a; Milner et al., 2016; Weitzer & Tuch, 2004; Weitzer, 2015). Even though studies have shown that Whites are more likely to have contraband when stopped by the police, Blacks continue to be targeted for stops (Chambliss, 2011; Chong, 2011; Maciag, 2015a; Smith, 1986; Weitzer, 2015). In fact, research findings have consistently documented racial differences in perception of the police with minorities, namely Blacks, more likely than Whites to harbor negative views (see e.g., Chambliss, 1994; Chambliss, 2011; Chong, 2011; Kennedy, 1997; Smith & Petrocelli, 2001; Smith, 1986; Weitzer & Tuch, 2004). Thus, as the aforementioned studies have shown, the awareness of racial and ethnic disparity and bias in traffic stops has increased and continues to increase dramatically in the United States. Therefore, as more developing studies continue to show a high correlation between the race of suspects stopped with the officers' decision to make such discretionary stops, many citizens cannot help but inquire whether this decision is being made based on race. This begs the question: does the decision to stop, search and/or arrest rests solely on the race of the suspect? This was the primary controversial debate in Michael Brown's case⁶. Many frustrated citizens, along with Black citizens who are resentful of the prejudice that lies within the justice system, contended that Michael Brown was targeted and wrongfully executed by Officer Wilson with no justifiable grounds, simply because he was Black.

Accordingly, the issue of race being the 'risk factor' for officers to stop, search, and/or arrest potential suspects was the prevalent debate in the Michael Brown case. With

⁶ The tensions between the citizens of Ferguson/St. Louis and governmental officials during the duration of this case sparked the researcher's interest to conduct the current study on the state of Missouri.

minority officers underrepresented in the Ferguson Police Department, many citizens reasonably concluded that Officer Wilson’s decision to kill an unarmed teenager, Brown, was due to the lack of racial diversity on the force. There were many indications that, perhaps, if Ferguson Police Department were diversified then this case would have had a different outcome. Furthermore, citizens of Ferguson contended that because only four out of 54 police officers were Black in a town that is two-thirds Black⁷, Officer Wilson’s discretion to wrongly execute Brown was prejudice-driven due to the longstanding perception of police as an oppressive force towards minorities, namely Blacks. Additionally, in spite of the demand to diversify police departments around the globe, many police departments remain predominantly White in cities and towns where the majority of the population is non-White (Maciag, 2015b; Weitzer, 2015). Thus, this incident demonstrated why diversifying police departments is important to answer the question of whether police officers everywhere intentionally target persons because of their race; this question remains unanswered, although a study on Ferguson Police Department has proven that the harms of this force’s police and court practices were borne disproportionately by Black citizens and thus “there was enough evidence to say that this is due in part to intentional discrimination on the basis of race” (DOJ, 2015; pp. 4). Conceivably, diversifying police departments around the globe could minimize the perception of officers intentionally targeting and profiling Black citizens. As Weitzer (2015) underscored in a *Guardian* article, achieving such diversity within police forces can help build trust and confidence in the police. Moreover, even though studies’ findings are mixed and inconclusive, studies have shown that a more racially diverse police force will produce less disparate and biased, problematic outcomes for Black communities; although the same studies have emphasized how diversification is not a one-time solution for

⁷ See DOJ (2015) pp: 4 & 88 for a deeper understanding on how racial bias and Ferguson’s lack of diverse force undermine community trust.

this phenomenon (DePillis, 2014; Weitzer, 2015). However, if this assumption holds any truth, then policymakers and police administrators need to start putting forth sustainable efforts that would reduce the spread of police discretion in traffic stops in communities by diversifying police composition within cities for doing so would strengthen police-community relations. Implementing some of the recommendations made by President Obama in the White House Task Force on 21st Century Policing guidebook (see COPS, 2015, pp. 1-4 for the list of recommendations) would also be an appropriate approach to address this matter.

Representative Bureaucracy Theory

Even still, perhaps diversifying police departments could help address this staffing dilemma as well. Undoubtedly, we reside in a society where the governmental representation of its citizens is crucial. Fundamentally, all citizens have the right to be treated fairly and properly. However, this is not the case in America, especially when discussing races and ethnicities (see e.g., Dongziger, 1996; Meeks, 2000; Free, 1996; Harris, 2003; Ramirez et al., 2000; Russell, 1999). Consequently, there have been similar interests in understanding whether people of color experience this practice of racial profiling due in part of the location that specific police officers serve. Though this issue of staffing (hereinafter representative bureaucracy) is at the center of this phenomena, current literature offers a variety of definitions and measurements of representative bureaucracy that are contradictory and ultimately inconclusive (Kennedy, 2014). Perhaps, this is due, in part, to the fact that the term *representative bureaucracy* has been conceptualized in different ways in various social contexts which caused its meaning to change over time.

Nevertheless, as Kennedy (2014) emphasized in her study, understanding what is meant by the term, with respect to the police, is an acute factor if policymakers and police

administrators are to take steps in reducing racial bias in traffic stop practices. Essentially, the basic principle of representative bureaucracy is that a diverse bureaucracy will lead to a more responsive public policy (Kennedy, 2014). In other words, on a departmental level, state governments who are representative of the population they serve would have more of better police-community relations (Lasley et al. 2011). There are two distinguished types of this theory that also adds to the complication of generating an operational definition for scholars. On one hand, there is active representative bureaucracy, which refers to responsible administrations in an individual socialization or organization who is expected to press for the interests and desires of those whom it presumes to represent. Passive representative bureaucracy, on the other hand, is mostly concerned with individuals' ethnicity and the degree to which, collectively, they mirror the total society that the individual or the organization presume to represent (Bradbury & Kellough, 2011; Kennedy, 2014; Lasley et al., 2011). In short, racially representative governments can be expected to yield racial parity in government services. However, as the existing literature will illustrate throughout this paper, evidence to the aforementioned premise are contradicting for findings in the light of racial profiling are mixed and inconclusive.

Critical Analysis of Racially Representative Government

Even though research regarding the accuracy of the representative bureaucracy theory is equivocal at best, several assumptions of representative bureaucracy are frequently employed when discussing police traffic stop bias. On one end of the spectrum, there are myriad studies supporting the tenets of representative bureaucracy theory. Supporters of the theory contend that location and staffing of police officers do not play a significant role in how police officers carry out their daily routines. Primarily, they contend that increasing the representation of officers of the same race as the location they serve, will not increase nor

decrease the partiality that lays within officers' daily traffic stop practices. Despite the officers' race within a particular community, the officer's discretion to stop, search and/or arrest rests solely on what the officer has deemed as inappropriate and illegitimate (Lasley et al., 2011; Wilkins & Williams, 2008, 2009). Furthermore, proponents of the theory contend that those who oppose the theory simply utilize its framework to rationalize their argument of the injustice and racial biases that lie within the justice system when discussing race and ethnicity in the police workforce.

Critics, on the other hand, contend that increasing the representation of officers of the same race as of the location they serve will decrease police traffic unfairness within communities. Critics of this theory are strong supporters of racial diversification of the police culture for they believe doing so would improve police treatment of minorities (Bradbury & Kellough, 2011; DOJ, 2015; Smith & Holmes, 2003; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009; Weitzer, 2015). In sum, representative bureaucracy suggests minority representation in the police department will have a direct and substantive effect enforcement patterns amongst minority citizens. While representation is symbolically powerful, it is unclear whether this is true, and there are a number of impediments to this reality (constraints of police culture, etc.). Currently, answers to the aforementioned assumptions remain at large. However, if either perspective holds some truth, then it would be beneficial for policy-makers to recognize this and take steps to reduce both by diversifying police departments. Also, if this is the case, then policymakers and police administrators may be able to take steps to address racial bias in traffic stop practices as an effort to defuse potential situations where brutality may occur.

Representative Bureaucracy Through the lens of Racial Profiling

The hypothetical claims of representative bureaucracy have long been acknowledged by numerous scholars who have provided great theoretical insights and empirical

understandings to the concept of representative bureaucracy (see e.g., Bradbury & Kellough, 2011; Lasley et al., 2011; Riccucci, Van Ryzin & Lavena, 2014; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009). Even though the principle of representation has also been applied to several governmental bureaucracies and organizational socializations, there was a literature gap of representative bureaucracy within policing, particularly in the racial profiling context. To address this gap in the literature, Wilkins and Williams (2008) were among the first scholars to examine whether there is a correlation between race and police officer representativeness. Their initial study examined whether there are certain conditions under which minority bureaucrats are less likely to provide active representation. Combining literature from three areas of empirical studies—existing literature on racial profiling, representative bureaucracy, and police socialization—the researchers examined the link between the passive and active representation for race in a police department, focusing solely on racial profiling cases. Utilizing San Diego Police Department vehicle stop statistics from 2000, Wilkins and Williams (2008) conducted a one-year longitudinal study from this department’s eight divisions to examine the relationship between racial profiling and representative bureaucracy. To minimize the shortcomings of their analyses, they focused their dependent variable measurement towards the Black driving-eligible population rather than accounting for the entire Black population within that city. Additionally, to investigate the link between passive and active representation, they focused their independent variable on the percentage of Black sworn police officers in each division. Employing ordinary least squares regression to examine the aforementioned variables and their proposed hypotheses, Wilkins and Williams (2008) discovered that there are, in fact, certain conditions under which minority bureaucrats do not provide active representation. As their study also revealed, “the presence of Black police officers is related to an increased in racial disparity in the divisions in which they

work” (Wilkins & Williams, 2008, pp. 60). From this finding, they were able to articulate that such findings were problematic because they are counterintuitive; and thus, requires further individual-level data investigation to allow a richer understanding on the matter.

Extending their 2008 findings, Wilkins and Williams (2009) conducted another study to examine whether the presence of the Latino police officers reduces the racial disparity in traffic stops in divisions in which they work. Like their previous study, the researchers specifically aimed to test the link between passive and active representation for ethnicity in the context of racial profiling in the Latino community. They posed a similar question of whether there are conditions under which minority bureaucrats will be less likely to provide active representation. Employing the same 2000 San Diego Police Department data, the authors focused solely on how the representation of Latino police officers influences the vehicle stop behavior in their division. The researchers focused their dependent variable on the percentage of vehicle stops involving a Latino driver in each division for each month in 2000. Furthermore, to test the link between passive and active presentation, their variable of interest was the percentage of Latino sworn police officers in each division in 2000. In findings, their analyses from the ordinary least square regression revealed consistent findings from their experiment on the presence of Black officers (Wilkins & Williams, 2008); precisely they discovered that the presence of Latino police officers is related to an increase in racial disparity in the divisions (Wilkins & Williams, 2009). Based on both of their findings, Wilkins and Williams (2009) suggested that it would be beneficial if systematic individual-level studies were conducted to yield a richer understanding of the causal relationship behind their own findings.

Bradbury and Kellough (2011) conducted their study to assess the evidence on active representation through the lens of representative bureaucracy theory. The authors wanted to

know if there are any definitive correlation(s) between the presence of diversity in the public workforce and the representation of minority interests. To address this connection, the researchers reviewed myriad pertinent studies—extant literature on the theory of representative bureaucracy, active representation in the public administration, reassessment of the evidence of active representation as well as an examination of literature from the field of criminal justice studies, including the focus on policing, courts and corrections systems—and discovered that there is, in fact, a connection between the presence of diversity in the public workforce and the representation of minority interests (Bradbury & Kellough, 2011). With such a conclusive finding, which appeared to be consistent with Wilkins and Williams findings (2008, 2009), one could arguably suggest that the critics of the theory are accurate with respect to the officers' race and the representativeness in the division they serve.

Exploring this matter even further, Lasley et al. (2011) attempted to explain the long-term effects of officers' race on police attitudes towards the community through the lens of representative bureaucracy theory. The authors wanted to know whether increasing racial parity between the organizational workforce and the population it serves would increase the representation of the residents with a similar demographic background. Accordingly, they extended the theory to the question of police organizational change and community relations and examined police officers' attitudes towards the community. Utilizing the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) dataset from the years of 1992 and 2007, the authors were able to conduct a longitudinal, two-wave panel analysis to test their hypotheses. They hypothesized that an increased police-community demographic balancing will produce attitude change among officers that favors policing and practices that improve service to minority communities and the community at large. In findings, their study provided support to the general hypothetical claims of representative bureaucracy theory within the context of major

policing organizations such like LAPD (Lasley et al., 2011). Precisely, the authors discovered that, with respect to community attitudes changing between minority and non-minority officers, the hypothetical claim holds truth in that the attitude of both Latino and Black officers were significantly more favorable towards involvement with the minority community than were similar attitude measures for White officers. Additionally, they found that both minority and non-minority officers' community attitudes improved over their 15-year time span (Lasley et al., 2011). Accordingly, one might reasonably conclude that passive representations of police officers within cities have a probability of improving police treatment of minorities. This begs the question of how much of a probability? Does this probability vary across departments within the same state? These are the questions the current study seeks to explore.

As such, the current study extends the investigation of representative bureaucracy to determine whether racial diversification in police departments is correlated with racially biased outcomes in traffic enforcement. Logically, you would expect that police departments that are more racially reflective of the community they serve will report correspondingly lower rates of racial profiling indicators. Conversely, police departments that are less racially reflective will report correspondingly higher rates of racial profiling. To that end, the current study borrows heavily from the framework forwarded by Wilkins and Williams (2008, 2009), Bradbury and Kellough (2011) and Lasley et al. (2011). However, each of these studies examined representative bureaucracy with single police departments, whereas this study will focus on racial representation across a number of police departments in Missouri. Given the aforementioned recommendations by the Department of Justice, the Missouri Attorney General and the White House Task Force on 21st Century Policing, to increase racial representativeness in policing, it is important to examine whether police departments that are

already more (or less) diverse engage differentially with Black citizens during traffic enforcement. If this assumption holds any truth, then it would be advisable for governmental officials to implement such regulations locally as an effort to defuse potential situations where brutality may occur.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The current study aims to identify the correlation between passive representative bureaucracy and racial profiling, in the light of department-level racial patterns across several of Missouri's law enforcement agencies. Replicating previous studies' methodological approaches, the researcher conducts this study using bivariate correlation analyses.

Employing secondary data from the 2013 Missouri Attorney General racial profiling annual report (hereinafter "MOAG")¹ as well as the 2013 Bureau of Justice Statistics' Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (hereinafter "LEMAS")² survey, the researcher wishes to explore whether Missouri police departments that are less racially representative of the population they serve have correspondingly higher rates of enforcement on Blacks. Conversely, this study also aims to explore whether police departments that are more representative of the population have fewer problems with racial bias in traffic stops. Additionally, it aims to explore whether Missouri cities with less representative police departments have higher disparity indices regarding those whom police officers stopped, searched and/or both. This study also aims to explore whether Missouri cities with less representative police departments have correspondingly higher arrest and contraband hit rates in traffic stops. Conversely, it also aims to explore whether Missouri cities that are more representative of the population have lower arrest and contraband hit rate in traffic stops. It must be noted that at the time of writing, 2013 was the most recent year where both LEMAS and MOAG sources of data converged.

¹ The current researcher used the 2013 annual report in order to be able to utilize the 2013 LEMAS to generate the current findings.

² The current researcher utilized the BJS most trusted data, LEMAS, to conduct this study because it allows room to investigate passive representative bureaucracy through the lens of racial profiling across 76 Missouri police departments.

Study Population

This study utilizes a purposive sampling frame. Considering the events that unfolded in Ferguson, Missouri, with respect to racial profiling, the current researcher decided to utilize Missouri as the chosen sampling population for multiple reasons. First, since Missouri has a long history of perceived racism by law enforcement agencies among Black citizens (see Berry, 1995; Greene, Kreme & Holland, 1993; Murray, 1971) the current research hopes to provide practical recommendations that would reduce the perception that police actions, such as stops or searches, are based on racial profiling. Second, as findings of several studies show officers in Missouri, as well as other states, to be more disproportionate in targeting Black drivers of official post-stop activities (see Chong, 2011; Harris, 1999; Kennedy, 1997), the current researcher wishes to investigate whether employing this study's data would reveal similar, consistent findings. If data from the 2013 MOAG racial profiling and 2013 LEMAS reports yield the same empirical findings as the aforementioned studies, then it would be advisable for officials to locally implement the task force recommendations listed in the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing Implementation guidebook³. Lastly, and most importantly, Missouri is amongst the largest states in the United States with disproportioned demographics where minorities' race-based stops outweigh the total population that they represent. Precisely, census statistics from 2013 ranked Missouri as the 18th largest population with approximately 6.02 million people⁴ (World Population Stats, 2013). Among the 6.02 million people, 84% of the state population identified as White while only 12% identified as Blacks. Missouri's disproportioned demographic, in light of the recent

³ See *COPS (2015)* pp: 7, 9 & 11 for the lists of specific actions steps that local government officials, police officers as well as communities in Missouri can take to address the underlying dilemma.

⁴ Retrieved April 2016, from <http://www.worldpopulationstatistics.com/missouri-population-2013/>. The current study utilized 2013 population stats since the data also utilized 2013 secondary sources to generate its findings. Missouri current population is 6.09 million as of July of 2016.

statistics on police stop activity, is a concerning factor that needs exploring. With recent events, such as Michael Brown's killing, highlighting tensions in predominately minority communities where White police forces are overly represented, investigating whether race is a "risk factor" is fundamental in yielding a richer understanding on this matter. Furthermore, as Smith (1986) highlighted in his study, police officers are more likely to respond differently toward Blacks and even seem to exercise coercive authority toward Blacks offenders than Whites, within communities such as Missouri. Therefore, the current study aims to investigate whether Missouri police departments that are less racially representative of the population they serve have correspondingly higher rates of enforcement on Blacks.

Data

The current study borrows heavily from the framework forwarded by Wilkins and Williams (2008, 2009), Bradbury and Kellough (2011) and Lasley et al. (2011). However, each of these studies examined representative bureaucracy with single police departments, whereas this study will focus on racial representation across several police departments in Missouri. Specifically, the current study utilizes secondary data provided by LEMAS (Matusiak, Campbell, & King, 2013) to conduct its investigation across several Missouri police departments. Additionally, the current study also employs the 2013 MOAG racial profiling annual reports in order to better investigate the correlation relationship between cities' representativeness and racial profiling. Precisely, the study borrows five dependent variables (local population percent; disparity index; search rate; contraband hit rates; and arrest hit rates) from the 2013 MOAG report to investigate the causal relationship between passive representative bureaucracy and racial profiling across several Missouri police departments. Utilizing the secondary data along with the frameworks forwarded by Wilkins

and Williams (2008, 2009), Bradbury and Kellough (2011), and Lasley et al. (2011), the current researcher hypothesizes the following:

(1) Missouri police departments that are less racially representative of the population they serve will have correspondingly higher rates of enforcement on Blacks motorists;

(2) Missouri cities that are more racially representative police departments will have lower disparity indices regarding those whom police officers stopped, searched and/or both;

(3) Missouri cities with less representative police departments will have correspondingly higher arrest and contraband hit rates in traffic stops; and

(4) Missouri cities that are more representative of the population will have lower arrest and contraband hit rates in traffic stops.

Examining contraband hit rates and arrest rates during traffic stops provides additional information and clarity on important outcomes of police-public encounters, and has been previously acknowledged as indicative of bias within previous research on racial profiling (Fallik & Novak 2011; Knowles, Persico & Todd, 2001; Persico & Todd, 2006; c.f. Engel, 2008) in that racial disparity may manifest at different decision-making points within traffic encounters.

Table 1: Descriptive of Police Departments Variables

	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
<i>Raw numbers</i>					
<i># of full-time sworn personnel (FTSP)</i>	76	3	1363	98.5	267.4
<i># of FTSP Hispanic or Latino</i>	76	0	56	2.03	7.8
<i># of FTSP Black</i>	76	0	436	10.08	53.5
<i>Percentages (Police Departments)</i>					
<i>Percent FTSP Hispanic or Latino</i>	76	0	0.2	0.012	0.028
<i>Percent FTSP Black</i>	76	0	0.71	0.033	0.098

The current researcher decided to utilize the selected secondary data for multiple reasons. This exploratory study utilizes the 2013 LEMAS dataset because this BJS data series has had significant impacts on the number of police organizational research. Since 1994, LEMAS data has been utilized by numerous scholars to measure elements of organizational structure within the police organizational studies; and from these studies, researchers have ranked this dataset to be the second-most used BJS data series (Matusiak et al., 2013). Additionally, this dataset is applicable and appropriate for this current study because 76 Missouri police agencies were included in the latest report published in May of 2015, which also reflects the year 2013 population (Maciag, 2015b). Furthermore, this dataset is reliable because figures and findings within this recently published report reflect the racial and ethnic makeup of Missouri police departments' full time sworn officers compared with demographic estimates of corresponding jurisdictions recorded in the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010-2013 American Community Survey. Likewise, the 2013 MOAG report was utilized

because of the emphasis on allegations of racial profiling by Missouri law enforcements. Due to these concerns, a state statute was enacted in August of 2000 to be utilized by individual departments as a means of eliminating racial profiling allegations within their daily practices (Decker et al., 2015). Specifically, this statute requires that all individual officers in the state of Missouri report specific information, including drivers' identifying race, for each vehicle stop made in the state.

To ensure accountability, Missouri law enforcement agencies are required to turn in the data to the Attorney General's office no later than March 1st; and the Attorney General is required to compile the data and report to the Governor no later than June 1st of each year. Moreover, the law allows the Governor to withhold state funds for any agency that does not comply with the law for it was understood that being stopped based solely on individual's race or ethnicity was unjust and unethical. The 2013 MOAG reports summarized data from 613 enforcement agencies in Missouri, resulting in total filing reports of 1,679,565 traffic stops (106,631 searches and 81,510 arrests). Findings from this critical examination indicated a disturbing trend for Black drivers in Missouri, which serves as a foundation for this current study. As the disparity index for Black drivers continues to increase, the assumption of law enforcement officers intentionally making vehicle stops based on the perceived race or ethnicity of the driver continues to be an acute concern that needs further investigation. However, as Decker et al. (2015)'s study underlined, a reasoned determination of the existence of racial profiling in a community requires a more comprehensive evaluation of the full range of information compiled in the agency reports; thus, by combining passive representative bureaucracy theory with a suitable definition of racial profiling, along with the aforementioned frameworks and datasets, this present study hopes to be the springboard to this phenomenon.

Data Analysis

Dependent Variables

To yield a richer understanding of the correlational relationship between passive representative bureaucracy and racial profiling, the analyses focus on four decision nodes associated with traffic stops: disparity index, search rates, contraband hit rates, and arrest rates. In addition, the current study employs the local population percentage of Black and Hispanic citizens within each city while solely focusing its dependent variable measurement towards the driving-eligible of the respective ethnic groups, rather than accounting for the entire local population (i.e., age 16 and older). These variables were constructed using data secured from the 2013 LEMAS and the 2013 MOAG reports. Because there are only 76 Missouri law enforcement agencies within the 2013 LEMAS dataset, this study only focuses on 76 corresponding cities from the 2013 MOAG racial profiling report. However, it should be noted that several of the analyses utilized smaller sample sizes due to the undefined values in some, typically smaller, jurisdictions. For example, several jurisdictions performed no searches of Hispanic drivers, making estimating a ratio impossible. [Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of these endogenous variables].

Notably, the low sample size of this study does not allow the multivariate analysis that aforementioned studies have suggested. Nonetheless, this study's data set includes 57 local police departments, 18 sheriff's offices, and one state police agency. With such a small dataset, this researcher is still hopeful that this viable exploratory project would be utilized by future researchers to examine whether local enforcement agencies across nations that are less racially representative of the population they serve have correspondingly higher and/or lower rates of enforcement on people of color. Furthermore, it should be noted that the researcher created a new variable to flag cases that the researcher identified as outliers. This

new variable allowed the researcher to exclude the one state police agency—MO Highway Patrol⁵—to ensure a more conclusive finding without encountering an ambiguous statistical error. Likewise, Counter County and Milan Police Departments⁶ were also coded as outliers to help eliminate the statistical error. Both police departments’ variables displayed heavy-tailed distributions that would have resulted in skewed findings; thus, they were eliminated to avoid experimental error with the proposed hypotheses. Thus, only 73 cities of Missouri Police Departments are employed within this exploratory study.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variables

	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
<i>Black Disparity Index</i>	75	0	162.22	6.64	19.07
<i>Hispanic Disparity Index</i>	76	0	3.12	0.69	0.57
<i>Black Search Rate</i>	73	0	50	10.11	8.18
<i>Hispanic Search Rate</i>	72	0	50	10.84	11.67
<i>Black Contraband Hit Rate</i>	65	0	100	25.2	26.5
<i>Hispanic Contraband Hit Rate</i>	54	0	100	17.32	21.99
<i>Black Arrest Rate</i>	73	0	25	8.31	5.94
<i>Hispanic Arrest Rate</i>	72	0	40	6.71	7.19

The descriptive statistics for the dependent variables illustrate some intriguing correlation matrices. Black disparity index for stops measures at a mean of 6.64 (SD= 19.07), ranging from 0-162.2while Hispanic disparity index for stops measures at 0.7 (SD= 0.57),

⁵ This one state police agency was coded as outlier because its total population account for the entire State of Missouri, which result in a skewed measurement compare to the other local agencies.

⁶ These departments were coded as outliers because they happen to have one resident that identify as Black although their police departments made 5 black stops, making the Black disparity index to be skewed.

ranging from 0-3.12. Likewise, there also appears to be a similar formula when accounting for the search, contraband, and arrest hit rates for each racial/ethnic group. Precisely, Blacks search rates range from 0 to 50 with a mean of 10.11(SD= 8.2). Hispanic search rates also range from 0 to 50 with a mean of 10.8 (SD= 11.7). Additionally, Black contraband hit rates measured at 25.2 (SD= 26.5), ranging from 0-100. Hispanic contraband hit rates also range from 0 to 100 with a mean of 17.32 (SD= 21.9). Lastly, Black arrest rates measured at 8.3 (SD= 5.94), ranging from 0-25; meanwhile, Hispanic arrest rates range from 0 to 40, with a mean of 6.7 (SD= 7.2). These analyses illustrate the overrepresentation of traffic stops among minority drivers, which also support previous search findings (Brunson & Gau, 2011; Brunson & Weitzer, 2009, 2011; Chambliss, 1994; Chong, 2011; Gaines, 2006; Holmes, 2000; Novak et al, 2012; Smith & Petrocelli, 2001; Roh & Robinson 2009).

Independent Variables

As previously stated, the central focus is the correlation between minority racial representation within police departments and outcomes for drivers based on race. As such, the unit of analysis is the traffic stops data collected by individual agencies. The researcher includes a variable coded 1 if the driver is Black and 2 if the driver is Hispanic (See *Table 3* for the descriptive). The researcher also includes a variable coded 1 if the majority of the officers present are Black, and 2 if the majority of the officers present are Hispanic. In addition, to better assess this correlation, the researcher investigates the racial stops made per city officers by focusing on the total percentage of Black personnel within local police departments and then dividing that by the percentage of Black full-time sworn officers. Similarly, the researcher investigates the racial stops made per city officers by focusing on the total percentage of Hispanic personnel within local police departments and then dividing that by the percentage of Hispanic full-time sworn officers.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on the Estimation of Representative Bureaucracy

	<i>N</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Deviation</i>
<i>Black Representation</i>	75	0.00000	10.00000	.1358108	1.15442472
<i>Hispanic Representation</i>	76	0.00000	.07072	.0033635	.00982338
<i>Valid N (listwise)</i>	75				

To interpret the indices, a value of one indicates department representation equal to the racial/ethnic group's proportion of the population at large. Values greater than one indicate the overrepresentation of racial/ethnic groups within a department while values of less than one indicates underrepresentation. By focusing on the percentage of just Black and Hispanic department representativeness, the researcher could carefully assess the percentage of a department's Black and Hispanic officers in relation to that racial/ethnic group's corresponding percentage in the jurisdiction's general population. Black department representativeness ranges from 0-10 with a mean of 0.14 (SD=1.15). Hispanic department representativeness measure is 0.00(SD=0.00), ranging from 0 to 0.07. These estimations of representativeness excluded the extreme outliers which allowed for positive distributions across the representativeness scale.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Bivariate Relationships

Utilizing the provided database only allows for a bivariate analysis; therefore, the bivariate relationships (Pearson's r) were assessed between the variables of interest across all agencies in the sample¹. In conclusion, Black representation of full-time sworn officers was unrelated to stops, arrests rates or contraband hit rate for Blacks drivers. Nonetheless, with respect to municipal organizations, Black representation was correlated with higher search rates of Black citizens ($r = 0.280, p < .05$) (see Table 4 & 5 below).

Table 4: Black Representation: Relationship between Passive RB and Racial Profiling in All Agencies*

	<i>Pearson</i>	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Stop Disparity</i>	-0.198	0.098
<i>Search Rate</i>	0.071	0.563
<i>Contraband Hit Rate</i>	-0.168	0.187
<i>Arrest Rate</i>	-0.042	0.735

*all analyses are generated at the $p < .05$ threshold

Table 5: Black Representation: Relationship between Passive RB and Racial Profiling in Municipal Agencies*

	<i>Pearson</i>	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Stop Disparity</i>	-0.209	0.13
<i>Search Rate</i>	0.28	0.044**
<i>Contraband Hit Rate</i>	-0.211	0.15
<i>Arrest Rate</i>	-0.007	0.962

¹ The researcher considered these relationships across all agencies included in the data set and then ran supplemental (i.e., the same) analyses using only municipal departments to yield the following findings.

** Indicators generated a significant correlation amongst the variables

Black Representativeness

To yield definite findings, the researcher looked at these effects across all agencies in the sample and considered if the findings were impacted by considering municipal agencies only. Doing so also revealed that municipal agencies are more diverse which serves as the rationale for the separate models/analyses. These analyses consistently, however, provided small to zero-order correlations for the variables of interest. Precisely, when focusing on the hypothesized relationship derived from the passive theory of representative bureaucracy, departmental representativeness *was not* correlated with traffic stops for Blacks. In fact, and contrary to hypotheses # 2 and 4, the analysis revealed no correlation between the level of disparities, search and arrest rates, nor contraband hit rates when assessing Black representation across all agencies. Furthermore, and more interestingly, the results appeared to illustrate otherwise when considering municipal agencies only. Departments with higher degree of Black representation are associated with *higher* level of search rates for Black motorists. The analysis showed a Pearson's r of 0.280 with a significance level of .044 which indicated a positive and relatively strong relationship between the variable of interest.

Hispanic Representativeness

Shifting the attention to Hispanic representation, there are somewhat similar findings. With respect to the hypothesized relationship derived from the passive theory of representative bureaucracy, departmental representativeness was also not correlated with traffic stops for Hispanics. Likewise, and contradictory to the proposed hypotheses, the analysis revealed no correlations between Hispanic representativeness and search and arrest rates of Hispanic motorists. However, when assessing Hispanic representation for all agencies in the study, there was a significant, positive correlation between contraband hits and Hispanic representation (Pearson's r 0.301; $p=0.032$). Similar results were found for

municipal agencies. Precisely, the analysis revealed a Pearson’s r of 0.350 for Hispanic contraband hit rates at a significance level of 0.029. Yet again, a positive and relatively strong relationship emerged between the variables of interest. As such, these findings do not bode well for the profound perceptions that more diversity in departments will translate to practical and beneficial outcomes among minority members of communities. Nevertheless, such conclusions could not be drawn at this time for this study’s sample size is too small to generalize its findings across the board. But implications of such findings will be explored and discussed in the segment to follow.

Table 6: Hispanic Representation: Relationship between Passive RB and Racial Profiling in All Agencies*

	<i>Pearson</i>	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Stop Disparity</i>	-0.131	0.273
<i>Search Rate</i>	-0.113	0.361
<i>Contraband Hit Rate</i>	0.301	0.032**
<i>Arrest Rate</i>	-0.075	0.599

** Indicators generated a significant correlation amongst the variables

Table 7: Hispanic Representation: Relationship between Passive RB and Racial Profiling in Municipal Agencies*

	<i>Pearson</i>	<i>Significance (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Stop Disparity</i>	-0.108	0.431
<i>Search Rate</i>	-0.118	0.405
<i>Contraband Hit Rate</i>	0.35	0.029**
<i>Arrest Rate</i>	-0.026	0.835

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The Diversification Dilemma

The assumption that diversifying police departments would result in beneficial outcomes for both the public and agencies has been an ongoing debate with no empirical examinations. Since the 1960s, the need to diversify police departments continues to be the focus of public administrators who confidently believe that increasing racial diversity within this line of work would improve community relations (Brunson & Gau, 2011; Donohue & Levitt, 2001; Kochel et al., 2011; Lasley et al., 2011; Weitzer & Tuch, 2005). Essentially, the goals of these recommendations have been to create police departments, on a local level, that are more closely reflective of the demographic characteristics of their communities. In so doing, administrators anticipate that minority officers will bring a knowledge of and a sense of belonging to their fellow minority citizens, which would, in theory, reduce disparities in stops/searches, use of force and contraband and arrest rates of minorities, among other factors. This approach is fairly consistent with representative bureaucracy theory. The current analysis was conducted at the municipality/city-level to better assess whether Missouri cities that have more racially representative police departments will have lower disparity indices regarding those whom police officers stopped, searched and/or both.

The analyses of the bivariate correlation data do not indicate support for the proposed hypotheses, nor do they support the tenets of representative bureaucracy theory. As a matter of fact, the most expected relationships between representativeness and outcomes were not observed within this study. Specifically, greater minority representation in law enforcement does not appear to reduce disparities in traffic stops; indeed, some of the findings point to the opposite effect. These findings appear to be consistent with Wilkins and Williams (2008,

2009)'s in that the presence of minority police officers is related to an increase in racial disparity in the divisions in which they work. Therefore, the present research refutes the assumptions that homogenizing the racial dyad will in and of itself produce positive outcomes (Bradbury & Kellough, 2011; Brunson & Gau, 2011; Lasley et al., 2011; Wilkins & Williams, 2008, 2009). This is not to say that race is entirely absent from consideration, but it is evident that more work needs to be done to fully address the officer's race thesis embedded in the proposed hypotheses and the recited studies. As such, this research provides little support for representative bureaucracy across police organizations in Missouri. Nonetheless it is worth noting the possibility that while minority representation may be important symbolically, it is yet to be determined what, if any, substantive effects representation has on policing.

However, this also is not to say police organizations should not consider diversity within their local departments. For there was a prominent theme (as organizational minority presentation increases, so too did the variables) that emerged from the data that is also worth fully exploring in order to adequately address the assumptions of the theory as proposed by the recent national and local commissions. As discussed earlier, there are many good reasons for police departments to continue to strive toward racial representativeness within their organizations, though analytical testing of the significance of these relationships was beyond the scope of the current study. However, the current research does not support the contention that passive racial and ethnic representation alone manifests into racial and ethnic parity during traffic stops with citizens.

These null findings are important. As noted earlier, several high visibility political calls for reform have included racial representation as a mechanism to reduce disparate encounters between police and people of color (COPS, 2015; Decker et al., 2015). This

research joins others (Lasley et al., 2011; Wilkins & Williams, 2008, 2009) that call into question the efficacy of passive representation. Racial and ethnic representativeness, while symbolically powerful, does not appear to be a panacea for disparity within traffic stops, either for Blacks or Hispanics, across traffic stops, search rates, arrest rates, or contraband hit rates. There is danger in implementing a policy that has mixed evidence of effectiveness in achieving its stated goal because there is a risk of diverting attention and resources away from other strategies and considerations that may achieve these goals. This is not to say that the tenet of representative bureaucracy could not be achieved elsewhere for Bradbury and Kellough (2011) were able to successfully support its basis within their study.

However, it must be noted that increasing representation alone will not be as effective unless those symbolic changes are followed up by substantive changes. Epp et al. (2014) did an exceptional job at providing recommendations that local departments around the globe ought to consider and implement as an effort to improve police's legitimacy amongst minority communities. One of the many recommendations is changing the norms and practices of policing; doing so would help law enforcement agencies establish a culture of transparency and accountability in order to build public trust and legitimacy. Because without a culture of transparency and accountability, police departments' legitimacy becomes questionable amongst the targeted. Thus, it is imperative that police leaders understand the impact of the historical foundation of policing on people of colors and take the necessary measures to redefine the norms of their institutional practices. Because even with a diverse department, a Black person who has been stopped for being in a "wrong" neighborhood, for instance, can still feel like an object of a suspicion rather than a citizen with civil rights if that individual was stopped for investigatory stops. It would be impossible to have trust among

the targeted who feel like an object of suspicion without first promoting a new norm of not stopping drivers without a clear evidence of criminal behavior (Epp et al., 2014).

Strengths and Limitations

For one, although the hypothetical claims of representative bureaucracy have long been acknowledged by numerous scholars, all of the existing literature seemed to be focusing on the passive rather than the active representative bureaucracy (Kennedy, 2014). Instead of focusing on police departments' responsible administrations and encouraging them to press for the interests and desires of those whom it presumes to represent, researchers focus their attention on how individual officers' race affect their daily interaction with citizens. This is problematic when discussing organizational socializations with strongly entrenched culture such as the police because increasing diversity without changing the actual police culture does more harm than good as mentioned above (Epp et al., 2014; Weitzer, 2015). Furthermore, active representative bureaucracy is concerned with how community representation in an agency actually impacts policy making. Therefore, adequate attention should be given to the broader organizational characteristics of departments as well as the environmental characteristics of communities that have been shown to affect relationships between the police and citizens of color. Doing so would allow for a fuller understanding on the matter by investigating the effect of the race on responsible administrations. However, analytical tests of the significance of these characteristics was beyond the scope of the current study.

Also, as noted, the small sample size prohibited a deeper analysis of representative bureaucracy. It was not possible to estimate multivariate models, which could add richer understanding of the relationship between the variables while offering statistical controls. One of the reasons why this was limited was because there was a need to rely on LEMAS for

basic organizational level data, namely number of full-time sworn officers by race. Currently, the state of Missouri requires law enforcement agencies to report data on traffic stops within their jurisdiction, yielding a large, rich, longitudinal data set of police-public encounters during traffic stops. This is incredibly transparent. Unfortunately, though, these same law enforcement agencies are not required to report the racial and ethnic characteristics of the officers they employ. If departments in Missouri were required to report these employment data to the Department of Public Safety (along with other POST certifications, they already report) then a fuller understanding of the hypothetical impact of diversity on traffic enforcement in Missouri would be possible. Unfortunately, the current study is limited to those Missouri departments that voluntarily submit data to the LEMAS program (every 3 or more years), and these departments tend to be only the largest organizations. This appears to be a missed opportunity to comprehensively examine 600+ police departments within the state.

Future Research

What remains unclear though is whether examination of active representative bureaucracy would produce conclusions, or whether longitudinal examinations within individual organizations rather than cross-sectional research across multiple organizations would vary. This is a vital area of study that other researchers ought to target. Moreover, it would be beneficial to do so while directing adequate attention to the broader organizational characteristics of departments as well as the environmental characteristics of communities that have been shown to affect relationships between the police and citizens of color (Bradbury & Kellough, 2011; Brunson & Gau, 2011; Brunson & Weitzer, 2009).

Additionally, this research does not explore representativeness of racial and ethnic minorities within policy making positions within police departments (e.g., supervisors and

commanders). Traffic stops are a function of line level officers, and in most agencies, is performed by officers or sergeants. An additional line of inquiry could include an examination of racial representativeness among captains, majors, chiefs, etc., within police departments to understand whether departments who are more racially and ethnically representative among the higher supervisory echelons influence the behavior of subordinates. Some limited research suggests that this phenomenon may influence minority citizens' attitudes toward the police but whether this same influence is observed within traffic stops is unknown. For example, Frank, Steven, Cullen and Stichman (1996) noted that Blacks viewed police more favorably than Whites in Detroit, and attributed this to the fact that Blacks were statistical majorities in that city at the time of their research, as well as the fact the mayor and chief of police were African American. They posed this minority representation within powerful political positions was uncommon and concluded this altered black citizens' perception of their access to political power and influence. Yet the question of why greater levels of minority representation in law enforcement did not result in beneficial outcomes still remain unclear.

However, it is also worth exploring whether passive representative bureaucracy influences individual decision making as one of many factors (Riksheim & Chermak, 1993), among others, recognized officer discretion is shaped by individual officer characteristics (e.g., officer race, gender, age, level of education, cultural orientation), legal characteristics (e.g., level of evidence of criminal wrongdoing, seriousness of offense), situational factors (e.g., citizen race, gender, age, level of intoxication, influence of victims, witnesses, bystanders, method of police entry), organizational factors (e.g., level of bureaucracy, organizational culture) and community factors (e.g., community level of disadvantage, community crime rates). Representative bureaucracy could be considered within this larger

context. Perhaps representativeness of police departments alone is unrelated to macro level disparity measures such as those reported here, yet it is reasonable to explore whether they interact with other factors during individual-level interactions between the police and public. For example, citizens' hostility (e.g., poor demeanor) by citizens to officers has been observed to be correlated with greater levels of vigor during the officers' reactions (Riksheim & Chermak, 1993; Skogan & Frydl, 2004; Engel, Klahm & Tillyer, 2010). This is particularly true for citizens of color. In a meta-analysis examining the influence of race, Kochel et al. concluded:

From our findings, we can conclude more definitively than prior nonsystematic reviews that racial minority suspects experience a higher probability of arrest than do whites. We report with confidence that the results are not mixed. Race matters. Our finding is consistent with what most of the American public perceives, and that finding holds over time, research site, across data collection methods, and across publication types. Furthermore, controlling for demeanor, offense severity, presence of witnesses, quantity of evidence at the scene, the occurrence or discovery of a new criminal offense during the encounter, the suspect being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, prior record of the suspect, or requests to arrest by victim does not significantly reduce the strength of the relationship between suspect race and arrest. . . . Thus, the most credible conclusion based on the evidence examined is that race does affect the likelihood of an arrest. (Kochel et al., 2011, pp. 498)

Further, this appears to interact with community characteristics, and Skogan and Frydl (2004) conclude citizens in disadvantaged neighborhoods are more likely to experience punishment or enforcement-oriented policing. But it is unknown whether officers employed

within more/less representative organizations react differently to hostility by minority citizens during dyadic encounters. Racial representativeness may have a mitigating effect on officers' vigor net other factors. The Brown-Wilson event in Ferguson in August 2014 has become a microcosm of these types of encounters, and certainly, a range of factors influence both officer and citizens (re)actions during that encounter. It is dangerous to consider the Brown-Wilson encounter as representative of police-public interactions, but at the same time, it is irresponsible to ignore or dismiss it as anomalous. Understanding organizational racial and ethnic representatives at the same time as these other correlates of police and citizen behavior may permit a fuller understanding of the factors that influence these actors.

APPENDIX A

VARIABLE EXPLANATIONS

Variable	Description	Source
Percent FTSP Hispanic or Latino	Percent of full-time sworn police personnel who identify as Hispanic/Latino	LEMAS
Percent FTSP Black	Percent of full-time sworn police personnel who identify as Black	LEMAS
Percent Black Population	Percent of local population who identify as Black	MO AG
Percent Hispanic Population	Percent of local population who identify as Hispanic/Latino	MO AG
Black Representation	Ratio of Percent Black full-time sworn personnel to percent local Black population	Created
Hispanic Representation	Ratio of Percent Hispanic full-time sworn personnel to percent local Hispanic population	Created
Black Disparity Index	Ratio percent of Black population to percent Black local stops	MO AG
Hispanic Disparity Index	Ratio percent of Hispanic Population to percent Hispanic local stops	MO AG
Black Search Rate	Ratio percent of Black search to percent Black local stops	MO AG
Hispanic Search Rate	Ratio percent of Hispanic search to percent Hispanic local stops	MO AG
Black Contraband Hit Rate	Ratio percent contraband found amongst Black Population to percent Black local searches	MO AG
Hispanic Contraband Hit Rate	Ratio percent contraband found amongst Hispanic Population to percent local searches	MO AG
Black Arrest Rate	Ratio percent of Black arrest to percent Black local stops	MO AG
Hispanic Arrest Rate	Ratio percent of Hispanic arrest to percent Hispanic local stops	MO AG

APPENDIX B

MISSOURI REVISED STATUTES

2013 VEHICLE STOPS EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Concerns by the citizens of Missouri and the Missouri legislature regarding allegations of racial profiling by law enforcement prompted the passage of state law Section 590.650, RSMo (2000), which was enacted Aug. 28, 2000. **Racial profiling has been defined as the inappropriate use of race by law enforcement when making a decision to stop, search or arrest a motorist.**

Missouri's state law requires that all peace officers in the state report specific information including a driver's race for each vehicle stop made in the state. Law enforcement agencies are required to turn in the data to the Attorney General, and the Attorney General is required to compile the data and report to the Governor no later than June 1 of each year. The law allows the Governor to withhold state funds for any agency that does not comply with the law. State law requires that all information be reported to the Attorney General's Office by March 1

Chapter 590: Peace Officers, Selection, Training and Discipline Section 590.650 August 28, 2013

Racial profiling--minority group defined--reporting requirements-- annual report--review of findings--failure to comply--funds for audio-visual equipment-- sobriety check points exempt.

590.650. 1. As used in this section "minority group" means individuals of African, Hispanic, Native American or Asian descent.

2. Each time a peace officer stops a driver of a motor vehicle, that officer shall report the following information to the law enforcement agency that employs the officer:

- (1) The age, gender and race or minority group of the individual stopped;
- (2) The reasons for the stop;
- (3) Whether a search was conducted as a result of the stop;
- (4) If a search was conducted, whether the individual consented to the search, the probable cause for the search, whether the person was searched, whether the person's property was searched, and the duration of the search;
- (5) Whether any contraband was discovered in the course of the

search and the type of any contraband discovered;

(6) Whether any warning or citation was issued as a result of the stop;

(7) If a warning or citation was issued, the violation charged or warning provided;

(8) Whether an arrest was made as a result of either the stop or the search;

(9) If an arrest was made, the crime charged; and

(10) The location of the stop

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VITA

Mercy Harris Gbomina was born in Ivory Coast, West Africa by her parents Nora and Harris Gbomina, Sr. Her family immigrated to the United States as refugees at age 11. She was raised partially in Anaheim, California and Kansas City Missouri; she graduated from North Kansas City High School in 2009. She was awarded the State of Missouri Horatio Alger Scholarship Winner in 2009 which she used to further her education at the University of Central Missouri. She graduated in May 2013 with a degree of Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice and Criminology with an emphasis in International Justice. Gbomina began working toward her Master of Science in Criminal Justice and Criminology at the University of Missouri-Kansas City in January 2014. While attending graduate school, she worked as one of the Junior Case Supervisors at Jackson County Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) advocating for the best interest of foster children. This experience inspired Gbomina to further seek fairness of treatment of foster children beyond the scope of the foster care system. Upon the completion of her master's thesis "Representative Bureaucracy and Racial Profiling in Missouri," Mercy Gbomina was awarded a Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology in December 2017.