

**Policing in Greater Victoria: A Study in Addressing the Gaps in Engaging Greater  
Victoria's Diverse Communities**

**MADR 598 Master's Project**

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## **Executive Summary**

Law enforcement jurisdictions within Canada have historically had a difficult time gaining the trust of racially and ethnically diverse communities. There has therefore been an increase in emphasis of relationships and trust building best practices between police officers and diverse communities within many Canadian law enforcement institutions. The Greater Victoria police departments have increased their focus on building stronger relationships and confidence with the communities they serve. Building trust and confidence means diverse communities will be less afraid to utilize the services of the Greater Victoria Police (GVP), assuring that the GVP will be more effective in maintaining public health, safety and order.

The objective of this project is to identify the perceptions and experiences that Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria have had in interacting with the GVP, and provide recommendations that will improve trust and relationships.

The primary research question for this study is:

- *How can the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) address gaps in engaging Greater Victoria's diverse communities?*

Secondary questions are:

1. *Which communities are underrepresented by the GVPDAC?*
2. *What communities should the GVPDAC be most interested in engaging with?*
3. *What strategies should be utilized to engage priority communities?*

## **Background**

Law enforcement institutions have had difficulty adapting from predominantly racially homogenous immigration policy that existed in Canada prior to the 1960s, to policy that is increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. This has created barriers in trust and relationships between the police and diverse peoples of Canada. Additionally, civilian movements and protests of the 1960s shifted the perception of police institutions as the consensually supported legal and social order to institutions that enforce inequitable political systems. Law enforcement agencies therefore became the face of public resentment and mistrust. Although there has been a steady decline in police misconduct since the 1950s, mistrust of law enforcement further increased with the introduction of statistical gathering and public dissemination of police misconduct statistics. Provincial, federal and municipal service cuts have furthermore meant that police jurisdictions have limited resources for community policing practices that are essential in building trust and relationships with diverse communities.

The client for this project is the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC). The GVPDAC was created in 2002 in response to two reports. The reports were created in response to grievances by diverse communities of Greater Victoria who perceived the GVP as lacking in diversity within its ranks, over policing their communities, having inadequate complaints processes and failing to acknowledge diversity.

## **Literature Review**

The literature review explored challenges police officers in Canada face in building relationships and trust with racialized/ethnic communities, concentrating on the communities that are the main focus of this study: Muslims, Aboriginal people, African-Caribbeans and Chinese.

The Muslim section focuses on the increase of profiling and surveillance that Muslim Canadians have experienced by law enforcement organizations following incidents such as the 2001 attack on the United States. This section discusses the increase in Islamophobia and hate crimes targeting Muslims and how negative portrayals of Islam within the media may contribute to this violence. The Aboriginal section explored the distrust Aboriginal peoples have of law enforcement institutions in Canada and the role of Canada's colonial legacy in fracturing this relationship. A crucial element of distrust is the role the RCMP played in apprehending Aboriginal children during the residential school era. The review showed negative depictions of African-Caribbeans in American and Canadian media and how these depictions heighten mistrust of police amongst African-Caribbeans. This section also highlights racial profiling of African-Caribbeans by law enforcement and the over representation of African-Caribbeans in the criminal justice system thereafter. Finally, the review considers the challenges that Chinese immigrants experience adjusting to life in Canada and the differences in police-community relations and policing culture in China in comparison to Canada.

## **Methodology**

The study used a qualitative community based research design which is used by researchers in partnership with community members to seek solutions for social problems within society. The study used focus groups and semi-structured individual interviews to capture data regarding the experiences and impressions participants have of the GVP.

Purposive sampling was used in the selection of research participants. Purposive sampling is a non-random research technique where the researcher decides what information is needed and establishes the appropriate participants who could provide this information base on their knowledge and experiences. The participation criteria for this research project were residents of Greater Victoria who self-identify as Muslim, African-Caribbean, Chinese and Aboriginal. Participation was voluntary. Each of the participants provided data regarding their personal experiences with the GVP and their impressions of the GVP and police officers in general.

## **Findings and Discussion**

Participants of all groups expressed both similar and differing perceptions and experiences interacting with the GVP. Muslim participants expressed gaps in legal knowledge as fundamental vulnerabilities for newcomers within their communities. Aboriginal participants noted that Aboriginal peoples are mistrustful of the GVP due to the role the RCMP played in apprehending children during the residential school era. African-Caribbean participants indicated that they feel unsafe interacting with the GVP because they felt the GVP have an inflated sense of entitlement, are arrogant, abuse their power and are prejudice. Chinese participants expressed frustration of the GVP's unwillingness to follow up with reports and to address crimes involving Chinese merchant's stores being robbed. They also expressed limitations in legal knowledge as fundamental vulnerabilities for newcomers within their communities and wished for the GVP to provide legal education and training. Participants shared positive experiences such as quick response times of GVP officers. They suggested that the GVP work with the Chinese community to develop effective communication tools that build bridges between the Chinese community and the GVP.

Three main ideas arose from the interview findings. First, the findings highlight the negative experiences and perceptions that Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents have of the GVP. Second, residents shared community concerns, vulnerabilities and recommendations for the GVP in trust building best practices. Third, it presents the positive experiences and perceptions of the GVP.

## **Recommendations**

Recommendations have been provided for the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC), and Greater Victoria Police (GVP) to enhance relationships with Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria.

### *Short-term*

1. Creation of GVPDAC future planning strategy
  - Create a strategic plan to optimize the future potential of GVPDAC.
2. Expansion of Global Café activities
  - Establish monthly police-community forum to expand on lines of communication.
  - Ensure rank and file officers who interact with participant groups while on duty attend Global Café events.
  - Produce communication tools that reach a broader amount of residents who do not attend Global Café events.

- Conduct a police-community news conference in celebration of police-community relationship building achievements.

### 3. Recommendations specific to a combination of groups

#### *Muslim/Aboriginal/Chinese*

Implement formal community volunteer liaison strategy to enhance communication between the GVP and communities.

### 4. Recommendations specific to individual groups

#### *Muslim*

- Appoint Masjid Al-Iman Mosque representative to the GVPDAC.
- Organize conference to find solutions to Islamophobia.
- Collect hate crime data and identify strategies and tactics to combat it.

#### *Aboriginal*

- Organize information session regarding illicit drugs.
- Implement Aboriginal-Police Friendship Academy to build relationships between Aboriginal youth and GVP officers.
- Establish Aboriginal Youth Mentorship program to provide Aboriginal youth with opportunities to witness life as a GVP officer.

#### *African-Caribbean (Apply recommendations to Muslim, Aboriginal and Chinese Groups)*

- Provide time slot on Greater Victoria Area Police Chief monthly meeting agendas for community representatives to address community concerns.
- Establish police-community cultural participation strategy.
- Provide legal information workshop to inform residents of legal rights and responsibilities and internal and external police complaint investigation processes.
- Ensure race/ethnic data is collected on all police stops.

#### *Chinese*

- Appoint Chinese representative to GVPDAC.
- Establish communication tools that enhance communication between community and GVP.
- Ensure international students undergo drivers training.

### **Conclusion**

Aboriginal, African-Caribbean, Muslim and Chinese participants provided examples of the GVP partaking in racial profiling, racism and verbal and physical abuse, and failing to address criminal behaviour committed against them by other residents of Greater Victoria. They also shared positive experiences in their interactions with the GVP. The

recommendations are intended to address the gaps in relationships, understanding and trust between these groups and the GVP.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Historically in Canada, police services have had a challenging time demonstrating fair treatment to the diverse communities they serve, and have therefore been challenged in maintaining public trust (Jain, Singh & Agocs, 2000, p. 47). Law enforcement institutions within Canada and elsewhere are therefore increasingly working together with their communities in creating policy, and developing systems to help the police better understand the ethnic culture, value systems and religious sensitivities of the diverse communities they serve. The police departments of the Greater Victoria Area including Victoria, Saanich, Central Saanich, Oak Bay, the RCMP detachments Sidney/North Saanich and West Shore, and the Military Police Unit Esquimalt have increased their focus on community-based approaches to policing, and are seeking new ways to build relationships with the communities they serve. The benefits of this approach may be a decrease of fear and distrust that diverse communities may have of the Greater Victoria Police (GVP), and a greater understanding of the role the GVP play in maintaining public order, safety and health so community members are not afraid to utilize their services when needed.

### **Project Client**

The client for this project is the *Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC)*, represented by its two co-chairs, Staff Sergeant Scott Treble, head of the Community Engagement Division at the Saanich Police Department, and Moussa Magassa, Human Rights Education Advisor at the University of Victoria. The client is interested in building closer relationships of trust and understanding between the GVP and diverse communities within the Greater Victoria Area. The client wishes to ensure that the Greater Victoria region's police services understand the diverse cultures, value systems, unique perspectives, socio-economic conditions and religious beliefs of the communities the GVP serve. GVPDAC members have expressed a desire to understand and learn the most effective engagement initiatives that would help bridge gaps in engagement best practices between the GVP and diverse communities in Greater Victoria.

The purpose of this project is to undertake research and provide engagement recommendations to the GVPDAC. Specifically, this study will seek to understand the gaps in engagement between the Greater Victoria Police (GVP), and Greater Victoria's diverse communities including Muslim residents, African-Caribbean residents, Aboriginal peoples and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria, and assess whether the GVPDAC needs to begin a formal engagement process, or increase engagement with these communities.

### **Project Objectives, Research Question and Sub Questions**

This project will examine how the GVPDAC can build on existing work in developing and maintaining positive relationships with diverse communities in Greater Victoria and provide engagement recommendations. The primary research question for this study is:

- *How can the GVPDAC address gaps in engaging Greater Victoria's diverse communities?*

*Secondary questions are:*

4. *Which communities are underrepresented by the GVPDAC?*
5. *What communities should the GVPDAC be most interested in engaging with?*
6. *What strategies should be utilized to engage priority communities?*

### **Organization of this Project Report**

Following this chapter, Chapter 2 will provide necessary background information about the GVPDAC, its history, governance structure, mandate and examples of the GVPDAC's current community engagement practices. Chapter 3 will present a literature review of the history of the role of police in Canada, and identify police community engagement methods and solutions to addressing power imbalances within various institutions including the police. Chapter 4 will provide a detailed description of the qualitative research methodology chosen for this project, which used several sequential phases of data collection including (literature review, individual interview and focus group interview research) to gather, analyze and validate data. Chapter 5 will present the findings from focus group and individual interview research, discuss the major themes established within the data, and compare these themes to the relevant literature. Chapter 6 will provide conclusions of findings and discussion of themes of individual interviews, focus groups and literature review. Based on findings from the individual interviews, focus groups and literature, Chapter 7 will provide recommendations of efficient engagement best practices that will better prepare the GVPDAC and the GVP to engage with diverse communities of Greater Victoria.

## **2. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT CLIENT**

Since the 1960s, there has been a dramatic shift in the racial and cultural demographic of Canada which has posed a challenge for law enforcement. Immigration policy prior to the 1960s was racially homogenous, limiting immigration to predominantly Caucasian countries such as central and southern Europe. A shift towards inclusive immigration policy however, has meant that Canada is increasingly becoming racially and ethnically diverse. Unlike the past where immigrants were expected to assimilate and conform to an Anglo cultural model which included traditions and customs such as dress, language, cuisine and family size, immigrants today have more freedom in practicing and celebrating their diverse traditional and cultural practices (Kymlicka, 1995, p. 63; Kelley & Trebilcock, 1998, p. 14). Adapting from a homogenous populace to one as vibrant as today however, has been challenging for law enforcement who are seeking innovative ways in building relationships, understanding and trust with diverse communities (Culver, 2004, p. 329).

### **Growing Mistrust**

Historically, Canadians have traditionally been law-abiding, orderly, peace-loving and respectful of authority, perceiving law enforcement as moral and trustworthy community leaders (Murphy, 1998, p. 11). This however, has changed due to complex social changes of society within the last 60 years (Reiner, 1992, pp. 772-773). The police were once perceived as an institution that secures a consensually supported legal and social order. Beginning with political protests and the growth of the middle class in the 1960s however, the perception of the role of the police shifted to a coercive force that secures order and conformity (Murphy, 1998, p. 12). Anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, student movements and the politicisation of forms of deviance including the consumption of illegal drugs meant that the police increasingly became a direct extension of the political system which many civilians were at odds with. Images of the police controlling or suppressing protests then became a common theme within the media. Law enforcement agencies therefore became the faces of public political resentment and mistrust (Murphy, 1998, p. 11; Reiner, 1992, p. 771).

Although studies have shown that there has been a steady decline in police misconduct since the mid-1900s, the increasing practice of statistical gathering has changed this perception (Reiner, 1992, pp. 772-773). Statistical gathering and the dissemination of results of these studies has been a tool for governments, private organizations and non-profit organizations to display to the public evaluations of performance of products and services. In the early 1900s where statistical gathering was an uncommon practice, police misconduct often went unnoticed to the larger society. In present-day, the media frequently disseminates the results of studies such as the performance of the police (Tator, Frances 2006, p. 51; Hohl, Bradford, Stanko 2010, p. 496). Studies for example have shown an increase of evidence of visible minorities being disproportionately arrested in Canada,

causing a heightened level of awareness of unfair treatment and mistrust of the police by diverse communities (Reiner 1992, p. 770; Bayley, Shearing 1996, p. 591).

### **Community Policing and Budget Cuts**

Community policing is an essential element in building relationships and trust between diverse communities and the police. It allows law enforcement to get to know the communities they serve in face to face interactions which helps overcome biases and stereotypes (Fridell, Lunney, Diamound, Kubu, Scott, Laing 2001, p. 96). Trust between the police and diverse communities can therefore flourish if law enforcement demonstrates a commitment to long-term engagement and respect and care. Community policing is an important element in building this environment, allowing civilian input into police operation and policy decisions. This provides agency, accountability and trust between diverse communities and the police (Fridell, 2001, p. 100). Finding the resources needed for community policing practices, however, is a growing challenge that police jurisdictions in Canada face today (Culver 2004, pp. 330-332).

Provincial, federal and municipal government service cuts have meant that police jurisdictions have become regionalized or amalgamated, limiting resources for localized community policing and cultural sensitivity training (Murphy, 1998, p. 10). Community policing practices such as foot patrols, mini-stations and community officers, and cultural training programs prepare officers in navigating the diverse languages, family structures and hierarchies they face in the people they serve. These cultural preparedness initiatives limit gaps in communication between officers and community members, preventing unnecessary conflict or arrest (Culver, 2004, p. 331). These policing practices however, have been scaled back or removed in many jurisdictions in Canada, delegating the bulk of police services to community surveillance and intelligence gathering (Murphy 1998, pp. 16-17). This poses a challenge for law enforcement because without strong links with diverse communities, the police risk alienation and disengagement with communities they need to build trust and establish consensus with (Fridell, 2001, p. 96).

### **Policy in Canada Recognizing Bias Free Policing and Diversity Engagement**

There are encouraging signs of policy development initiatives in Canada from federal, provincial and municipal police jurisdictions that are meant to build relationships and trust between diverse communities and law enforcement.

#### *Toronto Pacer Report 2012*

The 2012 Toronto Pacer Report, identifies areas of Toronto Police Service where enhancements could be made to improve service delivery including practices surrounding the Field Information Reporting process. Phase One of the Pacer Report looks at all levels of Toronto Police Service to find ways for widespread advancement, and provides recommendations for community engagement best practices for all diverse communities.

Community organizations and individual community representatives and advocates who consider themselves to be marginalized or subjected to systemic biases by the police were consulted for this study. Police officers of all ranks were also consulted in seeking input for this report (Pacer Report, 2014, p. 39). The recommendations of this report are slated for implementation in 2016.

### *British Columbia Policing and Community Safety Plan 2013*

Based on the results of audits that were to be completed in March of 2015, the BC Ministry of Justice has committed itself to developing and instituting Police standards that ensure bias-free policing. In the 2013 document *British Columbia Policing and Community Safety Plan*, the ministry expressed the importance of equitable treatment of all persons and communities including marginalized, minority and First Nation communities (British Columbia. Ministry of Justice 2013, p. 31). One of the key themes expressed in this document was the importance of the police gaining awareness and understanding of all community members in order to deliver effective responses to criminal activity and crime prevention strategies, as well as the promotion of positive Police-community relationships in British Columbia (British Columbia Ministry of Justice, 2013, p. 31).

### **Client**

The Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC), is a consultative and advisory body to the Greater Victoria Police (GVP) and has a membership of a combination of approximately 25 GVP officers and community representatives. It is mandated to develop and maintain relationships between Greater Victoria's diverse communities, GVP officers and police agencies, and provides a direct link between communities and the GVP, helping the GVP better understand the diverse cultures, value systems, unique perspectives, conditions and religious beliefs of the communities they serve.

The GVPDAC includes representatives from police services within the region including, Victoria, Saanich, Central Saanich, Oak Bay, RCMP detachments Sidney/North Saanich and West Shore, Military Police Unit Esquimalt, and a maximum of 15 volunteer community members who represent diverse communities including: race, ethnicity, gender, language, education, religion, sexual orientation, age and culture.

The GVPDAC was created in 2002 in response to an assessment produced by the Capital Region Race Relations Association, *Making Peace – the Maturing Partnership of Capital Region's Minorities and their Police (1998)*, and a needs assessment created for the Victoria Police Department, *A Community in Transition: Victoria Police-Minority Relations in the New Millennium (2000)*. The aim of these reports was to help the GVP gain a greater understanding of Greater Victoria's diverse communities in order to better serve these communities in an efficient and cost effective way.

The needs assessment identified areas of distrust diverse communities felt in relation to Victoria Police Department. These communities felt there were too few diverse groups employed within the department's rank and file, they were over policed, the complaints process was inadequate and the Victoria Police Department overall failed to recognize diversity. The primary recommendation of the needs assessment in response to these concerns was the creation of a separate and independent Diversity Management Advisory Board to facilitate the liaison between communities and the police department (Considine, 2000, p. 39). The long term goal of the committee is to continue to develop and improve relationships with Greater Victoria's diverse communities with initiatives such as:

1. Expand its Global Café Community Engagement initiatives.
2. Gain a greater understanding of what other jurisdictions are doing in terms of community engagement and adopting initiatives that will be most effective in building relationships with Greater Victoria's diverse communities.
3. The creation of a GVPDAC website and social media presence.



### **3. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The purpose of this literature review is to explore the challenges police face in building trust with racialized communities in Canada, emphasizing those that are the main focus of this study. The review begins by providing a description of why public trust in the police is important. It will then discuss the challenges police officers experience in building relationships with the communities they serve, including occupational challenges, and historical and current changes in the structure and culture of policing. The review will also provide context to key challenges that racialized communities experience in society where police protection and support is needed. It will further examine the mistrust that racialized communities have of the police.

The Muslim Canadian section of the review will focus on the negative portrayal of Islam and Muslims within the media and how this may have played a role in the increase in Islamophobia and hate crime. This section will also explore the increase of surveillance and profiling of Muslim Canadians by the police, leading to increases of fear and mistrust of the police amongst Muslim communities. Next, the review will explore the impact Canada's colonial legacy has had on the relationship between the police and Aboriginal peoples. It will provide an overview of the role of the RCMP in residential schools and why this legacy has fractured the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the police. The next section is focused on the portrayal of African-Caribbean Canadians by both American and Canadian media and how this portrayal may create fear and mistrust of the police amongst African-Caribbean peoples. This section will also discuss racial profiling of African-Caribbean populations by the police, overcharging during police stops, and in each step of the criminal justice system thereafter. Finally, the review will consider how and why adjusting to life in Canada is often challenging for Chinese immigrants, and describes the differences in policing culture in Canada and China.

#### **Police**

##### *The Importance of Trust*

Public confidence in Canadian policing has historically been high, but this confidence has been declining in the last 50 years (The Council of Canadian Academies 2014, p. 64). Unless the police are perceived to treat the public equitably the moral authority and effectiveness of the police in upholding the rule of law will not be taken seriously (Christmas, 2012, pp. 457-458). Fridell et al., (2001) found that the loss of moral authority of the police could permanently damage the legal system, rendering it ineffective in providing justice to society (p. 6). Taking steps in relationship building is vital because of the history of strained relationships between the police and visible minorities and the increase in issues surrounding racially biased policing. These authors further noted that building relationships and trust with minority communities by responding to accusations or

perceptions of racially biased policing should be an important strategy of law enforcement. Without trust and cooperation of the public, it is less likely the police will be effective in their duties (p. 6).

Hanniman (2008) states that treating the public with respect and humility is the only way it will respect the rule of law. Establishing trust and positive relationships with the public allows the police to fully understand the security needs of the communities they serve (p. 276). Hohl, Bradford & Stanko (2010) note that the police moral authority cannot be perceived as legitimate unless the public has confidence and trust in them. Without the respect and trust of the communities they serve, citizens will not obey commands and fail to support and cooperate with police (p. 492). These authors further state that legitimacy and trust are only achieved with fair treatment, respect and clear communication by the police. This includes regularly engaging with the public, listening to and understanding their concerns and taking steps in responding to these concerns (pp. 492-509). Finally, Christmas (2012) states that fair and equitable treatment are essential in order to win the trust of the communities that the police serve. This includes treating civilians with respect and choosing to build relationships with community allies who are respected within the community (pp. 457-459). The police and the public should therefore be partners, supporting and protecting one another with accepted values and goals of the communities they live and work in. Furthermore, the police should serve and protect the interests not of only elites of society but also of everyone in a fair and equitable manner (pp. 457-458).

#### *Public Police Monopoly Devolving*

Municipal governments in Canada are experiencing increasing policing costs that are difficult to sustain (Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2008, p. 11). The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (2008) report states that due to increasing policing costs and a decline in federal financial support for municipalities, fire and police protection is the fastest growing municipal expenditure in Canada, averaging 20% of the operational budgets of Canadian municipalities. Federal financial support for provincial and municipal RCMP policing costs have declined from 50% in 1976 to zero for municipal contracts signed after 1992 (p. 4). Policing costs are projected to increase as growing resources are directed towards domestic security threats and increasing demands of the public for safer communities (pp. 5-11). Boyd, Geoghegan, & Gibbs (2011) found that compared to police expenditures of comparable jurisdictions, Canada's costs of policing per capita are higher than New Zealand, Australia and the United States and is second only to the United Kingdom (p. 26). The Council of Canadian Academies (2014) reported that the costs of policing in Canada has steadily outpaced GDP growth. Additional legal requirements and expenses for police jurisdictions such as requiring special warrants to enter a home to arrest suspects are adding to this financial increase (pp. 51-55).

Rising policing costs and government budget cut backs in Canada have culminated in a decline in public presence, influence and moral authority of the police (Sheptycki, 1998, p. 498). Murphy (1998) stated that federal and provincial budget cut-backs in Canada have resulted in a decline of the public police monopoly of security services. To reduce costs, provincial governments are both amalgamating and decentralizing municipalities. This has led to a reduction of localized community policing and the increase of large police jurisdictions covering large geographical areas (pp. 8-10). A former desire of local governments to expand publicly funded community policing best practices including community officers, mini-stations and foot patrols has become a reduced priority. To fulfill the decline in public security, the state is increasingly relying on private security companies and volunteer organizations for non-emergency policing services such as break and enters and public mischief. Citizen volunteers are being utilized for roles such as police auxiliaries and special constables and community policing roles such as foot patrols, community officers and mini-stations (Murphy 1998, pp. 15-16). Bayley & Shearing (1996) note that state run monopolization of policing in Canada has been in decline since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century due to the growing complexity and expense of crime control. Civilians and communities have been tasked with investigating offences, preventing crime and deterring criminal activity to mitigate this expense (pp. 586-588). These tasks include foot patrols, neighbourhood watches, advisory councils, community newsletters, crime prevention publications, and security at malls, schools and public parks. Bayley & Shearing point to advantages of civilian policing including community members who become accountable to one another within their communities (pp. 587-596).

### *Police Occupational Challenges*

Police officers face extreme occupational challenges that are difficult for most outsiders to understand. The vast contrast in experiences between officers and civilians can result in an occupational solidarity and subculture within the police profession, isolating officers from the communities they work within (Chan, 1997, p. 111). Officers may develop an 'us versus them' perspective, exhibiting machismo and cynical and anti-social behaviour when interacting with community members. This behaviour limits the ability of law enforcement agencies in building and maintaining trusting and respectful relationships between officers and civilians (Patterson, 2003, p. 224; Walker, Archbold & Herbst, 2002, p. 11). De Camargo (2012) summarizes the police subculture as a divide between the public and the police that is very difficult to reverse. He states that this divide becomes a combined part of an officer's personality at work, is difficult to put aside once the working day is finished and increases the more officers become isolated within their professions (p. 6).

Some of the routine occupational challenges that officers experience and that strengthen the police subculture includes experiencing verbal abuse from civilians, sustaining injuries, facing dangerous situations, making arrests, dealing with the consequences of making wrong decisions and being reprimanded from management (Anshel, 2000, p. 378). (Neylan

et al., 2002, p. 345) point to the varying levels of stress that police officers experience from the demands of their work including pressures from media, judges, supervisors, attorneys and the public, critical incidents such as witnessing death or injuries, sustaining physical injury and injuring others in the line of duty. Further stressors include the impact of shift work and barriers within the criminal justice system (Fridell et al., 2001, p. 38). These occupational challenges result in significant health concerns for police officers (Anshel, 2000, p. 396).

### *Police Health and Relationships*

The underlying consequence of a highly stressful occupation such as police work is a statistically high burnout and early retirement rate (Anshel, 2000, p. 396). Officers are known to experience sleep challenges such as insomnia and nightmares (Neylan et al., 2002, pp. 345-346). (Anshel, 2000, p. 376; Anderson, Litzenberger & Plecas, 2002, pp. 399, 415-416) note that after critical incidents such as facing a dangerous situation on the job, officers do not fully recover and retain an elevated heart rate following their shift. Most officers have limited capacity in coping with this kind of stress which breaks down the body and increases susceptibility to illness and disease. Furthermore, the stress that officer's experience not only impacts their personal health, but may also negatively impact interactions with civilians while on duty, and relationships with friends and family outside of work. Fridell (2001) states that for many officers, the challenges of police work could negatively impact their attitudes when engaging with the public while on duty, and family and personal life while off duty (pp. 38-40). Patterson (2003) noted that family members and loved ones of police officers are affected by the trauma and distress that officers experience on the job (p. 224).

### *Media Representation of the Police*

The media often disseminates negative images and ideas, producing stereotypes, racializing immigration and crime, and magnifying them. These images are known to affect our values, behaviours and beliefs (Tator & Frances, 2006, p. 51). Police officers are often portrayed as abusive, corrupt and prejudiced, and are infrequently portrayed as heroes. This negative portrayal has shown to influence the public's perception of the police, causing distrust, and delegitimizing their moral authority, affecting the public's willingness to cooperate and support police (Dowler, 2002, pp. 227-236; Hohl, Brandford & Stanko, 2010, pp. 507-509; Dowler & Zawilski, 2007, p. 201). A twenty-four-hour news media culture that puts pressure on reporters to feed the public hunger for crime related stories only adds to the problem (Huey & Broll, 2012, pp. 384-385).

In his study, Dowler (2002) points to the role of the media in reinforcing pre-existing attitudes or opinions that the public may have of the police. He describes a connection between television viewing and those who have had prior police contact, arguing that the combination of prior police contact and negative images displayed of the police play a

powerful role in influencing public perceptions of the police (pp. 227-236). The study shows that respondents who watch a lot of television are more likely to perceive the police negatively in terms of effectiveness (Dowler, 2002, p. 235). Weitzer & Tuch (2005) note that the mass media also shapes public perceptions of the way police treat racialized groups. They argue that the media consistently report police abuses of racialized people such as verbal abuse, corruption and excessive force. When people see these images they are more likely inclined to believe that police are prejudiced, racially profile and unfairly target minority neighbourhoods (p. 1026). Dean, Bell & Lauchs (2010) state that the police are vulnerable to public discontent when the media takes possession of a story of police misconduct. The media will take the actions of one officer and make it appear to the public that there is widespread corruption within a police organization. Politicians then come under pressure to satisfy the public by making an example of scapegoats within the force (p. 217).

The Canadian Judicial Council (2007) suggests that the media overemphasizes the mistakes of the police while withholding other components of police work that were performed well (p. 13). Dowler & Zawilski (2007) point to television news, particularly network news consumption as influencing the perceptions of visible minority respondents in terms of the frequency of police misconduct and discrimination in society (pp. 200-202). The study also shows that minority respondents who frequently viewed network news were more likely to believe that police misconduct was common and that whites were treated better than minorities. As a result, minority community members may be less inclined to cooperate with police (pp. 198-202). Finally, Campbell (2012) points to the interplay between police brutality and media racism as shaping society perceptions of the police and police violence. She suggests that racism exists within police organizations in Canada, but also highlights the role the media in aggrandizing and transmitting both the dominant racist sentiment of society and police violence. The media depicts racialized minorities such as African-Caribbeans as violent and deserving of the situations they find themselves in while whites are often portrayed as victims (pp. 171-174).

## **Muslim Canadians**

There are just over one million Muslims in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011, p. 5). From the the 2001 attack on the United States until 2016, Muslim Canadians have experienced more discrimination by the public and surveillance by law enforcement agencies than any other racialized, religious or cultural group in Canada. Many Muslims fear for their safety and that of their families (Perry & Poynting, 2006, pp. 4-5). Negative media depictions have been instrumental in the increase of fear and harassment of Muslims (Rane, Ewart & Martinkus, 2014. p. 33).

### *Negative Media Depictions*

Canadians are inundated with vast quantities of media, including media from other Western countries, primarily the United States. This may play a role in affecting the perceptions of Canadians in relation to society and racialized groups. In a United States publication, Moore (1995) points to widespread Islamophobia within the media as negatively influencing the public's perceptions of Muslims. The American news and entertainment industry distorts the image of Muslims and Islam, creating lewd caricatures and stereotypes of Muslims which the public has been led to believe. These images and stereotypes, Moore notes, may play a role in shaping people's understanding about ethnicity, race and religion, including Islam (p. 16). Bahdi (2003) points to Canadian and American media sources as disseminating negative stereotypical assumptions about Muslims and Islam, making Muslim Canadians more susceptible to discrimination and hate crimes (p. 305). Frost (2008) characterizes the media as playing a pervasive role in formulating and stimulating racist sentiment. This sentiment is ultimately displayed in society in the form of harassment, racial hatred, violence and low-levels of hostility (p. 574).

Powell (2011) notes that American media continuously links Muslims with terrorism, making the practicing of Islam subject to judgement and prosecution (p. 107). Rane, Ewart & Martinkus (2014) furthermore argues that negative Western media portrayals of Muslims has been the underlying cause of the discrimination against Muslims and the fear of Islam in Western society. Western media coverage depicts Islam and Muslims as misogynist, intolerant, terrorist and fanatic. These stereotypes focus on the actions and perceptions of a small minority, while withholding a complete picture and representation of the lives and religious practices of the majority of Muslims (pp. 2-34). Perry (2006) however, notes that stereotypical depictions of Muslims are more prominent within American media than in Canada. She points to Canadian media outlets as offering more objective coverage of Islam, using examples such as the failed terrorist attack in Toronto in 2006.

### *Perceptions of Muslims in Canada*

In a study produced by Jedwab (2011) for the Association of Canadian Studies about the perceptions of group and intergroup relations, minority groups who are typically perceived negatively in Canada such as Hispanics, Chinese and African-Caribbeans received positive perceptions while Muslims were perceived most negatively out of any other group. Helly (2012) points to Islam as receiving the most negative perceptions amongst Canadians in comparison to other religions including Judaism and Christianity. This sentiment has shaped political attitudes across Canada with debates regarding the efficacy of religious practices. For example, Helly points to court rulings, legislation and policy as a factor to the rise in intolerance for the Muslim faith in Canada. This includes the 2007 Quebec Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences. Debates of female voters wearing the burqa, the 2008 introduction of the Quebec's Ethics and Religious Cultural Program, and increasing debates regarding honour crimes, forced

marriage and polygamy. Within these debates, Muslim traditions and worldviews were deemed to be outdated (pp. 2-3).

### *Increase in Hate Crimes*

In many jurisdictions in Canada, Muslims experience greater levels of hate crimes in comparison to any other racialized, cultural or religious group (Statistics Canada, 2015, pp. 17-18). Hate crimes increased significantly for Muslims after terrorist incidents in western countries. This is shown in the Toronto Police Hate/Bias Crime Statistical Report (2001). The report indicates that in 2001, there was a 90% increase in reported hate crimes against Muslims in comparison to the previous year. The report suggests that this figure was a direct result of the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States (p. 4). Statistics Canada (2015) states that in 2013, police-reported hate crimes targeting Muslim populations in Canada increased while hate crimes for all other groups decreased. Hate crimes targeting Muslims were also more likely to be violent. More troubling was that over the period of 2010-2013, 47% of hate crimes targeting Muslim populations targeted females, assumingly because Muslim women's religious identity is more visible than men (pp. 17-18). The Toronto Police (2015) reported that there was an increase in hate/bias crimes targeting Muslim communities, a trend that may have been attributed to the backlash of the attacks in Paris, and the Canadian government's Syrian refugee resettlement initiative. Muslim Torontonians were victimized the most that year in criminal harassment occurrences (pp. 2-3). More recently on January 29<sup>th</sup> 2017, a French Canadian who is thought to be an anti-immigrant nationalist committed a mass shooting while Muslims were praying at the Islamic Cultural Centre Mosque in Quebec City. Six worshippers were killed and nineteen were injured (Kutty, 2017).

Although the rise in statistics of hate crimes against Muslims is considerable, a report from the Department of Justice Canada (1995) suggests that as much as 95% of hate crimes in Canada may go underreported (pp. vii-20). Perry & Poynting (2006) note that although the extent of hate crimes against Muslims are considerable, racial violence in Canada is significantly underreported by authorities. This suggests that hate crimes against racialized groups and Muslims is a significant problem in Canada and more research needs to take place to fully understand its gravity (p. 2).

### *Increased Surveillance by Law Enforcement*

Bahdi (2003) states that Arabs and Muslims are subjected to greater levels of scrutiny and surveillance by law enforcement in Canada. Arabs and Muslims have had bank accounts frozen, lost their businesses, and suffered ruined reputations because of being approached or put under surveillance by Canadian authorities. Other consequences include being unable to fly to see dying relatives because of being put on no-fly lists, and missed job interviews and career enhancing opportunities because of being stopped, questioned or interrogated by the police (pp. 299-305). Poynting & Perry (2007) point to an increase of

negative treatment of Muslims by police and security forces in Canada after the 2001 attack on the United States. Amendments have been made to the Canadian Human Rights Act, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act, and the Privacy Act which are intended to prevent terrorist threats. This has made all Muslims suspect to state investigation and surveillance (pp. 152-163). Anyone who shows interest in the affairs of their homeland in the Middle East or by simply being involved in a Muslim or Arab organization, political activism or subscribing to Eastern magazines becomes vulnerable to investigation by the police and federal agencies, contributing to the vulnerability and exclusion of Arabs, Muslims and other racialized groups within Canadian society (pp. 163-164).

The anti-terrorism bill C-36 passed in 2001 in response to the September 11 attacks and bill C-51 allows CSIS, the RCMP, and other Canadian law enforcement agencies to profile and target people of Muslim or Arab heritage (Helly, 2004; National Council of Canadian Muslims, 2015, pp. 5-6). Helly (2004) states that this has resulted in high levels of fear and harm within Muslim Canadian communities. Without judicial oversight, the bill has given law enforcement agencies the authority to conduct secret investigations and searches, and to eavesdrop overseas communications of the public. It also allows the police to collect information from Muslim community leaders or from Muslims who have less established immigration statuses such as asylum seekers or foreign students. More recently, the National Council of Canadian Muslims NCCM (2015) critiqued Bill C-51 anti-terrorism act, noting that they regularly receive grievances from Canadian Muslims who have been wrongly placed on no-fly lists. Their families, businesses, and professional interests are often shattered as being put on a no fly list can limit both social and economic mobility (pp. 5-6).

## **Aboriginal**

There are approximately 1,400,685 individuals who identify themselves as Aboriginal in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011, p. 4). As the most visible and physical tool of enforcement of the Indian Act, the RCMP played a fundamental role in removing children from their communities and placing them in residential schools. Aboriginal peoples have a profound fear and mistrust of law enforcement in Canada because of this history (Christmas, 2012, p. 461; LeBeuf, 2011, p. 2). Aboriginal people are stopped by police, overcharged, detained, held without bail and sentenced to jail at a far greater rate than any other racial demographic in Canada (Tanovich, 2006, pp. 1-2).

### *Legacy of the Indian Act*

Aboriginal communities feel that law enforcement should take accountability for the intergenerational effects of the Indian Act. Most Aboriginal communities including reserve communities have low employment, educational and economic prospects and are high in crime as a result of the effects of the Indian Act. Aboriginal youth are the most vulnerable,



experiencing statistically high rates of gang violence, suicide and substance abuse (Christmas, 2012, pp. 452-457). Brascoupé & Walters (2009) point to the paternalistic and assimilationist Canadian policy and legislation as leading to the destruction of cultures, traditions and languages of Aboriginal peoples (p. 10). Government policies such as the Indian Act and the legacy of the residential school system have deprived Aboriginal peoples of basic human rights. The Indian Act's legacy is still evident within Canadian legislation and policies, perpetuating paternalistic Western expectations for self-determination. A continued legacy remains of families, individuals and communities experiencing poverty, unemployment, unclean water, and poor education and nutrition (pp. 13-30).

Forced assimilation policies of Aboriginal peoples by the Canadian government deeply affected the stability of Aboriginal people's bands, nations, families, individual identities and mental health (Kirmayer, Simpson & Cargo, 2003, p. 18). They further state that since early settler contact, the spiritual beliefs and practices of Aboriginal people were suppressed through forced conversion to Christianity. These traditional beliefs were essential in maintaining the structure of communities and families and cultural activities. Children were separated from their parents and put into residential schools where they were denied their cultural beliefs and traditions. The intergenerational trauma, which is the negative consequences of historical oppression across generations continues to hurt Aboriginal communities and families, disrupting intimate connections between many Aboriginal peoples and communities, especially in childhood (Kirmayer, Simpson & Cargo, 2003, pp. 16-18; University of Calgary, 2012, p. 3).

Bourassa, McKay & Hampton (2004) state that the sexist laws within the Indian Act were instrumental in breaking up Aboriginal communities. For example, some Aboriginal communities are traditionally matriarchal, in which women have been symbols of strength. One of the tools the colonialists used in attempting to break up communities was to diminish this fundamental matriarchal role (p. 28). Bourassa, McKay & Hampton note that if an Aboriginal woman married a non-Aboriginal man, the person was forced to relinquish their Indian and Band statuses. They were therefore unable to legally return to their communities if they divorced or if their husband died. She notes these sexist policies have had profound intergenerational implications, impeding Aboriginal women's health, self-worth and belonging, and their ability to develop healthy identities (pp. 24-25).

#### *Historical Distrust and the RCMP*

Human Rights Watch (HRW) (2013) identifies Aboriginal peoples as having a profound distrust for the police because of the role the police played within the residential school era. HRW argues police continue to be perceived not as a source of help and support within Aboriginal communities, but as an authority figure that takes members of the community away (pp. 29-30). Cao (2014) notes that due to the RCMP's role in forcefully containing and

managing Aboriginal people through the reserve system, residential schools, mass adoption, and substandard conditions of poverty and social exclusion, Aboriginal peoples have a profound distrust of the police (pp. 502-503). Furthermore, Cao states that Aboriginal people of Canada also hold the police accountable for injustices such as the Starlight tours of the 1990's, where RCMP officers in Saskatchewan arrested Aboriginal residents, dropping them off far outside of town where they were forced to walk home in sub-zero temperatures, some freezing to death (pp. 502-503).

### *Current Challenges*

Aboriginal peoples are known to experience high levels of racism and discrimination by police organizations and within the justice system of Canada (Palmater, 2016, pp. 253-254). Jain, Singh & Agoos (2000) point to the low representation of Aboriginal peoples within police organizations in Canada as being a key element of distrust and tension between Aboriginal people and police organizations. Low representation, they state, perpetuates prejudice against Aboriginal people by the police, produces a culture of harassment and limits professional upward mobility of Aboriginal peoples within law enforcement organizations (pp. 49-50). Rudin (2005) argues that recruiting Aboriginal people or adding Aboriginal awareness programs will not have an impact on racism within police organizations in Canada if the discriminatory dynamics within police organizations do not change (p. 3).

Rudin (2005) further notes that the police and the justice system are culturally and systemically foreign to Aboriginal people. The justice system is perceived as being designed to maintain the cycle of powerlessness and poverty within many Aboriginal communities. He points to the historic use of police to suppress Aboriginal rights claims as leading to the over-policing of Aboriginal peoples in today's society. This has resulted in perceptions amongst police officers that Aboriginal people are violent and prone to criminal behaviour, consequently increasing distrust that Aboriginal communities have of the police (p. 1). Brzozowski, Taylor-Butts & Johnson (2006) found that the more Canadians interact with the police, the less likely they will feel that the police are effective in their jobs. They also suggest that Aboriginal people may be less likely to trust the police because they are more likely to be in contact with them. Aboriginal people have lower levels of satisfaction with the police because they are experiencing discrimination when interacting with them. Aboriginal participants were less likely to rate the police as doing a good job in all categories including response time and treating people fairly (p. 12). A study by the Environics Institute (2010) noted that urban Aboriginal people were twice as likely as non-Aboriginals to have low confidence in the criminal justice system. These statistics are consistent throughout most of Canada's big cities, and include Metis, First Nations and Inuit (p. 99).

Human Rights Watch HRW (2013) points to sexist, racist and physical abuse of Aboriginal women by the police as defining the relationship between Aboriginal women and law enforcement. HRW notes that many Aboriginal women feel unsafe when interacting with the RCMP as a result. This distrust is further enhanced by the unsympathetic attitude that the police are perceived to have in relation to the disappearances and murders of aboriginal women and girls. The police are also perceived by Aboriginal people as displaying apathy and disregard of domestic violence incidents within Aboriginal communities (p. 8). Aboriginal people who call the police are likely to be blamed for the abuse or at times shamed for using alcohol or drugs. HRW also suggested that if reports are made for missing persons, the police fail to promptly investigate the report (p. 20).

In a Cedar Project study, Pan et al., 2013 noted that more than half of Aboriginal participants were not interested in developing positive relationships with the police (p. 449). Palmater (2016) notes that law enforcement organizations in Canada have normalized misogynistic and racist views within their culture. She suggests that Aboriginal women have normalized expectations of gendered violence and racism by the police and feel hopeless in holding the police accountable for this (p. 269). She states that the chances of the police getting caught for physical or sexual violence are slim, and if they are caught, the repercussions are minimal. She also suggests that when the police fail to properly investigate the murder of or missing indigenous women, it enables perpetrators by creating the idea that there are few consequences for this type of behaviour. The lives of Aboriginal women are therefore devalued (pp. 275-293).

## **African-Caribbean Canadians**

### *Media Linking Race and Crime*

There are approximately 945,700 individuals in Canada who self-identify as African-Caribbean and who have ancestral origins from Caribbean and African countries such as Jamaica, Somalia, Haiti and Trinidad. (Statistics Canada, 2011, p. 5). The media reinforces and sensationalizes crime involving minorities, magnifying stereotypical and Eurocentric assumptions about race, and making associations between race and criminal behaviour (Tanovich, 2006, pp. 2-31). Tator & Frances (2006) state that in all aspects the media shapes identity structures including, race, gender, class and national identity. This informs and influences the behaviours, values and beliefs of its audiences (p. 51). African-Caribbean Canadians are consistently portrayed as criminal and antisocial, and being shot, arrested and assaulted by police on TV. These images along with the negative treatment African-Caribbean Canadians are known to experience by the police in Canada has created a fear and mistrust of police among African-Caribbean Canadians (pp. 16-176). Dowler & Zawilski (2007) state that visible minorities who frequently watched television news were more likely to believe that minorities are treated more harshly than non-minorities by the

police. They further suggest that minorities may respond with increased levels of fear and hostility towards the police because of the way they are portrayed as being treated by the police on TV (pp. 198-201).

In a study by Dixon & Linz (2000), African-Caribbeans were found more likely than whites to be portrayed as crime perpetrators in television news. African-Caribbeans were also more likely to be portrayed as deviant in comparison with police officers, while whites are often portrayed as victims of crime. They further state that news editors and reporters make stereotypical and Eurocentric assumptions about perpetrators of crime because it is deemed newsworthy or appealing to their audiences (pp. 147-149). Oliver (2003) notes in her study that the media construct an image of African-American men as dangerous and criminal. News and reality television programs such as *Cops* and *Americas Most Wanted*, show African American suspects receiving more aggression and physical force by police officers in comparison to white suspects (pp. 4-7). Oliver (2003) further argues that even when crime is presented in equitable ways between African-Caribbean and white criminal suspects on television, existing stereotypes within viewers result in the interpretation that African-Caribbean suspects are more deviant than white suspects. This, Beth argues, can result in African-Caribbeans being unjustly identified and targeted as criminals (p. 15).

Tator & Frances (2006) describe the media as depicting young African-Caribbean men as inherently criminal, rather than products of challenging socio-economic conditions. The media portrays African-Caribbean men this way by using explicit images and language, characterizing young African-Caribbean men as dangerous, unlikely to change and less deserving of empathy in comparison to whites (p. 53). Finally, Dixon & Linz (2000) suggest that African-Caribbeans are overrepresented as crime perpetrators on TV because racial out-groups are blamed for the troubles of whites. Even though there are many African-Caribbean officers, whites almost always employ the position of police officer and the moral defender of the law on TV, who fight the notion of African-Caribbean criminality (pp. 150-151).

#### *Racial profiling and Lack of Trust of Police*

Racial profiling has a devastating impact on those who experience it. It is a substantial barrier to the civil rights and freedoms of African-Caribbeans and racialized peoples, and causes embarrassment, humiliation, anger, rage and fear (Fridell et al., 2001, pp. 2-85). It also results in distrust of law enforcement, making it less likely communities will cooperate with the police. Without cooperation, the police can't be seen as legitimate moral leaders and can't therefore be effective in working together with communities in crime prevention (Fridell et al., 2001, p. 6).

Wortley & Tanner (2003) state that age, social class and good behaviour protects white males from police scrutiny, but African-Caribbeans are not protected in this way.

Furthermore, African-Caribbeans who drive expensive cars are more likely to be stopped by police than African-Caribbeans of lower class due to their perceived affluence (pp. 371-372). Tator & Henry (2006) note that police in Canada have had a long history of racial profiling African-Caribbean Canadians. For reasons such as being under the age of 35 and driving a nice car, African-Caribbean Canadians are stopped and searched. This has led to fractured relationships between African-Caribbean communities and the police in Canada (pp. 19-39). Tanovich (2006) notes that for African-Caribbean Canadians, simply driving a car or walking down the street can become a volatile or potentially deadly activity because of racial profiling (p. 4).

#### *Racial Profiling and Overrepresentation within the Criminal Justice System*

Melchers (2003) suggests that racial profiling by the police and the overrepresentation of African-Caribbeans within the criminal justice system in Canada is merely an extension of the systemic discrimination that exists within all social institutions in Canadian society (p. 362). Tator & Henry (2006) point to racial profiling by police in Canada as a product of the dominant and racist white values, norms and beliefs that exist within all institutions of society, including the criminal justice system, legislatures, media, educational institutions and popular culture. They note that the existence of racial profiling is made further problematic due to a hierarchal and militaristic Canadian policing culture (pp. 91-201).

#### *Racial Profiling Statistics*

In a report by Wortley (2005) on bias-free policing, it was found that African-Caribbean residents of Kingston Ontario were stopped and questioned by the Kingston Police at a far greater rate than all other racial backgrounds. African-Caribbean people are furthermore overrepresented in all outcomes after being stopped (pp. 74-76). Wortley further found that 15% of the African-Caribbean Kingston population had been stopped while 5.3% of the white Kingston population had been stopped. More troubling was that in age groups 15-24, 41% of African-Caribbean Kingston residents were reported stopped while only 5.2% for white residents. Furthermore, African-Caribbeans were more likely to be arrested or charged after being stopped by police in comparison to all other racial groups (pp. 76-85). In a report by Halifax Regional Police (2016) examining 68,483 police checks for the period of 2005-2016, it was found that in comparison to all other racial groups, African-Caribbean Haligonians were stopped by the police 20.48% of the time. This data takes in consideration that African-Caribbean's make up 3.59% of the municipal population of Halifax, suggesting a significant overrepresentation of African-Caribbeans being stopped by the police. This is equivalent to nearly one-third of all African-Caribbean residents within Halifax (pp. 2-5).

Tanovich (2006) notes that racialized groups such as African-Caribbeans are more likely to be stopped by police and more likely to be arrested in comparison to whites who have engaged in similar activity (p. 2). Wortley & Tanner (2003) note that because of racial

profiling, African-Caribbeans are far more likely to be caught and arrested when they break the law in comparison to whites who engage in similar criminal activity in Canada (pp. 373-375). Furthermore, Tanovich (2006) notes that after being arrested and detained by the police, lawyers are reluctant to mention the issue of racial profiling and stereotypes and the courts are reluctant to take seriously compelling evidence of this (p. 4).

## **Chinese Canadians**

There are approximately 1,324,700 individuals who identify as Chinese in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2011, p. 15). Chinese immigrants come to Canada with both negative and positive impressions of law enforcement. These impressions are based on their experiences with the police in their home country and may affect the expectations that Chinese immigrants have of the police in Canada. Police in China are often expected to fulfill the role of moral and ethical leaders to the communities they serve, especially children. The police and communities work together in ensuring safe communities (Bau, Ling, So & Qin, 2008, pp. 3-4; Jiao, 2001, pp. 158-174).

### *Chinese Culture and the Culture of Policing in China*

Jiao (2001) states that besides a few regions, China is a homogenous culture that is populated by residents of similar nationalities. China's homogenous society is less complicated to police in comparison to heterogeneous societies where diverse values, cultures and beliefs may sometimes collide. As far back as childbirth, Chinese people are socialized in moral and ethical principles such as emotional moderation, group cohesiveness and hierarchy, and maintaining positive human relationships (pp. 158-161). Jiao notes that disputes and interpersonal conflicts are solved primarily through early intervention, group functioning and moral and ethical education rather than the court system. The police consider themselves part of the community, expecting support and help from the community. Families, community leaders and school teachers all play a collective role in supporting, protecting and mediating with police and taking ownership of policing responsibilities (pp. 160-174).

Cao & Hou (2001) point to a collective respect for authority as being embedded within Chinese culture. Civilians therefore recognize and respect the authority of police officers. Police officers live in the neighbourhoods they work within for extended periods of time in order to build relationships and become familiar with the residents they serve. Police mini-stations coexist with civilian neighbourhoods, and public security committees are situated within rural and urban areas. The private lives of Chinese communities are intruded on more by elected civilian community representatives than by the police themselves (pp. 89-90). Working with public committees, Cao & Hou note that the police monitor and control criminal activities. They are not only active in crime fighting, but also in service oriented

tasks such as mediation and counseling committees, providing legal education and census registration (pp. 89-90). Jiao (2001) states that the Chinese police have a relatively trusting relationship with the communities they work with. They interact with community members professionally and informally, often having civilian friends. Positive relationships are vital because the Chinese police have long understood that through stronger connections and social harmony within the communities they serve, they are able to be more effective in their jobs (p. 174).

### *Challenges in Adjusting*

Chinese immigrants may have different perceptions and expectations of state authority because of their experiences of police in China (Wu, Sun & Smith, 2011, p. 748). Wu & Sun (2009) state that although there is a deeply embedded cultural value of respect for authority in a communist country such as China, the police-citizen relationship may be precarious. This precarious relationship comes from a historical legacy in China of authoritarian political leaders with absolute political control who infringed on the rights and interests of the public. Wu argues that repressive incidents such as the 1966 to 1976 Cultural Revolution and the Tiananmen Square Incident of 1989 may have undermined the legitimacy and trust of authority figures including the government (p. 175). Jiao 2001 states that Chinese police have become involved in corruption due to the greater opportunities in China's current rapidly growing economy. He does not directly link this as leading to a rise in mistrust of police in China, but notes that in general corruption leads to distrust of the police (p. 171). Some officers he argues, are cynical and vulgar and have been known to use force excessively when dealing with criminals and suspects (p. 174).

### *Adjusting to Life in Canada*

Simich, Beiser, Stewart & Mwakarimba (2005) suggest that most immigrants who come to Canada experience many challenges even though most are highly educated and skilled. These challenges include the lack of recognition of credentials by Canadian employers and educational institutions, poor housing, discrimination, minimal access to services and social supports, deteriorations in health, social isolation and high levels of poverty (pp. 258-266). In a study of pathological gambling habits, Lee, Fong & Solowoniuk (2007) point to the culture shock transitioning from Hong Kong to Canada as leading to health problems such as chronic stress. Some of these transitional challenges include language and cultural barriers, inadequate employment, racial discrimination, social isolation and lack of family and social support. Furthermore, adapting to a geographically dispersed, individualistic culture such as Canada can be challenging for Chinese immigrants who come from densely populated communities and vibrant social networks. Gambling is sometimes a means for Chinese immigrants to find community and escape isolation, but this practice often becomes habitual and unhealthy (pp. 1-7). Finally, in a United Way of Peel Region Ontario report, Bau, Ling, So & Qin (2008) state that there are few resources for Chinese immigrants to effectively transition into the social, political, legal and education systems of

Canada. There is limited information available for accessing family doctors, language, social and community programs and government services. There are also few online resources that could help provide potential newcomers with information about life in Canada prior to arrival such as pre-settlement orientations, and a lack of initiative from governments to bring ethno-cultural communities together to offer recommendations to government service providers in service planning and improvement for immigrants (pp. 3-4).

Wang & Lo (2005) state that there are challenges for Chinese immigrants who do not come from areas of China with high English language proficiency such as Hong Kong. Canadian employers generally have a higher value for work and education credentials from people who emigrate from Hong Kong in comparison to those who immigrate from Taiwan and mainland China (p. 37). Wang & Lo suggest that work and education experience acquired in developing countries is valued far less than credentials obtained from developed countries, or not recognized at all. Even with a Master's degree earned in a host country, Chinese immigrants are typically only able to match the employment income of the average Canadian. Recent immigrants earn substantially less than Canadian born, even after living in Canada for more than ten years (pp. 38-61). Finally, Bau, Ling, So & Qin (2008) state that for Chinese families, adjusting to Canada is often challenging because expectations of children in China are quite different than in Canada. Physical punishment is expected by parents and elders and children pushing one another is not considered bullying. The family home is considered to be private, and domestic violence is common but not acknowledged as an issue by the state (p. 3).

## **Summary**

The literature review included research of the changes in both the Canadian law enforcement structure in the last 50 years and police occupational challenges that make building relationships and trust with Muslim, African-Caribbean, Chinese and Aboriginal Peoples of Canada challenging. Some of these challenges include an occupational solidarity and subculture within police work that isolates the police from the communities they serve, increases in cost and complexity of crime prevention, the reduction of police officers within Canadian municipalities and the rise of private policing. These challenges have reduced the public police presence and moral authority within society making it more challenging for police to reach out, connect and build trust with culturally diverse communities. The review highlighted the inequitable treatment that racialized communities experience by the police, and systemic challenges within society that may make racialized communities distrustful of the police. It further highlights negative media depictions of police as abusive, corrupt and prejudice, and how this depiction creates a mistrust of the police by culturally diverse groups.



The review highlighted the increase in Islamophobia and hate crimes that Muslim and Arab Canadians have experienced since the 2001 attack on the United States, making Muslim Canadians vulnerable to violence and verbal abuse. Furthermore, excessive surveillance of Muslim Canadians by law enforcement in Canada has led to an increased fear and mistrust of the police. Racial profiling and discrimination that Aboriginal peoples experience by the police and the role the RCMP played in enforcing the Indian Act has led to a profound distrust of police within Aboriginal communities across Canada. The review highlighted the racial profiling and mistreatment of African-Caribbean Canadians within Canadian cities and towns and why this treatment has resulted in fear and mistrust of the police. Media depictions of African-Caribbeans being profiled, abused and shot by the police within Canada and the United States contributes to negative perceptions and deep distrust of police among African-Caribbean Canadians. Finally, the review noted the cultural differences in political, social and policing structures between China and Canada. Adjusting to an individualistic and diverse society can be challenging for Chinese immigrants who come from a collective and homogenous society where community involvement plays a fundamental role in the policing structure of most Chinese communities.

## **1. METHODOLOGY**

The research design used a qualitative community based research (CBR) approach for this project. CBR is a research approach used by researchers in partnership with community members to analyse and seek solutions for social problems for the benefit of society (Kapucu, 2006, p. 683). The researcher worked closely with the project client in designing the research methodology to ensure the proposed research methods met the values of the client's mission statement. CBR blends three essential aspects of community research including students, faculty and community stakeholders (Kapucu, 2006, p. 686). The focus of CBR is to implement social change and justice while working with communities within society. These principles are reflective of the goals of the project which are to inform the Greater Victoria Police (GVP) and the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) of relationship gaps between Victoria's culturally diverse communities and the GVP. The project used qualitative research methods to capture the experiences of culturally diverse people who reside within Greater Victoria. Semi-structured interviews and focus groups provided data regarding the experiences the participants have had with the GVP and their impressions of the GVP.

Four groups were selected: Muslim, African-Caribbean, Chinese and Aboriginal peoples who reside within Greater Victoria. Each of these groups provided their perceptions of the GVP and police officers in general. These positive and negative experiences included changes they would like to see made.

### **Sample**

The project used purposive sampling in the selection of research participants. The purposive sampling technique is a non-random technique where the researcher decides on what information is needed and finds the appropriate participants who could provide this information based on their experience and knowledge (Tongco, 2007, p. 147). The participation criteria for this research project were residents of the Greater Victoria area who self-identify as Muslim, African-Caribbean, Chinese, and Aboriginal. Through the purposive sampling technique, one or multiple individuals are solicited who then provide cultural information that is representative of their community. Participation was voluntary for all groups. Groups selected were:

- Participant group 1: Residents of Greater Victoria who self-identify as Muslim
- Participant group 2: Residents of Greater Victoria who self-identify as Aboriginal
- Participant group 2: Residents of Greater Victoria who self-identify as African-Caribbean
- Participant group 4: Residents of Greater Victoria who self-identify as Chinese

Participant group 5: One person who is a community representative and/or advocate for each of the target populations of groups one to four.

## **Recruitment**

### *Focus Groups*

Group 1 (Muslim): A GVPDAC committee member and Community Development Coordinator at the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA) connected the researcher with the Youth Coordinator at the Masjid Al-Iman mosque. The researcher introduced the study to the youth coordinator following an engagement event at the mosque and sent an information letter about the study via email. The Youth Coordinator provided potential participants at the mosque with the information letter. Some of the people who participated were born in Canada while others were immigrants who were from countries including Syria, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. Two females and six males participated who were all residents of Greater Victoria.

Group 2 (Aboriginal): The researcher knew a PhD student at the University of Victoria who self-identifies as Aboriginal. Through email correspondence, the researcher provided her with an information letter about the study and an invitation letter which she gave to potential participants. Four females participated in the interview, including two who were residential school survivors. All were residents of the Greater Victoria Area and self-identified as Aboriginal.

Group 3 (African-Caribbean): The researcher knew a few members of the African-Caribbean community in Greater Victoria. One of these members provided the contact information of a member of the British Columbia Black History Awareness Society (BCBHAS). The researcher contacted this member and provided him with information about the study that he forwarded to potential participants. He then provided the contact information of potential participants that showed interest in the study. The researcher contacted the potential participants by phone and email and provided them with an information letter about the study as well as an invitation to attend the focus group. Four females participated in the study.

Group 4 (Chinese): The researcher contacted and met with a former committee member of the GVPDAC and Intake Coordinator at the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Center Society (VIRCS). The intake coordinator agreed to assist the researcher in acquiring participants for the study. The researcher provided the Intake Coordinator with information about the study and information letters for potential participants. The Intake Coordinator recruited eleven participants after providing potential participants with information and invitations to the study. All participants were residents of the Greater Victoria area and of Chinese ancestry.

*Individual Interviews: (Community Representatives)*

**Muslim and African-Caribbean Participant:** For both the Muslim and African-Caribbean components of group five, the researcher interviewed one participant who represented both communities. The participant was a faculty member at the University of Victoria and committee member of the GVPDAC. The committee member agreed to participate in the study after the researcher provided information about the study and information letter at one of the GVPDAC meetings.

**Aboriginal Participant:** Team Leader of Family Services at Victoria Native Friendship Centre and member of the GVPDAC. The committee member agreed to participate in the study after the researcher provided information about the study and invitation letter at one of the GVPDAC meetings.

**Chinese Participant:** The participant is an Intake Coordinator at the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Center Society (VIRCS) and was a former member of the GVPDAC. The participant agreed to participate in the study after the researcher provided information about the study and invitation letter by email.

## **Instruments**

The focus groups were used to acquire an accurate depiction of the needs and experiences of community members. Unlike one-on-one interviews, focus groups allow participants to hear the responses of others and make additional comments. Furthermore, shared views among the community can be quickly assessed using focus groups (Patton, 2002, p. 386).

Interviews took place in person and were held from July 2016 to February 2017. The interview questions for all groups included eight general questions and a total of four sub-questions (Appendix A). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher within a week following the interview. The length of the interview ranged from 40 minutes to 90 minutes.

### *Focus Groups*

**Group 1 (Muslim):** The researcher was invited to attend an engagement event at the Masjid Al-Iman Mosque in Victoria and the focus group interview followed the event. The Youth Coordinator of the Masjid Al-Iman Mosque assisted in the selection of the date and time of the focus group. The researcher brought participant consent forms which were signed by the participants before the interview began. An audio recorder was used to record the interview.

Group 2 (African-Caribbean): The researcher hosted the focus group at the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA). A committee member of the GVPDAC and employee of ICA assisted in the date and time of the focus group. A total of four African-Caribbean residents of Greater Victoria participated in the focus group. The researcher brought participant consent forms which were signed by the participants before the interview began and an audio recorder which was used to record the interview.

Group 3 (Aboriginal): The researcher hosted the focus group at ICA. A committee member of the GVPDAC and employee of ICA assisted in the organization and establishing a date and time of the focus group. A total of four Aboriginal residents of Greater Victoria participated in the focus group. The researcher brought participant consent forms which were signed by the participants before the interview began and an audio recorder which was used to record the interview.

Group 4 (Chinese): The researcher hosted the focus group at the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Center Society (VIRCS). The Intake Coordinator at VIRCS assisted in establishing a date and time for the interview. A combination of eleven Canadian born and Chinese born residents of Greater Victoria who self-identified as Chinese participated in the interview as well as a translator. At the beginning of the interview the researcher had all participants sign consent forms and an audio recorder was used to record the interview.

### ***Individual Interviews***

Group 5 Participants participated in a standardized open-ended individual interview format. This method was used to provide a framework where respondents can express their feelings and perceptions in their own terms (Patton, 2002, pp. 344-348). The standardized open-ended interview format allowed the researcher to develop and use carefully worded pre-determined standardized open-ended questions where respondents are able to supply their own words, thoughts and insights (Patton, 2002, p. 346). The goal of this was to minimize predetermined responses when gathering data.

Interviews took place in person and were held from July 2016 to November 2016. The interview questions included eight general questions and a total of two sub-questions (Appendix B). The length of the interview ranged from 60 to 90 minutes. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher within a week following the interview.

Muslim and African Caribbean community representative: For both the Muslim and African-Caribbean components of group five, the researcher interviewed one participant who represented both communities. The researcher met in the participant's office at the University of Victoria. The researcher then provided the participant with a consent form which was signed before the interview began. An audio recorder was used to record the interview.

Aboriginal community representative: The researcher met in the participant's office at the Victoria Native Friendship Center in the participant's office. The researcher then provided the participant with a consent form which was signed before the interview began. An audio recorder was used to record the interview.

Chinese community representative: The researcher met in the participant's office at the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Center Society (VIRCS). The researcher then provided the participant with a consent form which was signed before the interview began. An audio recorder was used to record the interview.

### **Data Analysis**

The researcher analyzed the transcripts from the focus groups and from the standardized open-ended individual interviews. An inductive content analysis was used in unearthing themes within the data. An inductive content analysis is a qualitative sense-making effort that allows the researcher to discover themes and categories within the transcribed data of the focus groups and individual interviews. More specifically, through searching for reoccurring words, the researcher is able to identify important meanings and consistencies within large volumes of data (Patton, 2015, pp. 541-542). The researcher carried out a thematic analysis for all groups. Key themes were identified within the data including similarities and differences between the five groups.

### **Limitations**

Due to the timeline of the project it was not possible to include youth participation. The researcher attempted to mitigate this limitation by including participants who were young adults and youth leaders who advocated for youth.

Due to summer vacations only four people participated at both the Aboriginal focus group and African-Caribbean focus group interviews. Additionally, the limited number of African-Caribbean residents in Greater Victoria made it challenging to recruit participants. Males were not in attendance at either focus group. The inclusion of more participants including males may have offered a greater level of depth in data in relation to the experiences these groups have with the GVP. This was mitigated by including participants who held influential social and leadership roles within their communities. These participants were able to relay concerns and experience of the communities they represent including the experiences of youth, adults and males.

## 5. FINDINGS

This chapter is presented in two parts. The first part discusses focus group findings of groups one to four, the Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese. The second part discusses interview findings from group five, the Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese. For both the Muslim and African-Caribbean components of group five the researcher interviewed one participant who represented both these communities. Therefore the Muslim and African-Caribbean individual interview component of this chapter are combined into one section. Key themes are identified for each research group.

Focus group themes include positive and negative experiences in interactions with the Greater Victoria Police (GVP), community concerns and suggestions for improvement, cultural customs, and experiences interacting with the GVP at engagement events. Interview themes include: positive and negative experiences in interactions with the GVP, community concerns and suggestions for the GVP, community trust building practices from other jurisdictions, strengths and weaknesses of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC), and Global Café engagement event suggestions.

### **Muslim Focus Group**

#### *Community concerns*

In a discussion regarding relationship improvements that could be made between the Greater Victoria Police and Masjid Al-Iman mosque members, participants pointed to an incident where a member of the mosque was arrested and taken from his home. Seven participants noted that the husband was taken while his wife was in the shower and unaware of the arrest. Her children were tasked with explaining to their mother the arrest of her husband once she had stepped out of the bathroom. These participants emphasized the vulnerability of the family, expressing that the woman and children were new immigrants from overseas, had little education and could not drive or speak English. One participant stated: *“You know if anything was to happen to a white family, they have brothers, they have sisters, they have relatives, they can help each other, but what about us? We can’t help anybody, we don’t know anyone. So what I am saying you know, they should take it easy with the families who are new and don’t know the customs and laws in Canada”*. Participants also mentioned that as a result of the arrest, the wife was emotionally distressed, the family missed doctors’ appointments and they had to rely on a member at the mosque to take the children to school. While they did understand why the GVP arrested the husband, they suggested that the GVP should be responsible in making sure the wife and children are provided with information on where they could find support.

### *Over-surveillance leading to lack of trust*

In their discussion regarding police surveillance of Muslims in Canada, participants indicated that they had been followed and tracked by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). They mentioned that the RCMP and CSIS have been calling members of the mosque. One participant noted that the police have been calling because they are suspicious of Muslims in Greater Victoria and are trying to solicit information. He indicated that he used to meet with the police to build harmony between the police and mosque members, but stopped when he realized they had wiretapped his phone. He further explained that he was shocked to find out that a CSIS officer he met at a police event knew where he lived. Participants indicated that they had become apprehensive in working with the GVP because they felt the GVP viewed the mosque and its members as a training ground for terrorists who withhold criminal information. Participants also said that they have become accustomed to seeing Muslims and Islam misrepresented within the media, but felt that uniformed officers have been trained in cultural competency and should therefore perform professionally and without bias.

One participant commented on a youth anti-radicalization event that was held by the RCMP in Esquimalt. Both the Imam and the Youth Coordinator of Masjid Al-Iman attended the event as well as GVP officers, social workers and educational workers representing the municipalities of the Greater Victoria Area. The participant mentioned that the police led him to believe that the event was going to be an informative and educational event in building positive relationships between Muslim residents of Greater Victoria, the police and community members. The participant felt however, that the event cultivated fear and suspicion of Muslim people, particularly Muslim youth as being terrorists who needed to be monitored. He mentioned that he spent the majority of the time at the event defending Muslim people and Islam and left early because he was angry and resentful of the police, wishing he had recorded the treatment he and the Imam received. He also noted that he would not attend an event such as this again if invited, especially since he took an unpaid day off to attend while the police were all paid. In response to this experience, several participants mentioned that the GVP should not attempt to engage with Muslim communities on the assumption that Muslims are bad. Rather, the GVP should be addressing the prejudices within themselves.

### *GVP response to hate crime and hate speech*

In describing hate speech and hate crimes that Muslims experience in Greater Victoria, participants expressed a need for GVP protection. They provided examples of people yelling racist and Islamophobic slurs in front of the mosque. Some of the people yelling slurs also accused members of the mosque of being terrorists. They explained that Muslim women are harassed more than Muslim men in Greater Victoria because they dress in traditional Islamic garments that identify them as being Muslim. A participant provided an



example of an incident in a store in Victoria. The participant mentioned that his wife was physically assaulted by a stranger when she discovered that the participant's wife was praying into her phone.

The participants perceive the GVP as being reluctant to investigate and charge perpetrators of hate crimes. One participant described two incidents where an unknown person physically assaulted and injured his wife and pulled her headscarf off. These incidents happened in front of his home and in front of the mosque. In one of the incidents, the participant's children were present. In both incidents his wife was traumatized and did not sleep for days. She sought support at a local women's support group, avoided going outside without being accompanied by another person, and has expressed bitterness at her husband for encouraging her to immigrate to Canada. After both occasions where his wife was assaulted, the participant was able to retrieve the licence plate numbers of the perpetrators and report the incidents to the GVP. He noted that on both occasions, the GVP did not get back to him. He explained that because the GVP did not address the situation, he does not trust the GVP: "*On two occasions my wife was literally assaulted and absolutely nothing was done about it. How can I trust the Victoria police? Unless they do something about it it's hard for me to trust them*". He furthermore suggested that it would have taken a follow up call or email by the officer, or an empathetic statement condemning islamophobic behaviour to make him feel acknowledged and supported. He noted that if an assault like this was to happen again, he would call a human rights organization for support instead of the GVP. In response to this participant's story, the majority of participants mentioned that many Muslim families in Greater Victoria experience verbal and physical assaults, but will not approach the GVP because they do not trust that their concerns will be addressed. They also expressed apprehension in seeking support from the GVP for incidents such as these because they felt that they may get themselves into trouble with the GVP.

#### *Positive impressions of the Greater Victoria Police*

Participants mentioned that in comparison to the police of the countries they emigrated from, the GVP are more professional and respectful. They are professional when engaging with Masjid Al-Iman mosque members while on duty and while attending engagement events at the mosque, and show a genuine interest in understanding the diverse worldviews and cultures of the residents of Greater Victoria. They felt that the existence of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) shows that the GVP are moving in a positive direction. There was agreement among participants that the GVP has shown genuine determination in learning the cultures and traditions of mosque members. Specifically, they praised the efforts of the GVP in building trust and respect between themselves and children of the mosque. One participant credited the Victoria Police Department for providing tours of the police station for children, and was encouraged that the Saanich Police Department had offered to provide tours of their police station as well. Participants also noted that the level of trust between the members of the mosque and the

GVP has improved to the point where mosque members feel more comfortable in approaching the GVP if they have a problem. They felt however, that although relationships are improving, it will take more time for the relationship between the GVP and members of the mosque to flourish.

### *Suggestions*

Participants offered a few suggestions for the GVP. Eight participants felt that new immigrants should be provided with a legal information workshop of the customs and laws in Canada because most members of the mosque are unaware of the rules and laws. For example, customary practices such as disciplining a child by hitting or spanking is legal in many countries that mosque members emigrated from, yet most are unaware that it is illegal in Canada. Many immigrant families are uneducated, know few people in Greater Victoria and do not know where to look in terms of learning customs and laws in Canada.

Participants also identified the challenges they experience because they are new to Canada and have few friends and family members here to support them when they are in trouble. They suggested that the GVP be mindful of the family members that have few supports and resources to support themselves and their children when someone from the family is arrested or asked to come to the police station.

## **Aboriginal Focus Group**

### *Impact of the Residential School System*

In a discussion regarding the residential school system, all participants noted that they are afraid of the GVP because of the role the RCMP played in apprehending Aboriginal children and taking them to residential schools. One participant who is a residential school survivor, noted that when she was a child, the RCMP took her and other Aboriginal children away from their parents. Her father responded by recapturing children from the residential school and providing a home for them. The police however, eventually came and took the children back. She described her father experiencing hopelessness and emotional distress of being unable to save his family. He eventually disappeared, never to be seen again. Participants stated that there were children who effectively evaded the schools by hiding in the woods, but the ones that were captured became broken spirits. They mentioned that the schools taught them how not to be children, how not to love, punished them for having fun and told them not to be happy. They mentioned that through the loneliness and sadness of living at the schools, they learned not to love and trust anyone. Another participant noted that similar to herself, her parents were also residential school survivors. She expressed deep fear of the GVP because it was instilled in her by her parents to be scared of them, *“I never had contact with the police because I was told to be afraid of them. My parents instilled in me to be fearful of the police”*. She noted that most

Aboriginal people are fearful and do not speak to the GVP because of the role the RCMP played in apprehending Aboriginal children during the residential school era.

One participant mentioned that even though she is an elder, she still hides under her bed because of the trauma she experienced being forcefully taken to residential schools, and the emotional and physical violence she experienced while she was there. She finds it difficult to be strong for other Aboriginal people because of this trauma. She is a recovering alcoholic and was under psychiatric care for seventeen years because of the trauma she experienced. All participants agreed that Aboriginal people lost the knowledge of how to be parents because of the residential school system. They stated that Aboriginal people are trying to find their way back from being broken spirits and no longer want to be frightened or have others frightened by them. All participants agreed that this is why they agreed to be interviewed.

#### *Experiences interacting with the GVP*

In a discussion regarding current experiences with the GVP, one participant identified an incident she experienced with officers from the Victoria Police Department about 20 years ago near Chinatown. An intoxicated Aboriginal woman in a wheelchair was detained by police and lifted into the back of a paddy wagon. The participant mentioned that a police officer got into the back of the paddy wagon with the disabled woman and pretended that he was having sex with her by rocking the wagon back and forth. The participant mentioned that she could hear the officer in the wagon laughing while he was doing this. The participant asked the officer's partner who was standing beside her if he was going to let his partner get away with it. The officer responded by saying that his partner was just having fun. The participant mentioned that she was very angry.

One participant mentioned that her son is regularly targeted and stopped by the Greater Victoria Police even though he is not involved in crime. Her son is scared to leave his home because he hates being pulled over so frequently. He is a construction worker and is regularly stopped as he is walking home from work, even though he has his construction tool belt and work clothes on. She stated that officers are rude to her son and do not offer him a rational reason for being stopped. In another experience, her son was stopped by officers after buying a drink at a corner store. An officer grabbed his drink without asking and smelled it to see if there was alcohol in it.

Another participant shared an interaction she experienced with the RCMP and two Aboriginal youth near Nanaimo. A teenaged girl called family members saying she was going to commit suicide. Nobody within the family knew where she was so the family called the police to inform them of the situation. The police began a search for her. The girl was located by the family, sitting on the front stairs at an apartment building with her boyfriend who was also Aboriginal. Her boyfriend who was intoxicated was holding her,

trying to console and calm her down. The participant noted that although her boyfriend was intoxicated, he was calm and doing a great job at calming his girlfriend. The participant who is a friend of the family of the emotionally distressed girl called the police to say that they had found her. Three police cars and six police officers arrived shortly after the call. The participant did not understand why six police officers needed to be there because the girl was scared, vulnerable and the police presence increased her fear. The participant mentioned that four of the police officers grabbed her boyfriend, two on each side and walked him to the police car even though he was calm and quiet. They eventually took him to the drunk tank. The participant was angry and did not understand why the police needed to take him away, and why they needed four officers to take him to the police car. It was an unnecessary show of force and lack of empathy she noted. The girl was taken to the hospital.

A participant described an incident where an off reserve Aboriginal man was picked up by Aboriginal reserve residents for a traditional spirit dance ceremony. A neighbour who witnessed the man being picked up thought he was being kidnapped and called the police. The police responded by interrupting the ceremony and accusing the hosts of being kidnappers. The participant suggested that the police should not interfere with Aboriginal cultural practices. She also mentioned that the police are afraid of and know little about Aboriginal cultural practices.

A participant described an incident on the Oak Bay Victoria boarder where approximately three hundred Aboriginal residents of Greater Victoria blocked the Save on Foods grocery store owned by Jim Pattison Group. Aboriginal residents protested the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's decision to allow Jim Pattison Group's commercial fishing fleet to fish herring near Heiltsuk First Nation's traditional territory of Campbell Island. She indicated that Oak Bay residents who were angry with the protesters rammed them with their scooters. She mentioned that the police did little to prevent this from happening. The police stood in front of the neighbouring liquor store, she presumed protecting the liquor store from the Aboriginal protesters. She pleaded with the police to stop protecting the liquor store and assist in preventing the Oak Bay residents from ramming and hurting the Aboriginal protesters, but the police refused. She noted that the police were only there to make their presence known and cared little about the interests and safety of the Aboriginal protesters.

#### *Room for improvement in trust*

In a discussion regarding power imbalances, a participant felt that white police officers abuse their power and privilege as officers and are unable to conceptualize the privilege they have being in white skin. She noted that the GVP today still harbour similar racially superior attitudes over Aboriginal people as when the first settlers arrived in British Columbia. She mentioned that the GVP distant themselves from the historical injustices of

the colonial period by proclaiming that the injustices were the actions of the older generation of officers and not today's police. All participants agreed that Aboriginal people are currently living on their traditional lands, but the GVP make them feel like they are bad people and do not belong here. They also suggested that the GVP need to be educated in the colonial history of Canada, why this history has led to the struggles that Aboriginal people experience and the role the police played in this history. A participant stated, *"they don't take your heart to matter whether it's about your children or any other people within our communities. They have to start listening and taking it for our word, what we are saying is true and it is painful. And here we are, expressing ourselves again. How many times are we going to have to tell our story before the police realize what level we are at? We are still down here, but our heart is up here, our freedom is up here in our hearts, but we don't have freedom, because we are always fearful of the police. And that was taught to me from a young age, so I am fearful, I stay away from them. I have nothing to do with them"*. Participants noted that the GVP should become educated in Aboriginal history in Canada because this will be the first step in building a relationship. For example, one participant mentioned that the GVP do not understand Aboriginal peoples and do not care to take the time to get to know more about them, arguing that the GVP are scared of Aboriginal culture. She feels that the GVP think Aboriginal people worship Satanism, and feels the GVP are afraid of cultural practices such as the Sundance, the Yuwipi and the Ghost Dance.

Another participant explained that many aboriginal people today know little about their traditional cultures because they are still being taken from their homes. She noted that today there are more Aboriginal children in foster care than there were Aboriginal children in the residential school system. She suggested that the residential school system and foster care systems were designed to kill Aboriginal culture by not returning the children to their homes.

#### *Positive experiences*

Most of the participants did not feel they had any positive experiences to share of the GVP. One participant however, shared a bike rodeo initiative she participated in near Nanaimo. The police visited Aboriginal communities, spent time with the children and taught them bike safety. The participant mentioned that it is vital for the police to make positive connections with kids because as soon as children become teens, feelings of mistrust and resentment towards police become ingrained and remain throughout adulthood.

#### *Suggestions*

All participants wished for harmony and reconciliation between themselves and the GVP. They expressed a willingness to engage in difficult discussions with the GVP in order to achieve lasting peace and understanding. Participants mentioned that the GVP first need to take accountability for the way they have treated Aboriginal people in the past, regardless if

they had a direct role in it or not. They mentioned that some GVP officers might be aware of this history, but are possibly ashamed to speak of it. All participants expressed a need for a positive transformation in the attitude, soul and spirit of GVP officers in the way they perceive Aboriginal people.

All participants expressed a desire for Aboriginal people to be recruited as police officers into the Greater Victoria Police jurisdictions. They suggested that the GVP need to start recruiting locally on reserves by establishing relationships with Aboriginal youth. They highlighted the importance of reaching Aboriginal youth to both encourage them to think of becoming officers, and to gain trust with and lead them on the right path. One participant suggested, *“They need Coast Salish cops in there. They need local natives from this area trained as cops. They need to start trying to recruit on reserves”*. All participants however, highlighted the importance of improving relationships between the GVP and Aboriginal people before recruiting. They noted that they do not want their kids facing racism within the GVP departments of the Greater Victoria Area. If there is racism that exists within these departments, the participants suggested that the GVP develop ways to protect and support Aboriginal officers.

All participants suggested that the GVP consider removing their guns and batons, because Aboriginal people perceive the gun as a symbol of oppression and abuse of power. They expressed a desire for the GVP to exit their squad cars while on duty and begin building relationships and trust with civilians on the streets. This includes making eye contact and nodding at Aboriginal people. Eye contact and nodding is an important sign of respect within Aboriginal culture participants noted. All participants also expressed a wish for the GVP to participate in Aboriginal public functions on Vancouver Island including canoe races, potlatches and the Pow-Wow that is held every summer. They suggested that the GVP wear civilian clothes when participating at Aboriginal functions so they do not appear intimidating. Participants suggested that if officers wish to be identified as police officers at Aboriginal functions, maybe they can wear a symbol which identifies them this way.

In a discussion regarding a need for increased police accountability, participants expressed a need for an independent board where Aboriginal people can file complaints regarding GVP misconduct. One participant expressed anger and frustration that GVP officers have not provided their names and badge numbers in her interactions with them. All participants also noted that the GVP can demonstrate respect by coming to their communities to provide education of the legal authorities of police officers and the legal rights of civilians. They furthermore expressed a desire for the GVP to consult with the elders of the communities prior to providing this education. Participants also wished for officers to educate Aboriginal elders and leaders about illegal drugs. Most elders are unaware of the different terminologies that are used to describe illegal drugs today, and wish to become more informed of warning signs to protect Aboriginal youth.

### *Impressions of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee*

Participants expressed cynicism of the effectiveness of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee in producing positive change. They all agreed that there is a need for committees such as this, but felt that the people who represent Aboriginal people that sit on the committee do not represent all Aboriginal people of Greater Victoria, and probably are too agreeable and afraid to voice troubling issues.

### **African-Caribbean Focus Group**

#### *Impressions of the Greater Victoria Police*

In a discussion regarding participant comfort levels in engaging with or approaching the Greater Victoria Police (GVP), participants stated that they find some GVP officers to be arrogant, but also felt that others are very approachable. One participant suggested that because the GVP follows institutional protocols, their interactions with the public are overly scripted and not genuine, “*There may not be an opportunity for the police to adjust to how they should react to a situation because they are following a script. When you are in a job that doesn’t allow you to be creative, you are not*”. This participant also suggested that the GVP develop ways in becoming more creative and human in engaging with the public. There was agreement among participants that they would be comfortable calling the GVP if they were in need of their services. One participant indicated that she feels comfortable engaging with the GVP during the day, but not at night. She suggested that the GVP have an incredible amount of power and an inflated sense of entitlement when using this power. She feels that the GVP are not comfortable engaging with the public. Similarly, another participant mentioned that she hopes to never be in need of police services because she does not like them or feel comfortable talking to them. She pointed to experiences interacting with the GVP as an African-Caribbean woman as the reason for feeling this way. She noted that in her experiences of being stopped by the GVP, she is afraid to look officers in the eye because she feels that the GVP do not like African-Caribbean people. She also stated that she thinks there are great police officers out there, but finds their profession unnecessary and questions the credibility of anyone who wishes to be a police officer. One participant noted that she is scared to call the GVP because they approach all interactions with people of colour with preconceived biases. They will judge a person depending on if you are a man, woman or a person of colour she indicated.

A participant noted that she does not feel safe interacting with the GVP because she is an African-Caribbean person in a mostly white city. She stated that the GVP are a product of the community of Greater Victoria which treats her as a bad person because she is African-Caribbean. She pointed to the GVP as being raised in a system of misogyny and racism, and that they therefore exploit these negative qualities with the power and authority they

yield in society. In response to this comment, another participant stated that GVP officers demand respect without earning it. She mentioned that if you do not give them respect, they get very upset, *“An officer at this community police engagement event said that the best way to interact with police officers is to be nice and courteous. But this is not the instinctual response when they are intimidating to us. When someone is being mean to you, you are not going to be nice to them. The public are for some reason supposed to be the bigger people when interacting with police officers which is a strange weird dynamic”*.

#### *Experiences interacting with the GVP*

A participant noted that there have been times she has asked GVP officers who were stationed at public events in downtown Victoria for assistance. She indicated that the GVP have made her feel foolish for asking them for assistance, responding to her questions with cocky and unhelpful responses. She feels the GVP can be arrogant, similar to an annoying older brother. She pointed to an example of Canada Day 2016 when it was very busy downtown and buses were not running to schedule. She approached officers to ask for help, but they responded with annoyance and patronizing comments. She suggested that the GVP need to direct their negative energy at criminals and not people who simply want help. She furthermore noted that instead of feeling safe when the GVP are near, she feels unsafe. There needs to be a change in police culture she indicated.

A young adult participant shared an experience of going out for ice cream in Victoria with one of her friends late at night. She noted that neither she nor her friend looked rough or suspicious in their appearance. She stated that when walking down the street, the police drove by and looped back around, stopping in the middle of the road near where they were standing. One officer looked over at the participant and asked her for her name while ignoring her friend who is white. The participant disclosed her name and the officer looked at her and responded with a cocky “ok” while slowly driving away. The participant was dismayed that they did not ask her white friend for her name, or disclose why he stopped both of them. She felt that the experience ruined her night and is confused why the police of Greater Victoria always think she is up to something sinister. The participant mentioned that she is consistently stopped by the GVP for no apparent reason other than being African-Caribbean. She noted that she has not been in trouble with the law. Another participant responded by mentioning that the country she emigrated from, Spain, the police stop African-Caribbean people a lot, but this has not happened to her in Greater Victoria. Another participant shared an experience where the GVP picked up her son for drinking in the park illegally and brought him home. The participant’s ex-husband who was white, answered the door and had a friendly conversation with the police. The participant felt that if she spoke to the police instead of her husband, they might have been less friendly to her because she is African-Caribbean.



A participant described an experience dropping her son off at school in a no parking area. While she was sitting in her car, a GVP officer approached her and mentioned that she could not legally park in the area. The participant explained to the officer that she was dropping off her son and leaving. The officer responded by asking her to wait in her car. He returned twenty minutes later and gave the participant a ticket. The participant decided to contest the ticket in court after a witness to the incident suggested that she do so. At the court building just prior to entering the court proceedings, the officer approached the participant and suggested to her that she plead guilty. The participant became angry and told the officer that he was not supposed to talk to her. When speaking to the judge, the participant said that the officer did not give her the chance to move her car before giving her a ticket. The officer was deemed to be out of his jurisdiction and the ticket was dismissed. The participant felt that if it was not for the witness who told her to contest the ticket, she would have been stuck with a three hundred dollar fine. The participant was visibly angry. In response to this participant's experience, another participant expressed frustration of police behaviour after experiences being pulled over. She mentioned the length of time the GVP sit in their cars before returning to either tell you to have a nice day, or to give you a ticket is too long. The participant stated that she wonders if the GVP are intentionally trying to test the patience of civilians by waiting to see if they will panic and start running. She noted that the GVP can be very professional, but the time it takes the officer to return to civilians after pulling them over is unpleasant.

A participant shared an experience that took place in James Bay. She noted that one afternoon she and a friend were walking near downtown James Bay and noticed a scruffy looking African-Caribbean man who was backpacking. The Victoria police drove by and pulled over near him, got out of the car and began speaking to him. The participant mentioned that the entire time they were talking to him, one of the officers had his hand on his gun which was sitting in the holster. The police officer was standing in a tense and confrontational way, appearing nervous that the backpacker might do something violent. The participant mentioned that if the civilian made the wrong move, the police officer could have done something dangerous. The participant felt that if the civilian was white, the police probably would not have stopped or reacted with such fear and aggression. Another participant agreed by saying that if the civilian did not stop walking, the officer could have done something awful.

A participant shared an experience of an interaction with Saanich police officers at her home. She mentioned that one night she and her ex-partner engaged in a bitter argument. The participant called the police because her partner would not leave the home when she asked. She mentioned that soon after the officers arrived, one of the officers told the participant she was behaving immaturely. The participant noted that she felt insulted and angrily told the officers to leave her home. Furthermore, the participant mentioned that when she was arguing with the officer, the officer's partner stood there without saying

anything. She felt that the officer should have calmed the situation by intervening and telling his partner that he was out of line. The participant also indicated the officers were apathetic and unsympathetic in their actions, and that more empathy and compassion would have been appropriate. Another participant responded by suggesting that the police are trained to deal with situations, but not people. She also felt that the way police behave when interacting with the public has a lot to do with the way they were raised as children.

### *Positive experiences*

In a discussion regarding the strengths of the GVP, participants mentioned that they feel fortunate to be living in Greater Victoria because officers are not as violent or as quick to pull the trigger as in other places such as the United States and Canadian cities such as Toronto. One participant indicated that she has lived in Greater Victoria for ten years and has not heard of an incident where the GVP have shot someone for no reason. Another participant indicated that she felt encouraged that racialized people do not experience the same level of prejudice by the GVP as in most cities in North America, but suggested that the Aboriginal experience with the GVP is probably not as encouraging. All participants agreed with this statement. One participant mentioned that she feels the GVP have biases and prejudices, but feels encouraged that the GVP and the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) are open to this conversation and approved of this study. She also expressed pessimism that improvements will come from this focus group interview. Participants were also pleased that the GVPDAC and the Saanich Police Department borrowed banners from the British Columbia Black History Awareness Society that displayed information about black pioneers of British Columbia and Greater Victoria. Participants applauded the Saanich Police Department for placing the banners directly in the lobby of their police station, commending Saanich police for demonstrating a sincere effort in learning about the African-Caribbean communities of Greater Victoria. One participant noted that the more the police know about the history of African-Caribbean people in British Columbia, the more they are able to build and strengthen relationships. Participants were encouraged that there is a GVPDAC, but were curious if the police on the committee are assigned or obliged to be members, or requested to participate out of genuine interest. Another participant also asked if the community liaison or co-chair of the committee was assigned to the committee or requested to be in the position.

### *Suggestions*

In a discussion regarding improvements that the GVPDAC could make in its operations, participants empathised with the challenges and difficulties that GVP face on the job. They noted however, that the badge and the gun automatically puts the GVP in a position of enormous power. The GVP therefore do not need to punch or kick someone to prove a point. A participant who is a sergeant in the military indicated that the GVP need to be more human just like the civilians they interact with. The GVP should not let their gadgets, equipment and uniform dehumanize them and negatively influence their behaviour. She

noted that when an officer approaches someone with their hand on their holster, they are sending a powerful message. She mentioned that she is unsure if the GVP are conscious of the way they carry themselves on the job, but felt that the GVP should be mindful of their behaviour because civilians already assume the police are dangerous, and are scared to interact with them.

A participant noted that the sex or colour of an individual should not influence the way the GVP interact with civilians. She suggested that some officers come from small towns where they have not had interactions with anyone outside of their own race. In response, the majority of participants suggested that the GVPDAC purchase cultural banners it borrows from the British Columbia Black History Awareness Society (BCBHAS). The BCBHAS uses these banners often so it becomes hard to lend them out. They also mentioned that the Victoria police could display the banners in their station like the Saanich Police does. Another participant suggested that cultural banners should be displayed in Greater Victoria police stations all year round and not just during cultural celebrations. She also suggested that the police display cultural material not only from the African-Caribbean community, but all cultural backgrounds. All participants agreed that it is important that the police learn and become more culturally aware of different cultural and racially diverse communities because the police serve and protect all individuals within Greater Victoria.

A participant provided a suggestion outside of the topic of police bias. She expressed a concern for the green N which the ministry requires youth to put on cars of new drivers. She said that in listening to her son and her son's friends, the N makes the youth targets for being pulled over for no reason. She stated that her son and his friends are stopped all the time by the GVP.

#### *Interactions with police at community engagement events*

In a discussion regarding experiences participants have had interacting with GVP at community engagement events, a participant noted that she interacted with the GVP at a local Community Partnership Network (CPN) event based on the Theater of the Oppressed. The GVP and community members acted out scenarios where the GVP were in conflict with racially and culturally diverse community members. She noted that she enjoyed participating in the event and learning about how police think. She stated that the GVP contradicted the director of the play at times, but it was great to get to know the officers and their point of view. The participant highlighted that she was baffled when one of the officers boasted that he had one of the highest arrest records on the force. Other participants in the focus group also expressed concern in regards to why an officer would boast having the highest arrest record. The participant who participated at the CPN event then mentioned that the officer shared a story of him growing up in Calgary and being one of the few people of colour in his high school. The officer told the participant that his friend in Calgary became a criminal while he became a police officer. The officer expressed how

easy it can be for anyone to choose a life of crime when they are young. The participant was encouraged by the interaction with the officer, suggesting that it was interesting to be able to humanize officers and get to know more about their lives and families. She mentioned that when we see officers on the street, we dehumanize them.

One participant mentioned that she went to a Music in the Park event where many organizations including the GVP had community engagement tents and displays set up. When walking by the tent, she expressed an interest in meeting the police but was a little fearful in approaching them. She suggested that the GVP make an effort to come out to meet and engage with civilians because if the GVP had stopped her to say hello, she would have been happy to speak with them.

## **Chinese Focus Group**

### *Experiences interacting with Greater Victoria Police*

In a discussion regarding the experiences participants have had with the Greater Victoria Police (GVP), one participant who works at the Canadian Forces base in Esquimalt pointed to an incident of his wallet being stolen from his car. He mentioned he parks his car outside the military housing where he lives and he often does not lock his car because the area is generally crime free. After his wallet was stolen, the participant called the military police who responded quickly. The participant then checked his credit card records online and found that the thief had used his card in a Tim Hortons. The police viewed the video camera from the Tim Hortons and to the participant's delight, the police caught the thief three days later. The participant expressed concern that people will try to steal items from his car in his neighbourhood, but was pleased with the response of the military police. Another participant shared an experience that took place at her apartment building. One night one of the participant's neighbours hosted a very loud party. The police were called and the noise settled down after. The participant mentioned that the police were very nice. Another participant shared an experience of an interaction with police officers in Oak Bay. A friend of hers died of natural causes and she was in shock. Oak Bay police officers quickly arrived and provided the participant with information and advice. The participant praised the police for showing calm and empathy during a time of shock and sadness.

Participants shared their experiences visiting police stations in the Greater Victoria Area to attain criminal record checks. A participant who visited the Victoria police station noted that the police and the community volunteers working there were unfriendly. Another participant who also visited the Victoria police station indicated that the police were very polite and nice. A third participant who visited the Oak Bay police station noted that he and his wife were encouraged by the way they were treated, "*we went to the Oak Bay police station for a criminal record check. We brought our little son and the police gave my son*

*candy and paper and he sat down to draw. In China we never see these kinds of things”.* The participant was also pleased that he was able to engage in friendly conversations with the police that day.

### *Impressions of the GVP*

The majority of participants noted that they feel the GVP are friendly. Some mentioned that they felt the police were adequate. One participant praised the GVP for addressing more concerns of the community in comparison to his experiences with the police of China. He stated that in China, the police address safety while the GVP handle safety and many other concerns as well.

### *Weaknesses*

In a discussion regarding the weaknesses of the Greater Victoria Police, a few participants noted that the GVP reaction time is very slow after calling 911. One participant stated that not everyone has had this experience, but a slow reaction time is a concern amongst many Chinese residents. One participant shared an incident where a Chinese store owner frequently experienced shoplifters stealing from her store. She noted that the GVP did not follow up with the merchant or address the criminal activity. This participant also noted that she would like to be informed of what the protocol of the GVP is when thefts like this happen. She emphasized that Chinese merchant’s frequently experience theft and little is done by the police to address the situation. *“It happens again and again. Other Chinese business people say when the shoplifters come over and they report to police, not much changes. The other owners were afraid to come to this interview because they don’t want the police to know the merchants are saying bad things about them”.* In a separate incident, a participant stated that her landlord entered her apartment late at night without permission. She was extremely frightened so she called the Victoria police. The police arrived but the landlord had disappeared. The participant noted that the police never followed up with her or addressed the situation. She now feels unsafe living in Victoria. The majority of participants expressed a desire to sit down with the GVP to discuss the issue of police inaction, but they were fearful that it might be unsafe for them to challenge the police.

### *Suggestions*

In a discussion regarding suggestions that Chinese residents have of the GVP, one participant noted that she went for a ride along with the Victoria police. She suggested that more civilians be provided with this opportunity so they could understand the importance of police work and the depth of their responsibilities. She also noted that this experience helped her to humanize police officers. Other participants expressed a desire to be given this opportunity. Other participants wish for the GVP to understand the differences in child rearing culture between China and Canada. They mentioned that in China, parents have a lot of power and influence in their families. They have the right to shout at and hit their children if they do not obey the rules. He noted that for many Chinese people, they do not

know that hitting a child in Canada is illegal. Most participants expressed fear that a member of the Chinese community or themselves might unknowingly break the law and get arrested by the police. *“If the child does not obey his parents, the parents have a right to shout at them and hit them, in Chinese culture this is very common. “In Canada this is illegal. We cannot shout at the kids? It’s just a shock for us. My kids, my son? So if somebody does not know this cultural gap, he might shout at his kids at a school play garden. Maybe someone will call 911 and the parents will be arrested. The Greater Victoria police departments should create a guide, especially for Chinese people”.* Participants expressed a need to sit down and discuss the cultural gaps between the Chinese community, the GVP, and legal system of Canada. They expressed a desire for the GVP to create a guide with information about the legal rules in Canada that immigrants can follow.

Participants also expressed a desire for the GVP to make more appearances at Chinese cultural events. All participants indicated a need for increased communication between Chinese residents of Victoria and the GVP. To rectify this communication gap, most participants expressed an interest in the GVP creating a volunteer community liaison position who could act as a bridge between the GVP and Chinese communities of Greater Victoria. They noted that in China, civilian involvement in policing is a big part of the policing system. A participant suggested that a volunteer or co-op position could be set up for international students to fulfill this role. This way important information can be communicated between the GVP and Chinese communities. For example, one participant noted that his wife who is a University of Victoria (UVic) international student, frustratingly travelled all over Greater Victoria before she finally discovered where she needed to go to acquire a criminal records check. Some participants emphasized the importance of setting up a website that provides Chinese residents Canadian cultural, legal and policing information both in Mandarin and Cantonese. They noted that electronic communication and social media communication is an important communication tool because the Chinese community of Greater Victoria is not centralized and live in many areas within Greater Victoria. A participant volunteered to develop communication tools such as this.

A participant suggested that a visual display or bulletin board be created that could assist Greater Victoria residents for whom English is a second language, in distinguishing when the GVP, firefighters or paramedics should be called. The majority of participants agreed to this suggestion. One participant shared an experience of a pumpkin that was thrown through a window at her home. She thought that she should call 911, but her daughter convinced her that it would be too much of a hassle. She mentioned that she is unsure what number to call if this happens again, 911 or the non-emergency number. Most participants noted that they do not know what the non-emergency phone number is and when it is appropriate to use this number instead of 911. One participant who represents a local Chinese church mentioned that the church has an eBook system where they translate

information into Mandarin for those within the community who cannot read English. He suggested that the GVP incorporate this system because it would make the Chinese community very happy. He also suggested that he could broadcast information to his church organization and to the broader Chinese community through social media.

Some participants expressed concern for the safety of Chinese international students at UVic in the wake of sexual assaults on campus. They stated that students are afraid to go out after dark and have questions regarding safety on campus, but do not know who to go to. They said if a Chinese student was to call the GVP to report a sexual assault, they would not know what to say because they would be in shock and also have difficulty communicating because English is their second language. They also noted that Chinese people would be ashamed to call the GVP if they were assaulted this way. The majority of participants asked if there was an emergency button that they could push if they are in trouble while on campus and if a person would respond if this button is pushed. One participant asked if there could be more security and GVP patrolling the campus. Another participant suggested that there be more cameras placed around Greater Victoria so more evidence could be collected about criminal behaviour. She indicated that in comparison to Chinese cities such as Beijing, there are very few cameras in Greater Victoria. One participant responded by noting that in China the authorities can follow you for over one thousand miles because of the multitude of cameras placed throughout the country. Another participant responded by suggesting that there is not enough privacy in China because of the multitude of cameras. Participants responded by noting that for Chinese people, it is very difficult to articulate to the GVP the nature of the crimes committed against them because of the language barrier. Many Chinese people therefore, do not attempt to communicate with the GVP because of this. Cameras therefore, provide more evidence.

A participant indicated that it is unsafe to allow Chinese students to drive in Greater Victoria, even if they have an international drivers licence. He stated Chinese international students are not prepared for driving in Canada because driving in China is very different. He also suggested that the GVP and ICBC come together and provide proper training for Chinese newcomers of road rules.

## **Muslim and African-Caribbean Interviews**

### *Community concerns*

In a discussion regarding the concerns that Muslim and African-Caribbean residents have in relation to the Greater Victoria Police (GVP), the participant indicated that these communities feel that they are unjustly targeted by the GVP. The participant stated that he has proof of these claims. He mentioned that Muslim and African-Caribbean people feel they are over surveyed and scrutinized by the GVP and are stopped and ticketed more than

any other race, *“People within the Muslim and African-Caribbean communities feel that they are under surveillance and undergo far too much scrutiny by the police. We have proof of this. Many feel they are excessively targeted because of their religion and race and given excessive penalties compared to all other communities in Greater Victoria. This treatment is not unique to only police officers, but trickles into the rest of the judicial system as well”*. The participant also noted that it is problematic that the GVP would rather arrest and charge ethno-cultural communities instead of using positive intervention techniques to resolve disputes.

The participant indicated that he receives complaints from Muslim and African-Caribbean youth who claim the GVP stop them for no apparent reason while they walk on the sidewalk. He noted that these actions are a serious concern for the Muslim and African-Caribbean communities. The participant further indicated that there are not enough racially diverse police officers within the police jurisdictions of Greater Victoria, adding to feelings of mistrust of police within his communities.

#### *Negative experiences*

In discussing negative experiences of the GVP, the participant indicated that a member of the Asian community informed him of a negative interaction with a Saanich police officer who has since transferred to the Victoria Police Department. The participant noted that the Asian community member was stopped by an officer who then charged her with operating a mobile phone while driving. She pleaded with the officer that she was not on the phone, but was given a ticket. She noted that the officer was condescending and arrogant in the way he spoke. She decided to plead innocent and disputed the ticket in court the participant indicated. During the court proceedings, she requested that the court review her phone records in order to prove that she was not speaking on the phone prior to being pulled over. She also submitted to the court the audio of the conversation between herself and the officer that she recorded the night she was charged. The officer was unaware that his conversation was recorded that night. The audio revealed the officer calling the woman a racial slur when he began walking back to his squad car. The traffic ticket was dropped by the court. The participant mentioned that he feels the officer should not be working within any police jurisdiction because of his actions that day.

The participant noted that one of the challenges the GVP have in gaining trust with the public is that the GVP are becoming paramilitary in the way they carry themselves and operate. He mentioned that the GVP have a bond in which they stick together and cover up for each other even if they do something unlawful.

#### *Positive Experiences*

In a discussion regarding the strengths of the GVP, the participant noted that he has had good experiences in most of his interactions with the GVP. He stated that the officers he



has met have been very personable and nice. He also indicated that the officers he has encountered during traffic stops in Greater Victoria have been courteous.

#### *Best practices in other police jurisdictions*

In a discussion regarding best practices in building trust between racialized communities and the police that exist outside of Greater Victoria, the participant noted that in almost every country he has lived in or visited, he has discovered a positive way to approach the police. He stated that he strongly believes the negative aspects of police culture can change because the police are human beings who sincerely wish to do a good job for the greater good of society. He mentioned that it is important to treat police officers with respect, even if you are scared or do not like them. He stated that through his experience working in other countries, he has learned that when someone is in disagreement with another person, it is important to avoid humiliating them. One should instead engage in a positive way. He pointed to an example of visiting his friend in Calgary. The participant and his friend exited a restaurant to see a police car sitting in the parking lot, seemingly watching them. The participant's friend mentioned that the police always come into the neighbourhood because the community is Muslim and the police think Muslims are terrorists. The participant's friend told him not to look at the officers because it will raise suspicion. Ignoring the suggestion of his friend, the participant walked over to the police officers who were sitting in their car and said hello. The participant mentioned to the officers that he wished to prove to his friend that the police officers of Calgary are friendly. The participant and the officers engaged in a positive conversation thereafter. The officer expressed delight that the participant came and spoke with him.

#### *Strengths of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee*

In a discussion regarding the participant's impressions of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC), the participant noted that the GVPDAC is making gains in breaking down barriers between diverse communities and the GVP. He indicated that Muslim and African-Caribbean communities in Greater Victoria are beginning to feel that they are able to approach the GVP with concerns. This increase in trust is in large part because of the efforts of the GVPDAC the participant noted. He also mentioned that trust between the GVP and Muslim and African-Caribbean residents of Greater Victoria is essential if the GVP wish to be effective in their jobs.

The participant noted that the GVPDAC is doing great work in attempting to address bias within the GVP. He highlighted that together with the GVP, the GVPDAC has supported implicit bias training which creates bonds and addresses power imbalances. He noted that the GVPDAC is just a great example that is not unique only to Greater Victoria, but is something the GVP and the GVPDAC can be very proud of. The participant also indicated that the GVPDAC is continuously engaging and building positive relationships with Muslim residents of Greater Victoria. For example, an important custom at Mosques is to

remove ones shoes at the entrance. The GVP have respected this custom even though wearing shoes is an important component of the police uniform. The participant noted that in Muslim culture, men and women are sometimes separated within the mosque. During current engagement events between Masjid Al-Iman mosque members and the GVP and the GVPDAC, the interactions between men and women have become a more relaxed in comparison to previous years. The Masjid Al-Iman community is therefore becoming more comfortable with the GVP and GVPDAC members the participant highlighted. The participant further stated that the GVPDAC continues to build trust with Muslim residents of Greater Victoria. He noted that if trust is difficult to achieve, do not let it discourage you.

#### *Weaknesses of the GVPDAC*

Discussing areas where improvements can be made within the GVPDAC, the participant mentioned that most GVP officers that attend Global Café engagement events between the GVP and Muslim and African-Caribbean peoples are not the rank and file officers who interact with these communities on the street. He indicated that the rank and file officers are the ones that Muslim and African-Caribbean residents of Greater Victoria have had bad experiences with. The rank and file officers therefore, need to come to the events so trust can be built. The participant stated that he is positive that trust with these officers can be achieved, but he is unsure of how to reach it.

The participant indicated that the GVPDAC needs to establish alternative ways to effectively communicate to the public the developments that culminate from the Global Café engagement events. The Global Café community engagement format provided Muslim and African-Caribbean residents of Greater Victoria a series of questions, asking their impressions of the strengths, weaknesses and areas where the GVP need to improve. A subsequent report of recommendations is submitted to the area Chiefs. The participant mentioned that one of the challenges of the reports is effectively distributing the reports to Muslim and African-Caribbean people of Greater Victoria. He indicated that there are organizations such as the African Heritage Association of Vancouver Island (AHAVI) which could submit the reports to its members, but AHAVI does not represent all African-Caribbean people of the Greater Victoria Area. He also noted that there are communities within the African community who will not participate in AHAVI events and initiatives. The participant further indicated that African people are not one homogenous community. Africa is as diverse in culture and nations as Europe.

#### *Cultural customs to be aware of*

In a discussion regarding cultural customs that GVP and the GVPDAC need to be aware of when engaging with Muslim and African-Caribbean communities of the Greater Victoria Area, the participant emphasized the importance of understanding and respecting people who choose to be Muslim. He suggested that the GVPDAC and the GVP Victoria do not shake the hands of Muslim women. He noted that this custom is not just unique to

Muslims, but fundamentalist Christians as well. He also mentioned that some fundamentalist Christians do not allow women to walk in the same line as men, and that women of other faith practices wear head scarfs, not just Muslim women. The participant also emphasized that not long ago in the Western world, it was unacceptable for women and men to greet each other by hugging, kissing or shaking hands. He indicated that in many Asian cultures, bowing is a sign of respect and looking into the eyes of the opposite sex is perceived as a sign of disrespect. The participant therefore suggested that it is important for the GVP to understand that if someone does not look at them in the eye, it does not mean they are trying to hide something. Avoiding eye contact for many Muslim and African people is a sign of respect.

The participant indicated that many Muslim and African-Caribbean people come from countries that are led by oppressive regimes. Many therefore, fear police and authorities in Greater Victoria, not because of the gun they hold, but because of the trauma they experienced by the authorities of their former countries. He emphasized that in order for the GVP to gain the respect of many Muslim and African-Caribbean peoples, they have to earn it. The participant also stated that the GVPDAC and the GVP should recognize and appreciate that Muslim people of Greater Victoria put a lot of time and effort into hosting the GVP at engagement events in and outside of the mosque. Muslim leaders take a lot of time to convince Muslim community members of Greater Victoria to attend the events, *“Do you know it takes a lot of work for the Muslim community every time they invite groups such as the GVPDAC to the mosque for an engagement event? The leaders at the mosque invest a lot of their time convincing mosque members one by one”*.

### *Suggestions*

In a discussion regarding areas where the GVPDAC can improve, the participant pointed to the importance of creating effective communication tools that can inform broader audiences of the GVPDAC’s achievements and initiatives. Currently the only communication tool at the GVPDAC’s disposal are the reports which follow the Global Café events. These reports are created primarily for the Greater Victoria police Chiefs. The participant noted that the ultimate goal of the GVPDAC is to bring accountability to the GVP in relation to the communities they serve. The participant also indicated that grievances that Muslim and African-Caribbean people have with the GVP are primarily with the rank and file, not just the Chiefs of the GVP. The participant therefore, noted that a report needs to be created and distributed to the rank and file police officers who do not attend Global Café events. The report could possibly be an audio or video presentation, and should be administered by a GVP sergeant during police meetings the participant suggested. He emphasized the importance of trying to reach members of the Muslim and African-Caribbean communities who do not attend or know about the Global Café engagement events. He also indicated that even if the GVPDAC was able to distribute the Global Café reports to everyone, many members will be unable to understand them because they are long, complex and full of

academic language. *“If we send the Global Café report to the communities, they might not even read it. They might also be unsettled if they were not invited to the event. So there is a lot of work to be done there. And again, is the written report the most effective tool? In our communities we know that many members are illiterate. Many within the community, even if they know how to read and write, they may toss the Global Café report after reading one paragraph because of the academic language. We need to find a different medium to engage with them. In order to find a different medium, you have to go back to the communities, talk to them and listen to their perspectives regarding what the best way is to communicate with them”.*

In discussing safety concerns of Muslim peoples of Greater Victoria, the participant suggested that the GVP and the GVPDAC be aware of the climate of Islamophobia that exists in Canada and the world today. No Muslim is safe in any area of the world. He also pointed to the over surveillance of Muslims by the GVP and CSIS as being harmful to the safety of Muslim people of Greater Victoria and harmful to the relationship between Muslim people and the GVP. He noted that globally, Muslims are being watched and scrutinized simply for speaking with someone who is under investigation. Many lives of Muslim people around the world have become nightmares because of being falsely arrested, jailed and tortured. He noted that this type of treatment can also fall to someone who is a friend of someone who is Muslim.

## **Aboriginal Interviews**

### *Negative experiences*

The interview participant is an employee at the Native Friendship Center (VNFC). In a discussion regarding the experiences the participant and the community she represents have had with the GVP, she indicated that her experiences working with the GVP in a professional capacity have not always been great. She noted that it has taken nearly ten years to build trustful relationships with some of the officers within the Greater Victoria Area. She also stated that due to the past traumatic colonial history, many Aboriginal peoples of Greater Victoria do not trust the GVP. She therefore accompanies and supports Aboriginal clients if they are reporting a crime, charged with a crime or being interviewed by victim services at the police department. However, she credited the Victoria police department for allowing her to sit beside and hold her clients hands for support and reassurance when visiting the station, a practice that is not normally approved of.

The participant mentioned that she has spoken to members of both Saanich and Victoria Police departments about some of her client’s negative experiences with police officers. Some of these experiences include allegations of racism and unjustified physical violence inflicted onto Aboriginal people by officers. She wanted the GVP to know that Aboriginal people are going to hold the GVP accountable for their actions, but also suggested that the

VNFC wishes to communicate with the GVP, even if it is felt by the VNFC that the GVP were unlawful in their actions. The participant provided an example of a fifteen year old boy who was punched in the face by a police officer even though there were six fully armed police officers present. The participant felt the police could have approached the situation in a nonviolent way considering there were six officers present. She also emphasized that the only reason the fifteen year old boy had the courage to come forward was because of the support of the VNFC. She reiterated that Aboriginal people are fearful of the GVP and are often reluctant to reveal instances of police malpractice.

The participant pointed to another incident where a downtown Victoria merchant informed her about how Aboriginal people are mistreated by the police. The police intervened to a disturbance downtown involving an Aboriginal person and non-Aboriginal persons. The merchant informed the participant that the police immediately assumed the Aboriginal person was at fault, but this was not the case. He furthermore mentioned that he felt the police acted with bias and that overall Aboriginal people are not liked and frequently discriminated by the police and the public in downtown Victoria. The participant wished for the police to understand that Aboriginal people are not uneducated and uninformed as they have stereotypically been perceived to be by the GVP. She stated that Aboriginal people are becoming well educated, sometimes more so than the people who stereotype them. She furthermore feels that the increasing rates of education of Aboriginal people is perceived as a threat to many people including police officers, *“I think one of the things the police need to understand is that we are no longer the uneducated Indians from reserves. I think some people in society feel that this is a threat. We are becoming well educated and sometimes it makes people uncomfortable. I think the same applies to police officers. They forget that we are keeping up with them and they need to rethink their image of what a First Nation’s person is in today’s society”*.

#### *Positive experiences*

In a discussion regarding positive experiences the participant and her community has had with the GVP, she stated that there have been incidences where Aboriginal women who were in violent relationships and needed assistance in collecting their things from their partner’s residence after leaving them. With the presence and protection of West Shore officers, the participant accompanied her clients in collecting personal things. The participant noted that she finds most officers to be helpful, crediting them for their support in these situations. The participant also stated that the VNFC has developed great rapport with officers at the Saanich police department which includes officers from the bicycle patrol. She noted that the goal of the VNFC has been to create an environment where clients and visitors of the centre are comfortable with the police. She feels the centre has been successful in building relationships between police officers, Aboriginal youth, and adults from the VNFC men’s warrior group. *“The police are engaging with our youth in amazing ways. Our youth are very comfortable having them around. We also have an*

*officer who comes to our men's warrior group. Our men's warrior group is attended by First Nations men who have either engaged in or have been victims of violence. The men are becoming comfortable with the police attending, this has been our goal for the VNFC. For our youth particularly, we want them to know that if they get into trouble, there are good people on the police force who they can feel comfortable in calling. We do not want to maintain the silence that we have historically had with police officers. When we are comfortable with police officers, it trickles down to our families".*

The participant expressed gratitude that committee members of the GVPDAC who are GVP officers, and a selection of police officers from the Greater Victoria Area are making a genuine effort in understanding the protocols and unique cultural customs of Aboriginal communities. She noted that she has received positive feedback from area Band Chiefs. The participant suggested that if the police approach Aboriginal people of Greater Victoria with an open gesture of friendship and express a genuine interest in learning more about the culture, Aboriginal people will be very giving and open in developing a relationship.

#### *Community concerns and suggestions for the GVP*

In a discussion regarding the concerns Aboriginal peoples have of the GVP, the participant mentioned that Aboriginal people will hold the GVP accountable for actions that are bias and unjust. However, she mentioned that the VNFC wishes to work with and have open communication with the GVP. She hopes the GVP will approach Aboriginal communities with calm in comparison to how they have operated in the past, but she also expressed that she has not been a police officer and therefore does not understand why the appearance of force is necessary in certain situations. The participant noted that the VNFC is willing to assist and be peace makers in situations of an arrest of an Aboriginal person, or if the GVP are going to be working with Aboriginal families. She does not wish to see Aboriginal people unnecessarily harmed. She also expressed a wish for Aboriginal youth to understand that if they get into trouble, there are good people within the GVP that the youth could trust and feel comfortable in calling. The participant emphasized that she does not wish to maintain the historical silence that Aboriginal people have had with the police. She noted that when Aboriginal adults are comfortable with GVP officers, it trickles down to the youth and into the coming generations. She pointed to the importance of the GVP respecting the people they serve no matter what race they are, and recommended that the GVP make a strong effort in listening to and empathizing with the civilians they interact with. The participant noted that she is appreciative of the efforts of Saanich police in achieving this aim. The VNFC is currently trying to build this connection with the Victoria police department as well she indicated.

The participant stated that one of the concerns that Aboriginal people have when interacting with the GVP is their body language. She noted that the GVP look intimidating in the way they stand, including the way they position their hands on their hips. She suggested that

depending on the situation, the GVP could relax their stance and posture and extend a hand in showing appreciation and respect when interacting with Aboriginal people. The participant furthermore mentioned that there is a common misconception that Aboriginal people do not like to make eye contact with others. Aboriginal people however, appreciate when the people they interact with are relaxed, make eye contact and speak with sincerity. Above all, she noted that Aboriginal people simply wish to be recognized and acknowledged. She provided an example of an experience of attending a meeting at the University of Victoria. The meeting opened with introductions without acknowledging the traditional territory. It was not until it was the participants turn to introduce herself at this meeting that she personally acknowledged the territory. The participant noted however, that although there is room for improvement, the GVP are beginning to acknowledge traditional territories at meetings and events.

The participant indicated that developing relationships with GVP officers is a new phenomenon for most Aboriginal communities. She noted that although there are Aboriginal people who are willing to build relationships with the GVP, there are many communities that are unwilling, including isolated reserve communities. She also indicated that there are Aboriginal people who live on the streets in downtown Victoria, but do not originate from the Greater Victoria area. She stated that these residents do not have the same understanding of the GVP in comparison to Aboriginal people who have roots in the area. These individuals are therefore a little more vulnerable because they may be unaware of which GVP officers they can trust if they are in need of support on the street. The participant stated that many homeless Aboriginal residents are very suspicious of others and it can be difficult for them to trust the GVP and to visit the VNFC if they are in need of support. She pointed to the VNFC as being a place where homeless Aboriginal people can go to if they are in need of a shower, food, clean clothing and emotional support.

The participant also indicated that a lot of researchers come to the VNFC and attempt to frame Aboriginal history in a way that is patronising and offensive. She indicated that researchers often do not have intentions in learning about Aboriginal history and culture. She also wished to emphasize the importance of not assuming that it is appropriate to hug Aboriginal people. The participant mentioned that it is sometimes ok, but a handshake is more appropriate.

#### *VNFC Client Support Structure*

In discussing how the VNFC supports Aboriginal residents of Greater Victoria in navigating the justice system, the participant indicated that she values transparency when working with her clients. The participant noted that the GVP may feel that because she is Aboriginal, she may withhold information from the GVP in order to better support her clients. She emphasized that although she maintains a high level of support and

confidentiality with her clients, she values accountability and emphasizes to her clients that she will not withhold criminal activity from the GVP if her clients have broken the law.

The participant indicated that when a young Aboriginal person is charged with a crime, older family members will often come to the VNFC for support. The VNFC will sometimes connect clients with an Aboriginal court worker who will work with the family in developing an understanding of the court system before they enter the court room. The VNFC also connects clients with a lawyer if they are in need of one. If a young offender comes to the VNFC for support but is not a client of the VNFC, the participant mentioned that she will ask this person to begin getting involved with the VNFC's youth department. The participant noted that there is an officer who is on the police bicycle patrol who has developed rapport with the youth team and can also be a support for youth clients.

#### *Addressing police bias through hiring practices*

In describing methods of addressing institutional biases and exclusion within the GVP, the participant pointed to the importance of hiring Aboriginal people. She stated that Aboriginal people are now employed within the government of Canada and the government of British Columbia, emphasizing that twenty years ago there would not have been many Aboriginal people working for the government. She furthermore indicated that the federal government has more Aboriginal people heading departments than ever before. She noted that she feels the Truth and Reconciliation report has been instrumental in these developments because it has brought attention to the inequalities across the country.

#### *Room for improvement GVPDAC Global Café*

In a discussion regarding areas where improvements can be made in the GVPDAC Global Café format, the participant noted that she would like for the GVPDAC and the GVP to develop relationships with the communities they are attempting to engage with prior to an official engagement event. The participant also mentioned that when she met with diverse communities during the Global Café events, she had little understanding of the hierarchies of the communities. This included not knowing who the leaders were and what their role was within the community. She suggested that the GVPDAC prepares for the events by better informing its members of the cultural customs of the people they meet. The participant suggested that there should be ice breaker meetings established prior to the engagement events in order to build trust and comfort with one another. She also emphasized the importance of continuing working with the communities prior to the Global Café events. She suggested following up three to six months after the Global Café and ask the communities if they felt they were heard, if they feel that their relationship with the GVP has improved, and what more the GVPDAC can do to build better communication and trust between the GVP and their community.



## Chinese Interviews

### *Negative experiences*

In a discussion regarding negative experiences that the Chinese community of Greater Victoria have had with the GVP, the participant pointed to an incident where the Victoria police did not follow up with a Chinese merchant after his store was robbed. She stated that during the stores open hours of operation, a cash register was stolen. The participant indicated that the police responded, but did not find the thief, and the register and money were not returned. She noted that the merchant is disappointed with the police because they did not follow up with him regarding if they were still searching for the thief. The participant pointed to another incident where a merchant in China town was consistently robbed by the same individual. She mentioned that the merchant called the police multiple times and has shown camera footage of the suspect to the police, but the police have not caught the person. The merchant expressed that financially, she cannot afford to be robbed anymore.

### *Positive experiences*

In a discussion regarding positive experiences Chinese residents of Greater Victoria have had with the GVP, the participant pointed to an incident where a Chinese merchant's store window was broken by a vandal after store hours. The merchant received a call late at night from the Victoria police informing him of his broken window. The police then protected the merchants store by waiting in front of the store until the merchant arranged for the window to be repaired. The participant said that she was delighted and surprised that the Victoria police would show this level of dedication. She also emphasized that the police of her hometown of China would not show this type of dedication, *"My Tia Chi instructor one day told me that someone threw a rock through his store window around two or three o'clock in the morning. I was impressed to hear that the police stayed at his store until he was able to find someone to fix his window. I said oh my god! It was very surprising to me. If this was to happen in my hometown in China, I don't think the police would have shown such dedication. This is the good side of the police in Victoria"*. The participant also shared a positive experience of her going for a Ride Along with officers from the Victoria Police Department. She stated that the experience was so enlightening that she wished she would have booked a half-day session rather than just two hours. The participant furthermore noted that she learned a lot about the police and their duties including the process that follows a 911 call. She mentioned that civilians have many assumptions about the police and their duties, but do not truly know the depth of the responsibilities of the police unless they are able to go for a Ride Along. She noted that the officers that hosted her that night stated that police work can be as emotional as being a social worker. The participant indicated that officers in downtown Victoria spend a lot of time working with homeless people who have mental health concerns.

### *Community concerns and suggestions for the GVP*

In a discussion regarding how the Canadian justice system differs from the justice system in China, the participant pointed to the unfamiliarity of domestic violence legal rules in Canada as an area her community struggles with. She noted that in China, the police do not intervene in domestic disputes because family disputes are considered private, *“Because we have many Chinese newcomers in Victoria, most are unaware that domestic violence is illegal in Canada. In our country sometimes people argue or fight at home. In our culture fighting and arguing at home is your personal business. But here it’s different. You get charged like a criminal. The consequences are devastating to Chinese newcomers”*. The participant indicated that Chinese residents of Greater Victoria have been criminally charged because they are unaware that domestic violence is illegal in Canada. They are also unaware of how the justice system works. She pointed to an example of a Chinese resident who thought his criminal charge would be dismissed if he pleaded guilty for a crime. The resident now has a criminal record and is having difficulty finding employment because most employers do criminal record checks. The participant furthermore mentioned that most Chinese residents of Greater Victoria are scared of the police. She noted that the police uniform and gun make the GVP appear intimidating.

The participant suggested that Chinese newcomers need to be provided with education regarding the structure and rules of the Canadian justice system. This way they can take steps in avoiding getting into trouble with the law. Furthermore, if Chinese newcomers are better informed of the rules of the justice system, they will better understand their rights and legal obligations if they are criminally charged with an offense. The participant also indicated that most Chinese newcomers are very shy and have few friends to support them if they get into trouble. She mentioned that unlike many newcomers who come from countries where English is widely spoken, most Chinese newcomers do not begin learning English until they arrive in Canada. Furthermore, for people who speak Mandarin and Cantonese, learning Western languages such as English is very challenging. The participant suggested that domestic violence awareness training program that the Saanich Police has offered in the past is an important resource which her community should have access to.

The participant indicated that Chinese international students have little knowledge of traffic rules in Canada and need to be trained before getting behind the wheel of a car. She mentioned driving regulations in Canada are different than China. The participant frequently receives calls from Chinese students who have been charged for driving offences such as drinking and driving, texting while driving and speeding and traffic accidents. Sometimes the expense of these charges can cost students thousands of dollars. The participant requested that the universities of Greater Victoria inform international students of the rules of driving in Canada during their school orientations.

### *Global Café Suggestions*

In a discussion regarding areas where the GVPDAC Global Café format can be improved, the participant suggested that the engagement events be held not only at the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria (ICA), but in neutral locations. She mentioned that many clients of the Victoria Immigrant and Refugee Center Society will attend the events if they are not always located at ICA. The participant also suggested that the events should be open to everybody, not just clients of ICA. She feels that the main concept of the Global Café events is diversity inclusion. It is therefore discriminatory to exclude other organizations. The participant also indicated that after attending a Global Café event, she was disappointed to discover that photos of ICA participants were prominent within the Global Café report, but her photo and others were excluded. She also suggested that the engagement events be hosted by different communities so more diverse people of Greater Victoria feel more inclined to participate. She furthermore mentioned that when she was a member of the GVPDAC, she noticed that the diverse communities that often host the events do not play a strong enough role in organizing them. She also indicated that other intercultural organizations of Greater Victoria need to play a role in organizing the Global Café events, not just ICA.

## **6. DISCUSSION**

The objective of this project was to understand the gaps in trust between the Greater Victoria Police (GVP) and Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria, and offer recommendations to the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) on how to fill these gaps. It aimed to provide a deeper and more thorough understanding of the positive and negative experiences that these four groups have in their interactions with the GVP and the GVPDAC. The findings from the interviews and literature provided insight of the major themes which both impede the trust building process and positive experiences between these groups and the GVP and the GVPDAC, as well as possible solutions that may address barriers in trust. This chapter is organized by specific themes arising from the research. The chapter begins with a discussion about the negative experiences and perceptions of the GVP by Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria, followed by community concerns and recommendations, and positive experiences and perceptions.

### **Negative Experiences and Perceptions**

#### *Malpractice and inaction*

The findings recognized negative perceptions and malpractice allegations of the Greater Victoria Police (GVP) by Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese groups as a significant barrier to relationship building and trust. Aboriginal participants accused the GVP of mocking and humiliating Aboriginal people, sometimes in a sexually exploitative manner. Participants indicated that the GVP have physically assaulted Aboriginal youth despite officers being fully armed and substantially outnumbering them. Aboriginal participants criticized officers in how they position their hands near their firearms while interacting with Aboriginal people, noting that their posture is intimidating. They also expressed bitterness of being denied the name and badge number of officers during interactions with them. Aboriginal participants also highlighted negative experiences of GVP abusing their power in jurisdictions outside of Greater Victoria such as Nanaimo. They felt that the GVP abuse both their white privilege and power given to them as officers. Aboriginal community leaders furthermore noted that there are seldom positive examples of trust building initiatives and improved relationships between Aboriginal people and the GVP. These findings were consistent with the literature which found that Aboriginal peoples are over-policed, experience high levels of racism, sexism and discrimination by the police and are twice as more likely to have low confidence in the police of Canada than non-Aboriginal people (Environics Institute, 2010, p. 99; Human Rights Watch HRW, 2013, p. 8; Palmater, 2016, pp. 253-254; Rudin, 2005, p. 1).

Similarly, the findings indicated that African-Caribbean residents feel that the power imbalance between themselves and police is abused by the GVP. The findings noted that the GVP are cocky, patronizing and unhelpful and have punched and kicked African-Caribbean residents. African-Caribbean participants indicated that they therefore feel unsafe calling and interacting with the GVP because they feel they have preconceived biases. These biases are influenced by the predominantly white racial demographic of Greater Victoria and the rise of paramilitarism within the GVP. Participants stated that the GVP should therefore be more conscientious and respectful in the way they carry themselves because African-Caribbean people are fearful of officers and perceive the GVP as a danger to their safety. The findings also suggested that the GVP need to be less scripted in the way they interact with the public. Respondents noted that the GVP should be initiators and leaders in ethical and respectful behaviour when interacting with the public because their role is to serve the public, not the other way around. This is congruent with the literature which found that simply driving a car or walking down a street can become a volatile activity for African-Caribbean Canadians. It has become more problematic because of the increasing hierarchal and militaristic Canadian policing culture (Tanovich, 2006, pp. 4; Tator & Henry, 2006, pp. 91-201).

The findings indicated that negative perceptions and malpractice accusations of the GVP were based almost entirely on racism of African-Caribbean and Aboriginal residents, while with respect to both Muslim and Chinese residents, negative perceptions and malpractice accusations were based on police inaction. In discussing hate crimes and hate speech, Muslim participants indicated that Muslims have been subjected to verbal and physical Islamophobic assaults by residents of Greater Victoria. Participants identified Muslim women as being the predominant target of these incidents because they are often dressed in traditional Islamic garments. Respondents stated that they have called the GVP to report these incidents, sometimes numerous, but the GVP do not follow up. The findings note that Muslims have therefore become resentful of the GVP and will no longer seek support from the GVP because they do not trust their concerns will be addressed. Similarly, the findings indicate that Chinese residents of Greater Victoria felt resentful of the GVP for not following up with instances of theft of Chinese merchants. They noted that some merchants have been robbed multiple times, leaving them in precarious financial situations.

Another similar theme which Muslim and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria share is their distrust of the GVP due to negative experiences they have had with the police of the countries they emigrated from. Both Chinese and Muslim participants indicated that they are often reluctant to call the GVP for assistance because of this. This was reflected within the literature which found that China's historical legacy of oppressive political leaders and rising police corruption has led to the distrust of the public police (Jiao, 2001, pp. 171-174; Wu & Sun, 2009, p. 175).

### *Racial and faith profiling*

Profiling and over-surveillance were consistent themes within the findings of Muslim, Aboriginal and African-Caribbean groups of this project. They indicated that African-Caribbean residents feel that they are unjustly targeted, stopped, ticketed and maltreated by the GVP and are profiled at a greater rate than any other race. These findings were consistent with the literature which found that African-Caribbean Canadians are far more likely to be stopped by police, arrested and charged in comparison to whites who have engaged in similar activity (Wortley & Tanner, 2003, pp. 373-375; Tanovich 2006, p. 2; Halifax Regional GVP Report, 2016, pp. 2-5; Wortley, 2005, pp. 74-85). Similarly, the findings indicated that Aboriginal residents of Greater Victoria are regularly profiled by the GVP because of their race and regardless of criminal history. This is highlighted within the literature which indicates that Aboriginal people are stopped by police, overcharged, detained, held without bail and sentenced to jail at a far greater rate than any other racial group in Canada (Palmater, 2016, pp. 253-254; Tanovich, 2006, pp. 1-2).

While the findings recognized that African-Caribbean and Aboriginal people are profiled based entirely on race, Muslims were found to be profiled based on religion. Muslim participants indicated that they experience high levels of surveillance and profiling by the GVP and that they have been tracked, followed, solicited for information, and had their phones wiretapped by the RCMP and CSIS. The findings noted that Muslims have become apprehensive in working with the GVP because they feel the GVP views their mosque and its members as a training ground for terrorists who withhold criminal information. This is congruent with the literature which found that since the 2001 attack on the United States, police and federal agencies in Canada have been given increased authority to conduct secret investigations of Muslims in Canada. This has led to ruined reputations, lost businesses and lost careers of Muslim Canadians (Bahdi, 2003, pp. 299-305; Helly, 2004; National Council of Canadian Muslims, 2015, pp. 5-6; Poynting and Perry, 2007, pp. 152-164).

### *Residential schools, foster care and distrust of the GVP*

A consistent theme identified solely within the findings of the Aboriginal groups was the distrust of the GVP because the role the RCMP played in apprehending children during the residential school era. Participants who were residential school survivors indicated that they still experience extreme psychological distress because of their experiences of being taken by the police and being placed in residential schools. The findings found that fear, lack of trust and anger of the police that ensued because of the police role in the residential school era has been passed down through the generations, negatively impacting Aboriginal people's perceptions of the GVP. Respondents stated that they blame the GVP for the breakup of their families, cultures and parenting capacities which culminated because of the residential school system. Participants also emphasized that the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children within the current foster care system is merely a continuation of the police role within the residential school era. This is congruent with the literature which

identifies Aboriginal people as perceiving the police as a negative authority figure that forcefully removes Aboriginal people from their communities through the residential schools system, mass adoption and social exclusion (Cao, 2014, pp. 502-503; Human Rights Watch, 2013, pp. 29-30).

#### *Colonial legacy and distrust of the GVP*

In addition to residential schools, the findings indicated that Aboriginal people distrust the GVP because they continue to harbour similar racist and superior attitudes as when the first settlers arrived. They indicated that the GVP does not wish to take the time to get to know Aboriginal people and are afraid of Aboriginal culture. Respondents further noted that relationships between the GVP and Aboriginal people will not improve unless the GVP take ownership of current instances of misconduct within their jurisdictions, and ownership of the injustices inflicted onto Aboriginal communities by the older generation of officers. Participants further indicated that the GVP continue to treat Aboriginal people like they are delinquent, inferior and guests on Aboriginal traditional lands. This is highlighted within the literature which found that the historic use of police to suppress Aboriginal land claims has led to over-policing and the perception among police officers that Aboriginal people are prone to criminal behaviour (Rudin, 2005, p. 1). The literature also indicates that law enforcement organizations should take accountability for the intergenerational effects of the Indian Act because its legacy is still evident within Canadian legislation and policies, perpetuating paternalistic Western expectations for self-determination (Brascoupe & Walters, 2009, pp. 13-30).

### **Community Concerns and Suggestions**

#### *Language barrier*

The findings recognized that for Muslim and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria, English language comprehension poses a challenge in building trust and confidence with the GVP. Muslim and Chinese participants indicated that many Muslim and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria are illiterate and therefore have difficulty reading Global Café engagement event reports. The Global Café engagement events provide diverse residents of Greater Victoria including Muslim and Chinese residents a series of questions, asking their impressions of the strengths, weaknesses and areas where the GVP can improve. A subsequent report of the findings is then sent to diverse residents of Greater Victoria and the GVP. The findings of this study suggest that the academic language of the reports is too complex to interpret for many community members.

The findings further indicated that because many Chinese residents have difficulty understanding English, they are fearful to engage and seek assistance from the GVP when they are in need. This communication gap is worrisome for Chinese international students who feel vulnerable to the increase in sexual assaults at the University of Victoria in 2016.

This is congruent with the literature which found that transitional challenges including language and cultural barriers is leading to social isolation and health problems such as chronic stress among Chinese Canadians (Lee, Fong & Solowoniuk, 2007, pp. 1-7). Participants recommended that the GVP appoint a community liaison that could act as a bridge between the GVP and community, as well as the addition of more surveillance cameras placed around Victoria.

#### *Need for legal education and information*

The need for legal education and information was a common theme among Muslim, Chinese and Aboriginal groups. Muslim and Chinese respondents indicated that many residents within their communities are new immigrants and unaware of the legal rules and customs of Canada. These residents have been subjected to criminal charges because of being unaware of these legal rules. Respondents expressed a need for the GVP to offer domestic violence awareness programs, similar to the program offered by the Saanich Police Department. The literature found that for Chinese families, adjusting to Canada is challenging because in China physical punishment is expected by parents and elders. The family home is considered private and domestic violence is not acknowledged as an issue by the state (Bau, Ling, So & Qin, 2008, p. 3).

Chinese residents of Greater Victoria expressed a wish to be provided with the GVP non-emergency number and to understand the appropriate time to call the GVP, fire department or paramedic. When discussing GVP inaction involving theft of Chinese merchants, Chinese participants wished to be informed of the GVP's legal obligations when thefts happen. When discussing GVP malpractice, Aboriginal participants expressed a desire for the GVP to provide Aboriginal communities education in the legal authorities and responsibilities of police officers and the legal rights of civilians. They also expressed a need for an independent board where they can safely voice concerns of GVP malpractice.

#### *Safety and protection*

Safety and a need for GVP protection were consistent themes in the findings of Muslim, Aboriginal and Chinese groups. Muslim residents frequently receive Islamophobic and racist slurs and have been physically assaulted by residents of Greater Victoria. Respondents explained that Muslim women are often the primary target of these assaults because they dress in traditional Islamic garments. Participants pleaded for increased protection from the GVP. These findings were consistent with the literature which found that in many jurisdictions of Canada, Muslims experience greater levels of hate crimes in comparison to any other racialized, cultural or religious groups (Statistics Canada, 2015, pp. 17-18). The literature also noted that as much as 95% of hate crimes in Canada go underreported, suggesting that Muslims are considerably vulnerable (Department of Justice Canada, 1995, pp. vii-20; Perry & Poynting, 2006, p. 2). Muslim residents are furthermore significantly vulnerable because many are new immigrants. Participants indicated that the



GVP need to be educated of the climate of Islamophobia in the world and in Greater Victoria so they are better able to understand and support Muslim residents. Participants also expressed a desire for the GVP to exhibit empathy and restraint when charging or arresting Muslim immigrants. They mentioned that many Muslim immigrants have few family members and friends to support them if they get into trouble with the law and do not drive or speak English. The sudden removal of a husband and father from a home may have devastating implications for the family members left behind.

Chinese residents are concerned about the incidences of sexual assaults of Chinese international students at the University of Victoria. Participants noted that students are fearful to go out after dark, are unaware of where to support regarding safety and are ashamed to call the GVP if they are assaulted. Participants suggested that there be an increase in security presence on campus and students should be informed of the location of emergency buttons. Chinese residents also feel that it is unsafe for Chinese international students to drive in Greater Victoria unless they are trained for driving in Canada. They have been charged with speeding, texting and drinking and driving resulting in heavy fines. Chinese international students therefore need the GVP and ICBC to provide drivers training if they are to drive in Greater Victoria. Finally, a major theme within the findings is that Chinese respondents wish for the GVP to take greater steps in protecting Chinese merchants from thieves.

Safety and protection requests and suggestions by Aboriginal participants were minimal. A few participants however, requested that the GVP provide Aboriginal elders and leaders information of the different illegal street drugs and the street jargon which identifies these drugs. Aboriginal leaders feel that if they are better informed of the drugs on the street, they will be better able to protect Aboriginal youth.

### *Recruitment*

Police recruitment is a barrier in building trust and relationships with Aboriginal and African-Caribbean residents of Greater Victoria and the GVP. Aboriginal participants emphasized that the GVP and the RCMP need to hire Coast Salish officers both locally and on reserves within Greater Victoria. Participants noted that the GVP first need to establish relationships and trust with Aboriginal youth in order to convince them that law enforcement is an honourable profession. This is highlighted within the literature which notes that the limited number of Aboriginal police officers in Canada is a key element of distrust and tension between Aboriginal people and law enforcement organizations (Jain, Singh & Agocs, 2000, pp. 49-50). Participants felt that the GVP first need to address racism that may exist within their departments. This is congruent with the literature which notes that recruiting Aboriginal people will not have an impact on racism within police organizations in Canada if the discriminatory dynamics within the organizations do not change (Rudin, 2005, p. 3). Similarly, African-Caribbean respondents highlighted that trust

cannot be achieved between African-Caribbean people of Greater Victoria and the GVP unless the GVP hire more African-Caribbean and other racially diverse people as officers. This will insure that the GVP become more culturally aware and accountable to the diverse communities they serve.

*Participant's engagement recommendations for the GVPDAC and GVP*

Respondents provided community engagement and communication recommendations for the GVP and the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC). Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese participants all shared recommendations. Muslim and African-Caribbean respondents wished for rank and file GVP officers to attend Global Café engagement events. They emphasized that rank and file officers are the ones that Muslim and African-Caribbean residents of Greater Victoria have come into conflict with. The trust building process therefore cannot progress without their attendance. Muslim and African-Caribbean respondents recommended that the GVPDAC create more effective communication tools that inform diverse communities of Greater Victoria of the developments that culminate from the Global Café engagement events. The current Global Café communication reports are created primarily for the Greater Victoria Police Chiefs and are too academic and complex for many Muslim and African-Caribbeans, many of whom are immigrants and have difficulty reading English. African-Caribbean organizations that the GVPDAC have established relationships with do not necessarily represent all African-Caribbean residents of Greater Victoria. Respondents recommended that the GVPDAC approach Muslim and African-Caribbean residents who do not know about or attend the Global Café events and ask for communication recommendations. Participants suggested the GVPDAC create a report that can be distributed to the rank and file officers who do not attend the events. The data from the report for example could be administered by audio or video by a police sergeant during police briefing meetings.

The GVP and the GVPDAC need to become better informed of the dangers Muslims face in Greater Victoria and the climate of Islamophobia that exists in the world today. The findings determined that police over surveillance of Muslims is becoming harmful to the safety of Muslims in Greater Victoria and the relationship between Muslims and the GVP. This is consistent with the literature which indicates that Muslim Canadians experience greater levels of hate crimes by other Canadians, and greater levels of police scrutiny than any other racialized, cultural or religious group in Canada (Bahdi, 2003, pp. 299-305; Statistics Canada, 2015, pp. 17-18).

African-Caribbean participants suggested that the GVPDAC purchase cultural banners from the British Columbia Black History Awareness Society. Respondents noted that the banners could be displayed year round at the Saanich Police Department and recommended that other departments display them as well. Muslim and African-Caribbean participants furthermore suggested that it is a sign of respect for many Muslims and African-

Caribbean's not to make eye contact with others. The GVP therefore should not assume that African-Caribbean people are trying to hide something. Aboriginal participants however, suggested that the GVP make eye contact and nod to Aboriginal people when on duty because it is a sign of recognition and respect. Respondents also wished to know if GVPDAC members are assigned or obliged to be members, and if the co-chair was assigned or requested to be in the position.

Aboriginal residents of Greater Victoria do not wish to maintain the historical silence that Aboriginal communities have had with GVP officers. Participants wished for their communities to establish trust between themselves and the GVP so this trust could trickle down through the generations. The first step in gaining this trust is for the GVP to show accountability for the role the police played in Canada's colonial history that has led to many of the struggles Aboriginal people experience today. Respondents feel that the GVP does not know enough about Aboriginal culture, and perceives cultural practices such as the Sundance, the Yuwipi and the Ghost Dance as Satanic practices. Some Aboriginal residents are cynical of the effectiveness of the GVPDAC in making positive change. Respondents also suggested that the Aboriginal community representatives on the GVPDAC may not effectively voice and advocate for Aboriginal concerns.

The GVPDAC should take more time in building relationships and develop a greater understanding of the cultural customs of diverse communities prior to and following the Global Café engagement events. Respondents for example, emphasized the importance of GVP officers participating in Aboriginal public events and celebrations. They also emphasized the importance of the GVP wearing civilian clothes because the gun and uniform are a sign of oppression and abuse of power to many Aboriginal people. Displaying a symbol identifying themselves as officers at these events is sufficient. These findings are consistent with the literature which found that the justice system is perceived among Aboriginal people as designed to maintain the cycle of powerlessness and poverty within Aboriginal communities (Rudin, 2005, p. 1). Finally, participants underscored the importance of the GVPDAC and GVP in recognizing the traditional First Nation territory when events and meetings begin.

There are a number of engagement and communication recommendations from Chinese residents of Greater Victoria. Participants requested to sit down with the GVPDAC and the GVP to discuss cultural gaps between the Chinese community and the Canadian legal system. Participants wished to inform the GVP of the differences in child rearing culture in China. They also wished to gain a better understanding of the legal rules in Canada and would like the GVP to make more appearances at Chinese cultural events. Respondents furthermore expressed that in China, civilian involvement in policing is a fundamental element of the legal structure. Respondents wished for the GVP to appoint a volunteer community representative which could act as a cultural bridge and language interpreter

between Chinese communities and the GVP. These findings were consistent with the literature which found that in China, the police consider themselves part of the community, expecting support and help from the community. Civilians collectively take ownership of policing responsibilities (Jiao, 2001, pp. 160-174). Participants requested that more civilians be provided with opportunities to go for a ride along. They noted that this privilege is an excellent way for the community to gain a greater understanding of the challenges of police work and to humanize and build relationships with GVP officers. Finally, the findings found that Global Café events should be hosted by different communities and at neutral locations, not just at the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria. Diverse communities that host the events should also play a stronger role in organizing them.

### **Positive Experiences and Perceptions**

#### *Approachable and friendly while on duty*

The findings revealed instances where Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria feel that the GVP are approachable and friendly. Muslim, African-Caribbean and Chinese respondents found that the GVP can be professional, approachable and respectful, especially during traffic stops. The findings noted that Muslim residents are encouraged by the efforts of the GVP in understanding the cultures of Masjid Al-Iman Mosque members. Muslim respondents also noted that they appreciate the efforts of the GVP in building relationships with children of the mosque. African-Caribbean participants noted that the GVP are not as violent, prejudice or quick to pull the trigger like Toronto or the United States. They also indicated that they feel comfortable in calling the GVP if they need them. Aboriginal respondents praised the efforts of West Shore officers in supporting women who are leaving abusive partners. Aboriginal respondents also praised the GVP for allowing support workers from the Native Friendship Center in accompanying Aboriginal clients when they are reporting a crime, charged with a crime or being interviewed by victim services. Muslim and Chinese participants highlighted that the GVP are friendlier than the police of the countries they emigrated from and address more concerns. Chinese participants particularly praised the GVP for their dedication when comparing the policing practices within China.

#### *Sincere effort in understanding culture and building relationships*

It was found that the GVP have made sincere efforts in understanding culture and building relationships of Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria. Muslim participants noted that GVP and the GVPDAC have displayed genuine progress in respecting and learning cultures, religious customs and traditions of mosque members, especially during engagement events. The relationship between the GVP, the GVPDAC and mosque members has become more relaxed than previous years as a result. Respondents also praised the efforts of the GVPDAC in their efforts in helping many

Muslims in Greater Victoria feel more comfortable approaching and trusting the GVP when in need.

Aboriginal residents of Greater Victoria had few positive experiences to share, but participants highlighted the efforts of the Saanich PD in building relationships with youth and adults at the Victoria Native Friendship Center (VNFC). Youth at the VNFC have become comfortable with the GVP because of these efforts. One participant commended officers from the GVPDAC in making positive efforts in understanding the cultural customs of Aboriginal communities. African-Caribbean respondents felt encouraged by the existence of the GVPDAC and that this study was approved by the GVPDAC. Participants noted that the efforts of the GVPDAC have contributed to African-Caribbean people feeling more comfortable with the GVP and were encouraged that the GVPDAC and the Saanich Police Department borrowed British Columbia Black History Awareness Society banners, displaying them in the lobby of their police station. They also praise the officers who took part in a Community Partnership Network play which GVP officers and civilian's enacted real life disputes between GVP officers and racialized people of Greater Victoria. Chinese participants applauded the GVP for offering a ride along to a community leader and for being friendly and welcoming when participants went to the GVP stations for criminal record checks.

## **Summary**

The negative images of police misconduct within the United States and Ontario that are frequently displayed within the media have played a role in the increase of mistrust of the GVP by diverse peoples of Greater Victoria. Aboriginal, African-Caribbean, Muslim and Chinese participants of this study provided examples of the GVP partaking in racial profiling, racism and verbal and physical abuse, and failing to address criminal behaviour committed against them by other residents of Greater Victoria. This has led to significant gaps in trust between these groups and the GVP. Muslim residents in particular identified high levels of surveillance that they experience by the GVP and CSIS as a significant cause of mistrust. Chinese and Muslim residents indicated that the negative experiences they experienced by the police of the countries they emigrated from have played a role in influencing their mistrust of the GVP. The consequence of this mistrust are communities who are less likely to feel the GVP are legitimate moral leaders and are therefore unwilling to seek support of and cooperate with the GVP when they are in need of their services.

Before the relationship and trust building process begins between Aboriginal peoples of Greater Victoria and the GVP, the GVP first need to acknowledge the role the RCMP played in apprehending children during the residential school era and the role of law enforcement in Canada's colonial history of Aboriginal racism. Aboriginal residents feel that the GVP still harbour similar racist attitudes as when the first settlers arrived. They

furthermore feel that through the current foster care system, the police mimic the role they played during the residential school era. Aboriginal peoples of Greater Victoria indicated that they wish to be understood, recognized and respected by the GVP. They wish for the GVP to show a genuine interest in getting to know Aboriginal people and Aboriginal culture, spend time with and be a positive influence for Aboriginal youth, and make efforts to protect youth from the dangers on the street. Aboriginal elders emphasized a need for Coast Salish police officers both on and off reserves. They feel it is imperative that the GVP first make efforts in gaining the trust of Aboriginal youth so if they eventually become police officers, they will feel supported if they experience racism within the force. African-Caribbean residents also expressed a desire for the GVP not only to hire African-Caribbean police officers, but officers of many different nationalities.

Muslim residents expressed feeling increasingly vulnerable due to the increase of Islamophobia within Canada and Greater Victoria. Muslim residents furthermore indicated that the GVP does not follow up with their reports of physical and verbal Islamophobic assaults by other residents of Greater Victoria. They appealed to the GVP to demonstrate greater eagerness in protecting them. Chinese residents emphasized that the GVP frequently does not follow up after Chinese merchants' report being victims of robbery. They also wanted the GVP to show greater commitment in investigating thefts because many merchants have been left in precarious financial situations. Muslim and Chinese residents expressed hesitation in contacting the GVP when in need of their services due to language and cultural barriers. Many of these residents have not been provided with the tools needed to understand the laws of Canada, causing community members to unknowingly break the law, leading to devastating consequences. Muslim and Chinese residents emphasized that they felt the GVP have been unsympathetic to these challenges, sometimes leaving them and their family members in precariously vulnerable situations. They pleaded for the GVP to be empathetic and expressed a need to be provided with legal education and effective communication tools that can inform them of the legal rules.

Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Muslim residents were encouraged by the existence of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC), but suggested that this is merely the first step in improving trust between diverse communities and the GVP. Residents emphasized the importance of rank and file officers attending GVPDAC events because these are the officers they regularly interact with and come in conflict with. Residents also indicated that the GVPDAC need to improve their communication tools so more community members are informed of the GVPDAC best practices. The Global Café reports are too lengthy and difficult to understand, especially for those who have difficulty understanding English. Residents suggested that the GVPDAC consult with them about the best ways to communicate with diverse communities of Greater Victoria.

Although there were many areas of improvement suggested within this study, residents also provided positive experiences and perceptions of the GVP. They indicated that the GVP can be approachable and at times show a sincere effort in understanding the diverse cultures of the people they serve. Residents felt fortunate to be living in Greater Victoria because officers can be very supportive during times of crises. They felt that GVP officers are much friendlier than officers from the United States and countries residents emigrated from. Many improvements still need to take place in order for relationships to improve between the groups of this study and the GVP, but participants were enthusiastic that there is a GVPDAC and that this study was approved by the committee.

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to provide strategies that will address gaps in engagement, relationships and trust between the Greater Victoria Police (GVP) and Aboriginal peoples, Muslim, African-Caribbean, and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria. Recommendations for the implementation of these strategies will be short term (6 months - 1 year) or long term (1 - 2 years). The chapter begins with a recommendation for the creation of a strategic plan for the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (referred to as GVPDAC below). The chapter then provides recommendations that focus on the expansion of the GVPDAC's Global Café activities. The next section provides recommendations specific to a combination of the Muslim, Aboriginal and Chinese groups. The final section includes recommendations specific to individual groups. Individual recommendations for the African-Caribbean section also apply to Muslim, Aboriginal and Chinese groups as indicated.

### **Creation of GVPDAC future planning strategy**

#### *Short-term*

1. Create a strategic plan to optimize the future potential of GVPDAC. Consult with the School of Public Administration at the University of Victoria regarding accessing a student to undertake this project. A strategic plan will:
  - a. Determine where the GVPDAC is going over the next few years
  - b. Develop an action plan on how to get there
  - c. Provide an explanation of possible strategies and tactics
  - d. Produce a budget and operating plans
  - e. Determine strengths and weaknesses of GVPDAC and future opportunities

### **Expansion of Global Café activities**

#### *Short-term*

1. Establish a monthly police-community forum to expand on lines of communication and relationship building between diverse residents of Greater Victoria and police executives and rank and file officers.
2. Ensure rank and file officers or officers who interact with Muslim, Aboriginal, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents while on duty attend Global Café events.
3. Establish community-police ice breaker meetings prior to formal Global Café engagement events.
4. In months following Global Café events, follow up with host communities to see if they feel their relationship with the GVP has improved. Working with communities, implement steps to further enhance relationships.



5. Develop communication tools that effectively disseminate Global Café achievements to a higher number of community members. Communication tools must have the capacity to reach those who are illiterate, residents who do not attend Global Café engagement events and police officers who do not attend engagement events.

*Long-term*

6. Conduct a police-community joint news conference to celebrate successes and achievements of police-community relationship building. Invite the media including newspapers and television and broadcast through social media.

### **Recommendations specific to a combination of groups**

#### **Muslim/Aboriginal/Chinese**

*Long-term*

1. Implement a formal community volunteer liaison strategy. Community liaisons will act as a bridge between the GVP and community to enhance communication, understanding and trust. Liaison duties include:

*Muslim/Chinese*

- a. Provide translation support services
- b. Assist with interviewing victims of crime
- c. Inform community of legal information and developments

*Aboriginal*

- a. Assist with interviewing victims of crime

### **Recommendations specific to individual groups**

#### **Muslim**

*Short-term implementation*

1. Appoint a Masjid Al-Iman Mosque community representative to the GVPDAC.
2. Organize a conference about Islamophobia and institute a brainstorming session as part of the conference to discuss solutions to the problem.
3. Ensure that data is collected for the purpose of monitoring occurrences of hate crime and identify measures to combat it.

#### **Aboriginal**

*Short-term implementation*

1. Organize information session with the VNFC and elders of surrounding First Nation communities of the Greater Victoria Area to provide education regarding illicit drugs and street terminologies used to describe them.

*Long-term implementation*

2. Implement an Aboriginal-Police Friendship Academy to expand on the successes of the Saanich Police Department and the Victoria Native Friendship Center's initiatives in building relationships between Saanich police officers and Aboriginal youth. Include additional GVP agencies and additional First Nation communities.
3. Establish an Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program aimed at reaching Aboriginal youth who have an interest in policing, by providing opportunity to witness, experience and participate in life as a police constable.

**African-Caribbean** (recommendations to be applied to Muslim, Aboriginal and Chinese Groups)

*Short-term*

1. Provide time slot on Greater Victoria Area Police Chief monthly meeting agendas for community representatives to address community concerns.
2. Establish a police-community cultural participation strategy to promote GVP participation and support of cultural practices and events.
3. Develop booklet and/or video translated into languages of residents that informs residents of their legal rights, freedoms and responsibilities and legal authorities and responsibilities of the GVP.
4. Provide formal legal information workshop and webinar to inform residents of their:
  - a. Rights, freedoms and responsibilities and legal authorities and responsibilities of the GVP
  - b. How internal investigation processes work, possible outcomes of internal investigations, the disciplinary action process, external oversight mechanisms such as the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner of British Columbia and Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the RCMP, the length of typical investigations and requirements of the complainant.

*Long-term*

5. Ensure that data is collected on all stops and all contacts for the purpose of monitoring occurrences of racial/ethnic profiling and identify measures to combat it.
6. Expand on community policing best practices by including or increasing regular GVP foot patrols.
7. Create task force of community members and GVP officers to identify measures to combat racial/ethnic profiling.
8. To decrease negative perceptions and build trust:
  - a. Change the colour of police cars from black to a colour that is less aggressive and intimidating
  - b. Wear name badges that are clearly displayed
  - c. Ensure that officers are fitted with body cameras

## **Chinese**

### *Short-term implementation*

1. Appoint Chinese community representative to the GVPDAC.
2. Establish communication tools that enhance communication between community and the GVP and inform community of legal rights, freedoms and responsibilities.  
Tools include:
  - a. Community bulletin boards, flyers, social media, mailed information and email listserv, neighbourhood newsletters and newspapers.
3. Ensure that international students are required to undergo drivers training prior to driving in Canada.

## **8. CONCLUSION**

There are significant gaps in relationships, understanding and trust between Aboriginal peoples, Muslim, African-Caribbean, and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria and the Greater Victoria Police (GVP). The purpose of this research project was to understand these gaps and provide recommendations to the GVP and the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee (GVPDAC) that will improve relationships and trust. This study provides a resource which could either inform or be a catalyst for future research and initiatives in improving relationships, understanding and trust between racialized and ethnic groups and the GVP.

Aboriginal, African-Caribbean, Muslim and Chinese participants of this study provided examples of the GVP partaking in racial profiling, racism and verbal and physical abuse, and failing to address criminal behaviour committed against them by other residents of Greater Victoria. This has led to significant gaps in trust between these groups and the GVP. This study also provided positive impressions and experiences that these residents have had in their interactions with the GVP including GVP officers who are personable and determined in learning the diverse cultural customs of Greater Victoria residents. The research in this study led to recommendations intended to address the gaps in relationships, understanding and trust between Aboriginal peoples, Muslim, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria and the GVP. Recommendations include engagement and interactive relationship building strategies between the GVP and groups of this study, educational tools to increase understanding of Canadian legal laws and the role of the GVP, communication tools which could effectively disseminate the GVPDAC's Global Café achievements and tools to address racial/ethnic profiling.

For relationships and trust to improve between the GVP and Aboriginal peoples, Muslim, African-Caribbean and Chinese residents of Greater Victoria, the GVP and the GVPDAC must advance relationship and trust building best practices. These efforts will contribute to community members that will be happier living in Greater Victoria, relaxed and less fearful when interacting with the GVP, and more likely to respect, collaborate and contribute to the goals and responsibilities of GVP officers. Research relating to gaps in trust and relationships between racialized/ethnic communities and the police is limited in Canada. This study may be a resource which could be used to encourage and continue future advancements in police and diverse community relations.

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## Appendix A: Focus Group 1-4 Questions

1. What are your impressions of the Greater Victoria police?
2. What are your experiences of the Greater Victoria police?
3. Based on your experiences, what are the strengths of the police?
  - a. What are the weaknesses?
4. How comfortable are you engaging with the police?
5. Have you heard of the Greater Victoria Police Diversity Advisory Committee?  
Yes/No
6. Have you ever participated in a formal or informal engagement event with the police or the DAC? Yes/No
  - a. What was it about this engagement event that you liked?
  - b. What didn't you like about it?
  - c. What would you like to see changed?
7. How could the police demonstrate respect to you and your community?
8. How safe do you feel in your community?
  - a. What role does the police have in those feelings?

## **Appendix B: Individual Interview Questions**

1. What are your experiences of the Victoria police?
2. What are some of the concerns that your community have with the police?
3. Have you had experiences with other police jurisdictions?
4. Are there best practices within these police jurisdictions that have been effective in building relationships and trust between the police and people who self-identify as Indigenous?
5. Could you provide a few examples of how institutions other than law enforcement have effectively addressed power imbalances and or biases?
6. Have you participated in or have been a guest at one of the DAC's Global Cafés?
7. In your opinion, were the strengths and weaknesses of the DAC's Global Café in building relationships and trust between the police and diverse communities?
  - a. What was missing? What could be included?
8. Are there cultural customs that the DAC should be aware of when preparing for and hosting a formal engagement event?
9. Are there any cultural customs or attributes that you would like the police to be aware of when interacting with your community while on duty?