Trust and legitimacy: Policing among racial groups

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When it comes to trust in the police, ethnicity matters: members from minority groups trust the police less than majority group members. Without trust the police lack legitimacy and consequently groups' cooperation. While trust and legitimacy are closely related constructs, less is known if the ethnic-based differences in trust and legitimacy hinges upon different dimensions. This work addresses this question by utilising the multidimensional Intergroup Trust Model, which identifies the five dimensions of competence, integrity, compassion, compatibility, and security as a comprehensive set constituting trust. Three hundred and fifty participants were surveyed in three Boston neighbourhoods. Through mediation and regression analysis, the study found that for White participants legitimacy was predicted by integrity-based trust. Black participants perceived police as less legitimate, which was predicted by the lack of compassion-based trust. The indication of the findings for policing in the US and NZ are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

Police play an integral role in protecting society and keeping communities safe. But what happens when the very communities police are there to protect, fail to perceive police as a legitimate institution? It is likely that, failing to find authority legitimate correlates with a lower sense of trust in police (Jackson & Gau, 2016), and a lower likelihood of reaching out to police when threatened or in danger. The result may be increased exposure to crime and violence (Moravcová, 2016; Panditharatne et al., 2018). Concerningly, this is the reality for many ethnic minority groups. Indeed, research across the USA (e.g. Burgason, 2017; Mummolo, 2018; Tyler, 2005), United Kingdom (e.g. Griffiths, 2018), Belgium (e.g. Van Craen & Skogan, 2015), and Finland (e.g. Kääriäinen & Niemi, 2014), as well as closer to home in Australia (e.g. Sargeant et al., 2014) and New Zealand (e.g., Kappmeier, Guenoun, & Campbell, 2019; Panditharatne et al., 2018; Quince, 2007; Te Whaiti & Roguski, 1998), consistently shows ethnic minorities trust the police less than the majority group.

Lower trust in the police by minority groups often stems from historical antagonism, between oppressive and prejudicial police and victimised minorities. Indeed, past and present experiences of brutality, harassment, and bias create perceptions of the police as racially and/or culturally discriminatory, procedurally prejudiced, and ultimately untrustworthy (Burgason, 2017; Schuck et al., 2008; Sivasubramaniam et al., 2008). In the present day, the Black Lives Matter protests emerging across the USA and the globe, highlighted the centuries of prejudicial treatment minority groups faced at the hands of police (see Weine et al., 2020). Further, the arising "Defund the Police" slogan highlighted the perception of an illegitimate and untrustworthy police force.

Researchers and media alike have focused much of their attention on the strained relationships between police and minority groups in the USA, however, a similar pattern may be observed here in Aotearoa. The global BLM protests from 2020, including in Aotearoa, reflects that the strained relations between ethnic minorities and police is not an isolated phenomenon. Indeed, in Aotearoa, Māori communities are less likely than Pākehā communities to report that they trust the police (e.g. Panditharatne et al., 2018). Further, Te Whaiti and Roguski (1998) highlights the negative consequences of the police's bias and discrimination towards Māori communities on Māori trust.

In addition to consistently reporting lower trust in police, minority group members are also less likely to perceive the police as legitimate (Tyler, 2010, 2011). The legitimacy of the police is based on the social contract that the police hold but not misuse the state monopoly on violence. This provides the foundation of consent philosophy for policing adopted by many Western countries (Jackson et al., 2013). In most Western countries it is the police who are tasked with enforcing the law, and who are allowed to use violence if necessary to achieve this. But for this social contract to work it is of utter importance that the police are seen to be following the rules, are being a legitimate institution, and are indeed proving themselves to be trustworthy.

Given the importance of communities trusting the police, and given the ethnic-based difference in this trust as outlined above, this paper examines how minority and majority group members differ in their examination of police legitimacy.

Trust and legitimacy

Jackson and Gau (2016) differentiate between trust and legitimacy: that trust is based on how the police fulfil the function they are tasked with (how competent, how well in line with moral values etc), while legitimacy refers to the perception that the police rightfully hold the power to fulfil their duty. Following this conceptualisation of

trust and legitimacy of the police, we theorise a causal relation between trust to legitimacy.

Furthermore, Jackson and Gau (2016) distinguish in their conceptual model of legitimacy between duty to obey, and institutional trust. Duty to obey relates to the feeling that it is your positive duty to obey police instructions. Institutional trust relates to the idea that the community believes police are appropriate, have the requisite properties to justify the possession of their power, and can be trusted to wield their power judiciously. Indeed, legitimacy is considered a combination of a collective agreement that police are duly authorised to possess the power they do, and the institutional trust that police can use this power in a manner that is just (Jackson & Gau, 2016). Legitimacy, as referred to here, is considered a consequence of how police treat people, and how police make decisions when they are exercising their legal authority (Tyler, 2011).

When authority is defined as legitimate, the "duty to obey" replaces personal morality (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989). That is, when citizens view police as a legitimate authority, they allow police to define social boundaries and appropriate behaviour in a social context. If police are considered legitimate, citizens will voluntarily comply with police orders, as citizens trust that the orders police give are fair and just Without legitimacy, police are not viewed as moral, just, and proper in their use of power. Lower legitimacy would suggest communities do not trust police to respond professionally, efficiently, and fairly to their cries for help (Jackson & Gau, 2016).

Overall, given the differences in experiences with police for ethnic minorities versus majorities, both in Aotearoa and internationally, it is not surprising that minority group members tend to exhibit differing levels of trust in, and legitimacy towards police. This is problematic, as lower trust in police results in lower cooperation with police and a lower likelihood of reaching out to police when they are in danger, resulting in a greater exposure to crime (Moravcová, 2016; Panditharatne et al., 2018). Failing to perceive police as legitimate is not only harmful to minority groups, it is also harmful to police themselves. When police officers investigate crimes in the community, they need to be seen as legitimate: as a just, trustworthy entity, not an oppressive force. When perceived as a legitimate institution, police are more likely to receive important support and cooperation from the community (Sargeant et al., 2014; Tyler, 2016; Tyler & Jackson, 2014; Murphy et al., 2018).A link between trust and legitimacy is strongly implied: legitimacy requires trust, and this trust must be earned. However, due to the multi-dimensionality of trust, how minority versus majority groups develop trust in police may differ.

Multi-dimensional approaches to trust

Recent research has begun to understand trust in police as a multi-dimensional model (Balliet & Van Lange, 2013; Connelly et al., 2018; McEvily & Tortoriello, 2011; PytlikZillig & Kimbrough, 2016). Trust in the police can, for example, be based on the expectation that they have the skills, experience and reliability to keep communities safe: a competency-based trust. However, trust in the police can also be based on the expectation that police are honest and engage with the community

honourably: an integrity-based trust. Given this, the question examining the relationship between trust and legitimacy becomes not so much if trust predicts legitimacy of police, but rather which dimension of trust achieves this.

Kappmeier, Guenoun, & Fahey (2021) developed a five-dimensional trust model, the Intergroup Trust Model, which is particularly well suited to capture a more nuance understanding of which type of trust predicts legitimacy (IGT-Model, see figure 1).

Figure 1. The Intergroup Trust Model
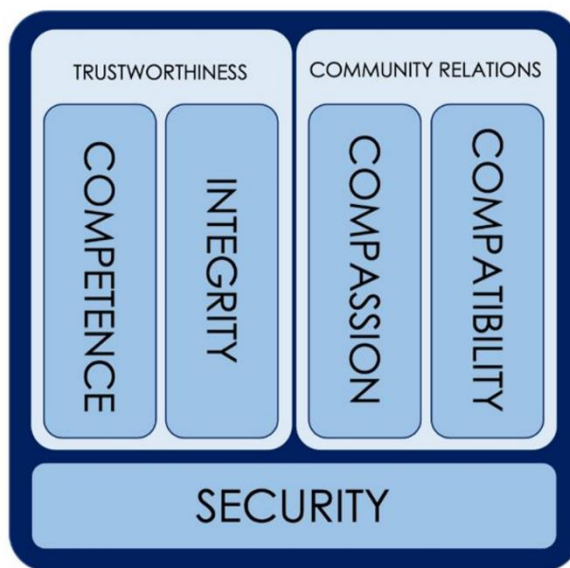
These five dimensions are broadly split into two categories: trustworthiness, and intergroup relations, with a third category of security-based trust relating to both of these. The trustworthiness category includes dimensions of competence and integrity. As mentioned above, the competence dimension of trust addresses perceptions of how effective or capable police are, whilst the integrity dimension addresses perceptions of whether the police are honest and guided by a moral code acceptable to ones own ingroup (Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2019). The intergroup relations category includes dimensions of compatibility and compassion. Compassion addresses the perception of whether police care for your ingroup, whilst compatibility addresses the perception that one's group can relate to the police through shared language, culture, race, or experiences (Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2019). Security is a dimension on its own, and addresses the perception that police will not harm my group physically or psychologically (Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2019). Though the model is new, support for IGT-Model has been found across varied intergroup contexts (Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2021).

Race, legitimacy, and the Intergroup Trust Model

While the Intergroup Trust Model (IGT-Model) was developed to assess trust in group settings (Kappmeier, 2016; Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2021; Kappmeier, Venanzetti & Campbell, 2021), past research has also examined if ethnic minority groups based their trust in police on different trust dimension proposed by the IGT-

Model. Indeed, previous research using the IGT-Model for trust in the police found that while White Americans' trust in the police tend to be integrity-based: a stronger focus on honorability and morality of police. Conversely, Black American's reported a lack of compassion- and compatibility-based trust in the police: a stronger focus on the intergroup relational dimensions of trust (Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2019). In other words, Whites trust in police tended to be based on how honest police were perceived to be, how moral police actions were perceived to be, and that police did not abuse their power. On the other hand, Blacks trust in police tended to be based on how compassionate police were in their interactions with Blacks, how concerned and attentive the police were for the Blacks needs, and how much police were perceived to be able to relate to Blacks (via background, language, traditions, values, beliefs, etc.). A similar pattern was found in Aotearoa: Māori's trust in the police was also shaped by an emphasis on compatibility-based trust (Kappmeier et al., 2019).

While previous work has used the IGT-Model to examine ethnic-based trust in the police, the link between the five dimensions of the IGT-Model and legitimacy has not yet been explored. Addressing this gap, the aim of this study is to examine ethnic-based differences in perceived legitimacy, specifically focusing on the distinct dimensions of trust recently identified through Intergroup Trust Model. To investigate this question, we conducted a community-based study in the context of the race relation in the United States of America, comparing Black Americans with White Americans.

METHOD

Participants and procedure

The community-based study took place in Boston USA, and data was collected in three neighbourhoods from August 2016 – December 2016. The three neighbourhoods were chosen for their similar socio-economic status, a known co-variate that influence trust in the police (e.g., Burgason, 2017), but differing racial demographic: one was predominantly Black, one predominantly White, and the third one had an approximately equal racial representation (see the supplementary material for a more detailed description on the three neighbourhoods, reasoning selections and study procedures). We deliberately chose to collect the data within community (vis-à-vis an online or student sample) to ensure that a) our participants are policed by the same department, particularly since policing approaches within the United States can differ broadly even between counties (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015), b) to have a more homogenous policing experiences by recruiting from similar neighbourhoods, and c) avoid a recruitment bias often inherent to online participants sample. Finally, d) we also wanted to recruit participants from a broader breath than a student-based sample represented at the Higher Education.

A total of 372 respondents completed a pen and paper survey, at numerous locations in the neighbourhoods. To focus on minority-majority asymmetry only the responses of Black and White respondents were retained, since the two group memberships are the least ambiguous regarding their minority-majority status. The final sample included 252 respondents with 136 Black (61 female, 74 male, 1 unidentified) and 116 White participants (44 female, 72 male). The Black mean age was 36.1 (SD = 12.16; range 18 – 66) and the White mean age was 40.5 (SD = 15.9; range 19 – 87).

Materials

Participants responded regarding which racial group they most identified with.

Trust measures: Trust in the police was assessed through 19 items measuring the five dimensions of the IGT-Model (competence, 4 items; integrity, 6 items; compassion, 4 items; compatibility, 2 items; and security, 3 items). The items were displayed with opposite anchors on both sides. Participants indicated which side of the statement they strongly, somewhat, or slightly agreed with. For example, "We have nothing to fear from them" paired with "We have something to fear from them" (Security). This unusual form was chosen as it helps to lower multicollinearity, which has appeared in previous work (Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2021). The alpha Cronbach was very good for competence (n = 4; α = .70); integrity (n = 6; α = .80); compassion (n = 4; α = .86) and security (n = 3; α = .79). Only for compatibility was it in the medium to good range (n = 2; α = .67), but given that the scale consisted of only two items, the Cronbach still indicates good reliability (Field, 2013).

Legitimacy measure: Legitimacy was assessed by: "Overall the police force is a legitimate institution and people should obey the decisions made by police officers" (Tyler, 2005), answered using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = strongly agree, 7 = strongly disagree).

RESULTS

Preliminary analysis

As a first step, descriptive statistics were analysed for legitimacy and dimensions of trust separately for each race. Black respondents reported lower legitimacy and lower trust in police across all five dimensions compared to White respondents (see table 1). Independent *t*-tests were conducted for legitimacy as well as all five dimensions within the IGT-Model. These findings show that Black respondents reported significantly lower trust in the police than White respondents on all five trust

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for minority and majority group members legitimacy and different dimensions of IGT-Model

	Blacks		Whites	
	$\bar{X}$	sd	$\bar{X}$	sd
Legitimacy	3.92	2. 03	5.03	1.89
Competence	3.97	1.26	5.19	1.51
Integrity	3.48	1.22	4.90	1.40
Compassion	3.62	1.44	5.03	1.42
Compatibility	3.51	1.48	4.74	1.67
Security	3.46	1.51	5.02	1.67

Table 2. Independent t-tests for legitimacy of police and five trust
dimensions across Black and White respondents.

	t	df	LCI	UCI	d
Legitimacy	4.15**	218	.584	1.641	0.55
Competence	-6.87**	239	-1.577	-.874	0.97
Integrity	-8.06**	219	-1.772	-1.076	1.15
Compassion	-8.53**	228	-1.993	-1.245	1.12
Compatibility	-8.53**	228	-1.993	-1.24	0.83
Security	-7.49**	231	-1.979	-1.154	1.03

**p < .001; *p < .05

dimensions, and significantly lower legitimacy of police (see table 2).

To examine ethnic-based differences in perceived legitimacy, we conducted two sets of analyses: After the preliminary analysis, we first completed a parallel mediation analysis with race as the predictor of legitimacy, mediated by the five trust dimensions, to assess the influence of race on legitimacy. In a second analysis we explored in more detail how the five dimensions of the IGT-Model predict legitimacy for Black and White participants respectively.

Relationship between race and legitimacy, mediated by trust

In order to understand the relationship between race and legitimacy, a multiple parallel mediation analysis, using ordinary least square was conducted. Race was the predictor, legitimacy was the outcome, and the five trust dimensions were mediators, modelling an indirect path from race to legitimacy. The analysis was conducted in SPSS, using the Haynes process tool 3.3, Model 4.

Notable in the parallel mediation analysis, the direct path from race to legitimacy was not significant ($c' = -0.5$, $p = .59$, CI [-.11, .15]; see Figure 2 for details). This indicates that the race of participants did not predict how legitimate they perceived the police to be. However, a significant path from the race of the participants to all five trust dimensions, indicating that all five trust dimensions picked up on race-based differences in the participants (see Table 3 for details).

When examining the effect from each trust dimension to legitimacy, the results show that only the path from compassion-based trust was significant, suggesting that the five trust dimensions differ in their relevance for police legitimacy. While there is no direct effect of race on police legitimacy, there is an indirect effect via compassion-based trust. The more compassionate the police are perceived to be, the more legitimate they are perceived as, and this is especially true with respect to minority (over majority) group members.

Racial group members views on legitimacy via different dimensions of trust

Given that race had a direct effect on all five trust dimensions, there is some suggestion that the dimension(s) of trust most influential with respect to legitimacy of police may differ for majority and minority group members. In order to test this, a multiple linear regression analysis was conducted, using legitimacy as the dependent variable (see table 4 for details).[1]

For Black participants, from the five dimensions explaining the variance of trust, only compassion was a significant predictor for legitimacy ($\beta = 0.74$, $p = .002$). None of competence ($\beta = -0.11$, $p = .598$), integrity ($\beta = 0.13$, $p = .627$), compatibility ($\beta = 0.10$, $p = .556$), nor security ($\beta = -0.15$, $p = .468$) were significantly associated with legitimacy of police.

For White participants, from the five dimensions explaining the variance of trust, only integrity was a significant predictor for legitimacy ($\beta = 0.51$, $p = .017$). None of competence ($\beta = 0.17$, $p = .282$), compassion ($\beta = 0.16$, $p = .399$), compatibility ($\beta = 0.19$, $p = .139$), nor

Figure 2. Parallel Mediation Analysis

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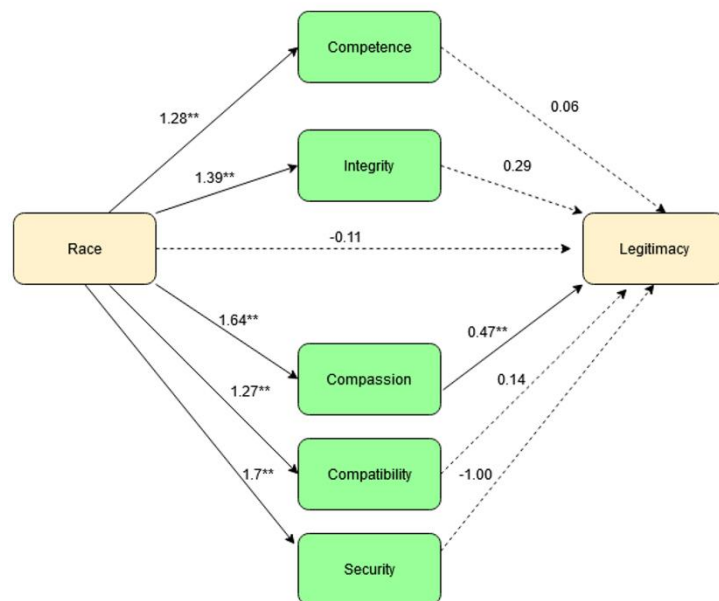
[1] We started with the underlying dimension of security, then focused on the trustworthiness dimensions (integrity & competence), and later the relationship relevant dimensions(compassion & compatibility). Order of inclusion did not change the patterns for either group.

Table 3. OLS path analysis for the indirect effects of race on legitimacy through the five trust dimensions.

Predictor	Mediator	a	a_{se}	LCI	UCI	Outcome	b	b_{se}	LCI	UCI
Race	Competence	1.28**	.20	0.88	1.68	Legitimacy	.06	.13	-0.16	2.00
	Integrity	1.39**	.20	1.00	1.78		.29	.13	-0.04	0.63
	Compassion	1.63**	.21	1.23	2.05		.47**	.15	0.17	0.77
	Compatibility	1.26**	.23	0.81	1.73		.14	.11	-0.07	0.36
	Security	1.70**	.24	1.23	2.18		-1.0	.13	-0.36	0.16

**p < .001; *p < .05; Bootstrapped 5000, Seed = 160730

Table 4. Multiple linear regression analysis for Black and White participants legitimacy of police.

Black Participants					
	B	se_β	t	LCI	UCI
Competence	-0.11	0.20	-0.53	-0.51	0.29
Integrity	0.13	0.26	0.49	-0.39	0.64
Compassion	0.74*	0.23	3.16	0.27	1.20
Compatibility	0.1	0.17	0.59	0.27	1.20
Security	-0.15	0.20	-0.73	-0.58	0.26
White Participants					
Competence	.065	0.15	1.08	-0.14	0.47
Integrity	0.51*	0.21	2.44	0.09	0.92
Compassion	0.16	0.19	0.85	-0.14	0.47
Compatibility	0.19	0.13	1.49	-0.06	0.54
Security	-0.09	0.17	-0.56	-0.42	0.24

Note: dependent variable: legitimacy of police; β = unstandardised beta coefficient; 95% LCI and UCI; * p < .05; ** p < .01

security ($\beta = -0.09, p = .576$) were significantly associated with legitimacy of police.

Overall, these findings suggest that Black participants lower views of police as a legitimate institution are best predicted by the lack of compassion-based trust, whilst White participants views of police as a more legitimate institution are best predicted by integrity-based trust. In a general sense, the lack of compassion-based trust evident with Black participants suggests that the Black community don't trust that the police care about Blacks wellbeing, and this lack of compassion-based trust undermines the perceived legitimacy of the police. At the same time, White participants views of police as a more legitimate institution is best predicted by integrity-based trust – the perception that the police are honest and act in accordance with moral codes. We will return to these findings in regards to different policing approaches and their impact on minority communities in the discussion. In conclusion, our findings indicate two different processes for perceived legitimacy of minority and majority participants, importantly predicted by different dimensions of trust.

DISCUSSION

This study examined ethnic-based differences in perceived legitimacy, focusing specifically on recently identified distinct types of trust. First, consistent with past research (e.g., Kahn et al., 2017; Oliveira & Murphy, 2015; Tyler, 2005; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015), we established that minority group members were found to have lower trust in police than majority group members. Importantly, this pattern of findings was also replicated for legitimacy: majority group members view the police as a more legitimate institution than minority group members do (Tyler, 2010, 2011).

Interestingly, given that there is a difference between how legitimate minority versus majority group members view police, we found no direct relationship between race and legitimacy. There was, however, an indirect effect of race on legitimacy, via compassion-based trust. This indicates that the more compassionate police are perceived to be, the more legitimate they are perceived to be. In other words, our data indicates that legitimacy hinges upon a compassion-based trust perception Further, the relationship between compassion-based trust and legitimacy was found to be especially important with respect to minority group members. Multiple linear regression analyses suggested that minority group members reduced view of police as a legitimate institution are best predicted by compassion-based trust, whilst for majority group members legitimacy was best predicted by integrity-based trust. This revelation may have important implications for the way police interacts with communities, particularly their police approaches.

Policing Approaches: Instrumental versus Trust-Based

Broadly speaking there are two competing approaches police take. The first is an instrumental approach, which is focused on a duty to obey, such that communities comply with the police based on either threat of punishment or compliance based on obligation (Tyler, 2016). Duty to obey also aligns with the perception that the police hold the moral mandate to police the communities and do in-line with a moral value (Jackson & Gau, 2016). However, the instrumental approach seems to foster perceived legitimacy through integrity-based trust, the perception that the police is acting according to moral values and righteously. Our findings that for White Americans the legitimacy of the police is predicted by higher integrity-based trust, can indicate the instrumental approach aligns more with ethnic majority perception on policing.

Concerningly, the instrumental approach to police, such as the duty to obey tends to be disproportionately focused on minority group members (Gelmam et al., 2005; Ayres & Borowsky, 2008). For example, in the early 2000s, the 'duty to obey-approach' experienced strong public support in New York City, and police stops (designed to act as deterrents) increased 500% (Tyler, 2011). Contrary to expectation, however, crime rate during this time did not change, suggesting such an instrumental approach (especially when focused on the ethnic minority) is ineffective in increasing cooperation with police (Fagan et al., 2009). Our findings that, for Black Americans, the legitimacy in police is predicted not by a 'duty-to-obey' integrity-based trust, but instead a compassion-based trust, supports this conclusion.

Therefore, a strong-suit police approach or strong "law and order" (e.g., a punitive style of policing, attempting to gain compliance via threat of punishment), where police respond with a lack of compassion, does not only destroy trust, it consequentially also reduces legitimacy, particularly where the ethnic minority is concerned. This suggests that law-and-order approaches to policing are often uncalled for, as our data indicates that this is harmful – not only for communities, but also for police insofar as this results in lower legitimacy, reducing communities willingness to cooperate with the police and their mandate (Tyler, 20050.

An alternative approach to policing is a trust-based approach, in which communities are internally motivated to engage with the police (Tyler, 2016). The trust-based approach's mechanism of cooperation between communities and police is beyond obligation and deterrence. It takes the agency of the communities into account, going beyond a more passive rule of being policed. Rather than expecting communities to blindly follow police instruction, such trust-based approaches focus on communities cooperating with police due to internal beliefs that it is the right thing to do (Jackson & Gau, 2016). Furthermore, a trust-based approach also puts a higher obligation on the police to earn the trust of communities; the police need to be trustworthy and also work to establish trustful relations with the communities (Tyler, 2005). This aligns with the finding our work, which indicates as well that minority communities

emphasise a more relational trust, such as compassion-based trust, to enhance perceived legitimacy.

However, more often than not, a general sense of "trust in police" is implicitly understood as what the IGT-Model would deem integrity-based trust. For example, when differentiating between trust and legitimacy, Jackson and Gau (2016) discuss trust in police with respect to appropriateness of police action. In other words, societies trust in police is related to how well they feel police protect their communities' rights, and to how just police decisions are. When comparing this view of trust to Kappmeier (2016; Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2021) Intergroup Trust Model, it is most akin to the idea of integrity-based trust. Integrity-based trust here is considered the level of confidence communities have that the police will be honest, and will act in accordance with a moral code.

If people generally conceptualise "trust" in line with institutional-based trust, our findings suggest that only majority group perspectives are being considered. This may have important implications when it comes to interventions designed to increase the perspective of police legitimacy. Indeed, whilst increasing societies trust that police will behave in ways considered right and just, may enhance the percieved legitimacy of police with respect to majority group members (as supported by our findings). However, our results suggest that this strategy may be ineffectual when it comes to minority group members. In order to enhance legitimacy of police from the perspective of minority group members, we would suggest that strategies would need to be implemented the consider increasing compassion-based trust, i.e., trust that police will treat me with compassion and are concerned with the needs of my community.

Taken as a whole, our findings suggest two important take-aways. First, a strong-suit law-and-order policing approach undermines legitimacy. Second, the general "trust in police" approach considers only the majority groups perspective, perhaps further undermining legitimacy of police for the minority group. Overall, considering our findings that the dimension of trust that predicts perceived legitimacy of police differs across minority and majority group members. This conclusion could have significant implications for how police as an institution might introduce strategies to increase their perceived legitimacy.

Relevance of the current findings to a New Zealand perspective

The current research assesses which dimensions of trust predict views of police as a legitimate institution, while taking ethnic-based difference into account. Our findings emphasise the importance of considering the perspectives of both minority and majority group members, as different trust dimensions predict legitimacy of police for such groups. However, our data was sourced from a US sample, considering groups of Black and White participants. Nevertheless, we have reason to believe that a similar pattern of results may hold when considering a New Zealand cultural context.

Ethnic minority groups across both the USA (e.g., Blacks) and NZ (e.g., Māori) routinely report lower trust in police compared to majority group members (e.g.,

Whites and Pākehā respectively). Further, preliminary research by Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., (2019) directly compared which trust dimensions of the IGT-Model capture trust in the police across minority groups in the USA (Black Americans) and NZ (Māori), when faced with discrimination. The results suggest similar patterns across both groups: perceived discrimination lowered trust in the police for both groups, which is mediated by a lack of compatibility-based trust. Importantly, from the perspective of the present research, this suggests that trust in police follows a similar pattern when considering Blacks in America or Māori in New Zealand. Though not explicitly tested as of yet, this leads us to believe that it is possible for the relationship between police legitimacy and minority group status, mediated via particular dimensions of trust, to also be mirrored across these cultural contexts. Nevertheless, further research investigating this relationship is needed.

Whilst we have some evidence to suggest similar dimensions of trust in police are important from Māori versus Blacks perspectives (e.g., Kappmeier, Guenoun & et al., 2019), we cannot yet confidently conclude that this is indeed the case. Indeed, policing does not occur in a vacuum, and any considerations of contemporary policing must always consider past experiences (Kappmeier &

Mercy, 2019). Whilst Māori and Blacks may report similar histories with police in terms of discrimination and unjust treatment (e.g., Quince, 2007; Howell et al., 2004; Te Whaiti & Roguski, 1998), the details of how this was experienced differs across these groups.

Therefore, an important next step of this research is to consider the relationship between trust in police and perceived legitimacy of police from a New Zealand cultural context, e.g., across Māori and Pākehā groups. Current research of the first author is undertaking this endeavour, but at this point no empirical data has been provided yet.

Our research and results illustrate the specific facet of trust that can helps to explain ethnic-based differences in trust and suggest that ethnic minority and majority members focus on different components of trust when evaluating the legitimacy of the police. Given the observed inequality, with a disproportional higher arrest number and incarceration of Māori, we need to find a way to address the shortcomings of our justice system. Understanding the basis for trust and legitimacy, and pathways for building trust in (and therefore increasing perceived legitimacy of) police is a first imperative step towards this end.

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