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INNOVATIVE RECRUITMENT AND
SELECTION STRATEGIES FOR VISIBLE
MINORITY POLICE OFFICERS IN SELECTED
CANADIAN POLICE ORGANIZATIONS

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Harish C. Jain
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Management of Innovation and New Technology
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**INNOVATIVE RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION STRATEGIES FOR VISIBLE
MINORITY POLICE OFFICERS IN SELECTED CANADIAN POLICE ORGANIZATIONS**

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I. INTRODUCTION

Canada is becoming an increasingly diverse country, accommodating people with a wide variety of cultures and races. The resulting complexity of the Canadian society, with its mix of different customs and values, can sometimes contribute to heightened tensions and conflicts among different groups. Such an environment makes it even more difficult for police and justice systems to maintain peace and order in a manner that is satisfactory to all citizens. The need to maintain fairness and equality of treatment must be balanced by the need to be sensitive to different cultural values and norms of behaviour. The inability of police and justice systems to always achieve this balance often contributes to poor relations between police and various minority groups.

It is well documented that relations between police and visible minorities (VMs) have been strained in major urban centres across Canada (Justice Oppal Report, 1994; Lewis, 1989; Bellmare, 1988; Corbo, 1993). The 1989 and 1992 Ontario Race Relations and Policing Task Force Reports (Lewis, 1989; 1992), the 1988 Quebec Human Rights Commission Report (Bellmare, 1988), and the 1983 Task Force (Corbo) Report (Oziewicz, 1993) have all served to highlight the problems in relations between police and minorities. The fact that the 1992 and 1993 task forces were struck so soon after the original task forces in Ontario and Quebec points to the continuing tense relations. According to some critics, this is in part due to the low representation of visible minorities as police officers in police services across Canada.

Although VMs comprised only 9.1 percent of the labour force in Canada in 1991, they constituted more than 20 percent of the labour force in Toronto and Vancouver, and about 10 percent of the workforce in Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Ottawa-Hull, and Montreal.

Moreover, it is estimated that VM Canadians will constitute almost 18 percent of the population by the year 2000 (Picton, 1992). In a recent report on policing in Canada, issued by the federal Ministry of the Solicitor-General, Normandeau and Leighton (1990) noted that the growth of the VM population is accompanied by an increased risk of racial tension and conflict which often involves the police. They suggest that police organizations need to recruit VMs in response to the need for enhanced police-minority relations.

Jain (1994) found the representation of VM officers in selected major urban police organizations across Canada to be lower (ranging from 0% to 5.1% in 1990) than their representation in their respective communities. Normandeau (1990) suggests that a low representation of VMs on police organizations helps to perpetuate white officer' prejudices against minorities; that it creates a climate of harassment for the few "ethnic" police officers and hinders their professional mobility; and, that it fails to provide young people from the minorities' groups with "role models." These factors help to exacerbate relations between the police and VMs. Similarly, the Ontario Task Force Report indicates that success rates in recruitment and selection are heavily skewed in favour of white males (Lewis, 1990). In addition, many new immigrants from dictatorial or repressive regimes distrust the police (Fleras, et al., 1989) and may not consider law enforcement as a respectable profession or may view a police job as having few advancement opportunities (Jayewardene and Talbot, 1990). *Given these obstacles, considerable emphasis needs to be placed on finding innovative and effective ways of increasing VM representation on police organizations.*

Various police organizations have begun to use innovative methods to recruit and select minority applicants, including the use of minority role models and recruiters, making

presentations to minority community groups, consulting with representatives of minority organizations, advertising in minority media, and depicting minorities in promotional materials and ads, to name a few. Some police organizations are investigating the use of computerized information technology to track recruits through the application process and, subsequently, through job assignments. However, it is not clear to what extent these methods are being utilized and which methods, if any, are most effective in increasing minority representation on police organizations. No systematic research has addressed these questions to date. ***Thus, the main objective of this paper is to identify general recruitment and selection strategies, with a focus on the more innovative strategies, across selected police organizations in Canada, and to make preliminary assessments of their effectiveness.***

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Importance of Visible Minority Recruitment and Selection

In Canada, and other liberal democracies, police services have become integrally associated with roles and values important for the functioning of society. Apart from the traditional function of maintaining law and order necessary in a civilized community, police services have become more diverse to suit the needs of evolving democracies, including “social services” and “non-crime” related matters such as domestic disputes and counselling.

While peace maintenance services, as opposed law enforcement, are on the increase, they are not totally new. In fact, Sir Robert Peel’s “Bill for improving Police in and near the Metropolis” presented to the British Parliament in 1829, emphasized the need for police to maintain public order and peace (Dutton, 1986). In today’s society, the service function

comprises a large proportion of a police officer's time. In fact, Hill (1984) estimates that approximately 80 per cent of calls for police service are of non-crime related activities such as family upheaval, racial discord and youth unemployment; Dutton (1986) reports that order maintenance and service functions comprise over 80 per cent of a police officer's time, while law enforcement duties take up only about 10-15 percent. Similar figures have also been reported by Wycoff, Susmilch and Eisenbart (1980). Thus, the police represents a major governmental institution with which the public interacts; this is especially so in the case of non-whites, including recent third world immigrants (Jain, 1994). Given the changing nature of the Canadian "public", it is pertinent that the composition of the police be reflective of, or at least be sensitive to, the wider community it serves.

Further, police officers are usually "solitary actors" and spend most of their time at work without direct supervision (Coulton and Feild, 1995; Skolnick, 1967; McLaughlin and Bing, 1987). The nature of their job usually requires them to work alone or with a partner. For this and other reasons, police work usually involves a wide latitude of discretion (McLaughlin and Bing, 1987; Coulton and Feild, 1995). Thus, police officers must have high ethical standards, "free" of racial and other bigotries. Also, since departmental promotions are usually within the police organization, all ranks within the police hierarchy come from largely the same pool recruited. As such, it is important that high quality candidates are recruited and selected. Finally, civil liability claims against the police are on the increase (McLaughlin and Bing, 1987); such legal challenges usually emanate as a result of "normal police duties", as well as administrative procedures, including personnel selection and promotion. Police agencies that are negligent in the hiring of officers have been successfully sued in court.

As such, the recruitment and selection of police officers are of vital importance in achieving better community relations, as well as protecting the integrity and image of an institution vital to democracy. Recognizing such importance, governments and the police have initiated a number of initiatives to foster better relationships and enhance the utility of police services.

Government and Police Services' Initiatives

In Canada, police initiatives with regard to visible minority (VM) employment have to be examined within the federal, provincial and municipal policy contexts¹. At the federal level, the government initiated a national multicultural policy in 1971. However, the program was widely criticized for its “song and dance” approach and other deficiencies (Breton, 1986). In 1981, partly as a result of increasing levels of racism and discrimination against non-whites, the federal government established a race relations unit in the Multiculturalism Directorate of the Department of the Secretary of State, with increased funding. In 1982, multiculturalism became enshrined in the 1982 Constitution Act as part of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.²

¹In Canada, there are three main types of police organizations: the federal police (the RCMP), the provincial police and the municipal police organizations. The municipal and provincial organizations enforce municipal by-laws and provincial laws respectively. The RCMP enforces federal laws in all ten provinces and the two territories. Ontario and Quebec are the only two provinces that have provincial organizations. In all other provinces, the RCMP acts as the provincial police under federal-provincial contracts, and also as the police of some major urban areas under federal-provincial and federal-provincial-municipal contracts (Jain, 1988; Juliani, Talbot and Jayewardene, 1984).

²According to Section 27 of the Charter: “This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.”

The federal government also introduced the Employment Equity Act³ and federal Contractors Program in 1986. The Act requires federally regulated employers with one hundred or more employees to provide improved access to employment opportunities to four target groups: women, visible minorities, the disabled and aboriginal peoples.⁴ The federal Contractors Program affects employers with one hundred or more employees who bid on federal contracts for goods and services worth more than \$200,000 or more.⁵

Like the federal government, all the provinces have human rights codes which prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of race, colour, religion, sex, origin, etc. Further, all jurisdictions are covered by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Many provinces have also initiated formal multicultural policies and committees and other initiatives to provide for equality of opportunities for racial minorities.⁶ In fact, Ontario passed the *Police Services Act* of 1990, which called for increased representation of the target groups in its police organizations; the employment equity regulations issued by the province's Solicitor General in 1991 also

³This Act was amended in 1996. Coverage is now expanded to the federal public service; the Canadian armed forces and the RCMP will be covered upon order of the Governor in Council.

⁴The law requires that employers prepare annual reports for submission to the Canada Human Resources Department (HRDC), beginning June 1988. These reports must include information on geographic location, industrial sector and employment status. In addition to the annual report, employers are also required to develop an employment equity plan and retain it for at least three years.

⁵The program requires that the contractors sign a Certificate of Commitment to design and carry out an employment equity program which meets specified criteria. Failure to implement employment equity does not result in the cancellation of the contract but excludes the contractor from future government business.

⁶Saskatchewan has a Multiculturalism Act (1974) and four other provinces have legislation that relate to multiculturalism. Visible minorities and aboriginals have also been included in employment equity programs for the civil service as well as the private sector in some provinces.

supported increased representation. However, these initiatives have been repealed by the current Progressive Conservative government in that province.

At the municipal level, a number of cities have formed race relations or multiculturalism advisory committees to the mayor or city councils (Mastai, 1986). The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) also initiated several activities and programs on race relations, multiculturalism and improved employment opportunities for visible minorities and aboriginals, including a formal policy (1986) and a national action committee (1987) on race relations.

It is within this wider policy framework (at the national, provincial and municipal levels) that initiatives by police organizations can best be analyzed. The first major initiative was launched by the federal Multiculturalism Directorate in 1984 in the form of a national symposium, attended by police chiefs, visible minority representatives and government officials, on policing in multiracial/multicultural urban communities in Vancouver. In 1986, a National Police Multiculturalism Liaison Standing Committee consisting of visible minority leaders and selected police chiefs was established under the auspices of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) and funded by the government. A primary role of this committee was to work with the CACP membership to implement major recommendations from the 1984 symposium aimed at increasing the number of minorities in police forces, improving cross-cultural training for police, and promoting liaison between minority communities and the police (Jain, 1988). Since then, several police organizations, including Metropolitan Toronto and the Montreal Urban Community, have started innovative and proactive programs to recruit minorities. In 1988, the RCMP commissioner also announced that the number of visible minority officers will increase from the 1 per cent level at that time, to 5 per cent in fifteen years (Jain, 1988).

Despite these policies, programs and activities initiated by various governments and police organizations, the police services have not been able to attain their employment and promotional objectives over the years. This is evident from the conclusions reached by various investigative commissions and inquiries resulting from allegations of racism and discrimination in the police services.

Commissions and Reports

It is apparent that racial unrest simmers under a seemingly placid Canadian society. As RCMP Commissioner Norman Inkster stated, “Canada will face violence and social unrest unless it learns to accept an increasingly multiracial society...If we are incapable of preparing the way for a better understanding and mutual respect...whatever the colour of one’s skin - then violence in some form is inevitable” (Inkster, 1991). Such “understanding and mutual respect” is very much applicable to police behaviours in the communities they serve. However, as a number of relatively recent public inquiries have revealed, it seems as if the police services have not been able to fully appreciate the need for equal opportunities and fair treatment of all of Canada’s peoples.

The 1989 and 1992 Ontario Race Relations and Policing Task Force Reports (Lewis, 1989, 1990, 1992); the 1988 Quebec Human Rights Commission Report (Bellemare, 1988), and the 1993 Task Force (Corbo) Report (Oziewicz, 1993) all dealt with problems in relations between visible minorities and the police [Testimony from provincial justice inquiries in Nova Scotia (Hickman, 1989), Manitoba (Hamilton and Sinclair, 1991), and Alberta (Rolf, 1991; Cawsey, 1991) highlight the strained relations between aboriginals and the police; however, in this study the focus is on visible minorities]. The Commission of Inquiry into Policing in British

Columbia dealt with problems in the relationship between the police and both visible minorities and aboriginals (Oppal, 1994). Despite the initial reasons for these inquiries, a remarkable similarity is observed with regards to the findings and recommendations relating to the recruitment and selection of racial minorities in the police services. That is, as a result of the various testimonies before the commissions, *all* the reports stress the importance to some sort of “equity” in staffing policies in alleviating the relationship between the police and the diverse communities they serve.

Based on the testimony at the Quebec Human Rights Commission inquiry into relations between the police and ethnic and visible minorities, Normandeau (1990) suggests, in regard to the Montreal police department, that (i) some citizens viewed the police as being unwelcome to minorities, thereby having a dissuasive effect; (ii) low representation of visible and other minorities helped perpetuate white police officers’ prejudices against minorities, created a climate of harassment for the few “ethnic” police officers, and hindered the professional mobility of minority police officers; and (iii) the low representation failed to provide young people from minority groups with “role models” with whom they could identify. Normandeau (1990) further notes that an inquiry committee’s study of the Montreal’s police department’s selection process revealed that the success rate of visible minorities applicants was three times lower than for the majority group. The Ontario and British Columbia inquiries also reported that recruitment and selection (and promotion) policies and procedures are skewed in favour of white males (Lewis, 1989; Oppal, 1994). As the Oppal (British Columbia Inquiry) Report (1994, p. E-14) notes, “the potential conflicts and inequities that can result from a system of policing that draws recruits from only one segment of the population have been highlighted in many jurisdictions and reports...Unless some meaningful steps are taken to make our police agencies more

representative, a sense of alienation and antagonism will almost certainly develop between police and minorities. This has already occurred in the United States and, to a lesser extent, in some Canadian cities (most notably Toronto and Montreal). A police chief from a major American city warned the inquiry not to 'make the same mistakes we made.' He went on to say that in the inner cities, which are largely populated by African- and Hispanic-Americans, 'we are the enemy. Nobody gives us any information'."

As the above review suggests, the commissions and task forces have been unanimous in recommending some sort of employment equity/affirmative action and "new" staffing and promotional mechanisms to secure better representation for visible minorities within the police services. It has been argued that such representation would help in correcting police biases towards visible minorities by providing a link between the police and their communities; further, members of the minority public will feel more at ease in dealing with the police (Lewis, 1989, 1992; Oppal, 1994; Jayewardene and Talbot, 1990).

In general, some typical recommendations include:

- (i) the streamlining and shortening of the recruitment processes for VMs;
- (ii) the adoption of an affirmative action/employment equity plan designed to increase the level of VM recruitment and selection;
- (iii) the adoption of "realistic" minimum uniform standards for all police officers at the recruitment level;
- (iv) the dedication of staff and resources to VM recruitment efforts, including initiatives that target the minority population in their communities; and,
- (v) the use of "bias-free" selection (and promotional) instruments; and,

Thus in order to avert the risk of racial tensions, to meet the demands of a changing population, to improve police-minority relations, to provide role models for minority youths, and

to reflect the ethno-cultural make-up of the communities they serve, it is critical that the police services increase their representation of visible minority officers (Jain, 1994).

As this overview suggests, some of the problems in the police-VM relationship can be addressed through increased representation of VMs in police services/organizations. One method emphasized in the various reports is through the use of innovative strategies in recruiting and selecting VM police officers. Thus, the main objectives of this paper are:

- (i) to examine all methods of police staffing in selected police organizations;
- (ii) to assess the effectiveness of new and innovative recruitment and selection strategies implemented by these organizations; and,
- (iii) to make recommendations on increasing VM representation in Canadian police services, thereby decreasing police-VM tensions in their communities.

III. METHODOLOGY

Thirteen of the larger police organizations across Canada with sizable VM communities were surveyed to assess current and ongoing recruitment and selection strategies and their effectiveness in increasing VM representation (viz., Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa-Hull, the OPP, Montreal, QPP, Halifax, St. Hubert, and the RCMP)⁷. The questionnaire was pre-tested using a selected sample of respondents and appropriate adjustments were made before the surveys were mailed to the respective organizations (Please

⁷This study builds on previous work by Jain (1987, 1994) in which 14 police organizations were surveyed; in this study, there are 13 organizations as a result of the amalgamation of the Moncton Police Service and the RCMP.

see a copy of the final questionnaire in Appendix 1). Contacts were established in each of these organizations with administrators responsible for recruitment and selection. These contacts helped in completing the questionnaires and providing supplemental information through follow-up telephone interviews and/or visits to locations. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

IV. RESULTS

Overall Representation of Visible Minority Officers

As Table 1 below shows, representation of visible minority officers has increased over the past decade, especially over the last five years. However, the representation rates are still below the percentage of VMs in the labour market. This situation is especially noticeable in Vancouver and Toronto, two of Canada's cities with the highest proportions of visible minority residents. However, Halifax, Regina and Ottawa/Hull are approaching representation rates that reflect the VMs in the labour market, with the latter two recording relatively dramatic increases over the last five years. Women representation rates remain at low levels.

Table 1: Visible-minority representation in police organizations (1985, 1987, 1990, 1996/97) and availability of visible minorities in labour market (aged 15 years and over).

| Visible Minorities Police Organization | 1985 | | | 1987 | | | 1990 | | | 1996/97 | | | Area | VM % in Labour market (1991 Census) |
|---|-------------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| | % Men | % Women | % Total | % Men | % Women | % Total | % Men | % Women | % Total | % Men | % Women | % Total | | |
| RCMP | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.8 | N/A | 0.8 | 2.5 | 0.4 | 2.9 | Canada | 9.1 |
| Vancouver | 1.9 | 0.3 | 2.2 | 2.3 | 0.3 | 2.6 | 3.1 | 0.7 | 3.8 | 4.7 | 0.8 | 5.5 | Vancouver | 22.4 |
| Edmonton | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.7 | N/A | 0.7 | 1.6 | 0.4 | 2.0 | 4.8 | 0.5 | 5.3 | Edmonton | 11.5 |
| Calgary | 0.7 | 0.1 | 0.8 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.6 | Men & Women | | 1.5 | 3.5 | 0.3 | 3.8 | Calgary | 12.5 |
| Regina | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.6 | N/A | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0 | 0.6 | 3.6 | 0.0 | 3.6 | Regina | 4.8 |
| Winnipeg | 1.3 | 0 | 1.3 | 1.8 | 0.1 | 1.9 | 3.0 | 0.2 | 3.2 | 3.1 | 0.3 | 3.4 | Winnipeg | 10.3 |
| Toronto | Men & Women | | 2.7 | 3.0 | 0.4 | 3.4 | 4.3 | 0.4 | 4.7 | 6.7 | 0.7 | 7.4 | Toronto | 24.6 |
| Ottawa | 0.3 | 0 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0 | 0.3 | 2.3 | 0 | 2.3 | N/A | N/A | 8.3 | Ottawa/Hull | 9.4 |
| OPP | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 1.4 | 0.02 | 1.4 | N/A | N/A | N/A | Ontario | 12.7 |
| Montreal | 0.1 | 0 | 0.1 | 0.3 | N/A | 0.3 | 0.5 | 0.02 | 0.5 | | | | Montreal | 9.9 |
| QPP | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.05 | 1.3 | 0.3 | 1.6 | Quebec | 5.1 |
| Halifax | 1.9 | 0 | 1.9 | 1.9 | 0 | 1.9 | Men & Women | | 4.5 | 4.6 | 0.2 | 4.8 | Halifax | 5.6 |
| St. Hubert | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | St. Hubert | N/A |

Recruitment Strategies

The Canadian Police Services surveyed in this study utilize an extensive array of recruitment strategies, both traditional and some innovative new approaches. However, as Table 2 suggests, it seems as if the traditional strategies (such as recruiting through the standard media, employee referrals, etc) are still very popular. Nevertheless, over the last five years, police recruiting visits to community colleges and minority organizations have also been fairly widely used.

Table 2: Recruitment practices of selected Canadian police organizations, 1985, 1987, 1990, 1996/97.

| Source | 1985 | | 1987 | | 1990 | | 1996/97 | |
|---|------|----|------|----|------|----|---------|----|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Newspapers, Recruitment brochures, etc. | 10 | 71 | 10 | 71 | 11 | 79 | 11 | 85 |
| Employee referral | 9 | 64 | 9 | 63 | 10 | 71 | 9 | 69 |
| Walk-ins and personal contact | 11 | 79 | 11 | 79 | 11 | 79 | 10 | 77 |
| High school | 13 | 93 | 11 | 79 | 12 | 86 | 9 | 69 |
| Community colleges and universities | | | | | | | 9 | 69 |
| Minority organizations | | | | | | | 9 | 69 |

Note: N = 14 for 1985, 1987 and 1990. N = 13 for 1996/97 due to the amalgamation of the Moncton police service with the RCMP.

With respect specifically to the recruitment of visible minority officers, the comparative figures (Table 3) reveal that there are important changes in some recruitment strategies. That is, while the use of police officers with contacts, and meetings with high school teachers and administrators have decreased considerably (from 93 to 69 per cent and from 86 to 38 per cent respectively), the use of visible minority role models is on the increase (from 71 to 92 per cent).

Table 3: Strategies used by police organizations to recruit visible minority police officers, 1985 - 1996/97

| Strategy | 1985 VM | | 1987 VM | | 1990 VM | | 1996/97 VM | |
|--|---------|----|---------|----|---------|----|------------|----|
| | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % | No. | % |
| Police officers with contacts | 6 | 43 | 7 | 50 | 13 | 93 | 9 | 69 |
| Qualified and trained recruiters | 4 | 29 | 6 | 43 | 13 | 93 | 11 | 85 |
| VM community group presentations | 6 | 43 | 7 | 50 | 12 | 86 | 11 | 85 |
| High school presentations featuring VM role models | 4 | 29 | 4 | 29 | 12 | 86 | 11 | 85 |
| Meeting high school teachers and administrators | 1 | 7 | 3 | 21 | 12 | 86 | 5 | 38 |
| VM constables | - | - | - | - | 12 | 86 | 12 | 92 |
| Consultation with VM organizations | - | - | - | - | 12 | 86 | 12 | 92 |
| Advertising in VM media | - | - | - | - | 12 | 86 | 10 | 77 |
| Special police recruit team | - | - | - | - | 10 | 71 | 8 | 62 |
| VM role models | 3 | 21 | 6 | 43 | 10 | 71 | 12 | 92 |
| Upgrading VM civilian staff | - | - | - | - | 8 | 57 | 7 | 54 |
| Police recruitment stories in VM media | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 38 |
| Maintaining contacts with minority families | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | 31 |
| Promotional materials in other languages | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | 23 |
| Depicting VMs in promotional materials and ads | - | - | - | - | - | - | 5 | 38 |

Note: N = 14 for 1985, 1987 and 1990. N = 13 for 1996/97 due to the amalgamation of the Moncton police service with the RCMP.

The most popular new approaches in recruiting VM officers, as reported by respondents, include: seminars/outreach programs for minority students; job fairs; the use of minority officers as role models; and, the use of the VM media. Of interest, all these initiatives have been implemented by the more successful police services (i.e., in terms of reflecting the proportion of VMs in the labour market), viz., Ottawa/Hull, Halifax, and Regina.

Effectiveness of Recruitment Strategies

The main index used to capture the effectiveness of the various recruiting strategies was derived from a survey question (Q.6) that directly asked what methods generate the most applicants. As Table 4 shows, newspapers were ranked the most effective, followed by the use of VMs as role models, community outreach programs/presentations, and job fairs. None of the police organizations surveyed collected systematic data on actual figures for each recruitment method, broken down by the relevant groups (VMs, whites, etc.). Thus, no direct comparison could have been attempted. However, such an assessment can be done using indirect measures, such as representation rates across groups (see section on selection strategies).

Table 4: Recruitment methods that generate the most visible minority applicants, 1996/97.

| Source | No. | % |
|------------------------------|-----|----|
| Newspapers | 7 | 54 |
| VM role models | 4 | 31 |
| Community outreach | 3 | 23 |
| Job fairs | 2 | 15 |
| Community presentations | 1 | 8 |
| VM involvement in recruiting | 1 | 8 |
| Cultural relations officer | 1 | 8 |

Barriers to Recruitment

In general, perceived barriers (as reported by the police services) remained the same over the past five years (see Table 5 below). There were, however, some significant decreases with respect to: distrust of police; policing not being an “honourable profession,” VMs not being welcomed in police services; and, policing as being dangerous.

Table 5: Barriers in attracting visible-minority candidates as identified by police organizations: 1990 - 1996/97.

| VM Barriers | 1990 | | 1996/97 | |
|---|------|----|---------|----|
| | No. | % | No. | % |
| Home country perceptions of police | 12 | 86 | 10 | 77 |
| Policing not acceptable for VM women | - | - | 9 | 69 |
| Better opportunities elsewhere | 7 | 50 | 8 | 62 |
| Distrust of police | 12 | 86 | 7 | 54 |
| Policing not an "honourable profession" | 12 | 86 | 6 | 46 |
| High physical requirements | - | - | 5 | 38 |
| Lack of advancement opportunities | 5 | 36 | 3 | 23 |
| High educational requirements | - | - | 2 | 15 |
| Multiple trips required by applicants | - | - | 2 | 15 |
| VMs not welcomed in police force | 8 | 57 | 1 | 8 |
| Policing as dangerous | 7 | 50 | 1 | 8 |
| Unclear job requirements | - | - | 1 | 8 |
| Lack of compensation & benefits information | - | - | 1 | 8 |
| Lack of foreign qualification equivalency | - | - | 1 | 8 |

N = 14 for 1990; N = 13 for 1996/97 due to the amalgamation of the Moncton police service with the RCMP.

Selection Procedures and Strategies

The effectiveness of the recruitment strategies geared towards attracting VMs can also be assessed through final selection figures and ratios. However, the final figures should be understood within the context of a host of other issues involved in the staffing process. These include an understanding of various criteria used by the police services and associated "hurdles," and administrative issues involved in the decision-making process.

Selection Instruments and Criteria

As in other organizations, Canadian police services, at least in this study, use a variety of selection instruments and criteria in screening candidates for positions within the services, with the most popular shown in Table 6. In essence, with the exception of St Hubert⁸, all the other police services in this study use a multiple hurdle process in screening applicants. Applicants failing one hurdle are allowed to re-do the tests/hurdles, some with the failed or invalid tests (Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, QPP, and Montreal) and some all over again (Regina - except education test; Ottawa - except GATB; Halifax, OPP, Edmonton, and the RCMP). Table 8 below reveals the failure rates, by group, for the major hurdles (figures are only for the four police services that reported this data). It is evident that VM failure rates are higher than non-whites for most of these hurdles.

It is evident that two of the most popular selection instruments used are the interview and the psychological tests (including the general aptitude tests). Since many VMs fail these tests, it is pertinent that their validity be assessed - Tables 8 and 9 show relevant information. With respect to the interview, while all the police services have structured formats, only seven score the responses and in no instance are VMs (or ABs) included in the team that does the scoring. For the psychological test, only four police services have implemented (or are implementing) validation strategies.

⁸Only the Quebec Police Academy Diploma used.

Table 6: Most popular selection instruments used by Canadian police organizations in 1996/97. (N = 13)

| Selection Instrument | No. | % |
|--|-----|-----|
| Physical fitness examination | 13 | 100 |
| Background investigation | 13 | 100 |
| Fingerprint check | 13 | 100 |
| Interview(s) | 12 | 92 |
| Medical examination | 12 | 92 |
| Character reference check | 12 | 92 |
| Application form | 11 | 85 |
| English test | 9* | 69 |
| Personality test or other psychological assessment | 9 | 69 |
| Aptitude test | 8* | 62 |
| Academically related courses | 7* | 54 |
| Police officer selection test | 6* | 46 |
| Essay | 6 | 46 |
| Intelligence test | 6 | 46 |
| Polygraph test | 5 | 38 |
| Mathematics test | 4 | 31 |
| Assessment centre | 3 | 23 |
| Point system | 2 | 15 |
| Report writing | 2 | 15 |
| Other | 2** | 15 |

N = 13. Number of organizations that ranked selection instruments as usually (3) or always (4) used. (Also included if not ranked but checked); * In some cases it was indicated that these test were included in RRST, PCEE, & GATB tests; ** Other included: 1) life skills & qualified expertise; 2) urine sample, strip to underwear and take temperature.

Table 7: Failure Rates of Selected Groups in the Multiple Hurdle Process (most recent recruit class)

| Type of Hurdle/ <i>Police Service</i> | Visible Minorities | | Non-Minorities | |
|---|--------------------|----------|----------------|----------|
| | No. Processed | % failed | No. Processed | % failed |
| <i>Calgary</i> | | | | |
| Police Applicant Test | 86 | 60% | 896 | 32% |
| Physical Abilities Test | 14 | 36% | 505 | 24% |
| Interview (2 on 1) | 9 | 0% | 343 | 29% |
| Interview (3 on 1) | 6 | 33% | 222 | 34% |
| <i>Winnipeg</i> | | | | |
| Police Applicant Test | 56 | 71% | 348 | 41% |
| Physical Abilities Test | 17 | 12% | 240 | 13% |
| <i>Halifax</i> | | | | |
| Aptitude Test | - | - | - | - |
| PARE Test | 6 | 0% | 142 | 21% |
| 1.5 mile run | 6 | 33% | 82 | 33% |
| Essay | 4 | 0% | 85 | 14% |
| <i>Toronto</i> | | | | |
| General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) | 410 | 62% | 860 | 45% |
| Written Communication Assessment (WCA) | 410 | 26% | 860 | 3% |
| Physical Readiness Evaluation for Police (PREP) | 410 | 22% | 860 | 9% |
| Behaviour Exit Interviews | 59 | 30% | 64 | 17% |
| Background Investigation | 29 | 34% | 24 | 13% |
| Psychological Interview | 17 | 18% | 20 | 10% |

Table 8: Type and characteristic of interview used in selection of police officers in selected Canadian police organizations, 1990 and 1996/97.

| Police Service | Type of Interview | | Interview Scored | | Interview scored by VMs | | Interview Weight | | Number of Interviews | | How Interviews are conducted | Number of VM interviewers | | Who Interviews | |
|----------------|-------------------|------------|------------------|---------|-------------------------|---------|------------------|------------|----------------------|---------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|---|--|
| | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1996/97 | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1990 | 1996/97 |
| RCMP | Other* | Other* | Yes | Yes | No | No | N/A | 50% ** | 1 | 2 | Other + | 1 | 9 | Non-commissioned personnel officer | Trained recruiters in divisional staffing & personnel officers |
| Vancouver | Structured | Structured | No | No | No | No | N/A | 40% | 2 | 4 | Sequential | 2 | 0 | Recruiting sergeant or detective | Sgt i/c recruiting & polygraph, Assessment centre assessor, background investigator |
| Edmonton | Structured | Other* | Yes | Yes | No | No | 40% | 35% | 3 | 3 | Sequential | 0 | ? | Recruiting-unit member | - |
| Calgary | Structured | Structured | No | Yes | No | No | 30% | ** | 2 | 2 | Board | 0 | ? | Staff sergeant detectives, constables | Trained police officers |
| Regina | Structured | Other* | No | No | No | No | 100% | - | 2 | 2 | Board | 0 | 0 | Recruiting officer, chief, superintendent | Recruiting officer + H.R. secretary |
| Winnipeg | Structured | Structured | Yes | Yes | No | No | 100% | 60% | 3 | 2 | Both | 1 | 0 | City & police recruiting officers, personnel & training inspector | #1 Recruiting Sgt + police personnel; #2 Personnel division inspector, staff Sgt. personnel & training inspector |
| Toronto | N/A | Structured | N/A | Yes | N/A | No | N/A | - | N/A | - | - | N/A | - | N/A | - |
| Ottawa | Structured | Structured | No | Yes | No | No | 40% | 60% | 3 | 1 | - | 1 | 2 | Recruiting officer + 3 senior officers on recruiting board | Sr. officer + Sr. patrol supervisor |
| OPP | Structured | Structured | Yes | Yes | No | No | 100% | pass ** | 1 | 1 | - | 3 | 1 | Trained uniformed recruiting officer | Fully trained recruiter interviewers |
| Montreal | Structured | Other* | No | Yes | No | No | 80% | 60% | 2 | 1 | - | 0 | 2 | Civilian and police professionals | HR specialist + an officer |
| QPP | Structured | Structured | Yes | Yes | N/A | No | 100% | 32% | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 0 | Civil & police employees, retirees | Officers |
| Halifax | Structured | Structured | Yes | Yes | No | No | 100% | 100% | 2 | 2 | Board | 0 | 2 | Personnel & board of senior officers | #1 HR staff #2 Board of senior administration |
| St. Hubert | Structured | Structured | Yes | Yes | No | No | 100% | 40% | 1 | 2 | Both | N/A | 0 | Police inspector + 2 lieutenants | Police officers with rank Lieutenant and above |

* Combination of structured and unstructured

** RCMP: 50% in aggregate score with RRST, if minimum is achieved.

Calgary: Candidates must meet cut score on critical dimensions otherwise holistic weight.

OPP: Interview must be passed in order to proceed.

? Edmonton: A combination; all 3 females; all 3 VMs or AB.

Calgary: Varies

How is interview conducted: "Sequential" means the applicant moves from interviewer to interviewer; "Board" means that two or more interviewers conducted the interview at the same time; and "Both" indicates more than one board interview where the boards are conducted separately.

+ RCMP: Recruiting interviewer conducts applicant interview, followed by separate suitability interview.

Table 9: Validation and adverse-impact analysis of psychological tests used, 1990 and 1996/97

| | Validation | | Have any selection instruments been developed on the basis of a validation strategy? | Has the relationship between test scores and job performance been examined separately for: | | Adverse Impact: | | | | Description of process for final decision to hire: |
|----------------|------------|---------|--|--|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------|---------|---|
| | 1990 | 1996/97 | | Different racial groups | Males and females | By VM | By different racial groups | By Sex | | |
| | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1996/97 | 1996/97 | | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1990 | 1996/97 | 1996/97 |
| Police Service | | | | | | | | | | |
| RCMP | Yes | Yes | Yes, content validation used for RRST, cadet exams. | In progress | In progress | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | The required number of applicants in each division is selected top-down by aggregate test and interview score in each group. |
| Vancouver | No | No* | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Once a candidate has successfully passed all stages of the selection process the decision to hire is based on achieving a balanced class. |
| Edmonton | Yes | Yes | Yes, police constable entrance exam developed on JA | - | - | Yes | - | Yes | - | |
| Calgary | Yes | No* | No | No | No | No | Yes | No | Yes | Committee of: Chief or Deputy, Personnel officer, inspector from field, Psychologist and recruiting personnel discuss individual applicants Ales and make selections. |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------|-----|-----|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|
| Regina | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Chief makes final decision after interviewing candidates |
| Winnipeg | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Consensus of final selection panel consisting of 3 senior officers, reviewing all applicants who have advanced to the final stage of the 13 step selection process. |
| Toronto | N/A | - | - | - | - | N/A | - | N/A | - | - |
| Ottawa | Yes | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Review of entire file. Look at mix of group as long as meet minimum requirements. |
| OPP | No | Yes | Yes, validity tests available through CSS, Hay Mgmt & Dr. D. Hoath, force psychologist | Yes | Yes | No | No? | No | No? | All phases of process completed. Applicant file reviewed by 3 member Sr. Mgmt Board. If all phases successfully completed, applicant is offered employment in 1st available recruit intake (3 intakes per yr.) |
| Montreal | No | No | Yes, content validity for interview & scoring key, physical aptitudes test, medical exam & driving exam. | No | No | No | No | No | No | Recommendation made by selection committee and approved by 3 different management levels. |
| QPF | N/A | No | - | No | No | N/A | No | N/A | No | - |
| Halifax | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Successful interview. |
| St. Hubert | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | No | Consensus between the interviewers. |

* study in progress or work in process

Administrative Issues in Decision-Making

In developing a short list of candidates for selection, most of police services utilize a system whereby candidates only proceed to the next stage if they meet the minimum requirements of the hurdles. However, one service (the RCMP) uses a top-down procedure to achieve equity priorities; Edmonton also adjusts the bio-medical tests for women. Further, in order to encourage minorities to apply (as well as satisfying some legal requirements), most of the police services have formal and/or informal accommodation policies for VMs. For instance, all the respondents stated that they allow Sikhs to wear turbans at work (on this question, n=9) and three have special accommodation policies for VM women (Edmonton, Regina and Winnipeg).

The setting (choice and development) of selection standards vary across police services. However, in general, the Human Resources division in each service, the Police Chief, and Police Services Boards, in line with provincial legislation, feature prominently in the development of these standards.

Most Canadian Police Services also administer employment equity (EE) programs; notable exceptions are Ottawa/Hull, the OPP, and St. Hubert (see Table 11 below). For those services with employment equity programs, five have recruiting goals and timetables specifically for visible minorities (and aboriginals), viz., the RCMP, Vancouver, Edmonton, Regina, and Montreal police services.

Table 10: Employment equity programs in police agencies.

| Police Service | Employment Equity program | Employment Equity recruiting goals | Employment Equity recruiting timetables | 1996/97 goals | Future goals | VM liaison officers | Advisory committees with VM members | VM community involvement in recruiting VM applicants |
|----------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|---|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| RCMP | Yes | Yes | Yes | ? (deleted from summary by RCMP) | 16.6% VM 9.0% AB (3 yr avg. hiring goals) | - | - | - |
| Vancouver | Yes (mission statement) | Yes | Yes? | 1/3 of recruits hired from racial minorities | ongoing | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB | - |
| Edmonton | Yes | Yes | Yes | 11 VM 5 AB | ? | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB |
| Calgary | Yes | No | No | N/A | N/A | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB |
| Regina | Yes | Yes | Yes | 6% VMs & 12% ABs | Yes, by 2013 | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB |
| Winnipeg | Yes | No | No | N/A | N/A | Yes, VM & AB | Not applicable | No |
| Toronto | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Ottawa | No | No | No | N/A | N/A | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM and AB | No, in progress |
| OPP | No | No | No | N/A | N/A | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB |
| Montreal | Yes | Yes | Yes | 10% VMs & 1% ABs of new hires ⁹ | Yes, 1996 to 2001 | Yes, VM & AB | N/A | N/A |
| QPF | Yes | No | No | N/A | N/A | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB | Yes, VM & AB |
| Halifax | Yes | No | No | N/A | N/A | Yes, VM | - | Yes, VM & AB |
| St. Hubert | No | No | No | N/A | N/A | No | No | No |

⁹Also, ethno-cultural communities 5% of new hires by 2001.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Representation*

There has been substantial improvement in the representation of VMs from 1985 to 1998, especially in the last 5 years. However, VM representation continues to lag behind the labour market representation of this group (as per the 1991 Census). Concerted effort is required in order to attain acceptable levels of representation commensurate with their external representation. Promotional barriers need to be removed and lateral or direct entry into management positions and, to some extent, accelerated promotional measures need to be adopted by police organizations, as recommended by various inquiries and commissions, in order to improve the representation of minorities in management ranks of police organizations.

2. *Recruitment Barriers*

Perceived barriers in attracting VM candidates for police officer jobs, as identified by police services, have declined considerably. In order to attract qualified minorities, police organizations may wish to increase the use of VM role models, and community outreach programs.

To improve minority group perceptions of police, organizations will need to implement innovative strategies. The organizations should increase cross-cultural communication and diversity training of police officers; adopt pro-active strategies to reduce racism against minorities; provide mentoring programs; and work increasingly with youth organizations, and race relations committees.

3. *Innovative Recruitment Measures*

To increase the effectiveness of recruiting efforts, continued and enhanced use of role models to recruit VMs is essential and visits to community colleges and universities increased. Advertising in visible minority media should also be intensified. Additionally, concerted effort is required to more closely align police agencies recruiting efforts with community minority organizations. Further, it is necessary that systematic analysis of the effectiveness of these recruitment and selection strategies be conducted and appropriate changes made where necessary.

4. *Selection Methods and Removal of Adverse Impact*

Selection needs to be improved. Police agencies should give special attention to selection methods that can have an adverse impact on minorities. Consideration for alternate innovative and valid selection methods may be necessary in order to select successful police officers and to comply with the law. Data needs to be kept for each stage of the selection process for both validation and legal purposes.

More structured interviewing approaches should be considered by all police departments. As well, the interviewers and interview scoring teams should include representation of minorities to ensure that biases in selection are reduced to a minimum..

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it should be emphasized that there are significant improvements in the representation and hiring practices of the selected Police Services. There have been an increased use of innovative recruitment and selection practices. Nevertheless, there is still room for improvement since the representation rates generally do not reflect relevant labour markets. Hopefully, with the implementation of innovative strategies suggested in this paper, the situation will be corrected in the near future.

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