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A preliminary letter is advisable. Articles must be footnoted according to one of the following manuals of style Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association 2nd ed. or Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations 4th ed.

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Patrol Activities of Male and Female Officers as a Function of Work Experience

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Abstract
By studying official patrol car logs, the authors were able to follow the performance of newly trained male and female officers for over 145 tours of duty. The assignment of men to more “high risk” calls, observed in early tours, disappeared as the officers accumulated more experience. Over the course of the study, there were few if any significant differences in male-female performances.

As recently as 1970, the term “policeman” still served as the generic equivalent to “police officer” in the United States of America. Thirteen years later—and despite the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 1972—the odds continue to be overwhelming that a call for emergency police assistance will, if not bring a “policeman” to the door. When employment statistics for female officers were first reported in 1971, 1.4% of all sworn sworn officers were women by 1980, the figure had increased only 5% (FBI, 1972: 1981). The actual number of women assigned to patrol is undoubtedly far greater than the numbers of women sworn officers, for it is still common for police to deploy women in “protected” positions as dispatchers, jailers, and juvenile service officers (Polls, 1981).

The former justifications for excluding women from police work are gradually eroding in the face of growing evidence about the ability of female officers to handle street patrol. The first and more comprehensive of these studies compared 86 new patrolmen with 86 new patrolwomen in the Washington, D.C. Police Department (Block and Anderson, 1974). Apart from the many similarities that were found, men initiated a somewhat greater number of discretionary activities (usually traffic control), while women tended to hand's more dispatched calls for service. Male officers made more misdemeanor and felony arrests; however both groups of officers obtained similar conviction rates for arrests that were made. Citizens, patrolmen, patrolwomen, and police administrators shared the opinion that male officers were more effective than female officers in handling disorderly males, patrolmen and, to a lesser extent, patrolwomen both registered a preference for patrolling with a male partner.

A smaller study of 16 female officers and 16 male officers in suburban St. Louis County obtained similar results and reported few differences between the two groups (Sherman, 1974). As true in the Washington, D.C., study, males made more arrests; however, unlike that study, women officers in St. Louis County distributed more traffic tickets.

An intensive study of New York City police focused principally upon the operating styles of 41 males and 41 females in handling street encounters (Sichel, Friedman, Quinn, and Smith, 1978). Again, in most respects, men and women used similar techniques of approach. Nevertheless, female officers engaged in fewer efforts to take direct control of situations, were somewhat more deferential to their male partners, and tended to “hang back” from vigorous physical activity. On the other hand, citizen ratings of female officers were more positive than for male officers, especially on items pertaining to competence, respectfulness, and ability to “listen and understand.”

Despite this growing evidence favoring the equal competency of women officers, there is a puzzling lag in the attitudes of prospective (Golden, 1981) and experienced officers (Vega and Silverman, 1982) who acknowledge the skills which have been ascribed by researchers to women officers. In their survey of officers from three large Florida law enforcement agencies, Vega and Silverman found that only 16% of the male officers believed that women were as competent as men for police work and half felt women should not be assigned to patrol duty. If such attitudes merely reflected male prejudices against women, one might expect that these attitudes might be attenuated by opportunities to work with women officers. Such was not the case:

Significantly more officers who had worked with females in contrast to those who had not felt that females were more likely to be assigned to less violent sectors, received more backup, were not as skilled in the use of firearms, assertive enough, and generally as effective as male officers. We cannot know whether this was due to a change in the performance of the women or simply to a change in the attitudes of police officials as they acclimated to the presence of women. Quite apart from the question of sex differences, there is very little information in the literature on the performance changes of police rookies, in general, as they gain additional street experience.

Methodological gaps. The Washington, D.C., study is likely to remain the most comprehensive and authoritative study on police women for years to come. The project addressed dozens of questions, which will be attempted in the present research. Nevertheless, any research strategy must be constructed within the confines of particular measurements and local conditions, and available subjects. While adequate for the original purpose, methodological limitations become when others attempt to generalize the findings to other populations and situations. Here are some examples:

The Washington, D.C., study was conducted at a time when the height requirement for women was still an extraordinary 5'7" (vs. 5'3") in the El Monte Police Department. Can we generalize from such a select group to police...
women of average height? Or, as Walsh (1975, p. 22) asks, “Would this be like hiring only 6-foot-tall men?” A second problem with this study was that the policewomen and comparison men worked in different districts, leaving the lurking suspicion that differences in crime problems or deployment practices may have contributed to the outcomes. The St. Louis County study was presented in narrative form, with few -details on methodology (e.g., the number and duration of observation periods per officer) and no data tables. Thus, it is difficult to assess the adequacy of the analysis or design. Furthermore, the observations were limited to one-person patrol cars, thereby leaving an information gap on the effects of role and interactive upon the productivity of the working partner. The New York City study had a blind spot in the opposite direction, for department policy required that motor patrol officers work only in pairs, thereby excluding the possibility of assessing the independent activity of individual officers. The two studies are not really complementary because they addressed rather different aspects of patrol performance.

All three of the above studies obtained their central data on police performance from ride-along observers. This method has the obvious benefit of providing an independent measure which avoids having to rely upon official statistics. However, the observer method is not without limitations. There is the problem of observer bias (e.g., in the New York study, male observers reported more favorable observations of male officers than did female observers). There is also the risk that the presence of an “audience” may affect the behavior under study (in Washington, D.C., police engaged in slightly different activities in the presence of a male observer than with a female).

The most serious problem in using ride-along observers is one that is so costly being expensive, it tends to limit the number of observations which can be gathered. The Washington, D.C., officers were observed for an average of only 1.1 working days and the New York police for 5.6 hours of duty. Because there are so few incidents in an average day, this yields a very small and unstable data base, particularly when there is no reason to identify subcategories of patrol activity. For example, in Washington, D.C., observations were obtained for only 10 hours of duty for males in one-person vehicles.

During those 10 hours, just 21 service calls were dispatched to all of these men. One table (Table 4, p. 16) distributes these 21 incidents through 11 categories of activity, yielding a model response of just 1 observation per cell. It is this kind of unstable data which seems to have contributed to the misunderstanding and controversy in the exchanges between Walsh (1975) and Block (1975). By taking the calculated risk of trusting the performance measures available in the official car logs, the present study provided a data base of 146.8 hours of duty per officer, and these towers generated, in turn, 2,773.2 recorded incidents per officer (i.e., 5.3 incidents per shift in the Washington, D.C., study and study 24.4 incidents in the New York City study).

Method

This research was conducted in the El Monte Police Department in El Monte, California, a Los Angeles suburb of approximately 70,000 people. The subjects were 26 new officers who had completed both academy and field training and were ready for regular duty. Male and female groups were matched on the number of patrol shifts worked and were equated on the proportions of time allocated to off-time, swing, and graveyard shifts. At the time of this assessment, 13 males and 13 females had completed at least one block of 64 hours of duty: 10 of each shift had completed three blocks of 64, and 6 of each group had completed three blocks of 64 hours of duty. Because most of these assignments were based upon four ten-hour days per week, 64 hours of duty are equal to four calendar months of patrol experience.

Officers were monitored on 70 types of patrol activity as recorded in their official patrol car logs. For convenience, these activities were classified under eight broader areas, with representative activities as follows: (1) Stop details: briefing, dispatcher relief, desk relief, and prisoner search; (2) Traffic stops: all vehicle stops for moving traffic violations and impound equipment; (3) Pedestrian stops: all stops for questioning of pedestrians under suspicious circumstances; (4) Vehicle stops: all stops for questioning and vehicle search for "causes"; (5) Other observations: location checks, bar checks, and found property; (6) High risk calls: in-progress robbery, murder, assault with a deadly weapon, and shooting at a dwelling; (7) Disturbance calls: all

<p>| Table 1 Average Patrol Activities per Eight-hour Shift for Male and Female Officers in One- and Two-person Cars for as Many as Three Successive Time Periods |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mean Duration (min)</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incident</td>
<td>One Person</td>
<td>Two Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrol Activity</td>
<td>One Person</td>
<td>Two Person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crime Stop</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic Stop</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Stop</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disturbance Stop</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unless otherwise specified, these figures do not include any on-duty shift calls for the purpose of completing incident reports and other paperwork. There was no significant sex-by-deployment interaction.
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domestic quarrels, neighborhood disputes, and gang fights; (6) Other radio calls: grand theft auto, burglary, collision, and petty theft. It should be noted that items 2 through 5 can be considered "self-initiated," while items 6 through 8 are assigned by a dispatcher.

Results

Table 1 presents the number of activities logged for male and female officers, with one subsect of data showing activity rates for one- vs. two-person vehicles and another subset showing rates over successive time periods. The data indicate that the "second person" who generally rode in the passenger seat was always a male. Activity rates were converted to a standard eight-hour day, thus allowing for comparisons with other departments. The third column indicates the proportion of the shift that was devoted to each of the eight areas of activity. The proportion of time left "unaccounted for" was presumed to be available for "free-ranging patrol." The largest difference in free patrol time for police women vs. police women occurred during the first time period (21.9% vs. 27.9%, respectively) and the smallest difference was found for data based upon all three time periods (24.6% vs. 23.0%).

Activity rates were subjected to analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests to determine whether the "between subjects" variables (i.e., sex) and "within-subjects" variables (i.e., one- vs. two-person cars, and work periods) had significance. When there is only one time period (up to 64 tours of duty), the analysis shrinks to a two-factor design. A separate analysis was conducted for each sample size within each activity, for a total of 24 comparisons. However, it should be recognized that the three analyses within each activity were not truly independent because the sample size within each activity, for a total of 24 comparisons.

Discussion and Conclusions

The El Monte Police Department appears to have subjected its female officers to a fair and rigorous test. In contrast to law enforcement in the more affluent suburbs, police work in El Monte offers all of the risks and challenges to be encountered in any urban center. While the absolute number of police women deployed in El Monte is small, their practical significance is not. For the three periods of this study 14.1% of all patrol time was logged by female officers. The administrative guidelines in the El Monte Police Department were clear from the outset. Female officers were to be employed in the same way as males, except for such activities where they might be found to have special competencies. The present results have shown that, for the first four-month period, males were dispatched to a disproportionate number of "high-risk" situations; however, it should be recognized that the three analyses within each activity were not truly independent because data sets were not independent. To test the possibility that sex-role stereotyping might have been operating to divert women into clerical tasks in the work force, a sub-study was conducted of all 70 categories of logged activity. As a rough index, "over-utilization" of women was defined as any activity in which women carried at least 10% more of the workload than would have been expected from their 16.1% of logged time, and "under-utilization" was delineated as any activity at least 12% below the level of experience, women recorded more station details than men. There was one significant sex-by-manipulation interaction, indicating that when working alone, police women made more "other observations" than did police men, but, when working with a partner, police women tended to record fewer of these activities than police men. Each two-person officer, however, experienced changes in activity rates between periods 1 and 2 as these changes were noted for police women. Thus it appears that new officers were well seasoned before being placed on their own. Moreover, women seemed to be "learning the ropes" at about the same speed as men. Compared to officers working alone, two-person teams appeared to have no "other observations" after 64 tours) and more pedestrian checks and vehicle stops (after 128 tours).

The present findings, then, support the earlier investigations in Washington, D.C., New York, Fort Worth, and Chicago which have indicated equal competency for male and female officers. It is unfortunate that the present research sample was too small to confirm the areas of activity where women might expect that they will be utilized. However, examining some specific activities, women served slightly less than their fair share of dispatcher relief (10.2%) and desk officer relief (10.3%).

Vaughn, 1970. Thus it appears that new officers tended to develop a more selective dispatching system which might capitalize on the two-person vehicle. Whatever may be the benefits of a two-person car, it is the failure to develop a more selective dispatching system which might make up for the disadvantages of the two-person car. It was expected that new police officers would find that the quarters of activity differs from the cumulative figures cited above, reducing the likelihood that the summary figures are purely an artifact. For example "total activity" in Washington, D.C., was 1,63 for two-man units and 1.00 for man/woman teams, with EMPD figures being 2.92 and 2.92, respectively. In Washington, D.C., figures for 'public fights' and 'aroused under-utilization' yields figures which might be compared to EMPD police. The respective rates for the various activities are shown in Table 2, which might be interpreted as a measure of the amount of dispatcher relief (10.3%), physical abuse (2.10), sex offender (2.10), disorder (6.48), and desk officer relief (10.5). However, when working with a partner, police women, out- side of station details, might also be justifiable in view of the view of the differences in the one-man and two-person figures. It is unfortunate that the present results have shown that, for the first four-month period, males were dispatched to a disproportionate number of "high-risk" situations; however, it should be recognized that the three analyses within each activity were not truly independent because data sets were not independent. To test the possibility that sex-role stereotyping might have been operating to divert women into clerical tasks in the work force, a sub-study was conducted of all 70 categories of logged activity. As a rough index, "over-utilization" of women was defined as any activity in which women carried at least 10% more of the workload than would have been expected from their 16.1% of logged time, and "under-utilization" was delineated as any activity at least 12% below the level of experience, women recorded more station details than men. There was one significant sex-by-manipulation interaction, indicating that when working alone, police women made more "other observations" than did police men, but, when working with a partner, police women tended to record fewer of these activities than police men. Each two-person officer, however, experienced changes in activity rates between periods 1 and 2 as these changes were noted for police women. Thus it appears that new officers were well seasoned before being placed on their own. Moreover, women seemed to be "learning the ropes" at about the same speed as men. Compared to officers working alone, two-person teams appeared to have no "other observations" after 64 tours) and more pedestrian checks and vehicle stops (after 128 tours).

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capacities of men or women in some absolute sense. If we treated our findings in concrete terms, we might be drawn to conclude that EMPD policewomen can work circles around Washington, D.C., men. The safer generalization is that local work rates strongly affect local performance. If male officers predominate in numbers or in experience, it can be expected that they will set the pace. Then, given adequate selection, adequate training, and adequate opportunities for feedback and social comparison, it appears that women will more or less approximate this pace.

Notes

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References

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