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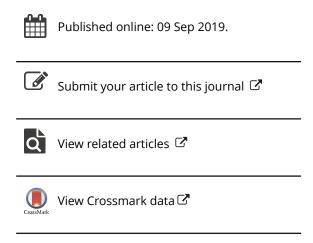
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Will They Even Hear Me? How Race Influences Citizen Complaint Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

Scholarship has explored how representation influences policing services, but little is known as to what effect officer and citizen race influences outcomes related to police misconduct cases. This analysis of the Indianapolis and New Orleans police department applies representative bureaucracy theory to create expectations on how race impacts citizen complaint cases. The findings indicate that Black citizens are more likely to have their complaint sustained when filed against a White officer compared to a White citizen. Moreover, male citizens are less likely to have their complaint sustained compared to females.

Introduction

In recent years, there has been substantial discourse regarding what represents good policing practices. This discourse has spilled over into public administration and policy circles as there is an increase in the study of policing, specifically the notion of equitable policing (Ward & Menifield, 2017, Menifield, Shin, & Strother, 2019; Park & Hassan, 2018; Riccucci, Van Ryzin & Jackson, 2018). Whether it is use of force practices (Nicholson-Crotty, Nicholson-Crotty, & Fernandez, 2017), police stops (Epp, Maynard-Moody, & Haider-Markel, 2014), or hiring practices (Linos, 2017), many streams of research study police officers and race within the context of public administration. Much of this literature has attempted to define and propose ways to alleviate discrepancies and inequities for underrepresented groups that exist in the police organization. While this literature is important in providing empirical case studies to address inequities in policing, there is still a substantial area that is left to be tackled: complaints by citizens against police officers, and how they are resolved.

Broadly, police misconduct is defined as any time a police officer is in violation of external or internal rules of codes that break procedure

and violate citizen's rights (Headley, D'Alessio, & Stolzenberg, 2017). Within the field of criminal justice, a vast amount of literature has attempted to explore the factors (including race) associated with the outcomes of complaints against police officer (*see literature review on police misconduct*), yet there is no consensus as to what effect racial matches between police and citizens has on the outcome of police misconduct cases. There is some literature in public administration that examines police misconduct as it relates to use of force (Hong, 2017b; Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2017), but it has only looked at the organizational level not the individual level. Despite this literature, there is still much to be explored around the topic of police misconduct as measured by complaints against police officers. Furthermore, this article attempts to understand does passive representation lead to more active representation as it pertains to police misconduct cases? To do this, the study examines outcomes for police misconduct: 1) the complaint was sustained, 2) the complaint was not sustained, 3) the complaint was unfounded or the officer was exonerated, or 4) the case went to mediation or negotiation and the race of the officer and citizen.

There are three reasons as to why this study is important for the field of public administration and policing. First, it is one of the few studies in public administration that determines whether the theory of passive to active representative bureaucracy holds when studying police misconduct, specifically complaints against police officers. Moreover, the article adds to representative bureaucracy literature by utilizing individual level data to more precisely study the one to one relationship that exist between a bureaucrat and a citizen. Lastly, this article attempts to discuss and understand intersectionality, or multiple identities, and policing outcomes.

The remainder of this article proceeds in six sections. First, there is a literature review on race and its role in the outcome of police misconduct cases. Next, the article draws on the theory of representative bureaucracy to develop the a priori regarding how the race of a police officer and the race of a citizen may influence the result of police misconduct cases. Moreover, I hypothesize that in the instance of racial non-congruence between citizens and police officers the result for police misconduct cases is more likely to be sustained. This article uses data from complaints made from 2013 to 2017 in Indianapolis and New Orleans. In the final section, I explore the findings and offer suggestions on how the field of public administration can further study police organizations and representative bureaucracy.

Police misconduct, complaint and race literature

Scholarship faces several challenges when attempting to measure and understand the causal mechanisms on police misconduct. Some of those

challenges include how to measure police misconduct (Lersch, 1999), the fact that no national database is available to researchers (Dunn & Caceres, 2010) and local police jurisdictions measure misconduct differently. Nonetheless, the current scholarship has uncovered two data sources to study officer complaint data; citizen perception through surveys and questionnaires (Dowler & Zawilski, 2007; Seron, Pereira, & Kovath, 2004; Weitzer, 1999; Weitzer & Tuch, 2004) as well as filed citizen complaint data, which measures instances in which citizens assert police misconduct (Cao, 1999; Chappell & Piquero, 2004; Hassell & Archbold, 2010; Hickman, Piquero, Lawton, & Greene, 2001; Michelle Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2000; Pate, Fridell, & Hamilton, 1993; Terrill & McCluskey, 2002). Outside of these two methods, scholars have examined perceptions of police officers (Long, Cross, Shelley, & Kutnjak Ivković, 2013; Wolfe & Piquero, 2011), published media reports (Eitle, D'Alessio, & Stolzenberg, 2014), and court cases (Gottschalk, 2011). These studies, while methodologically disparate, all attempt to understand the factors associated with who files complaints and what factors leads to officer misconduct being sustained.

The literature has found that Blacks voice their displeasure for police officers broadly and file complaints at a higher rate than their White counterparts (Liederbach, Boyd, Taylor, & Kawucha, 2007). Part of the oversaturation of Blacks filing more complaints against police officers can be attributed to the overrepresentation of Blacks being stopped, searched, and arrested by police (Lersch, 1998; Petrocelli, Piquero, & Smith, 2003). Alternatively, several studies have attempted to ascertain other alternative causal factors for filing a police misconduct cases. Some of these studies highlight the absence of Black police officers, which propagates feelings and ideas of mistrust and discontent with police officers' actions regardless of the actual behavior or services provided by police officers. Citizens of color are more likely to feel positive about the police and express a greater willingness to cooperate with police when the police force has higher representation of officers of color (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006; Riccucci, Van Ryzin, & Lavena, 2014; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2008).

While several studies attempt to evaluate the underlying reasons for observed ethnic/racial differences in citizen's complaints against police, surprisingly, minimal research examines the relationship a complaint's ethnicity/race on the outcome in police misconduct cases. A study of use of force complaints in Chicago by Kerstetter, Rasinki, and Heiert (1996) found that only in certain outcomes, unfounded or not sustained, did race matter. Moreover, the results of Kerstetter et al. (1996) failed to identify that a complainant's race influenced outcomes in police misconduct cases. Lersch (1998) found statistically insignificant results in a similar study. Alternatively, Terrill and Ingram (2016) found a weak but statistically

significant effect of a complainant's race related to whether a complaint was sustained and the officer received internal punishment. They found that Black citizens were less likely to receive a sustained complaint than White citizens.

Previous literature has suffered from not being able to measure the same outcome across different jurisdictions. This current study compares citizen complaint outcomes from two police departments that use similar filing systems. Furthermore, most studies do not identify the racial characteristics between the person filing the complaint and police officer, which this study is able to address. Moreover, previous studies utilize a single case study, which may lend to conclusions that are hard to extrapolate to other cities. By using a multiple site study from two states with different levels of representation, the results have the ability to relate to multiple police departments

Representative bureaucracy and policing

When defining what constitutes representativeness, scholars have looked at characteristics such as race/ethnicity, gender, age, religion, veteran identity, and disability (Atkins & Wilkins, 2013; Hindera, 1993; Krislov, 2012; Meier, 1975, 1993; Meier, Wrinkle, & Polinard, 1999). Meier and Nicholson-Crotty (2006), for example, argue that representation (symbolic representation) can change citizen behavior in their interactions with police. The most explored definitions relate to race and ethnicity, while several recent studies highlight gender. Regarding race and ethnicity, numerous studies have concluded that bureaucrats of color use their discretion or implement policy to reduce the disparate treatment people of color have historically received from public bureaucracies (Kennedy, 2013; Meier & Stewart, 1992; Pitkin, 1967; Selden, 1997; Selden & Selden, 2001). Thus, this empirical research has supported the link between passive representation and active representation (Wilkins & Keiser, 2004), and more specifically, the notion that passive representation promotes favorable outcomes for people of color.

Policing literature has uncovered mixed results for the linkage between officers of color and outcomes for citizens of color. The presence of officers of color leads to more favorable outcomes for drivers of color (less likely to be stopped and searched) (Close & Mason, 2006, 2007; Gilliard-Matthews, Kowalski, & Lundman, 2008). Alternative studies looked at the aggregate impacts of increased numbers of officers of color on police departments, and across agencies and communities; however, the findings are mixed (Hong, 2017a; Ochs, 2011; Wilkins & Williams, 2008). There fails to be any consistent record of a significant impact, let alone consistent findings of a positive or negative relationship.

The theoretical proponents of representative bureaucracy are best tested at the individual bureaucrat level, nonetheless, many studies test this theory at the aggregate level, which has been deemed as problematic because it is hard to parse out the impacts of the individual decision-maker and his/her actions. Specifically, Bradbury and Kellough (2011) argue:

> "When data on representation and decision making are aggregated to an organizational level, we cannot know with certainty whether outcomes observed are produced by active representation or are the result of other mechanisms. To isolate the impact of active representation by minority and/or female bureaucrats, we need studies in which individual bureaucrats are the units of analysis" (p. 160-161).

Similarity, Nicholson-Crotty, Grissom, Nicholson-Crotty, and Redding (2016) argue

> "The vast majority of studies examine only aggregate relationships, modeling the mean change in outcomes for some group of clients served by an organization as a function of the percent of the organization's employees from that same group. Using results from these analyses to "confirm" theoretical mechanisms fundamentally grounded in individual-level behavior obviously raises significant ecological inference concerns" (p.746).

Given this rationale, I explore the tenet of representation at the individual level. Specifically, I argue that racial matches (Black officers interacting with Black citizens and White officers interacting with White citizens) compared to racial mismatches (Black officers interacting with White citizens and White officers interacting with Black citizens) will lead to a lower likelihood that a complaint against a police officer will be sustained. When there are racial matches, officers are more likely to go from passive to active representation in the Indianapolis and New Orleans police departments. This in turn should lead to less claims of police misconduct between citizens and officers of the same race. Although there may be other organizational factors that can contribute to the outcome of these cases, I am primarily concerned with the role that race, specifically, racial matches and racial mismatches, has on influencing police misconduct cases. One article looked at outcomes of police misconduct cases (Hong, 2017a), although extremely rigorous the study was conducted outside the United States, its unit of analysis was at the organizational level and lacked contextual implications on police misconduct cases in the United States. This article fills this gap by using multinomial logit design focused on the Indianapolis and New Orleans Police Department. In the following section, I propose a testable hypothesis.

Expectation

Recent literature found mixed evidence on how a more diverse police force equates to policing outcomes for citizens. Nicholson-Crotty et al. (2016)

discovered that a higher proportion of Black officers in a police force does not reduce police involved homicides of Black citizens in large cities. This finding counters the narrative that increased representation results in a decrease in homicides in cities. Even though Hong's study (Hong, 2017a) of English and Welsh police forces was not set in the United States, Hong revealed that an increase in racial representation resulted in a reduction in police misconduct. These two studies merely scratch the surface when analyzing the effects of race in police misconduct. The contextual environment is important to consider; however, one paper finds no effect and the other paper notes a positive effect in a country outside of the United States makes the hypothesis inconclusive.

Following the theory of representative bureaucracy, it argues that passive representation can lead to active representation, where the bureaucrat will act on behalf of citizens they represent. If officers interact with citizens of the same race and engage in active representation, the expectation is that officers may be less likely to engage in police misconduct. Moreover, misconduct claims are less likely to be egregious or carry any merit and are less likely to be sustained. When representation is non-congruent, misconduct is more likely apparent, which is evidenced by a higher rate of misconduct cases being sustained.

For instance, when a Black officer interacts with a Black citizen, representative bureaucracy theory states that the officer should be less likely to engage in an ecounter deemed as misconduct, which should in turn lead to less police complaints by the Black citizen. The complaint being filed by citizens of the same race as the officer should be viewed as less serious and less likely to lead to a sustained outcome. Alternatively, if a White officer interacts with a Black citizen, then representative bureaucracy mentions that through the course of those interactions, a Black citizen filing a police complaint may lead to more egregious misconduct by the White officer. This sequence is driven by the notion that the officer is less likely to have a vested stake in the citizen's interest because of the lack of descriptive (or passive) representation. If it is the case, it may increase sustained complaints filed by citizens without racial congruence with the officer. Therefore, the article tests the assumption

> *Hypothesis*: When there is a racial non-congruence between citizens and police officers, the result for police misconduct cases is more likely to be sustained.

Data, variables and methods

The data utilized in this study comes from two publicly available datasets provided by the City of Indianapolis (IMPD Complaints Data) and the City of New Orleans (NOPD Police Misconduct Data). The Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department is a large police department with about

1,600 sworn police officers serving Marion County, Indiana[1]. Additionally, about 15% of the total police force in Indianapolis are individuals of color, while the total population they serve is approximately 42.5% people of color. There is a −26.7% point-difference between the share of police officers of color and the share of the population of color. . Thus, Indianapolis is underrepresented in passive bureaucratic representation in its police departments.

The New Orleans Police Department is a medium-sized police department with about 1,200 sworn police officers servicing the City of New Orleans, but covering the jurisdiction of Orleans Parish, Louisiana. Roughly 61.5% of the total police force in New Orleans are individuals of color, while the total population they serve is approximately 69.4% people of color. In this case, there is a -7.8% point-difference between the share of police officers of color and the share of the population of color. Thus, New Orleans is much more nearly passively representative in race and the overall population in its police force.

Both the IMPD Complaints Data and the NOPD Police Misconduct Data span from 2013 to 2017. January 2013 represents the earliest time frame that is available for the data. Each data set contains detailed demographic information about the citizen and the officer (i.e. race, gender, and age) as well as additional demographic information related to the police officer (i.e. years of service and unique pseudonym to identify officer). Furthermore, the datasets contain information related to how the citizen alleged the officer broke the law. While other cities, such as, Detroit or New York, have police complaint datasets, they do not provide as much detail related to the circumstances surrounding the incident (e.g. the officer's race or the service type), which may lead to inaccurate conclusions about what factors led to the outcome of police complaints in each incident (Table 1).

The data originally contained 1,540 complaints. The recoding procedure eliminated approximately 25% of the data because the finding indicated that the case was still pending (20%) or was classified as other (5%), which resulted in 1,155 observations between the two cities. Additionally, of the 1,155 observations, 187 had missing data on explanatory and or control variables. This left a restricted sample of 968 complaints with complete information. Of those 968 complaints 525 come from New Orleans and 443 come from Indianapolis.

Table 1. Outcome of Case by Race of Citizen (restricted to just Black and White).

Race of Citizen	Outcome of Case				
	Sustained	Not Sustained	Unfounded or Officer Exonerated	Mediation or Negotiation	Total
White	37	134	187	10	368
Black	43	131	386	40	600
Total	80	265	573	50	968

Table 2. Officer Race and Citizen Race Distribution-Black Officers.

Officer-Citizen Race	Frequency	Percent
Black-Black	196	20.2
Black-White	127	13.3
White-White	240	24.7
White-Black	405	41.8
Total	968	

Several methods were used to verify if missing data potentially biased the results. First, the vast majority of missing values (150 out of 187) appeared for citizen age. When comparing the means for the individuals with age present, compared to individuals missing their age, the means on all the other observable variables were similar. Second, to deal with missing data all cases classified with an outcome as "other" compared to non-other rulings (sustained, not sustained, unfounded or the officer is exonerated, case goes to mediation or negotiation) had similar means on the control variables. The only major difference between the cases group means were indicated by 1 additional year of experience for officers in cases that had "other" outcomes.

Dependent variable

The main dependent variable examines the outcome of police misconduct cases. The outcome takes on four distinct situations constructed in Headley, D'Alessio, and Stolzenberg (2017): (1) the complaint was sustained, (2) the complaint was not sustained, (3) the complaint was unfounded or the officer was exonerated, or (4) the case went to mediation or negotiation. A sustained allegation occurs when there is sufficient evidence to discipline the officer because of his or her actions. A not sustained result occurs when there is insufficient evidence to substantiate the claims by the citizen. An unfounded allegation occurs when the complaint is deemed to be not factual or false. A police officer is exonerated when the police officer behavior was deemed to be justified given the situation of the allegation. Finally, a complaint that goes to mediation or negotiation in these two police districts represents that the case is being settled out of court between the police agency and the accuser. Table 2 depicts the number of allegations that were sustained, not sustained, unfounded or exonerated, or went to mediation or negotiation by race of citizen.

The totals in Table 2 indicate that approximately 10% of complaints by Whites are sustained compared to 7% of Black complaints being sustained. Moreover, 62% of complaints were filed by Blacks compared to 38% of complaints being filed by Whites in Indianapolis and New Orleans. Overall, the findings indicate that Black complaints are less apt than White complaints to receive a favorable outcome when they allege police misconduct (Black complaints are 64% likely to be unfounded or exonerated

compared to 51% of White complaints). Nonetheless, this data does not provide any other individual or organizational level attributes that may be associated with how race of the citizen and race of the officer influence the outcome of police misconduct cases.

Independent variable

The dataset contains detailed demographic data related to the race of the officer and the race of the citizen. Primarily, the racial categories of Black and White constitute over 98% of the citizens and officers, with 2% of the data representing another racial category. To apply representative bureaucracy theory to police complaints, I analyze the *race match* between officers and citizens. The current data structure allows the main independent variable to be broken apart into two variables of interest: 1) *Black officers interacting with Black and White citizens* and 2) *White officers interacting with White and Black citizens*. This distinction is important because irrespective of with whom an officer interacts, a Black officer's interaction is not comparable to a White officer's interaction. Thus, I compare Black officers' interactions with only Black and White Citizens, and then separately compare White officers' interaction with White and Black citizens.

Control variables

There are several factors that may determine the outcome of police misconduct cases, therefore, this analysis attempts to control for some of them. The first set of control variables is related to the demographic characteristics of the complainant, including the age of the citizen and a dichotomous indicator for sex of the citizen. These two control variables indicate that on average a citizen who files a complaint is roughly 40-years-old and primarily male. A second set of control variables is the demographics of the officer, which include the officer's age, a dichotomous indicator for the officer's sex, and officer's years of service. Given these control variables, the average officer is male, 40-years-old with approximately 12 years of service. Finally, a third set of control variables is situational characteristics: the type of allegation against the officer and the officers' service type (which indicates the reason why the officer was at the scene). The four allegation types that appeared 96% of the time and are all mutually exclusive to one category, include citizen alleged inappropriate officer language or demeanor, citizen alleged officer use of force against a citizen, citizen alleged an officer violated a law, and citizen alleged neglect by the officer. Finally, the four service types that appeared over 97% of the time and were each mutually exclusive to one category include 1) police responding to a request or need; 2) arrest, warrant, investigation or crime in progress; 3) traffic stop, crown

control, pedestrian stop and reported suspicious activity; 4) and off-duty employment or off-duty incident[2].

Estimation technique

Given the nature of the data, I utilize a multinomial logit regression model. The multinomial logistic model is employed when the response categories are multi-categorized and have no apparent ordering. Specified within the model, the outcome of police misconduct cases have one alternative from the group of choices. I am interested in how changes in x may affect the response probabilities, $P(Y = n|x)$, $n = 0,1,2,\ldots N$:, given the probabilities must sum to unity. The multinomial logit models may be considered as a series of binary models where you evaluate the probability of the alternative n against alternative i for every instance $i \neq n$. The specific multinomial logit model is adapted for the outcomes related to police misconduct cases. The model employed is expressed as:

$$ln\frac{P(Y = n)}{P(Y = 1)} = \propto_m + \sum_{k=1}^{N} \beta_{mk} \ X_{ik} + \mu_i$$

In summation, the multinomial logistic regression compares the multiple outcomes associated with police misconduct cases through a combination of binary logistic regressions and estimates, the number of equations minus the base category (comparison category) which is "not sustained" in this case.

Findings

Table 3 indicates how officer and citizen race influence the outcome of police misconduct cases. Column 1 of Table 3 shows that Black citizens' complaints are more likely to be sustained when interacting with a White officer relative to White citizens. Conversely, Column 4 of Table 3 notes that White citizens' complaints are less likely to be sustained when interacting with a Black officer relative to Black citizens. Figure 1 indicates the predicted probabilities associated with each racial combination, where approximately 5% of White citizens' complaints are sustained when interacting with White officers compared to about 10% of Black citizens' complaints are sustained when interacting with White officers.

Unfounded or exonerated complaints is the statistically significant result related to White officers and Black citizens in this research. Column 2 of Table 3 indicates that Black citizens' complaints are less likely to be unfounded or exonerated when interacting with White officers relative to White citizens. Figure 2 depicts the predicted probabilities associated with

Table 3. MLR on Outcomes Related to Police Complaints.

	White Officers			Black Officers		
	(1)	(2) Unfounded or Exonerated	(3)	(4)	(5) Unfounded or Exonerated	(6)
VARIABLES	Sustained Complaint (RRR)	Complaint (RRR)	Mediation or Negotiation (RRR)	Sustained Complaint (RRR)	Complaint (RRR)	Mediation or Negotiation (RRR)
Service Type						
Arrest, warrant, invest.	−0.132	−0.389	−0.642	0.648	1.477	1.804
	(0.728)	(0.430)	(0.487)	(1.169)	(0.861)***	(0.833)***
Officer initiated	0.333	0.325	0.478	0.750	0.904	1.241
	(0.917)	(0.456)	(1.471)***	(1.154)***	(0.802)	(1.321)
Off duty	0.398	0.579	−1.356			
	(1.024)	(0.499)***	(0.927)			
Allegation Type						
Use of force	0.446	1.130	0.804	−0.039	1.760	1.316
	(0.849)	(0.483)**	(0.605)	(0.757)	(0.836)***	(0.800)***
Law violation	2.145	−0.121	−0.747	−0.194	1.524	1.787
	(0.486)***	(0.431)	(0.577)	(0.832)	(0.799)***	(0.751)***
Neglect by the officer	2.129	2.307	1.260	0.636	1.317	1.229
	(1.569)	(1.069)**	(1.408)	(0.934)	(0.671)***	(0.780)***
Officer age	−0.064	0.006	−0.032	0.021	−0.008	0.025
	(0.051)	(0.023)	(0.051)	(0.043)	(0.025)	(0.033)
Off. years of service	0.051	−0.029	−0.007	−0.035	0.019	−0.004
	(0.050)	(0.022)	(0.054)	(0.048)	(0.027)	(0.035)
Female officer	−0.902	−0.459	0.410	−0.185	0.830	−0.345
	(0.914)	(0.368)	(0.911)	(0.557)	(0.303)***	(0.469)
Citizen age	0.007	0.007	0.036	0.037	0.025	0.024
	(0.017)	(0.010)	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.014)*	(0.018)
Male citizen	0.060	−0.376	−0.158	−0.651	−0.005	−0.203
	(0.510)**	(0.295)	(0.757)	(0.718)	(0.356)	(0.482)
Officer and Citizen Race White- White (reference)						
White-Black	1.288	0.835	0.592			
	(0.650)**	(0.289)***	(0.891)			
Black-Black (reference) Black-White				0.626	0.452	0.916
				(0.496)***	(0.390)	(0.593)
# of Observations	645	645	645	323	323	323
City FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Adjusted-R	0.154	0.154	0.154	0.116	0.116	0.116

Robust standard errors in parentheses.
The omitted categories in the model are the complaint was not sustained, citizen initiated for service type, officer demeanor for allegations, male officer and female citizens. Standard errors in parenthesis clustered at the officer level.
***$p < 0.01$; **$p < 0.05$; *$p < 0.1$.

each racial category, in which 36% of White citizens' complaints are not sustained when interacting with a Black officer compared to approximately 22% of Black citizens' complaints are not sustained when interacting with a Black officer. However, the combination of Black citizen and Black officer is not statistically significant in the model.

Additionally, Table 3 indicates that specific service or allegation types and male citizens are statistically significant. For statistically significant service types (officer initiated and officer off-duty), Black citizens are less likely to have their complaints found to be unfounded, exonerated, or

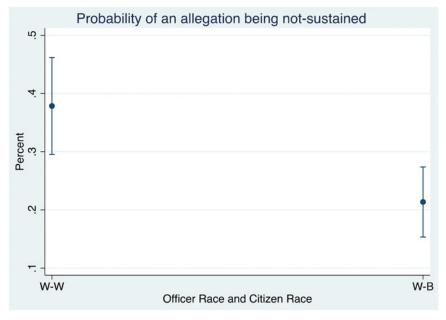**Figure 1.** Probability of an allegation being sustained.

Figure 2. Probability of an allegation being not-sustained.

moved to negotiation or mediation when interacting with White officers relative to White citizens.

The data reveals that allegation type influences outcome of police misconduct cases. When Black citizens file complaints against White officers relative

to White citizens, Black citizens' complaints are more likely to be sustained and less likely to have their complaint unfounded or exonerated. Finally, male citizens are less likely to have their complaint sustained and less likely to have their complaint exonerated when interacting with White officers relative to female citizens.

Table 3 determines that specific service or allegation types, female officers, and citizen age are statistically significant. White citizens are more likely to have their complaints exonerated, unfounded, or moved to negotiation or mediation when interacting with a Black officer during an arrest, warrant, or investigation. In an officer-initiated activity, a White citizen is less likely to have their complaint sustained when interacting with a Black officer.

The data shows that all three allegation types (use of force, law violation, and neglect by officer) lead to White citizens having their complaints unfounded, exonerated, or moved to mediation or negotiation when interacting with a Black officer. White citizens are less likely to have their complaints unfounded or exonerated when interacting with a Black female officer compared to a Black male officer. Also, as White citizens' age increases, they are less likely to have their complaint unfounded or exonerated when interacting with Black officers.

While the analysis provides rich detail in relation to the outcome related to citizen complaints collectively, disentangling the results by city reveals an unusual pattern. In New Orleans, Column 4 of Table 4 indicates that White citizens' complaints are less likely to be sustained compared to Black citizens' complaints against Black officers.

Obtaining results related to Black officers in Indianapolis was not feasible because of limited data (56 Black officers), which did not permit any statistical analysis to be performed. However, Table 5 indicates interesting results on citizen complaints by Black and White citizens against White officers. Column 1 of Table 5 indicates that Black citizens are more likely to have their complaint sustained and less likely to have their complaint exonerated or unfounded against a White officer compared to a White citizen. These results are the same as the findings in Table 3 when the two cities are combined.

Implications and discussion

This article seeks to understand if the outcome of police misconduct cases is influenced by the race of the officer and the race of the citizen. Specifically, it tests one of the components of representative bureaucracy, examining if racial mismatches increase the number of sustained cases of police misconduct. As seen in the results for Table 3, racial combinations

Table 4. New Orleans: MLR on Outcomes Related to Police Complaints.

	White Officers			Black Officers		
	(1)	(2) Unfounded or Exonerated	(3)	(4)	(5) Unfounded or Exonerated	(6)
Variables	Sustained Complaint (RRR)	Complaint (RRR)	Mediation or Negotiation (RRR)	Sustained Complaint (RRR)	Complaint (RRR)	Mediation or Negotiation (RRR)
Service type						
Officer initiated	0.987	14.716	−0.309	−13.131	0.289	0.761
	(1.111)	(1.146)***	(1.096)	(1.472)***	(1.276)	(1.417)
Officer Age	0.036	0.000	−0.032	0.024	−0.002	0.030
	(0.039)	(0.027)	(0.051)	(0.046)	(0.028)	(0.035)
Off. years of service	−0.090	−0.047	−0.024	−0.042	−0.007	−0.022
	(0.048)*	(0.028)	(0.054)	(0.055)	(0.030)	(0.037)
Female officer	−13.939	−0.460	0.386	−0.231	−0.517	−0.152
	(1.181)***	(0.684)	(0.958)	(0.708)	(0.337)	(0.489)
Citizen age	0.016	0.009	0.037	0.022	0.021	0.020
	(0.046)	(0.019)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.015)	(0.018)
Male citizen	−1.200	0.181	0.271	−0.399	−0.052	−0.217
	(1.280)	(0.487)	(0.796)	(0.831)	(0.385)	(0.496)
Officer and citizen race						
White-White (reference)						
White-Black	−1.820	0.649	0.313			
	(1.177)	(0.535)	(0.957)			
Black-Black (reference)						
Black-White				−2.934	−0.401	−0.867
				(0.498)***	(0.432)	(0.605)
# of Observations	172	172	172	267	267	267
Year FE	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Adjusted-R	0.111	0.111	0.111	0.038	0.038	0.038

Robust standard errors in parentheses.
The omitted categories in the model are the complaint was not sustained, citizen initiated for service type, male officers and female citizens. Standard errors in parenthesis clustered at the officer level.
*** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$.

impact the outcome of police misconduct complaints. The results indicate that Black citizens filing a complaint against White officers have a higher likelihood of having their complaint sustained. White citizens filing complaints against Black officers alternatively have a lower likelihood of having their complaints sustained. Additionally, Black citizens who file a complaint against White officers are less likely to have their complaint unfounded or exonerated. The outcomes of this analysis are worth further exploring and should be tested in other cities.

Disaggregated by city, there is no statistically significant effect for complaints filed by Blacks and Whites against White officers in New Orleans. White citizens are less likely to have their complaints sustained against Black officers compared to Black citizens. In Indianapolis, the results reveal that Black citizens are more likely to have their complaint sustained and less likely to have it unfounded or exonerated against White officers compared to White citizens.

One factor may be that New Orleans has a very robust civilian oversight apparatus with a large budget and high staff capacity. New Orleans's civilian

Table 5. Indianapolis: MLR on Outcomes Related to Police Complaints- White Officers.

Variables	(1) Sustained Complaint (RRR)	(2) Unfounded or Exonerated Complaint (RRR)
Service Type		
Arrest, warrant, invest.	0.141	−0.359
	(0.748)	(0.439)
Officer initiated	0.597	0.388
	(0.967)	(0.461)
Off duty	0.353	−2.866
Allegation Type	(0.842)	(0.535)***
Use of force	0.342	1.182
	(0.862)	(0.470)**
Law violation	2.382	0.021
	(0.544)***	(0.440)
Neglect by the officer	2.131	2.303
	(1.594)	(1.083)**
Officer Age	−0.146	0.011
	(0.064)**	(0.035)
Officer years of service	0.146	−0.028
	(0.068)**	(0.034)
Female Officer	−0.325	−0.481
	(0.946)	(0.436)
Citizen age	0.007	0.002
	(0.021)	(0.012)
Male citizen	−1.211	−0.643
	(0.614)**	(0.378)*
Officer and Citizen Race		
White-White (reference)		
White-Black	2.467	0.874
	(0.807)***	(0.356)**
# of Observations	473	473
Year FE	YES	YES
Adjusted-R	0.162	0.162

Robust standard errors in parentheses.
The omitted categories in the model are the complaint was not sustained, citizen initiated for service type, officer demeanor for allegations, male officers and female. Standard errors in parenthesis clustered at the officer level.
*** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.1$.

police oversight agency can recommend policy as well as officer discipline based on investigatory findings. Consequently, the organization may be driving the no effects found for citizen complaints against White officers by White and Black citizens. Furthermore, New Orleans is pushing towards more equitable policing as evidenced by the signing of a consent decree focused on reform within the police department. Most of the police force are officers of color, which indicates the department attempts to translate passive to active representation, as seen in the results where Black citizens interacting with Black officers are more likely to have their complaints sustained. Similar to the argument proposed by Hong (2017a), the findings from this article indicate that there may be substantive change at the organizational level (i.e. increases officer representation). These substantive changes (such as increased representation at the officer level) may mediate these unequitable outcomes of citizen complaints that would be apparent absent of increased racial representation of officers.

Alternatively, Indianapolis works with a smaller budget and staff, and therefore, it cannot recommend discipline. As compared to New Orleans, Indianapolis has not signed a consent to degree agreement and is less passively representative of the public it serves. Given this lack of representation, the original hypothesis does not hold in Indianapolis. Racial non-congruence in the case of White officers reveals opposite effects as Black citizens are more likely to have their complaints sustained compared to White citizens.

Another notable finding is the relative risk ratio associated with the gender dummy in the data for Black citizens. As stated earlier in the findings section, males are less likely to have their complaint sustained and less likely to have their complaint exonerated. Referring to these two cities, male citizens may file more complaints, but they are less likely to have them sustained. Several scenarios can explain this phenomenon. There is a higher number of complaints from male citizens in the data, so female citizens may not be as willing to file complaints against male officers because there may be increased retaliation from officers. This factor may result in the most egregious complaints being filed by females where officers are at fault. Also, male citizens may be more willing to file complaints against officers for behavior that they may perceive as negative while females may not share the same viewpoint. Complaints are filed by more males even if complaints lack the necessary substance to warrant a sustained verdict. Collectively, these results indicate that more research is needed on how gender influences police complaint data, specifically examining why there may be fewer complaints reported by women, and if there is increased retaliation against women by police officers.

These findings have significant implications related to the representative bureaucracy literature. They suggest that when exploring the issue of representation in a city like New Orleans that has a high level of passive representation, Black citizens are more likely to have their complaints sustained relative to Whites. Despite all the necessary conditions of passive representation in New Orleans (i.e. large share of officers of color, consent to degree agreement), the data reports that officers engage in less than representative forms as seen by police misconducts and Black officers being found guilty of complaints by Black citizens. It may be challenging for police forces to move from passive to active representation, despite having the observed characteristics, because of strong socialization as evidenced by earlier work by Wilkins and Williams (2009). Additional trainings, workshops, conferences, and increased community partnerships may be means to help mediate the lack of translation from passive to active representation. Secondarily, this article indicates that there may be limits to representation as it pertains to gender. This article provides the rationale behind

understanding the intersectionality of race and gender as it pertains to policing and broad public organizations.

Furthermore, this article addresses how the race of the officer and the race of the citizen influence the outcome of a police misconduct case, yet, there are three limitations associated with the data for analysis. First, I am not present to observe all the citizen-police interactions, so I cannot demarcate when or why a citizen files a complaint. In addition, the data is extrapolated from two police departments (i.e. New Orleans and Indianapolis), which makes it difficult to draw national generalizations about all police departments. Moreover, there may be unobserved variables (e.g. how active is the external review board in the cities, community policing efforts in the cities, etc.) that impact the outcome of police misconduct cases. Nevertheless, this article is one of the few that addresses how race impacts police misconduct cases and creates a baseline for other researchers to test the principles of race and police misconduct at the individual level, which is rarely discussed in current literature.

As it pertains to future research, there is tremendous room to expand at the individual level and the organizational level. More research is needed to test the proponents of representative bureaucracy, specifically as it relates to police misconduct, race, and gender. Future research should test how race and gender influence police complaint outcomes in different cities to see if the results found in this paper are unique. If so, a more robust discussion on policy implications can ensue in all levels of government. Besides additional quantitative work, qualitative work has an important role in understanding police complaints. Qualitative work can explore why females file fewer complaints, how organizational rules and policies impact police officers, and how leadership style can influence police complaints. Moreover, qualitative work may look closely at how the role of community policing practices can negate police misconduct complaints. Finally, qualitative work can investigate the ways in which police department culture can have an influence on police misconduct.

Overall, it is imperative that more data become available for researchers to explore not only how representation influences outcomes of police misconduct cases, but also, other substantive questions in policing. It is the hope that this article will motivate more researchers in public administration to explore the theoretical components of public administration through the construct of policing.

Notes

1. According to the 2015 estimates by the U.S. Census, Marion County serves a population of approximately 939,000, with a median age of 34 years old. The racial/ethnic demographic breakdown is as follows: 59% of the populous is White

    alone, 27% is African American/Black alone, 10% is Hispanic or Latino, 2% is Asian alone, and 2% is multiracial. Within the county, the police department serves 6 districts (North, East, Northwest, Downtown, Southeast and Southwest).
2.   See Table 2 in the Appendix for summary statistics.

Acknowledgments

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Appendix

Table 1. Demographics of Marion County and Orleans Parish.

2015	Marion County	Orleans Parish
Total Population	941,229	391,495
White (%)	65	35
Black (%)	28.5	60
Hispanic (%)	10.2	5.6
Asian (%)	3.1	3
Median Household Income	42,168	36,792
Unemployment Rate (%)	10.1	10.3
Families Below the Poverty Line (%)	16.6	21.7
Household Income < 10,000 (%)	9.9	16.1

Table 2. Summary Statistics.

VARIABLES	(1)\nN	(2)\nmean	(3)\nsd	(4)\nmin	(5)\nmax
Citizen Age	968	39.95	13.19	14	82
Officer Age	968	40.29	9.436	21	75
Officer Years of Service	968	12.38	8.528	1	52
Allegation Type	968	1.314	0.703	1	4
Citizen Sex	968	1.510	0.500	1	2
Service Type	968	1.488	0.821	1	4
Officer Sex	968	1.147	0.354	1	2