The Police Responses to Terrorism: Lessons from the Israeli Experience

Variables & Inclusion Criteria

Version 1

December 2012

START National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY BASED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

METHODOLOGY

Data used for the study was collected through a community survey conducted between October 27, 2008 and December 3, 2008. Nine police districts within Israel were selected for the survey based on their variability in size, locations, crime, socio-economic levels and the level of terrorism threats faced within the district in the decade preceding the community survey, especially those threats made during the Second Palestinian Intifada (2000-2006). An equal number of respondents were surveyed from each police district. Communities within the districts were proportionally represented in the survey, so a greater number of respondents were contacted in larger cities than in smaller villages. The community survey was conducted using the computer software "Dvash," and the database "Bezek," which includes all residents of Israel who have "land" phone lines. Approximately 85% of all households in Israel have "land" phone lines. In this manner 6,645 telephone calls were made resulting in 3,832 complete surveys.

Variables within this data were divided into twelve categories based on the subject of the question posed to the respondent. The categories are (1) procedural justice; (2) police performance; (3) trust in the police; (4) policing terrorism and its consequences; (5) obligation to obey the police; (6) public opinion of the police; (7) police as deterrence to crime; (8) cooperation with the police (9) public expectations; (10) personal experience with the police; (11) victimology; and (12) personal information. Questions concerning "personal experience with the police" include if the respondent had contact with the police in the year preceding the community survey and the nature of that contact. In the "trust in the police" category respondents were asked to give their opinion on the job performance of the police, if the police are generally trustworthy, and if the respondent thinks the police use excessive force towards Arab citizens, but not Jewish citizens. In the "policing terrorism and its consequences" section respondents were asked if they believe the police are incapable of performing their traditional duties because they are policing terrorism. Respondents were also asked if the police's counterterrorism role negatively impacted their relationship with the Israeli-Arab population. The respondent was asked to provide personal information, such as their country of origin, income, and religion. Seventy variables were included in this study.

VARIABLES

Procedural Justice

Respondents were asked to rank the following statements according to their level of agreement, ranging from 1=highly disagree to 5=highly agree.

1. The police are guided by the public's needs and well-being.
   Numeric Variable

2. Officers treat the citizens they encounter with respect.
   Numeric variable

3. The police explain their activities well to the people they encounter.
   Numeric variable

4. The police allow citizens to express their position before they come to a decision regarding their case.
   Numeric variable

Police Performance

Respondents were asked to rank the following statements according to their level of agreement, ranging from 1=highly disagree to 5=highly agree.

5. The police are efficient in dealing with crime in my area of residence.
   Numeric variable

6. Police presence in my area is adequate.
   Numeric variable

7. It usually takes the police a long time to respond to public calls.
   Numeric variable

Trust in the Police

Respondents were asked to rank the following statements according to their level of agreement, ranging from 1=highly disagree to 5=highly agree.

8. The police perform their job well.
   Numeric Variable

9. The police treat all citizens equally.
   Numeric variable

10. If a relative/friend was a victim of a crime, I would encourage them to turn to the police.
    Numeric variable

11. Police officers are often dishonest.
    Numeric variable

12. Usually police commanders make decisions that are for the good of all citizens.
    Numeric variable

13. In many cases the police violate citizen rights.
    Numeric variable

14. I have trust in the Israeli Police.
    Numeric Variable

15. The Israeli Police use excessive force towards Arab citizens, more than they do towards Jewish citizens.
    Numeric variable

Policing Terrorism and its Consequences

Respondents were asked to rank the following statements according to their level of agreement, ranging from 1=highly disagree to 5=highly agree.

16. The Israeli Police are efficient in handling terrorism.
    Numeric variable

17. Policing terrorism negatively affects police-citizen relationship.
    Numeric variable

18. When the police fights terrorism, they gain more respect.
    Numeric variable

19. Policing terrorism hampers police's other duties, such as handling property crimes, violence, drugs and traffic.
    Numeric variable

20. Violations of the law and citizen rights by the police are understandable in times of terrorism.
    Numeric variable

21. Too often, in my view, the police explain failure in handling crime by the fact that they are busy fighting terrorism.
    Numeric Variable

22. In times of terrorism, my personal sense of security increases due to the presence of Civil Guard volunteers.
    Numeric variable

23. Police activities in fighting terrorism hamper their relationship with the Israeli-Arab population.
    Numeric variable

Obligation to Obey

Respondents were asked to rank the following statements according to their level of agreement, ranging from 1=highly disagree to 5=highly agree.

24. I always try to obey the law, even if I find it unfair.
    Numeric variable

25. There are situations when it is okay to ignore police instructions.
    Numeric variable

26. The police should be obeyed, even if we are not pleased with the way they treat citizens.
    Numeric variable

27. Sometimes there is a need to break the law in order for justice to see light.
    Numeric variable

Public Opinions

Respondents were asked to rank the following statements according to their level of agreement, ranging from 1=highly disagree to 5=highly agree.

28. I am fine with the police doing anything they need, including violating procedures, in order to catch more criminals.
    Numeric variable

29. I would like to see the police more service oriented and less intimidating and militant.
    Numeric variable

30. Citizens should have the ability to dictate police priorities.
    Numeric variable

31. What steps does the Israeli National Police take to handle terrorism?
String variable

This open-ended question asks the respondent to explain, to the best of their understanding, the counterterrorism steps taken by the Israeli National Police.

Deterrence

Respondents were asked how likely, in their view, it is to be caught by the police for each of the following behaviors, ranging from 1=almost or completely unlikely to 5=highly likely.

32. Violating traffic laws.
Numeric variable

33. Breaking and entering.
Numeric variable

34. Dealing drugs.
Numeric variable

35. Vandalizing public property.
Numeric variable

Cooperation with the Police

Respondents were asked to rank in each case the likelihood that they would turn to the police, ranging from 1=almost or completely unlikely to 5=highly likely.

36. You witnessed a crime.
Numeric variable

37. You encountered a suspicious object.
Numeric variable

38. You suspect that someone is about to commit a serious crime.
Numeric variable

39. If the police approached you asking for information that may aid in solving a crime, what are the chances that you would cooperate?
Numeric variable

Public Expectations

Respondents were asked to choose one answer to each of the following questions, regarding public expectations of the police.

40. On which of the following offences do you think the police should focus?
Numeric variable

This field represents the type of offence on which the respondent thinks the police should focus.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Property crimes (ex. burglary, vandalism.)
2	Violent crimes (ex. assault, murder, rape)
3	Traffic violations
4	Drug related crimes
5	Terrorism
6	Quality of life offences (ex. vandalism, noise, disturbing the peace)
99	No answer

41. On which of the following strategies do you think the Israeli Police should focus?
Numeric variable

This field represents the strategy on which the respondent thinks the Israeli Police should focus.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Visible police presence on the streets
2	Initiated operations in fighting crime
3	Explanatory and educational efforts related to crime prevention
4	Efficient response to public calls
99	No answer

Personal Experience with the Police

42. Have you had any contact with the police over the past year?
Numeric variable

If the respondent answered "No" they were instructed to skip the remaining questions in this section.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Yes
2	No
99	No answer

43. Under what circumstances did you have contact with the police over the past year?
Numeric variable

This field represents the circumstances in which the respondent had contact with the police in the last year. If the respondent had multiple encounters with the police within the past year respondents are instructed to refer to their last encounter with the police.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Traffic Violation
2	Providing a Witness Statement
3	Filing a Complaint
4	Being Investigated
5	Calling the Police
6	Other
99	No answer

44. Elaborate on the circumstances of your contact with the police.
String variable

This open question asks respondents to provide the details of their most recent encounter with the police.

45. How would you evaluate the professionalism of the police?
Numeric variable

This field represents the respondent's evaluation of the professionalism of the police. Respondents were asked to rate police professionalism, ranging from 1= very unprofessional to 5= very professional.

46. Did the police use force against you at any time during your encounter?
Numeric variable

This field represents if the police used force against the respondent during their most recent encounter. If the respondent answered "No" they were instructed to skip to the next section.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Yes
2	No
99	No answer

47. Did you complain about the force used against you?
Numeric variable

This field represents the respondent complained about the force used against them by the police. Only respondents who answered "Yes" to the previous question answered this question.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Yes
2	No
99	No answer

Victimology

48. Have you been the victim of any crime over the past year?
Numeric variable

This field represents if the respondent has been the victim of a crime within the past year. If respondents answered "No" to this question they were instructed to skip the remainder of this section.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Yes
2	No
99	No answer

49. What type of crime?
Numeric variable

This field represents the type of crime that was perpetrated against the victim. If the respondent was the victim of multiple crimes within the past year respondents they were instructed to refer to the last case in which they were a victim. Only respondents who answered "Yes" to the previous question answered this question.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Violence
2	Property Offence
3	Sexual Offence
4	Domestic Violence
5	Fraud
6	Other
99	No answer

50. Elaborate on the type of crime.
String variable

This open question asks respondents to provide additional details concerning the type of crime of which they were a victim.

51. Have you filed a complaint with the police?
Numeric variable

This field represents if the respondent filed a complaint with the police concerning the case in which they were a victim. If the respondent answered "Yes" to this question they were instructed to skip the remainder of this section.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Yes
2	No
99	No answer

52. What is the main reason why you have not complained?
Numeric variable

This field represents the main reason why the respondent did not complain to the police concerning the case in which they were a victim.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	I did not believe the police could help.
2	Police encounters are usually unpleasant.
3	I was too busy, or I was not interested in dedicating time to the matter.
4	I did not think the offence was severe enough.
5	I thought others had already reported the crime, or that the police already knew.
6	I was worried about the offender's response.
7	Other

Personal Information

53. What is the respondent's sex?
Numeric variable

This field represents the respondent's sex.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Male
2	Female

54. What is the respondent's marital status?
Numeric variable

This field represents the respondent's marital status.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Single
2	Married or living with spouse
3	Divorced/Separated/Single-Parent
4	Widowed
99	No Answer

55. What is the respondent's year of birth?
Numeric variable

This field represents the year in which the respondent was born.

56. What is the highest level of education the respondent completed?
Numeric variable

This field represents the highest level of education completed by the respondent.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	No education
2	Elementary school or less
3	High school without diploma
4	High school with diploma
5	Non-Academic education beyond high school
6	Completed B.A.
7	Completed M.A.
8	Completed PhD
99	No answer

57. What is the respondent's religion/ethnicity?
Numeric variable

This field represents the respondent's religion or ethnicity. Among Jews this question refers to religion and among Arabs refers to ethnicity.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Jewish
2	Muslim
3	Arab Christian
4	Non-Arab Christian
5	Druze
6	Bedouin
7	Other
99	No Answer

58. Describe your religion/ethnicity?
String variable

In this open-ended question the respondent was asked to describe their religion/ethnicity.

59. What is the nature of the respondent's involvement in their religion?
Numeric variable

This field represents the nature of the involvement the respondent has in their religion.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Secular
2	Traditional
3	Religious
4	Very Religious (Arabs)/Orthodox (Jews)
99	No Answer

60. How would the respondent rank their average monthly income?
Numeric variable

This field represents how the respondent ranks their monthly income, compared to the average monthly income for a household in Israel of 12,500 NIS.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Much below average
2	A little below average
3	About average
4	A little above average
5	Much above average
99	No answer

61. What is the respondent's country of origin?
Numeric variable

This field represents the respondent's country of origin.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Israel
2	Other
99	No answer

62. What is the respondent's country of origin?
String variable

This open-ended question represents the country in which the respondent was born. This question should only be answered by respondents who indicated in Question 61 that their country of origin was not Israel.

63. What year did the respondent immigrate to Israel?
Numeric Variable

This field represents the year in which the respondent immigrated to Israel. This question should only be answered by respondents who indicated in Question 61 that their country of origin was not Israel.

64. Do you, or a family member, serve today, or have served in the past, in the Israeli Police?
Numeric variable

This field represents if the respondent, or a close family member, serve or have served in the past in the Israeli Police.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Yes
2	No
99	No answer

65. Have you ever volunteered in the Civil Guard?
Numeric variable

This field represents if the respondent has ever volunteered in the Civil Guard.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Yes
2	No
99	No answer

66. Would you be willing to be interviewed face-to-face about these topics?
Numeric variable

This field represents if the respondent would be willing to be interviewed face-to-face about these topics.

The codes for the responses found in the study are as follows:

Value	Responses
1	Yes
2	No
99	No answer

67. What is your name?
String variable

Respondents, who indicated in the previous question that they would be willing to be interviewed about these topics, are asked to provide their name in this field.

68. Is there an additional telephone number at which you can be contacted?
String variable

Respondents, who indicated in the previous question that they would be willing to be interviewed about these topics, are asked in this field to provide an additional telephone number, if available, at which they can be contacted.

69. What city do you live in?
String variable

This field represents the city in which the respondent resides.

70. What police station's jurisdiction do you live in?
String variable

This field represents the police station whose jurisdiction the respondent lives in.