CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMIES: DO THEY REALLY WORK?

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Abstract: Citizen police academies (CPAs) are popular community policing applications among police departments in the United States. They are designed to provide a better understanding of police, build closer police-citizen relationships, and gain citizens' support. Although the general impression from CPAs is positive, few empirical research studies have investigated the success of CPAs. This study attempts to determine whether a CPA program has an effect on participants' perceptions, opinions, and attitudes toward police, police work, and crime related issues. It uses a pre-test and post-test research design to survey students in a CPA offered by the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD, KY). The results indicate that the participants' view of police was positive before the CPA began. Involvement in the CPA led to significant increases in only six of the areas surveyed. The participants' evaluation of their CPA experience was very positive.

Key words: Citizen police academies, CPA, community policing, LMPD, Louisville.

Introduction

For the last three decades, increasing crime rates and changes in crime patterns have led police departments to reconsider the way that they serve the public. Police leaders and managers have realized that the police cannot reduce crimes and solve problems in the community on their own. They should cooperate with citizens and gain their input (Goldstein, 1990). Therefore, to establish cooperation and closer relationships with the public, many police departments have implemented various community policing activities, such as door-to-door visits, public or residential block meetings (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1994). Citizen's police academies (CPAs) have been one of the most popular programs among these activities. According to Law Enforcement Management and Administrative Statistics (LEMAS) (2003), almost 60% of the police departments with serving population of 25,000 - 99,000, and almost 80% of police departments with serving population of 100,000 and higher offer CPAs as a part of their community policing strategy. Not only large departments, but also many small, local police and sheriff's departments have widely adopted some type of CPAs (Schafer & Bonello, 2001).

The main objective of CPAs is to improve relationships with and gaining support from citizens to prevent crime. In CPA programs, participants learn firsthand how police officers carry out their jobs and how police agencies serve the public. The hope is that this education process will eventually develop mutual trust between police and citizens, a better understanding of police work among the public, and generate public support for police department. In addition, CPAs are effective means of educating the community on crime related issues (Aryani, Garrett, & Alsabrook, 2000). Participants learn about how they can prevent themselves from being victims and how they to help police when they encounter a crime.

Although the majority of police departments have established CPAs by funding through their budget, it is not clear how effective these programs are. Only a small number of empirical research studies have investigated the effectiveness of CPA programs. General findings have been positive related to CPA effectiveness overall and police departments praised them. However, it has been argued that implementation of CPA programs are not cost effective for the results achieved (Maffe & Burke, 1999). Bumphus and his colleagues (1999) pointed out that there is insufficient evidence to believe that CPAs play a critical role in gaining citizens' support in terms of crime prevention and reduction. Jordan (2000) suggested that police departments offer CPA programs as a result of their political or bureaucratic procedures rather than development of true police-citizen partnerships.

This study addressed the effectiveness of a CPA program. It attempts to determine whether a CPA program has a significant effect on perception, opinions, and attitudes of CPA participants toward police officers, police work, and crime related issues. It assesses whether the CPA manages to educate the participants about the police services, foster understanding about the nature of police work, and gain community support for the department. The findings from the study can help researchers and police executives understand the role of the CPA and improve its quality. The study used a pre-test and post-test design to examine the effectiveness of the CPA. The data were collected using survey questionnaires at the beginning and at the end of the CPA program of the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD). The data from the pre-test and the post-test groups were compared using independent *t*-tests.

Citizen Police Academies

The first CPA was developed in England by the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary in Middlemoor, Exeter in 1977 as a police night school (Ferguson, 1985). The main objective of

this night school was to improve the relationship between police and community (Stone & Champeny, 2001). Run by volunteer police officers, the school featured a ten-week program that met once a week and became a model for many other British as well as police agencies in the U.S. (Cohn, 1996). The first CPA in the United States was established in Orlando, FL in 1985. This first CPA was determined effective in increasing the relationship between police and citizens. On the basis of this example, many other police departments have imitated this program and established their own CPAs (Aryani et al., 2000).

Generally CPAs offer classes for 33 hours throughout 11 weeks (Bumphus et al., 1999). Typical class size is 24 students. Each police department has a different curriculum and class schedule in accordance with the department's goals. However, the majority of CPA programs provide education on departmental organization, patrol procedures, police selection and training, crime prevention techniques, laws, vice and narcotics, domestic violence, police use of force, field operations, and traffic stops (Cohn, 1996). Some CPAs include sessions about police officers' firearm training and the reasons behind the use of firearms (Enns, 1995; Lesce, 1993; Cohn, 1996). In addition, many CPAs offer ride-along programs for participants in which they spend several hours with a patrol officer and witness the real police work (Cohn, 1996; Maffe & Burke, 1999).

CPAs generally have criteria regarding participant selection and recruitment. While CPAs do not have an upper limit, they accept participants who are older than 18. The majority of police departments perform a background check because they look for people with no major criminal history (Hilson, 1994). Some departments also conduct a motor vehicle background check and take applicants' fingerprints (Maffe & Burke, 1999). The reason behind these criteria is the protection of police departments' reputation and image (Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002).

The Goals of Citizen Police Academies (CPAs)

The main goals of CPAs are improving the relationship between the community and the police, gaining support from citizens, and educating the public about crime-related issues (Bumphus et al., 1999; Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002). Stone and Champeny (2001) emphasized that people generally know about police from the media. However, this source typically sponsors myths and misunderstanding. Raffel (2003) asserted that the messages about police carried by the media can create fear of crime on public and can negatively affect the public image of the police and diminish police-community relations. CPAs address this issue by providing opportunities for citizens to gain first-hand knowledge about police operations. By sharing knowledge on police work in a friendly setting, CPAs can create better understanding of police work and operations among citizens may eventually become supporters of police (Bumphus et al., 1999; John, 1996; Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002).

CPAs provide a platform that citizens and police officers meet face to face and build rapport. This platform creates a mutual understanding between these two parties (Enns, 1995). On the other hand, Jordan (2000) felt that police are rarely interested in the community's opinions and feelings. Yet, CPAs attempt to provide an opportunity for both sides to learn about each other.

Furthermore, citizens' positive personal experiences with police officers help establish a strong police-citizen relationship. Friedmann (1990) pointed out that personal experience plays a more important role in police-citizen relationship than people's age, sex, ethnicity, and income level. The citizens might often think that the police officers are not performing their duties in a professional manner or are acting beyond their authority. To address this belief, CPAs provide information to participants about police regulations, rules, and policies (Aryani et al., 2000).

Again, the aim of the CPA is to provide a better understanding of police work, eliminate the "us-versus them" mentality and provide a better public image for police departments (Aryani et al., 2000; Bumphus et al., 1999). In fact, the hope is that these positive messages are not restricted to participants because CPA graduates may communicate positive experiences to their families, friends, and neighbors (West, 1996).

The long term goal of a CPA program is the sponsorship of crime prevention. Citizens' support and commitment created by CPAs can help police departments decrease crime rates (Hilson, 1994) and provide a safe and secure community (Bumphus et al., 1999). CPAs aim to create a close relationship between citizens and police in the hope that creation of these positive attitudes will help improve crime investigation and crime prevention programs. Cohn (1996) asserted that the citizens who have a good understanding of police work are more willing to assist the police. CPA graduates are more likely to report a crime, to testify for a crime, and to work with police (Greenberg, 1991; Peverly & Phillips, 1993). Similarly, Raffel (2003) stated that CPAs graduates are willing to help police for crime prevention and investigation purposes.

In addition, CPAs provide opportunities for police officers to get feedback from citizens about police activities (Schafer & Bonello, 2001). Throughout a CPA program, participants and police officers discuss different aspects of police operations and they share their ideas. Officers have a chance to learn about the true impacts of police operations on citizens. This feedback might be a valuable tool for police departments to improve their procedures. Another expectation from CPAs is about the accountability of police departments. Because CPAs provide better understanding of police and build close relationships, CPAs help eliminate citizens' negative attitudes toward police (Greenberg, 1991). Thus, complaints about police and police operations can be decreased.

How Effective Are CPAs?

Although, many police departments have invested resources in CPAs, they have not been thoroughly evaluated. Several studies reported positive outcomes for CPAs but they have relied upon anecdotal information and police departments' experiences (Enns, 1995; Lesce, 1993; Maffe & Burke, 1999; Whitman, 1993).

A small number of empirical research studies, however, have addressed the effectiveness of CPAs. Schafer and Bonello (2001) studied the CPA in Lansing, MI to determine if it met its goals. A survey instrument containing both closed and open-ended questions was used to determine changes in attitudes and behaviors among 92 graduates of the program. The findings indicated that almost all of the participants evaluated their CPA experiences as positive, informative, increasing their awareness of crime and safety issues, police activities and department-initiated problem-solving efforts. Seventy four percent of the graduates reported that they had more positive attitudes towards police-related news on the media than they had prior to their involvement in the CPA. Fifty percent of the participants' beliefs about the police's use of force changed in a positive manner. In addition, the findings indicated that the CPA involvement led them to volunteer to work with police. The majority of respondents (94%) stated that they were more likely to work with police to solve a neighborhood problem than they were before the CPA. However, the graduates' actual involvement in police activities showed only a small increase. Schafer and Bonello (2001) concluded that even though most participants had positive views about the department before attending the CPA, the CPA can generate positive changes in citizens' attitudes and make the citizens work with police more willingly.

Stone and Champeny (2001) compared 25 CPA graduates with a control group of 30 students enrolled in an upcoming CPA class in Austin, TX. The findings showed that the CPA

graduates' perceptions about police, police work, and their level of satisfaction with police were higher than the control group's perceptions and satisfaction level. Also, the CPA graduates' involvements in the police department's crime prevention programs were significantly higher than the non-graduates. In addition, the majority of the CPA graduates positively evaluated their experience. They found the CPA instructional and beneficial. On the other hand, CPA graduates also noted that upper police managers should have been proactive in the CPA as well as the officers who manage it. Many respondents recommended that the CPA program s be lengthened. CPA participation led to a better understanding of police operations and a more positive image of police.

Palmiotto and Unninthan (2002) investigated the effectiveness of the CPA in Wichita, KS, using a pre-test and post-test research design. The findings from the study supported mirrored the positive findings of the previously cited studies. They found that participants had more positive opinion on police following CPA participation. However, they also noted that the participants had positive attitudes towards police prior CPA involvement. Nevertheless, the findings indicated that the participants learned more about police work, procedures, and activities that contributed to their positive attitude toward the police.

In another pre-test and post-test design study, Brewster et al. (2005) examined two CPA in Harrison and Richmond, VA and surveyed 120 participants. Similar to previous findings of pre-existing support, they found that the participants had already positive perceptions about police and police work before they began to the CPA. However, the participants completed the CPA with greater knowledge about police, more positive attitudes toward police, and more expressed willingness to cooperate with police. In addition, almost half of the participants began to talk positively about police to other citizens. Also, the participants' willingness to join an

advisory board in a police department increased significantly. Their belief about police officers'

excessive use of force decreased. The participants' beliefs about whether police work is

interesting, difficult, and dangerous increased significantly. The participants began to believe

that police officers training were more sufficient than they did before the CPAs. The participants

noted that the CPA should continue to educate citizens and other citizens should attend the CPA.

On the other hand, the researchers did not find significant changes in participants` opinions on

media coverage about police and their willingness to contact with the police. The authors

concluded that size of cities, participants' demographics, and differences in the CPA curriculum

did not affect these findings.

Raffel (2003) also examined the effectiveness of CPA in a qualitative research study.

Instructors of the CPA and 20 participants were interviewed before and during the program. Also,

the CPA classes were observed. The findings showed that the CPA provided a better

understanding of police activities and more respect for police. The participants reported more

willingness to report suspicious activities to police and to involve in police activities.

In general, these research studies have indicated positive results about the effectiveness of

CPAs. It seems that after a CPA program, participants are more likely to have positive perceptions

about police and police work. Also, CPAs help police departments improve police-citizens

relationships. These studies have suggested that police departments accomplish the goals of CPAs

and they obtain desired benefits from offering CPA programs.

On the other hand, these findings have been criticized due to several limitations. Of all the

five abovementioned studies, three reported that the participants had already positive perceptions

about police before they had attended CPAs (Brewster et al., 2005; Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002;

Schafer & Bonello, 2001). Thus, the views of CPA participants toward the police are probably not

representative of the general public. Palmiotto and Unninthan (2002) also noted that CPA

participants were unlikely to have low income levels. Bumphus et al. (1999) emphasized that

younger participants rarely participate in CPA programs. Schafer & Bonello (2001) also

concluded that the CPA's participants represented only a small part of the community. Jordan

(2000) claimed that police departments use selection criteria that prefer participants from

community elites. Thus, most of the CPAs evaluated in the literature feature unrepresentative

populations of local communities. This limitation regarding representativeness of sample can

affect the findings about the effectiveness of CPAs. Therefore, researchers suggested careful

interpretation of the findings in terms of these critiques of CPA.

The Citizens Police Academy of the Louisville Metro Police Department

The LMPD is serves Jefferson County, KY, with the city of Louisville at its heart. The

Jefferson County metropolitan area, with a population of 701,500, is the largest urban area in

Kentucky with the most diverse population in the state (77% White, 20% African American, 3%

Hispanic or Latino, and 2% Asian) (Census Bureau, 2007). The median household income in

Jefferson County was $43,262 with more than 14% of the population lived below the poverty

line.

Since 2003, the LMPD has offered a CPA program, which is maintained by the Public

Relations Unit of the LMPD. The goals of the CPA are to educate the public about the police

services, to foster understanding of police activities, and to gain community support for the

department. The LMPD holds two CPA classes each year with approximately25 students/class.

Up to now, 242 citizens graduated from the program. To attend the CPA program, applicants

must be at least 21 years of age, be living or working in Louisville, have no prior felony

convictions, and no outstanding warrants. Those applicants who meet the eligibility requirements

are also subjected to a background check. There is no tuition or fee for the participation. All participants are encouraged to attempt all sessions and optional tours, but students have to participate in minimum of nine classroom sessions for graduation. Each session is taught by police officers trained in the particular topic. These officers give information on their specific topics and share their real-life experience. In addition, the program includes special opportunities, such as a tour of the Louisville Metro Corrections facility, a visit to the coroner's office, and the ride-along program.

The present study examined the CPA class in fall 2008. This class lasted from September 2 to November 18, 2008. Twenty-four students started the program and 21 students graduated. The remaining three students quit the program due to work conflicts. The participants met weekly 10 sessions on Tuesday evenings from 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM. The program was divided into the following weekly sessions.

Week 1: An introduction about the objectives of the program, general rules, and policies.

Week 2: A presentation about the law of arrest, probable cause, search and seizure, and use of force issues. A tour of the LMPD headquarters providing information about the duties and responsibilities of the various units.

Week 3: A presentation about the duties and responsibilities of the LMPD Mounted Security Patrol Unit and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Unit.

Week 4: A presentation about the roles and responsibilities of the Public Integrity Unit (PIU), which investigates any Louisville Metro City Government officials' misbehavior against criminal law. Also, a presentation about the roles and responsibilities of the Professional Standards Unit (PSU), which deals with the misbehavior of officers and investigates the

situations in which punishment is applied to officers' wrongdoing, such as officers' shootings, use of force, traffic death, or collisions.

Week 5: A presentation about the roles and responsibilities of the Recruitment Unit of the LMPD Police Training Academy, the police academy education policy, and the recruitment process, including application, background check, and written and physical exams. Also, a demonstration about functions of Taser, a non-lethal weapon that is designed used to stop all body movement of a criminal by affecting their nervous system.

Week 6: A presentation about the nature of the situations that requires a police officer's use of force to prevent a criminal act or maintain public order. Also, a demonstration about firearms and police officers' firearm training was included.

Week 7: A presentation about the roles and responsibilities of the Narcotic Unit. Also a demonstration about how to recognize narcotic substances and to report to the police took place.

Week 8: A presentation about the roles and responsibilities of the Fraud Better Business Bureau (Fraud BBB), which investigates and alert people on the methods of fraud and identity theft. A presentation about the implementation of CompStat (COMPuter STATistics or COMParative STATistics) was featured.

Week 9: A presentation about the role of Neighborhood Block Watch programs on enhancing the safety and the quality of life in the city of Louisville through empowerment of community groups working to prevent and solve crime-related problems in their neighborhoods - including a presentation about the personal protection methods and measures against burglaries.

Week 10: Graduation ceremony.

In addition to these 10-week sessions, all participants attended a tour of Louisville Metro Corrections facilities and ride-along activities. During the tour of Louisville Metro Corrections,

the participants were able to see a jail. During the ride along program, participants spent four to six hours with a police officer by observing the characteristics of the police profession, attitudes of police officers, and what kinds of equipment are used by police in real-life situations.

Methods

The present study examined how a CPA program affects its participants' perceptions, opinions, and attitudes toward police, police works, and crime-related issues. The study used a pre-test and post-test research design. The participants of the CPA of the LMPD Fall 2008 class were surveyed at their first class meeting and the last class meeting before the graduation ceremony. Using this type of research design is considered appropriate to measure the effectiveness of a CPA in terms of participants' perceptions, opinions, and attitudes (Schafer & Bonello, 2001). The pre-test and post-test questionnaires were composed of almost the same items. The post-test questionnaire contained five more items to obtain the participants' opinions about the evaluation of the CPA. Excluding these five items, both questionnaires included 25 the same items. Seven items asked about the participants' demographics and 18 items asked about the participants' opinions and perceptions regarding police, police work, and crime-related issues. The survey instruments were created depending on several research studies (e.g., Brewster et al., 2005; Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002; Schafer & Bonello, 2001) to discuss the present study's findings based on similar topics (Bumphus, et al., 1999). The items were five-point Likert-type scale items ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Before the data collection procedures began, an approval from the CPA program administrator and the instructor was sought. Also, an approval from the University of Louisville's Institutional Review Board was obtained. For both tests, the survey questionnaires were directly distributed to the participants in the classrooms. After 15 minutes, the questionnaires were collected. The surveys employed no identifiers. The surveys had a cover

page that explained the purpose of the study. The cover page explained that participation in the research study was voluntary and that the participants' confidentiality and anonymity were assured. [1]

To analyze the data, descriptive statistics and a series of independent *t*-tests were used. The demographic attributes of the participants and their opinions about the evaluation of the CPA were analyzed using descriptive statistics. To measure how the participants' perceptions, opinions, and attitudes changed throughout the CPA, independent sample *t*-tests were employed. Because the study used no identifiers for the participants of the pre-test and the post-test groups and the sample size was different for both groups, dependent sample *t*-tests were not preferred.

Results

The results from the study are presented in three tables. Table 1 presents the results about sample characteristics including age, sex, ethnicity, level of education, and level of annual income. Table 2 presents the mean scores for the pre-test and the post-test and the results of the *t*-tests for the comparisons of the mean scores. Table 3 presents the results of the participants' assessments about the CPA.

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the both sample for the pre-test and the post-test. Both samples are similar and did not show dramatic differences in terms of age, sex, ethnicity, level of education, and level of income. The mean of the participants' age was 47.2 for the pre-test group and it was 50.7 for the post-test group. The majority of the participants were between the ages of 41 and 60 for both groups (57.3% and 61.1%, respectively). The percentage of the

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[1] All of the registered 24 students of the CPA program completed the pre-test questionnaires. Eighteen present students at the last class meeting completed the post-test questionnaires. Although 24 students started the CPA program, three students quitted because of their work-load. At the time of the post-test, three students were absent. These reasons caused six participants differences between pre-test and post-test samples.

participants younger than 40 years old was 25.1 for the pre-test and 11.1 for the post-test. The majority of the both samples were composed of female participants (58.3% and 66.7%, respectively). Almost 80% of the both groups were white. African-American participants were the second largest group (16.7% and 11.1%, respectively) and Hispanic participants were the third (4.2% and 5.6%, respectively). These distributions are consistent with the ethnicity proportions in Jefferson County, KY. The majority of the participants for the both groups (58.3% and 61.1% respectively) had a college degree or some college education. Approximately 25% of the participants in both groups had a high school level of education while 16.7% of the pre-test group participants had a professional or graduate level education compared to 11.2% in the post-test group. These statistics indicate that the education levels of the participants were slightly higher than the general population in Jefferson County, KY. According to the Census Bureau (2007), 44% of Jefferson county residents had a high school diploma or less than a high school diploma, 46% had a college degree or some college education, and 11% had a professional or graduate level education.

The majority of the participants' income level was lower than the county's median. More than 60% of the participants for both groups had an annual income $40,000 or less. The Census Bureau (2007) reported that the median household annual income in Jefferson County, KY was $43,262. While approximately 25% of the participants from both groups had an income level less than $20,000, another 25% of the participants had and income level more than 60,000. Remaining approximately 50% had an income level between $21,000 and $60,000.

Table 1

Participant Characteristics

Variable	Type of Test	n	%
Age			
21 – 30	Pre-test	5	20.8
	Post-test	2	11.1
31 – 40	Pre-test	1	4.3
	Post-test	0	0
41 – 50	Pre-test	9	37.5
	Post-test	8	44.4
51 – 60	Pre-test	5	20.8
	Post-test	3	16.7
61 – 70	Pre-test	3	12.5
	Post-test	3	16.7
71 – 80	Pre-test	1	4.3
	Post-test	2	11.1
Sex			
Male	Pre-test	10	41.7
	Post-test	6	33.3
Female	Pre-test	14	58.3
	Post-test	12	66.7
Race			
White	Pre-test	19	79.2
	Post-test	15	83.3
African American	Pre-test	4	16.7
	Post-test	2	11.1
Hispanic	Pre-test	1	4.2
	Post-test	1	5.6
Education			
High school graduate or GED	Pre-test	6	25
	Post-test	5	27.8
Some college	Pre-test	12	50
	Post-test	9	50
College graduate	Pre-test	2	8.3
	Post-test	2	11.1
Some professional or graduate school	Pre-test	1	16.7
	Post-test	1	11.2
Annual Income			
Less than 20,000	Pre-test	6	25
	Post-test	5	27.8
21,000 - 30,000	Pre-test	2	8.3
	Post-test	2	11.1
31,000 - 40,000	Pre-test	7	29.2
	Post-test	4	22.2
41,000 - 50,000	Pre-test	1	4.2
	Post-test	2	11.1
51,000 - 60,000	Pre-test	2	8.3
	Post-test	0	0
more than 60,000	Pre-test	6	25
	Post-test	5	27.8

N (Pre-test) = 24

N (Post-test) = 18

Table 2 presents how the participants' opinions, perceptions, and attitudes changed throughout the CPA in terms of 18 different points related to police, police works, and crime-related issues. A higher mean score is indicative of a more positive perception, opinion, or attitude. The results indicate that of all the 18 surveyed areas, CPA participation resulted in only six significant and positive changes in perception. After the CPA, the participants had a significantly better understanding of both the police and police work ($t = 3.2$, $p < .01$). The participants' views of police were significantly more positive ($t = 2.1$, $p < .05$). The participants' beliefs about the fairness of police officers' training were significantly more positive ($t = 2.0$, $p < .05$).

After completing the CPA, the participants became significantly more aware of police activities ($t = 2.5$, $p < .05$). Their awareness about crime and safety issues in their neighborhoods significantly increased ($t = 2.3$, $p < .05$). Finally, the participants believed that they were significantly more careful to protect themselves becoming a crime victim than they were before the CPA ($t = 2.7$, $p < .01$). The CPA did not caused a significant effect on the remaining 12 surveyed areas. The CPA, for instance, did not significantly increase the participants' perceptions in terms of participants' respect for and trust to police. The CPA also did not significantly affect the participants' willingness to report suspicious activities to police; to initiate or participate in neighborhood crime-watch programs; to speak with families, friends, and neighbors about neighborhood problems; and to approach a police officer and talk about neighborhood problems. The CPA did not have a significant effect on the participants' beliefs regarding police officers' professionalism and police use of force. It is clearly seems, however, in the table that the participants opinions and perceptions were already positive before attending the CPA, particularly for these 12 surveyed areas. For instance, the pre-test mean scores for the

concerning the difficulties and dangerousness of police work and their willingness to report crimes to police did not change.

These results indicate that the participants had positive perceptions and attitudes toward the police in the areas of police use of force, police training, the difficulties and dangerousness of police works, and respect for trust in the police. In addition, the participants' perceptions and attitudes toward crime related issues was already positive, such as reporting a crime or a suspicious activities, talking about neighborhood problems to a police officers, families, friends, and neighbors. Despite these considerably high initial positive perceptions and attitudes, the CPA managed to make these perceptions and attitudes more positive on limited areas. The CPA provided a better understanding of police and police work and made the participants views about the police and their work more positive. The CPA increased the participants' perceptions of the fairness of police training and police activities. Finally, the CPA increased the participants' awareness about crime and safety issues in their neighborhoods and made the participants more careful to protect themselves from crime victimization.

Table 2
CPA Effects on Opinions, Perceptions, and Attitudes

Dependent Variable	Mean		SD		t
	Pre-Test	Post-test	Pre-Test	Post-test	
I believe that police officers' job is difficult	4.8	4.9	0.5	0.3	- 0.7
I believe that being a police officer is dangerous	4.8	4.8	0.5	0.4	- 0.3
I believe that police officers should have right to use force	4.4	4.4	0.7	0.6	0.6
I have a good understanding on police officers and police work	3.6	4.5	1.1	0.6	- 3.2**
I believe that police officers in my city are professional	4.4	4.6	0.7	0.5	- 0.9
I believe that police officers have sufficient education	4.2	4.5	0.8	0.7	- 1.4
I believe that police officers are fairly trained	4.1	4.5	0.7	0.6	- 2.0*
I am aware of police activities in Louisville	3.6	4.3	0.9	0.7	- 2.5*
I am willing to report crimes to police	4.8	2.7	0.4	0.5	0.8
I am willing to report suspicious activities in my neighborhood to police	4.7	4.8	0.7	0.4	- 0.3
I am willing to initiate or participate in neighborhood crime-watch programs	4.3	4.4	0.9	0.8	- 0.2
I speak with my family, friends and neighbors about neighborhood problems	3.9	4.2	1.1	0.7	- 0.7
I willingly approach a police officer and talk about neighborhood problems	4.2	4.3	1.1	1	- 0.3
I am aware of crime and safety issues in my neighborhood	3.8	4.5	1.1	0.6	- 2.3*
I am careful to protect myself becoming a crime victim	4.3	4.8	0.7	0.4	- 2.7**
My view of the police is positive	4.3	4.8	0.7	0.4	- 2.1*
I respect police officers in my community	4.5	4.6	0.7	0.5	- 0.8
I trust the police	4.3	4.6	0.7	0.5	-1.6

N (Pre-test) = 24

N (Post-test) = 18

The participants responded to five evaluation questions at their last class meeting. Table 3 presents the results of participants' evaluation of the CPA. All of the participants positively evaluated the CPA. The vast majority of participants reported that the CPA was enjoyable, educational, and beneficial. In addition, all of the participants strongly agreed with the idea that the CPA should continue to educate citizens. Furthermore, all of the participants reported that they recommend the CPA to someone else (82% strongly agreed and 18% agreed). These evaluation results of the CPA indicate that the participants were satisfied with the CPA, felt that they had learned useful and valuable information, and recommended the experience to other citizens.

Table 3
CPA Evaluation

Variable	Mean	SD	Agree		Strongly Agree	
			n	%	n	%
I believe the Academy was enjoyable	4.8	0.4	3	18	14	82
I recommend the academy to someone else	4.8	0.4	3	18	14	82
I think the academy should continue to educate citizens	5	0	0	0	17	100
I believe that the Academy was educational	4.9	0.2	1	6	16	94
I believe the Academy was beneficial	5	0	0	0	17	100

N = 17

Discussion

CPAs are popular community policing tools among police departments. Regardless of departments' types and sizes, most of police departments offer CPAs for their communities (Schafer & Bonello, 2001). The main outcomes expected from CPAs are providing better understanding of police, building close police-citizen relationship, and gaining citizens' support for crime prevention (Bumphus et al., 1999; Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002). The eventual expected outcome from CPAs is better crime prevention, safer, and a more secure community (Bumphus et al., 1999; Hilson, 1994). Police departments' views about CPAs are positive in general (e.g., Enns, 1995; Lesce, 1993; Maffe & Burke, 1999; Whitman, 1993). Few empirical research studies, however, have investigated how CPAs are successful in achieving their goals. To contribute for filling the gap in the literature, this study examined the effectiveness of the CPA offered by the LMPD in Louisville, KY. Students of the CPA were surveyed at their first and last class meeting to see how the CPA program affected their perceptions, opinions, and attitudes toward police, police works, and crime related issues. The post-test group also evaluated the CPA.

Twenty-four participants in the pre-test group and 18 participants in the post-test group, who are all the available students in the CPA classrooms, responded to the questionnaires. Despite the small sample size, comparisons to Census data revealed that the CPA respondents were representative of Jefferson County, KY residents. CPA researchers have cautioned careful interpretation of CPA studies due to unrepresentative samples. In one study, Palmiotto and Unninthan (2002) found that CPA students had higher levels of annual income. Similarly, Jordan (2000) criticized CPAs because they recruit students from community elites. However, the present study showed that the CPA had students from every income and education levels

proportionate to the county. Moreover, 25% of the participants' annual income level was under $20,000.

Another critique about CPAs' participants is related to small number of younger students among participants. Bumphus et al. (1999) emphasized that few young citizens join CPA programs. Findings of the present study partly supported Bumphus et al. (1999) conclusion. Although five students who were younger than 30 years old (21%) participated in the pre-test, only two (11%) responded to the post-test. The most dramatic decrease was seen in this age group from the pre-test to the post-test. These three young students might not have quit the CPA, instead they might have been absent at the time of post-test. Nevertheless, this amount of decrease is conspicuous.

To investigate the effectiveness of the CPA, the participants' perceptions, opinions, and attitudes toward police, police work, and crime related issues were measured at the beginning and at the end of the CPA using 18 different measurements. The findings showed that the participants' perceptions, opinions, and attitudes toward police and police work were already very positive. In other words, they were already supporters of police and volunteers for working with police. Also, they already trusted police officers and respected them. The participants' perceptions, opinions, and attitudes of CPAs significantly and positively increased in six surveyed areas out of 18. After meeting with police officers face-to-face, visiting several police units, and learning about details of police units and operations; the participants had a more positive view of police, they had a better understanding of police, and they perceived police officers' training more positively. In addition, the participants reported increased awareness about police activities, crime and safety issues in their neighborhoods, and protecting themselves

from becoming a crime victim. In the remaining 12 surveyed areas, the participants did not reported significant changes.

These findings indicated that the CPA showed a partial success to achieve its goals, which are to educate the public about police services, to foster understanding of police activities, and to gain community support for the department. For appropriate discussion about the CPA's success, however, the participants' evaluation about the CPA should be taken into account. The findings showed that all of the participants were very satisfied with the CPA. All of the participants reported strong beliefs that the CPA was beneficial, educational, and enjoyable. That is, they have learned something valuable, useful and enjoyable. In addition, all of the participants recommended that the CPA continue to educate citizens and that they would advise other citizens to attend. In sum, the CPA effectively gained public support and built a close relationship between police and citizens.

It seems that the participants' initial positive perceptions and attitudes toward police and police work was a crucial factor influencing the CPA effectiveness. These positive views were particularly high for some surveyed areas. The mean scores for these areas were so high that there was only a small chance for a significant impact. For instance, the participants' initial average score for *willingness to report crimes to police* was already 4.8, where the possible maximum score was 5. This finding is consistent with previous research studies. Research studies showed that participants' initial positive views about police and police work was generally positive (Brewster et al., 2005; Bumphus et al., 1999; Palmiotto & Unninthan, 2002; Schafer & Bonello, 2001). The effectiveness of CPAs has been criticized because participants were already police supporters. CPAs also have been criticized because they generally recruit citizens who are already familiar with the police. Schafer and Bonello (2001) suggested that to

truly fulfill community policing and to truly improve police-citizen relationship, CPAs should target the recruitment of citizens who are not supporters of police, do not trust police, or are afraid of police. Citizens with such convictions are less likely to attend a CPA. In addition, police departments' selection and recruitment criteria restrict attendance of citizens with such attitudes in a CPA. Furthermore, interacting with these types of citizens in CPAs may be difficult and disturbing for police officers (Schafer & Bonello, 2001).

The graduates of CPA may provide a way to reach these citizens and to explain police and police work to them. CPA graduates have very positive perceptions and attitudes toward police and expressed a willingness to serve as civilian community policing officers. Thus, the CPA effect may not be limited to program participants. Nowicki (1994) and Brewster et al. (2005) supported the idea that the effect of CPAs can be spread by graduates to other citizens. Therefore, CPAs should improve their curriculums and develop new strategies to reach a wider variety of citizens via their graduates. For instance, CPAs can encourage their participants to share their experience and feelings about police with other people. In this fashion, CPAs have the potential to reach a greater number of citizens, including those who are not supporters of, do not trust, and are even afraid of police.

In addition, CPAs should improve new strategies to attract younger participants and to keep them in the program. The findings of this study showed that six participants who attended the pre-test were absent at the time of the post-test. These participants either had excuses for that night or quit the program. Interestingly, four of them were younger students who were under the age of 40. These younger students might have not found the program exciting. CPAs should improve their curriculums to make younger citizens interested in the program. Recruitment of younger citizens is important because younger citizens are more likely to have more negative

perceptions and attitudes toward police than older citizens (Bumphus et al., 1999). When CPAs

recruit younger citizens and educate them, CPAs are more likely to turn a greater number of

citizens' negative views of police into positive ones.

  The present study has some limitations, which may affect the results. The limitations are

related to the sample, studying of a single CPA program, and the analysis method. First, the

study selected its sample from all the available students of a single CPA program. The total

number of the sample size was 24 for the pre-test and 18 for the post-test. Although the sample

seems representative in terms of ethnicity, level of education, and level of annual income, the

sample size is small for inferential statistical tests. In addition, there is a six-participant

difference between the pre-test and the post-test groups. Absence of these six participants in the

post-test could affect the results. Second, the study examined the effectiveness of a single CPA

program. Several factors related to the CPA, including curriculum, instructors, environment, and

participants' characteristics, might have affected the results. Similar studies examining different

CPA programs might provide different findings. Third, due to sample size, the present study was

limited to t-tests, rather than the more robust MANOVA. The number of t-tests increased the

probability of Type-I error. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted cautiously.

  It is clear that more studies focusing on CPAs are needed. To truly understand the role of

CPAs in improving police-citizen relationships and crime prevention, future studies should

examine different CPA programs. In addition to the effect of CPAs during the program, the

subsequent effects of CPAs should be studied after CPA graduates return to the community.

Consistent with the previous research studies, the present study found that CPA participants

already had positive views about police and police work before they attended the CPA.

Therefore, it is not expected that CPA graduates' views turn from negative to positive in

following years after CPAs. Rather than studying on how the graduates keep their positive views, future studies should study how the graduates influence other citizens' views about police and police work. Particularly, it should be investigated whether CPA participants transfer their positive experiences with police to the citizens who are not supporters of police, do not trust police, or are afraid of police. Furthermore, future studies should use larger and more representative samples. Because a typical CPA classroom is composed of 24 students, more than one classroom can be studied together.

In conclusion, CPAs bring police officers and citizens together and provide a valuable opportunity for them to learn about each other and share their feelings. Even if most of the citizens attending CPAs are already supporters of police, CPAs are effective enough to make citizens' views of police more positive and to improve police-citizen relationships. The investment of resources in CPAs seems worthwhile. However, CPAs should be improved in terms of their goals and strategies. CPAs should educate their students as civilian community policing officers to expand the effects of CPAs to a wider variety of citizens.

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