

A Statewide Analysis of Police Misconduct Charges in Arizona, 2000-2011

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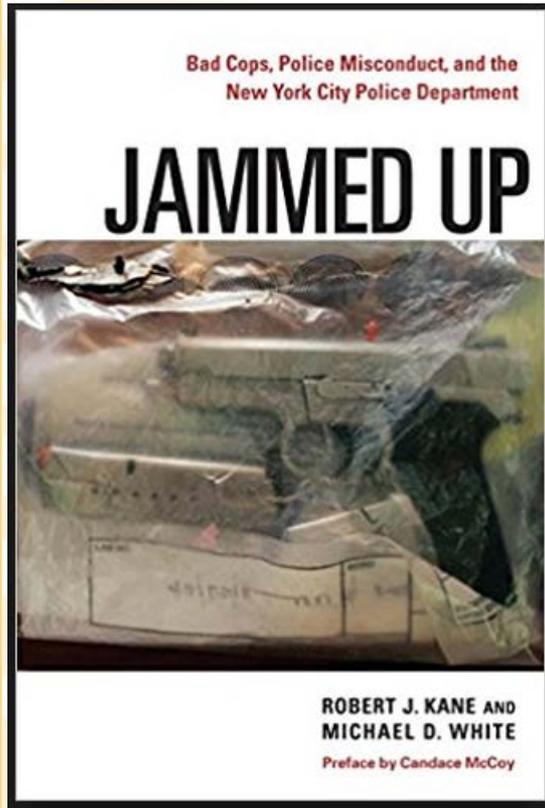
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Overview

- **Prior misconduct research and key findings**
- **The research gap**
- **Current study**
- **Findings**
- **Discussion and implications**

Prior Research

- Prior misconduct research largely focuses on one or two agencies



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Journal of Criminal Justice

JOURNAL
OF CRIMINAL
JUSTICE

The Residual Career Patterns of Police Misconduct

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The Effect of Sanctions on Police Misconduct

Crime & Delinquency
2014, Vol. 60(8) 1258–1288

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DOI: 10.1177/0011128712466933

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Key Misconduct Findings

■ Individual factors¹

- **Risk:** criminal history, prior employment problems, race/ethnicity
- **Protective:** college, training academy performance

■ Ecological Factors²

- Social disorganization, racial composition (racial threat), ecology of patrol

■ Organizational factors³

- Subculture, anthropological paradigm

¹ Chaiken & Chaiken (1972) Kane & White (2009; 2013), Harris (2014)

² Kane (2002), Klinger (1997)

³ Bayley & Mendelsohn (1969); Herbert (1998); Kappeler et al. (1998)

Research Gap

- **Strong understanding of causes and correlates at individual officer level**
- **Very limited research on departmental features influencing misconduct**
- ***Why?* Virtually no studies of officer misconduct across police departments**
- ***Why a problem?* Most theories of police misconduct include a strong organizational component**

Research Gap

- **Benefits of a multi-agency study of police misconduct:**
 - Examine prevalence across *agency type and size*
 - Identify organizational features of *high misconduct generator agencies*
 - Identify organizational features of *low misconduct generator agencies*
- **The challenge – getting misconduct data from multiple police departments**

Arizona Peace Officers and Standards Training Board (AZPOST)

- Established in 1968 by the AZ state legislature
- 13 members: law enforcement/correctional representatives, attorney general, & the general public
 - Dr. Scott Decker (2007-2011)
- Represents over 10,000 officers from 100+ law enforcement & correctional agencies
- Establishes training standards and certifies training facilities
- Oversees police and correctional officer misconduct cases
- Authority to suspend and revoke AZ law enforcement certification

Current Study

- **Investigate organizational correlates of police misconduct using AZPOST data**
- **1,500+ charges of misconduct between 2000-2011**
 - Not all misconduct – but likely the most serious
- **More than 100 agencies in the state:**
 - Big-city, medium/suburban, small/rural, border
 - Municipal/local PDs, county sheriffs, tribal, university police, constables

Research Questions

1. What are the key themes in officer and case-level characteristics of misconduct?
2. How does misconduct vary across agency type and size?
3. Are there identifiable features of *high misconduct generator agencies*?
4. Are there identifiable features of *low misconduct generator agencies*?

Analysis

Key themes at the officer and case level

- Gender, rank, misconduct type, POST final action

Variation across agency type and size

- Compare municipal, county, tribal, and state agencies
- Agency size based on number of officers: small (<100), medium (100-499), large (500+)

Identifiable features of *high/low misconduct generating agencies*

- Examined using the 2007 LEMAS

RESULTS

Officer Characteristics

Gender - 88.9% male

Rank

- **Officer/line level - 80.3%**
- **Front line supervisor - 7.2%**
- **Applicant/reserve - 6.2%**
- **Command level - 2.3%**
- **Agency head - 0.8%**
- **Detective/specialized - 0.3%**

Misconduct Charge Type

- **Administrative failure to perform - 32.6%**
- **Untruthful - 16.5%**
- **Drug/alcohol related - 9.0%**
- **Profit motivated - 6.9%**
- **Sexual misconduct - 6.8%**
- **Domestic violence - 5.3%**
- **Conduct related probationary failures - 3.6%**
- **Assault - 2.3%**
- **Felony conviction - 1.2%**
- **Excessive use of force - 1.0%**

AZPOST Final Action

- **None - 31.6%**
- **Certification revoked - 21.6%**
- **Administrative closed - 13.8%**
- **Suspend - 12.8%**
- **Voluntary relinquishment - 12.6%**
- **Deny - 2.8%**
- **Dismiss - 1.9%**

Identifying Low and High Misconduct Generating Agencies

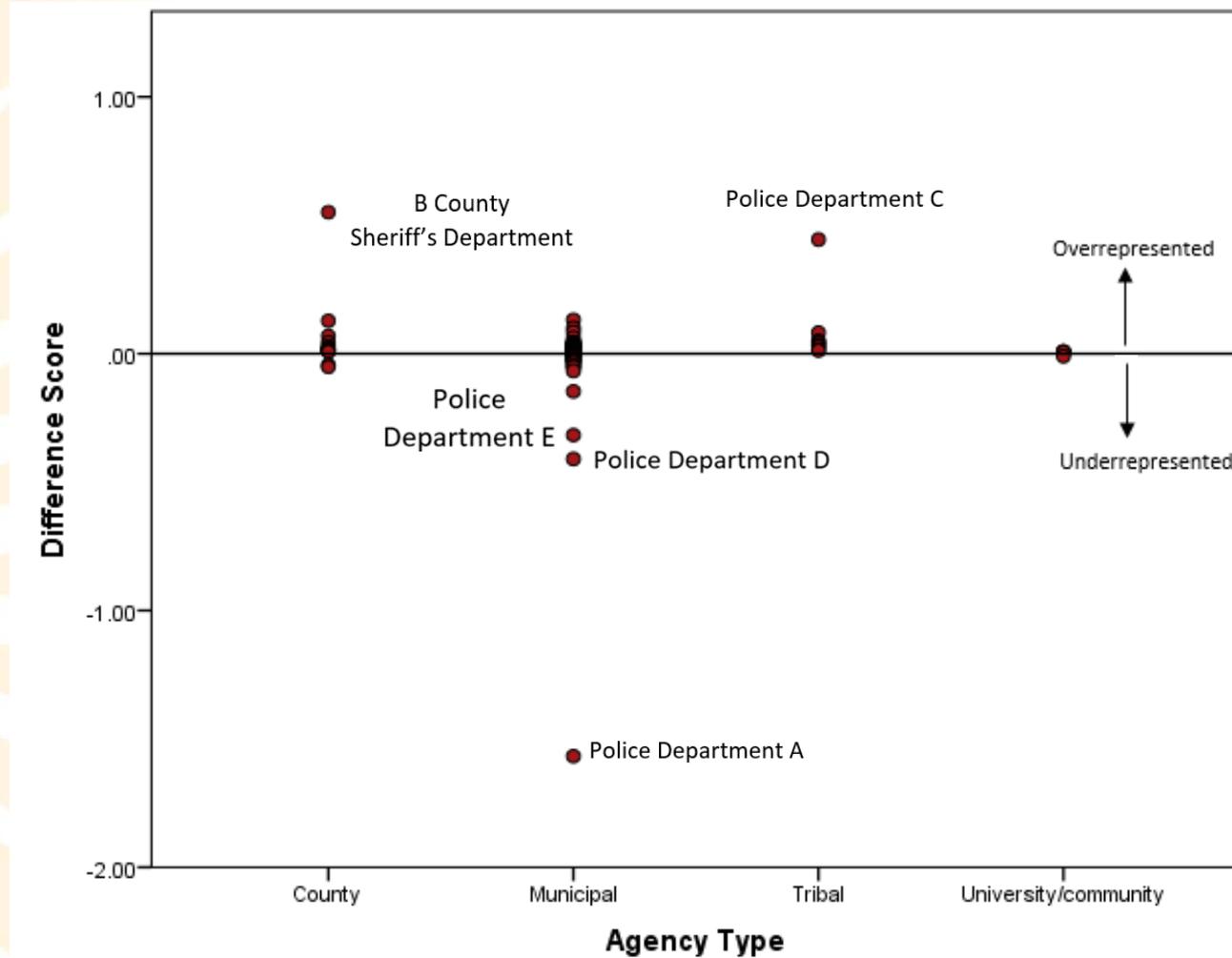
Agency	No. Officers	%	No. AZ-POST Cases	%	Difference Score
Police Department A	3146	26.9%	162	11.2%	-15.7%
B County Sheriff's Office	53	0.5%	86	6.0%	5.5%
Police Department C	210	1.8%	90	6.2%	4.4%
Police Department D	974	8.3%	61	4.2%	-4.1%
Police Department E	776	6.6%	50	3.5%	-3.2%
Police Department F	423	3.6%	31	2.1%	-1.5%
Police Department G	97	0.8%	31	2.1%	1.3%
H County Sheriff's Office	207	1.8%	44	3.1%	1.3%
Police Department I	44	0.4%	20	1.4%	1.0%
Total	11692		1442		0.0%

Note: Only agencies with a difference score > |1%| are shown

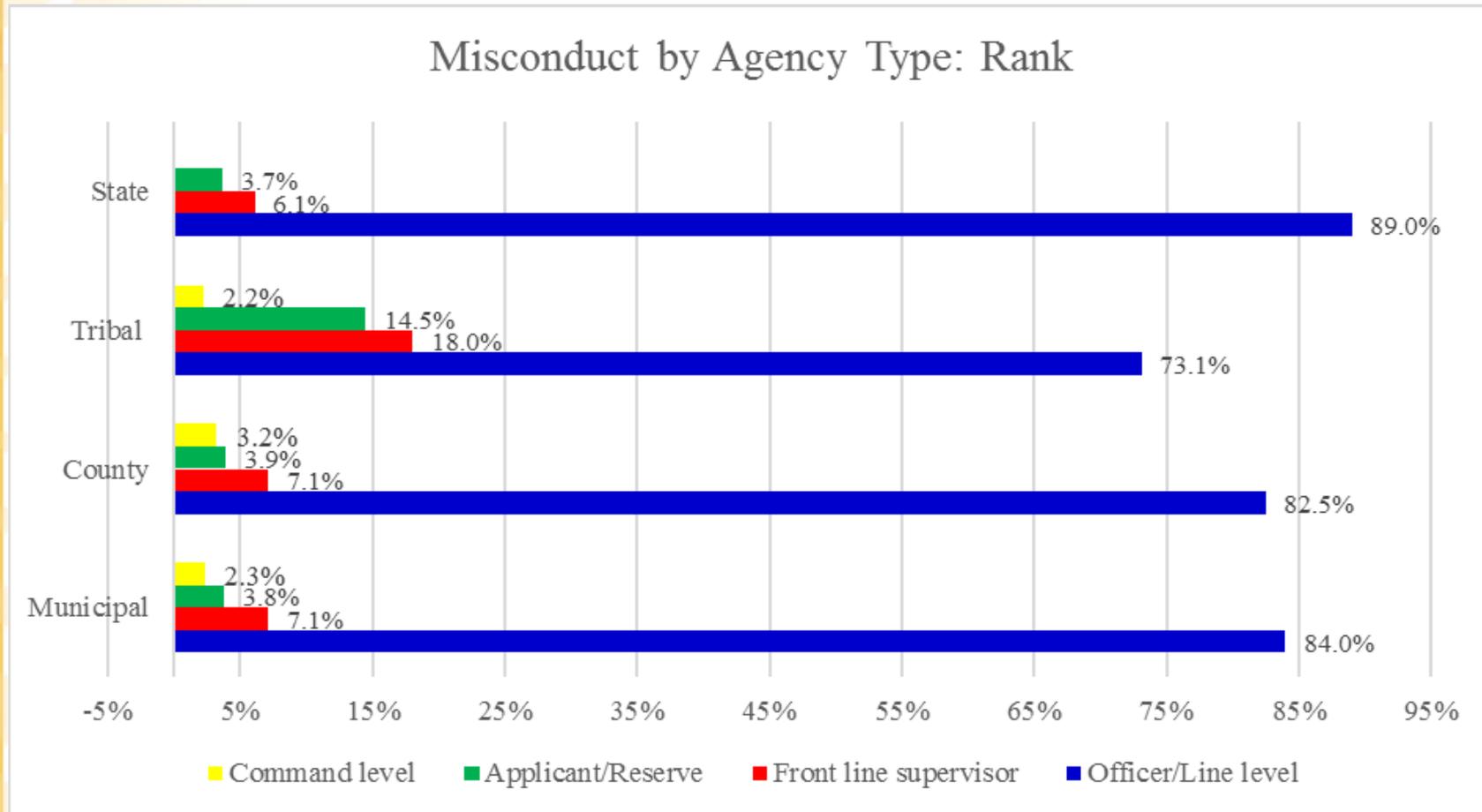
Variation across Agency Type

Agency Type	No. Agencies	%	No. AZPOST Cases	%	Difference Score
Tribal	16	11.0%	308	18.4%	7.4%
University/ Community College	8	5.5%	35	2.1%	-3.4%
County	15	10.3%	227	13.6%	3.2%
State	11	7.6%	153	9.1%	1.6%
Municipal	77	53.1%	910	54.4%	1.3%
Other	17	11.7%	40	2.4%	-9.3%
Total	145		1674		0.0%

Variation across Agency Type



Variation across Agency Type and Rank



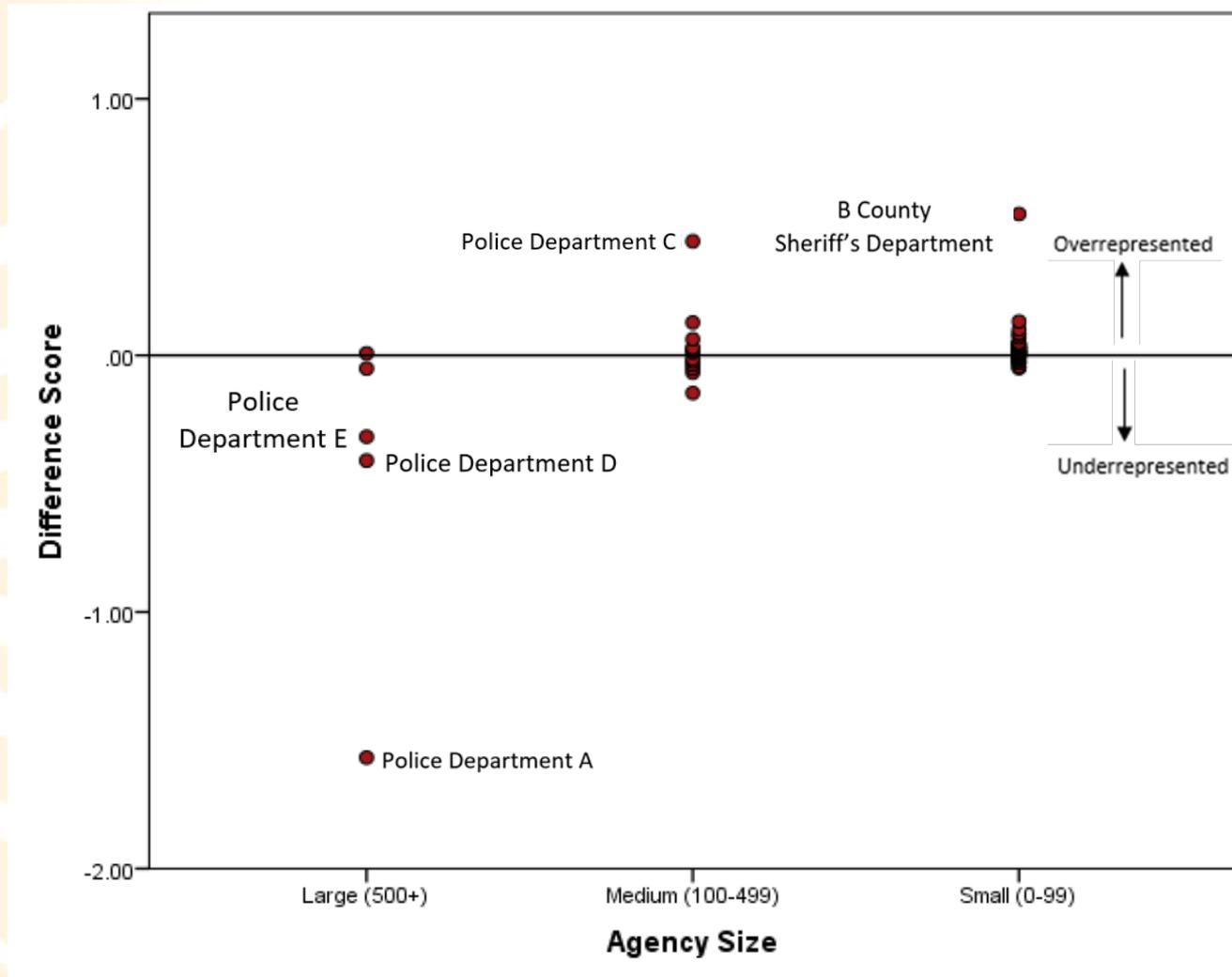
Characteristics of major types of misconduct by agency type

	Municipal		County		Tribal		State		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Charge Type										
Administrative/failure to perform	326	35.8	96	31.2	57	25.1	25	30.5	545	32.6
Untruthful	161	17.7	53	17.2	21	9.3	25	30.5	276	16.5
Drug/alcohol related	65	7.1	21	6.8	36	15.9	6	7.3	151	9
Profit motivated	59	6.5	22	7.1	10	4.4	7	8.5	115	6.9
Sexual misconduct	59	6.5	24	7.8	15	6.6	4	4.9	113	6.8
Domestic violence	38	4.2	14	4.5	27	11.9	2	2.4	88	5.3
Conduct related probationary failures	30	3.3	11	3.6	14	5.8	1	1.2	60	3.6
Assault	22	2.4	5	1.6	7	3.1	4	4.9	39	2.3
Felony Conviction	9	1	4	1.3	3	1.3	3	3.7	20	1.2
Excessive use of force	11	1.2	NA	NA	3	1.3	NA	NA	16	1

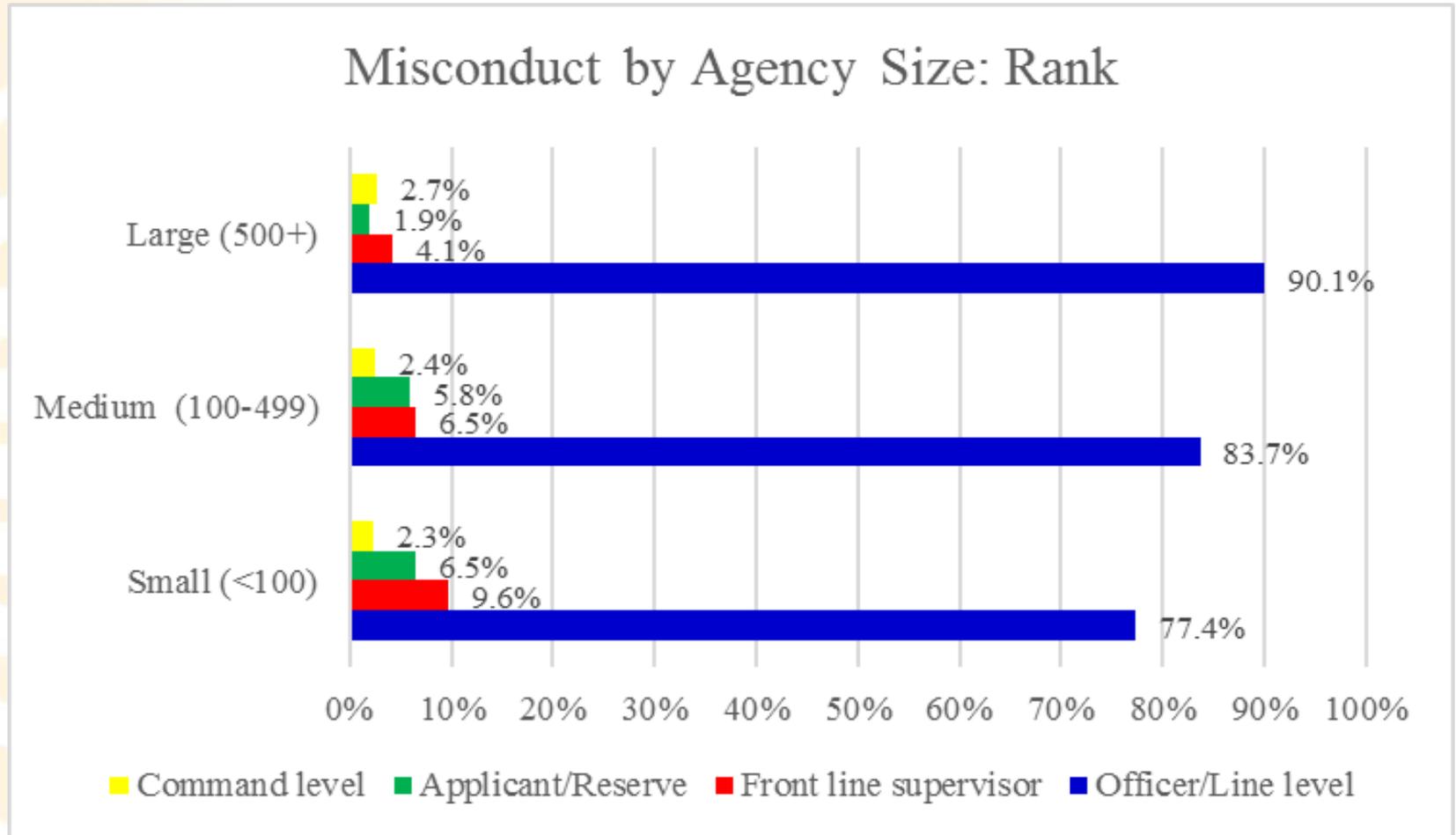
Characteristics of major types of misconduct by agency type

	Municipal		County		Tribal		State		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
POST Final Action										
None	290	31.9	98	31.8	77	33.9	15	18.3	529	31.6
Revoke	193	21.2	63	20.5	54	23.8	24	29.3	362	21.6
Admin closed	121	13.3	37	12	37	16.3	7	8.5	231	13.8
Suspend	123	13.5	34	11	22	9.7	22	26.8	214	12.8
Voluntary Relinquishment	130	14.3	55	17.9	8	3.5	8	9.8	211	12.6
Deny	17	1.9	6	1.9	19	8.4	3	3.7	47	2.8
Dismiss	19	2.1	6	1.9	4	1.8	1	1.2	32	1.9
Other	17	1.9	9	2.9	6	2.6	2	2.4	48	2.9

Variation across Agency Size



Variation across Agency Size



The Outlier Agencies

Low Generator Agencies

Agency	Difference Score
A PD	-15.7%
D PD	-4.1%
E PD	-3.2%

High Generator Agencies

Agency	Difference Score
B County Sheriff's Office	5.5%
C PD	4.4%

Organizational Features of Low and High Misconduct Generators (LEMAS)

	A PD	D PD	E PD	C PD	Other
Hiring Process					
Number of pre-hire screening steps	16	16	13	12	12
Credit history check	yes	yes	yes	no	74.1%
Polygraph test	yes	yes	yes	no	96.3%
Assessment of problem solving skills	yes	yes	yes	no	33.3%
Assessment of conflict management skills	yes	yes	no	no	18.5%
Volunteer/community service considered	yes	yes	no	yes	7.4%
Training					
Academy training hours	720	880	800	585	694.3
Probationary/Field training hours (FTO)	640	480	800	480	638
Total training hours (Academy/FTO)	1,360	1,360	1,600	1,065	1,332.30
Annual in-service training hours	8	8	8	40	31.7

Organizational Features of Low and High Misconduct Generators (LEMAS)

	A PD	D PD	E PD	C PD	Other
Agency Characteristics					
Sworn – percent nonwhite	18.9%	32.4%	19.9%	99.4%	31.9%
Sworn – percent female	12.7%	14.9%	9.5%	12.5%	10.3%
Education incentive pay	yes	yes	no	no	14.8%
College tuition reimbursement	yes	yes	yes	no	88.9%
Minimum salary at entry	\$46,238	\$45,510	\$50,856	\$27,441	\$43,211
Agency has a citizen police academy	yes	yes	yes	no	59.3%
Crime statistics available on website	yes	yes	yes	no	100.0%
Website allows citizen questions/feedback	yes	yes	yes	no	91.7%

Organizational Features of Low and High Misconduct Generators (LEMAS)

	A PD	D PD	E PD	C PD	Other
Agency Operations					
Officers engage in problem-solving	yes	yes	no	no	66.7%
Has a community policing unit	yes	no	yes	no	40.7%
Uses computers for crime mapping	yes	yes	yes	no	59.3%
Uses computers to analyze community problems	yes	yes	no	no	51.9%
Uses computers to identify hot spots	yes	yes	no	no	33.3%
Maintains computerized use of force files	yes	yes	no	no	91.7%
Has an early warning system	yes	yes	no	no	58.3%
Has an Internal Affairs unit	yes	yes	yes	no	91.7%
Has a written racial profiling policy	yes	yes	yes	no	81.5%
Maintains own file on citizen complaints	yes	yes	yes	no	83.3%
Has a citizen complaint review board	yes	yes	no	no	7.4%
Citizen complaints – Total use of force (2006, per 100 officers)	0.59	2.7	1.16	5.65	4.93
Citizen complaints – Sustained use of force (2006, per 100 officers)	0	0	0.12	1.49	0.97

Discussion

RQ 1: What are the key themes in officer and case-level characteristics?

- **Mostly male; Wide range of behavior**

RQ 2: How does misconduct vary across agency type and size?

- **General patterns hold across different agencies**
- **Some notable differences**
 - **Supervisors overrepresented - tribal & small agencies**
 - **Domestic violence and drug/alcohol cases overrepresented - tribal agencies**

Discussion

RQ 3: Are there identifiable features of *high misconduct generator agencies*?

AND

RQ 4: Are there identifiable features of *low misconduct generator agencies*?

- **YES! LEMAS shows many notable differences**
 - Hiring standards
 - Pay; incentives for education
 - Strategies (POP, COP, crime mapping)
 - Accountability mechanisms (EI systems, IA, Citizen Review)

Implications

- **First-of-its-kind state-level analysis of police misconduct**
 - Provides a structure for future research
 - All states have a POST board

- **Highlights the importance of organizational features**
 - More rigorous hiring and training standards
 - Incentives for education
 - Commitment to 21st century police strategies
 - Robust internal accountability mechanisms

Thank you!

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