

COLLEGE STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS POLICE REFORM

TAKEN FROM RESEARCH BY KATE MEDWAR-VANDERLINDEN

IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH, 2021, A SURVEY WAS DISTRIBUTED THAT MEASURED COLLEGE STUDENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS POLICE REFORM. AT LEAST 47% OF PARTICIPANTS WERE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK STUDENTS. THESE STUDENTS WERE ASKED HOW STRONGLY THEY AGREED OR DISAGREED WITH STATEMENTS DESCRIBING DIFFERENT REFORM STRATEGIES (SEE TABLE ON THE NEXT PAGE). THE AVERAGE RESULTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

STUDENTS FELT POSITIVELY ABOUT:

- REQUIRING IMPLICIT BIAS TRAINING
- REQUIRING CRISIS-INTERVENTION TRAINING
- CUTTING SOME OF THE POLICE'S FUNDING
- THE POLICE ISSUING AN APOLOGY
- DECREASING THE ROLE OF THE POLICE AND DELEGATING TO OTHERS, SUCH AS HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
- PROVIDING POLICE WITH MORE RESOURCES IN THE NAME OF REFORM
- COMMUNITIES DECIDING HOW TO POLICE THEMSELVES

STUDENTS FELT NEGATIVELY ABOUT:

- REPLACING THE POLICE WITH A NEW LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY
- REPLACING THE POLICE WITH A PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY
- COMPLETELY ABOLISHING THE POLICE
- DEFUNDING THE POLICE UNTIL THEY NO LONGER EXIST
- ABOLISHING THE POLICE AND NOT REPLACING THEM WITH ANYTHING

ULTIMATELY, WHILE THERE IS AN AVERAGE LACK OF SUPPORT FOR ABOLISHING THE POLICE, A WIDE VARIETY OF OTHER REFORM STRATEGIES ARE SUPPORTED - INCLUDING STRATEGIES SUCH AS DEFUNDING THE POLICE.

TO READ MORE ABOUT POLICE ABOLITION, PUBLIC OPINION OF POLICE AND REFORM STRATEGIES, METHODOLOGY, AND FULL FINDINGS. SEE MEDWAR-VANDERLINDEN, KATE (2021). PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE AND RELATED REFORM STRATEGIES. HONORS THESIS, DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND:

[HTTPS://CCJS.UMD.EDU/UNDERGRADUATE/INDEPENDENT-RESEARCH-ARCHIVE.](https://ccjs.umd.edu/undergraduate/independent-research-archive)

Table: Descriptive Statistics of Reform Strategies

Statement	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum (1 = Strongly Disagree)	Maximum (5 = Strongly Agree)
The police should be required to complete implicit bias training.	4.63	.771	1	5
The police should be required to complete crisis-intervention training.	4.58	.691	2	5
Some of the police's funding should be cut.	4.03	1.22	1	5
The police should apologize to the public.	3.90	1.22	1	5
The role of the police should be decreased and delegated to others, such as health professionals	3.85	1.32	1	5
The police should be provided with more resources	3.27	1.24	1	5
Communities should decide how to police themselves	3.10	1.30	1	5
The police should be replaced by a new law enforcement agency.	2.90	1.22	1	5
The police should be replaced by a public health agency.	2.89	1.21	1	5
The police should be completely abolished.	2.14	1.24	1	5
The police should be completely defunded until they no longer exist.	2.13	1.22	1	5
The police should be completely abolished and not replaced by anything.	1.48	.731	1	5