

Examining Rochester Community Youth-Police Relationships: Analysis of Teen Empowerment Police and Youth Surveys

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Greg Drake
Center for Public Safety Initiatives
Rochester Institute of Technology
585-475-2432
Gmd3165@rit.edu

John M. Klofas, Ph.D.
Center for Public Safety Initiatives
Rochester Institute of Technology
585 475-2432
John.klofas@rit.edu

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**Executive Summary:
Teen Empowerment Police and Youth Surveys Analysis**

This paper is an analysis of two survey studies conducted by the community organization Teen Empowerment. These studies consisted of a group of both Rochester Police Department officers and youth within the City of Rochester. The surveys rendered 264 Rochester Police Department officers and 1636 Rochester City youth for the sample.

The analysis for these surveys provided some interesting results. To begin, the police surveys offered some unique insight and allowed officers to express themselves in a survey that could not be scrutinized by superiors. Similarly, youth were given the rare opportunity to formally express their ideas to improve police-youth relationships in Rochester. Some of the most interesting results are given below. Consult the report for a full review of the survey analysis.

- Police respect youth and feel that their fellow officers respect youth:
 - 95.1% of all police officers report that they respect youth at least ‘some of the time.’
 - 96.2% of officers reported that their fellow officers respect youth at least ‘some of the time.’
- Youth respect police but feel their peers do not:
 - 67.6% of all youth in the sample reported that they respect the police at least ‘some of the time.’
 - When asked how often other youth were respectful toward the police, 64.1% of the sample reported that other youth were respectful ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never.’

- Police and youth do not often feel respected:
 - When asked how often they feel respected by, 57.4% of officers reported that they feel respected ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never’ by youth.
 - When asked how often youth feel respected by police, 44.8% of the youth sample reported that they feel respected ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never.’
- Police feel that they and their fellow officers are fair toward youth:
 - 92.4% of officers reported that they are fair toward youth at least ‘most of the time.’
 - 87.4% of officers reported that other officers are fair towards youth at least ‘most of the time.’
- Police feel they address neighborhood problems adequately:
 - When asked how well they solve community problems, 64.5% of all officers reported that they are ‘good’ or ‘excellent.’
- Youth feel police do not address community problems adequately:
 - When asked how well police respond to neighborhood problems, 13.2% of youth within the sample reported that police are doing ‘excellent’ or ‘good.’ 39.1% of youth reported that police are doing ‘poor.’
- Youth feel that their neighborhoods do not often work well with police:
 - 48.9% of youth reported that their neighborhood ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never’ works well with the police.
- Police see youth as uncooperative:

- When asked how often they thought youth were cooperative, 5.7% of all police officers in the sample reported that youth were cooperative ‘all’ or ‘most of the time.’
- Police feel that youth do not often call the police for help:
 - When asked how often youth call the police for help, 42.2% of officers reported that youth call the police ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never.’
- Youth report that they do not often call the police:
 - 58.4% reported that they call the police ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never.’
- Police and youth often do not often trust each other:
 - When asked how often the police in general trust youth, 11.8% of officers reported that police trust youth ‘all of the time’ or ‘most of the time.’
 - 35.7% of the youth sample reported that they trust the police ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never’ when they need would typically need police.
- Police feel that they are not trusted by youth:
 - When asked how often youth trust the police, 51.1% report that youth trust the police ‘hardly ever’ or ‘never.’

Crosstabs

The most significant findings that come from this report can be seen when the police surveys were broken down by reported policing style and when the youth surveys were broken down by reported race.

- Officers that report using ‘authoritative’ or ‘punitive’ policing styles consistently reported giving lower rates of respect and receiving lower rates of respect and trust from youth than officers who use ‘community oriented’ or ‘rehabilitative’ styles of policing.
- African Americans were more likely to report low rates of respect and trust for police when compared to Caucasian youth.
- Latino youth reported rates of trust and respect that fell in between the levels listed by Caucasian and African American youth in the sample.
- These trends followed for the rates of trust and respect youth felt that they received from officers between each of these racial groups.

Examining Rochester Community Youth-Police Relationships: Analysis of Teen Empowerment Police and Youth Surveys

One issue within the Rochester City community that needs to be further analyzed and discussed is the relationship that police officers have with youth and the relationship that those youths have with the police. These relationships can have a direct affect on the effectiveness of community initiatives directed by police officers. They can also affect community cooperation with police investigations and a community's ability to utilize informal social control with the aid of police resources.

One of the easiest ways to measure these relationships is through surveys of both Rochester police officers and neighborhood youth. This paper is an analysis of a survey project administered by the community organization Teen Empowerment and is designed to offer insight into the rates of respect and trust between police officers and youth and to further offer a general overview of police-youth relationships in Rochester, N.Y.

Methodology

The surveys analyzed in this paper were administered separately to both Rochester police officers and youth within the community. The police survey (Appendix 1) consisted of nineteen questions, fourteen of which were aimed at measuring police officer perceptions of police-community relations. The remaining five gathered information on a survey taker's demographics.

The police surveys were given to Rochester Police Chief David Moore and through him distributed to the ranks of the Rochester Police Department. The surveys were optional to the officers and an individual's survey was kept confidential. These surveys rendered **264** respondents for the sample.

The youth surveys (Appendix 2) consisted of sixteen questions. The first thirteen questions asked the respondent about police-youth relations and the final three questions asked the respondent about demographic information. These youth surveys were administered in two different ways. Firstly, surveys were administered by youth members of Teen Empowerment using convenience samples. Youth at various community centers, youth hangouts, and on the street were solicited to take the survey. The second type of sampling method for these surveys involved a snowball distribution. Members of Teen Empowerment were given these youth surveys and told to solicit their friends or family to complete them. There was no mechanism put in place to differentiate between these two distribution methods on the completed surveys during coding or analysis. These surveys were completed between August 2008 and December 2008. No dates were recorded on the surveys, meaning that no changes in attitude following historical events, such as a highly publicized act of violence or an allegation of police abuse of force, could be measured. These solicitations rendered **1914** completed surveys. Of those **1914**, **278** were excluded from the analysis for listing that they had taken the survey before, leaving **1636** surveys in the sample.

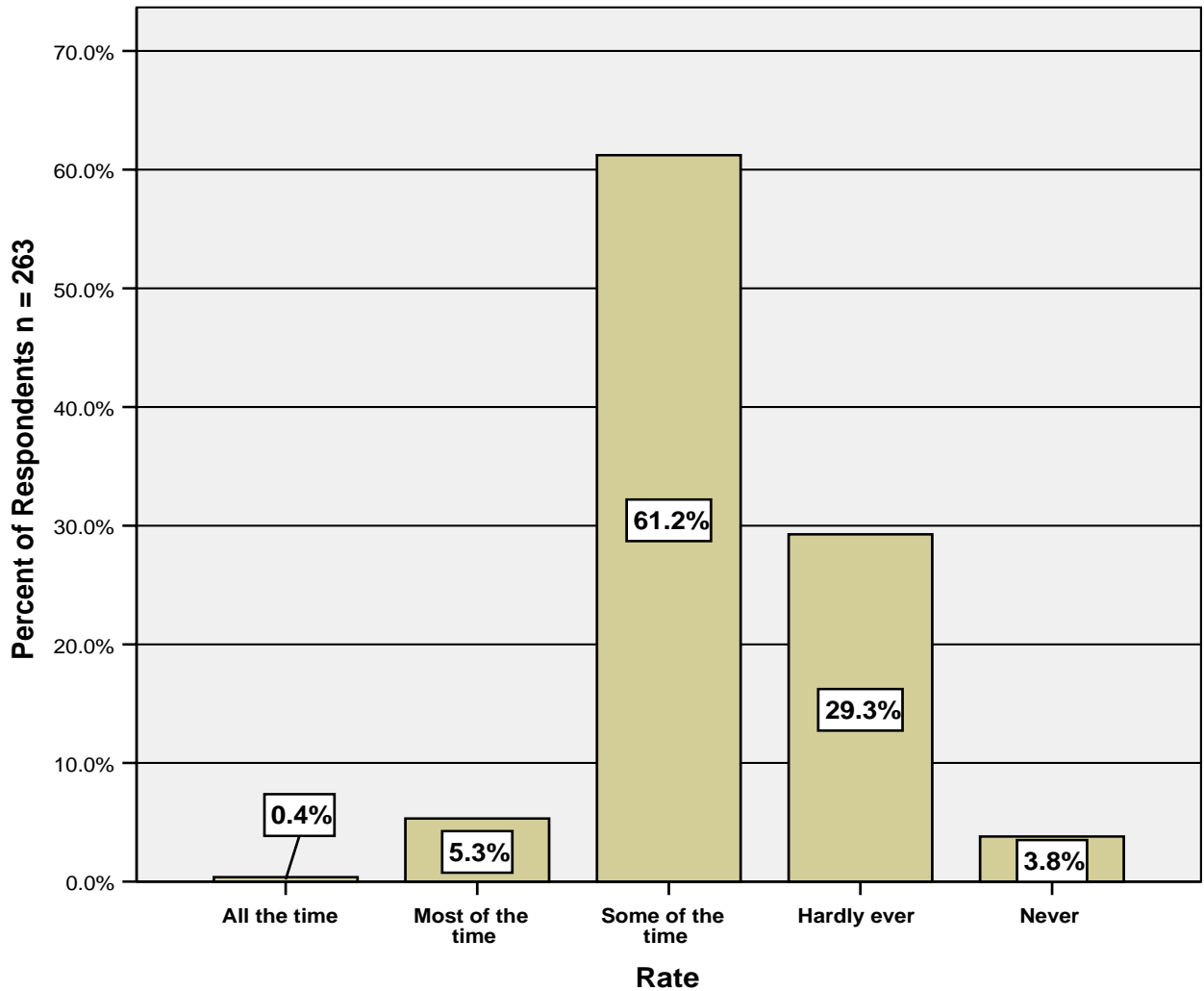
Both of these surveys used an ordinal rating system, or Likert scale, of 1 to 5 for the majority of questions. Two types of ordinal responses were used in the survey. The first set of responses started at 1=All of the time and continued to 2=Most of the time, 3=Some of the time, 4=Hardly ever, and finished at 5=Never. The second set started at 1=Excellent and continued to 2=Good, 3=Average, 4=fair, and finished at 5=poor. The response number was listed with the response name to minimize any confusion by the respondent.

Police Survey

Data

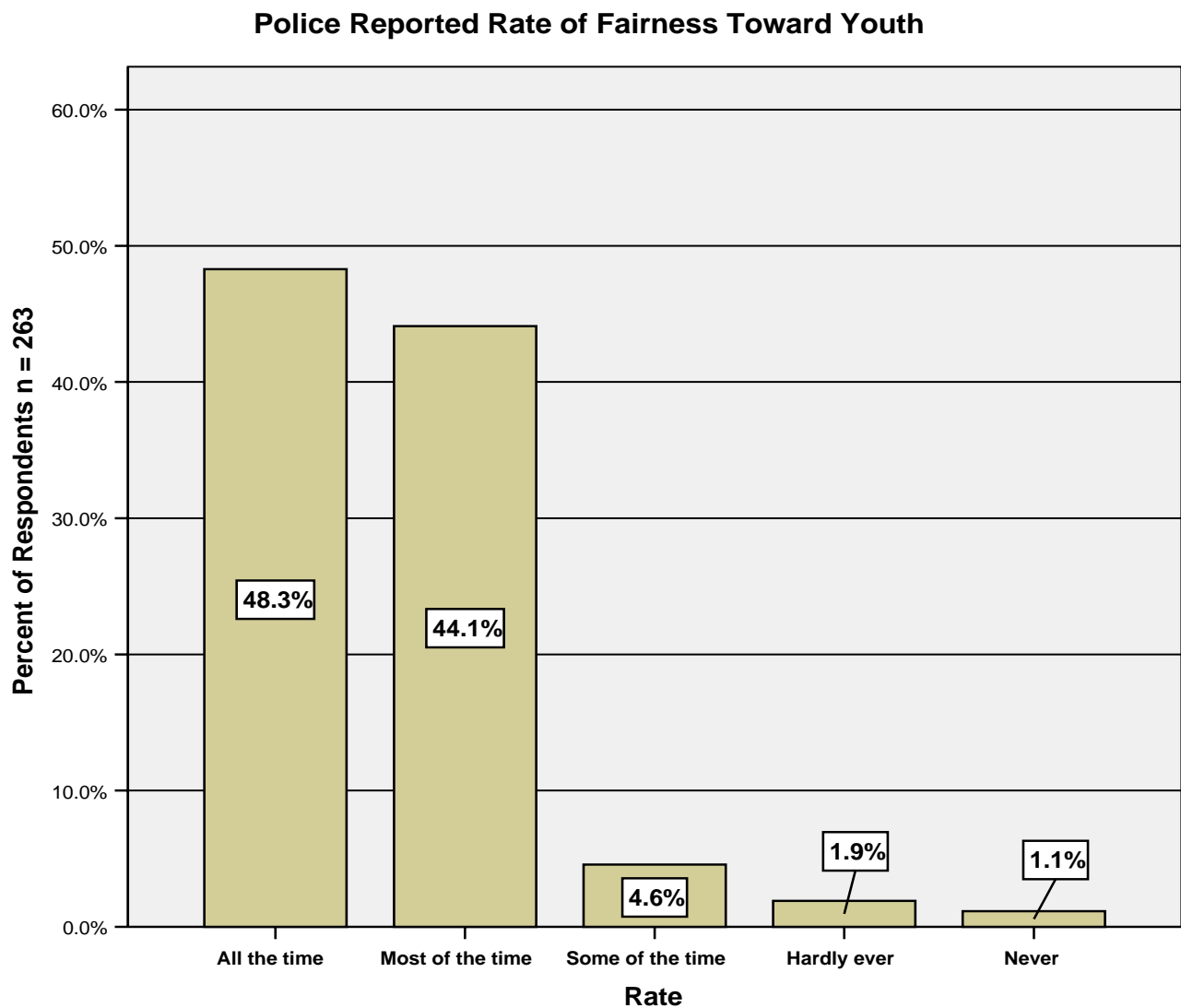
The first question of the survey asked officers to report how often they perceived youth they met on the streets of Rochester to be cooperative. The responses consisted of; all of the time, most of the time, some of the time, hardly ever, and never. With the majority of the responses, 61.2% of the officers responded that youth were cooperative some of the time, followed by 29.3% that responded that youth cooperated hardly ever.

Police Reported Rate of Youth Cooperativeness



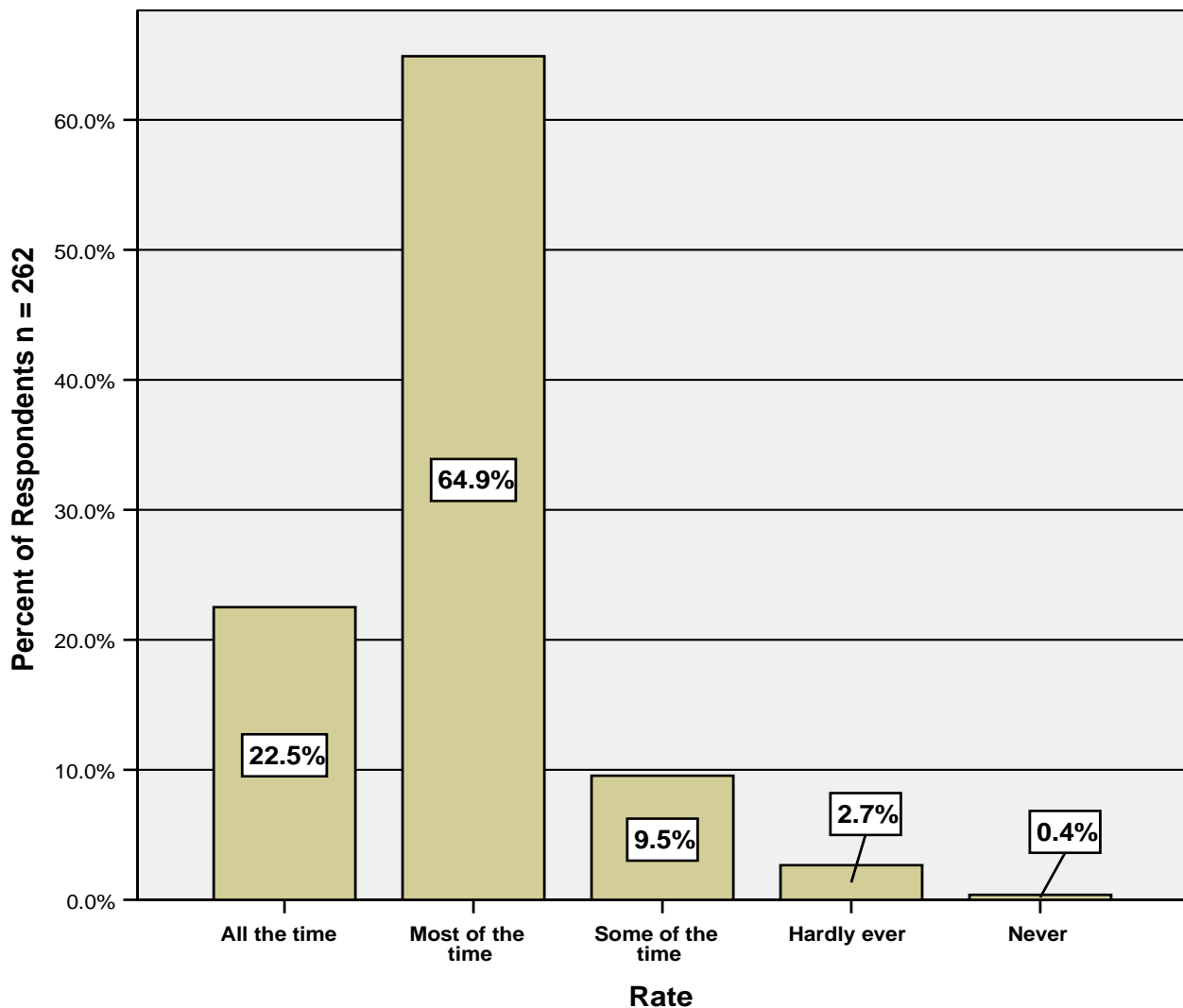
The next two questions asked officers to report their own rate of fairness when they interact with youth as well as the rate of fairness of their fellow officers.

Question number two asked officers to report their own rate of fairness, with 48.3% responding that they were fair in their approach all of the time, followed by 44.1% that responded that they were fair in their approach most of the time. Thirdly, 4.6% responded that they were fair in their approach some of the time.



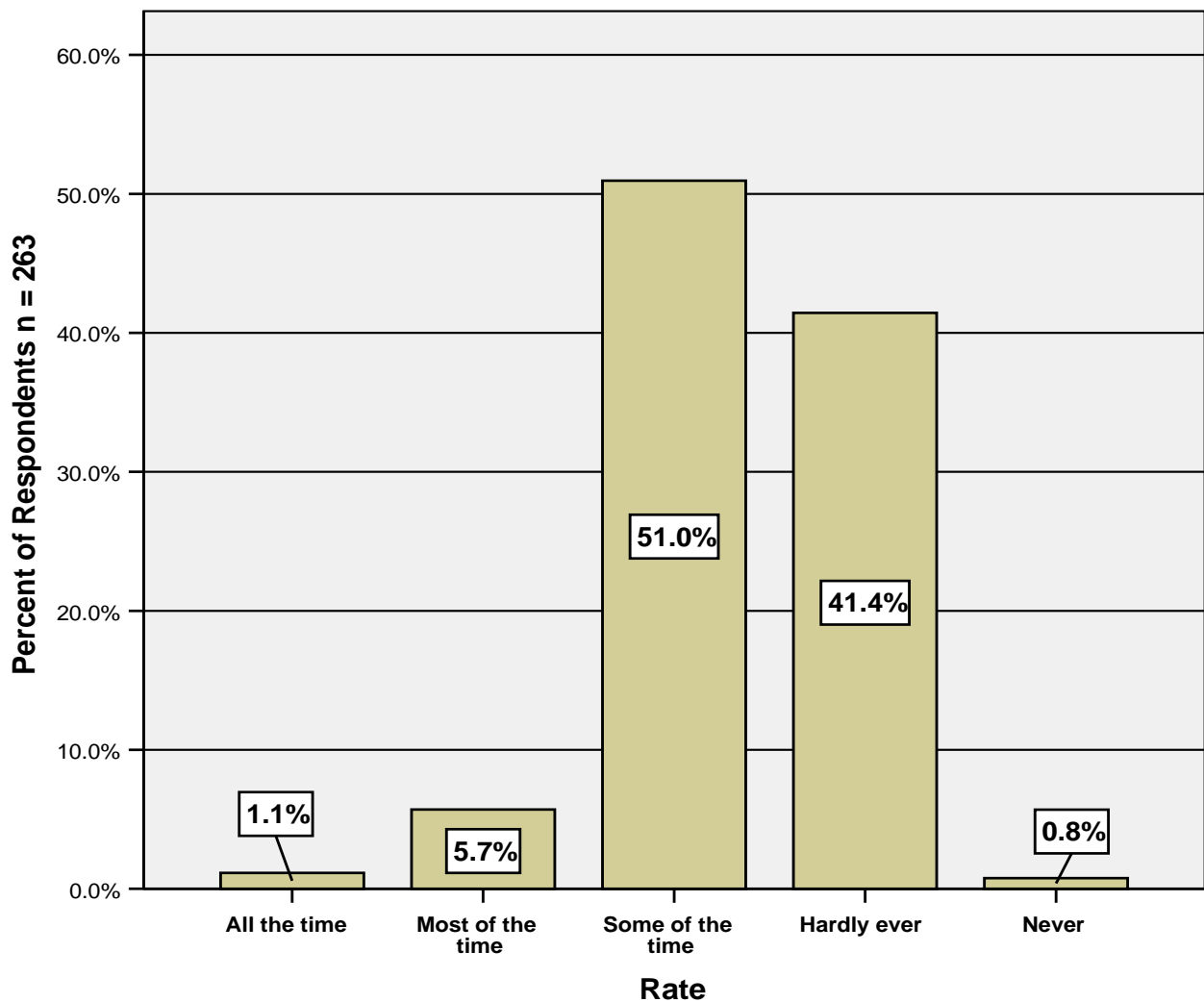
The third question asked officers to report the rate that their fellow officers are fair in their approach to youth. Of the sample, 64.9% responded that other officers were fair in their approach most of the time followed by 22.5 % of officers that responded that other officers were fair in their approach all of the time. Thirdly, 9.5% reported that other officers were fair only some of the time. Thirdly, 9.5% reported that other officers were fair only some of the time. Thirdly, 9.5% reported that other officers were fair only some of the time. Thirdly, 9.5% reported that other officers were fair only some of the time. Thirdly, 9.5% reported that other officers were fair only some of the time.

Police Report of how often They perceive that Other Officers are Fair with Youth They Contact



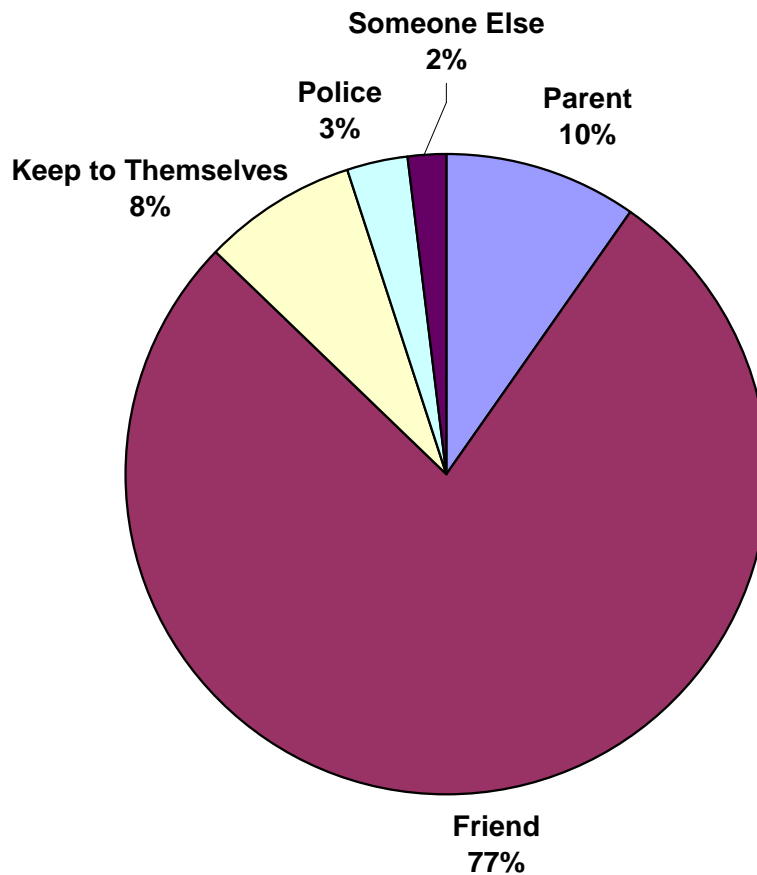
The fourth question asked officers to rate how often they perceive youth call the police for help. Within the sample, 51.0% of the officers responded that youth called for help some of the time. Another 41.4% of officers responded that youth called the police for help 'hardly ever.' Only 5.7% and 1.1% of officers thought that youth called the police for help most of the time or all of the time, respectively.

Police Reported Rate of How often Youth Call the Police for Help when They Need Help



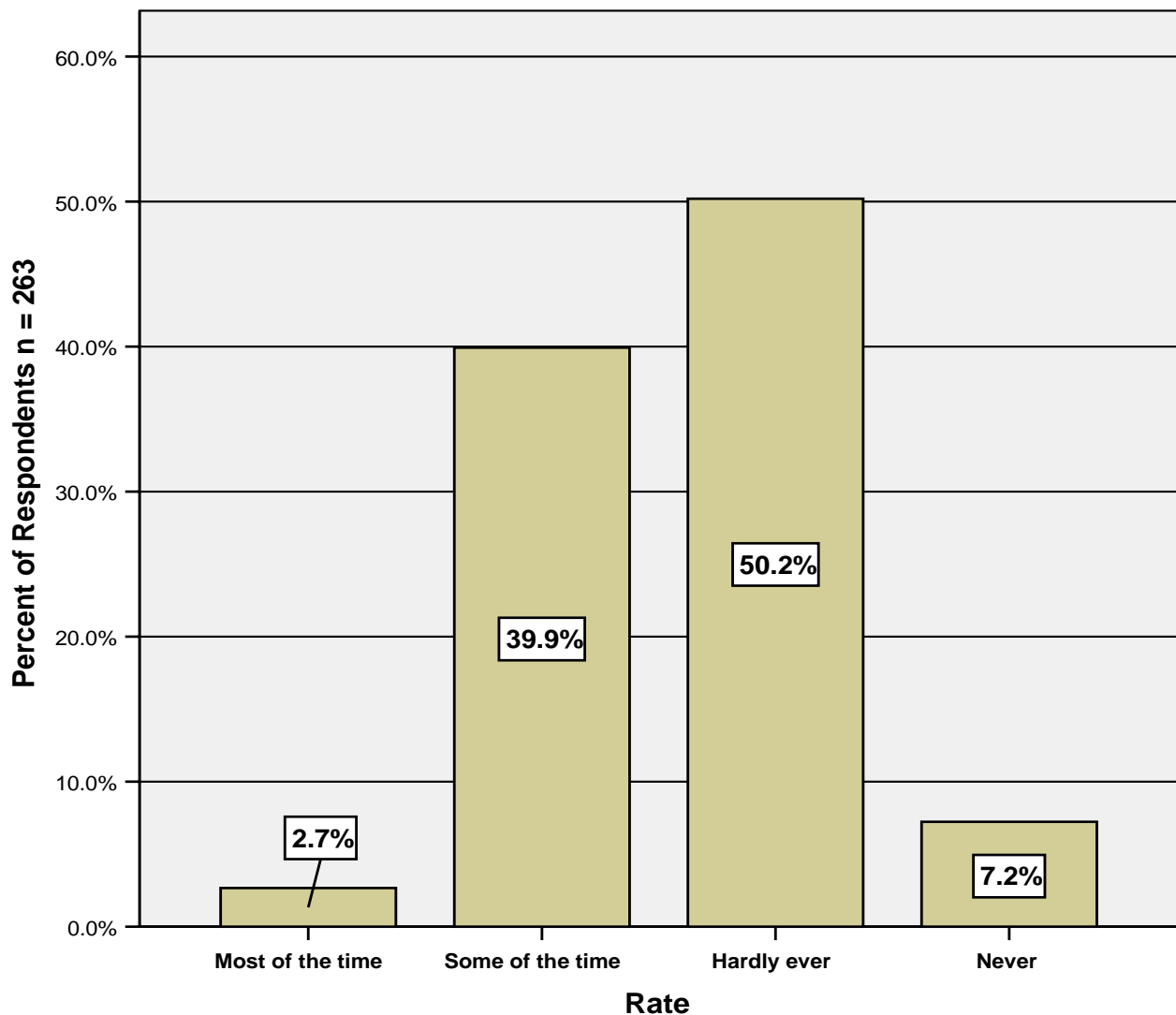
The fifth question asked officers to list who they thought youth went to first when there was youth violence. The vast majority of officers (77.5%) thought that youth would tell one of their friends first, followed by 9.7% that thought they would tell a parent, and 7.8% that thought they would keep to themselves. Only 3.1% of officers thought that youth would call or look for the police in this situation.

Who Police Think Youth Go to First When there is a Crime or Violence Problem



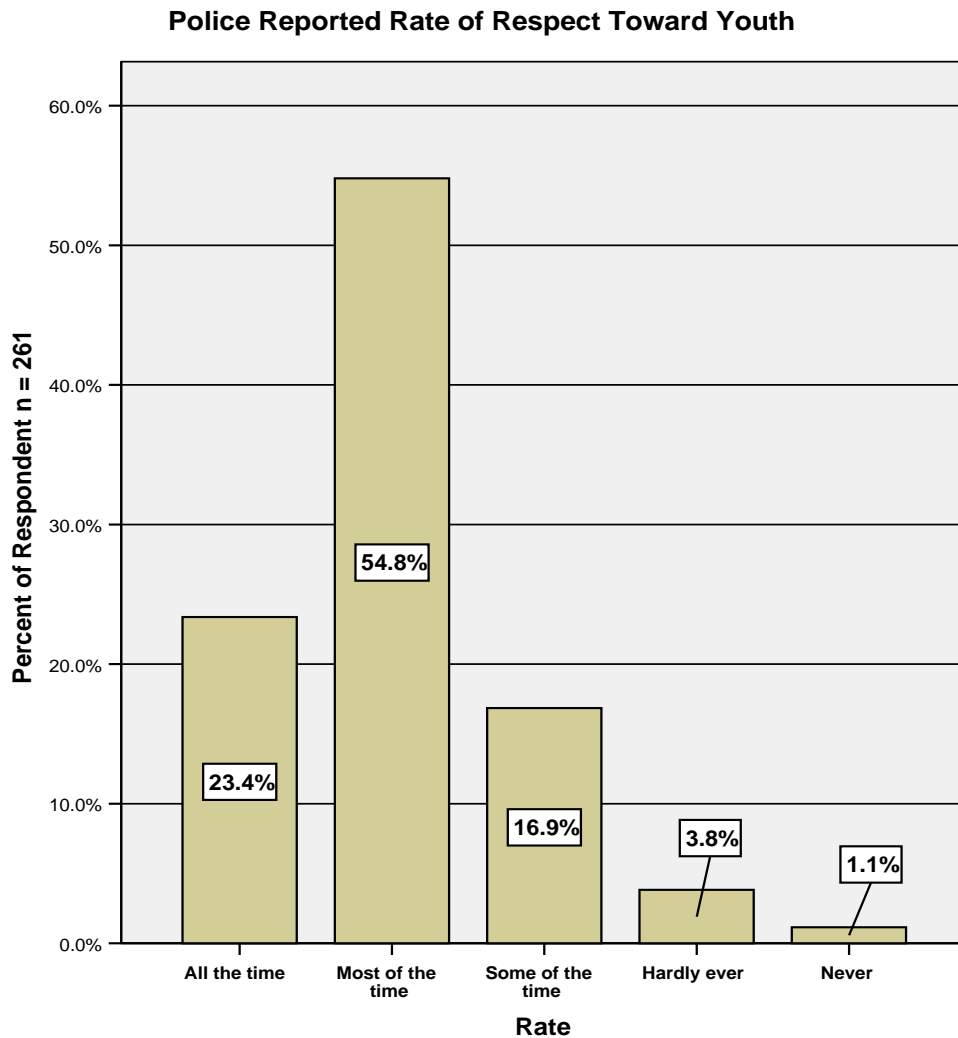
The sixth question asked officers to report how often they feel respected by youth they encounter. No officers responded that they felt respected by youth all the time. However, only 7.2% of officers responded that they felt respected never. The majority of officers, 50.2%, felt respected hardly ever, and 39.9% felt that they were respected some of the time.

Police Perception of How Often They Feel Respected by Youth



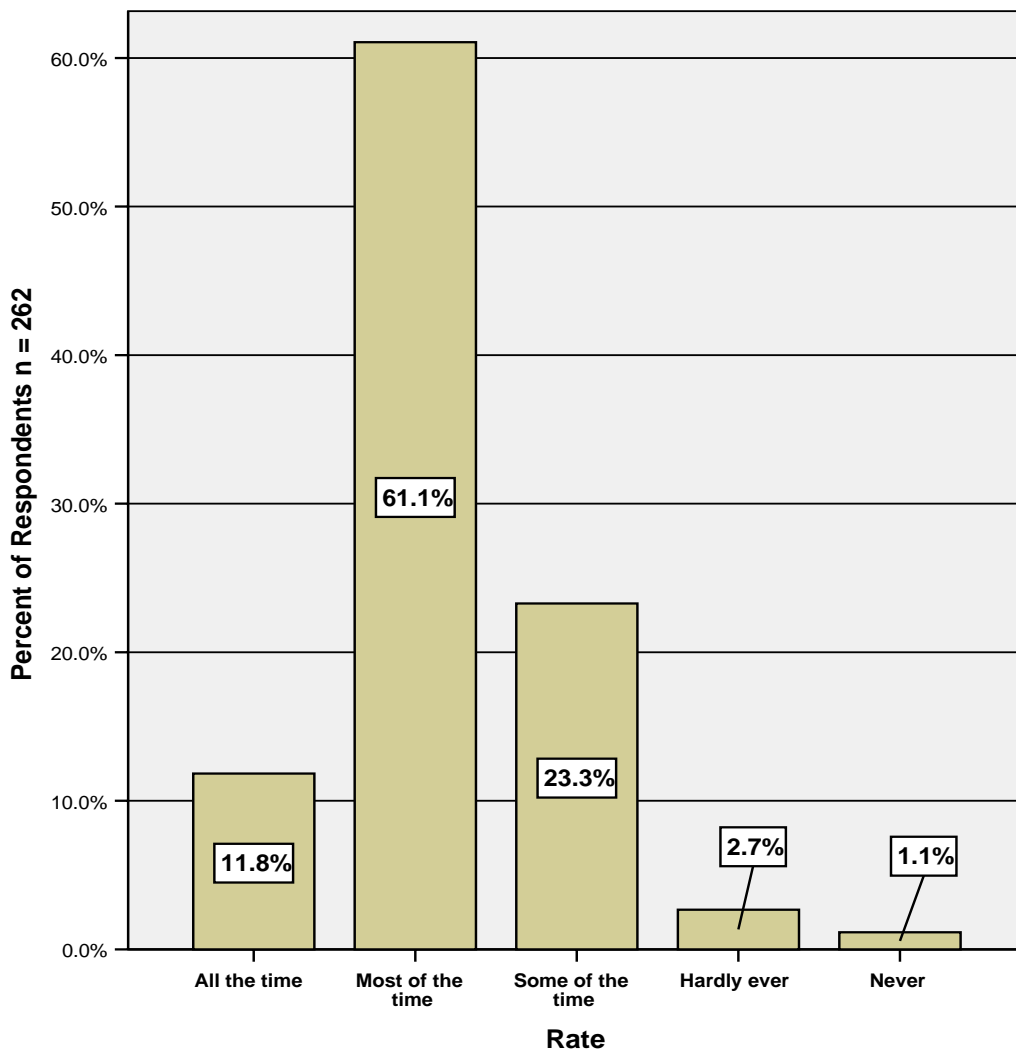
The next three questions asked officers to report how often they respect youth, how often their fellow officers respect youth, and how often their department as a whole respected youth.

Question seven asked about personal respect toward youth. The majority of officers (54.8%) responded that they respect youth some of the time, followed by 23.4% who responded that they respect youth all the time, and 16.9% who responded that they respect youth some of the time. Only 3.8% and 1.1% responded that they respected youth either hardly ever or never, respectively.



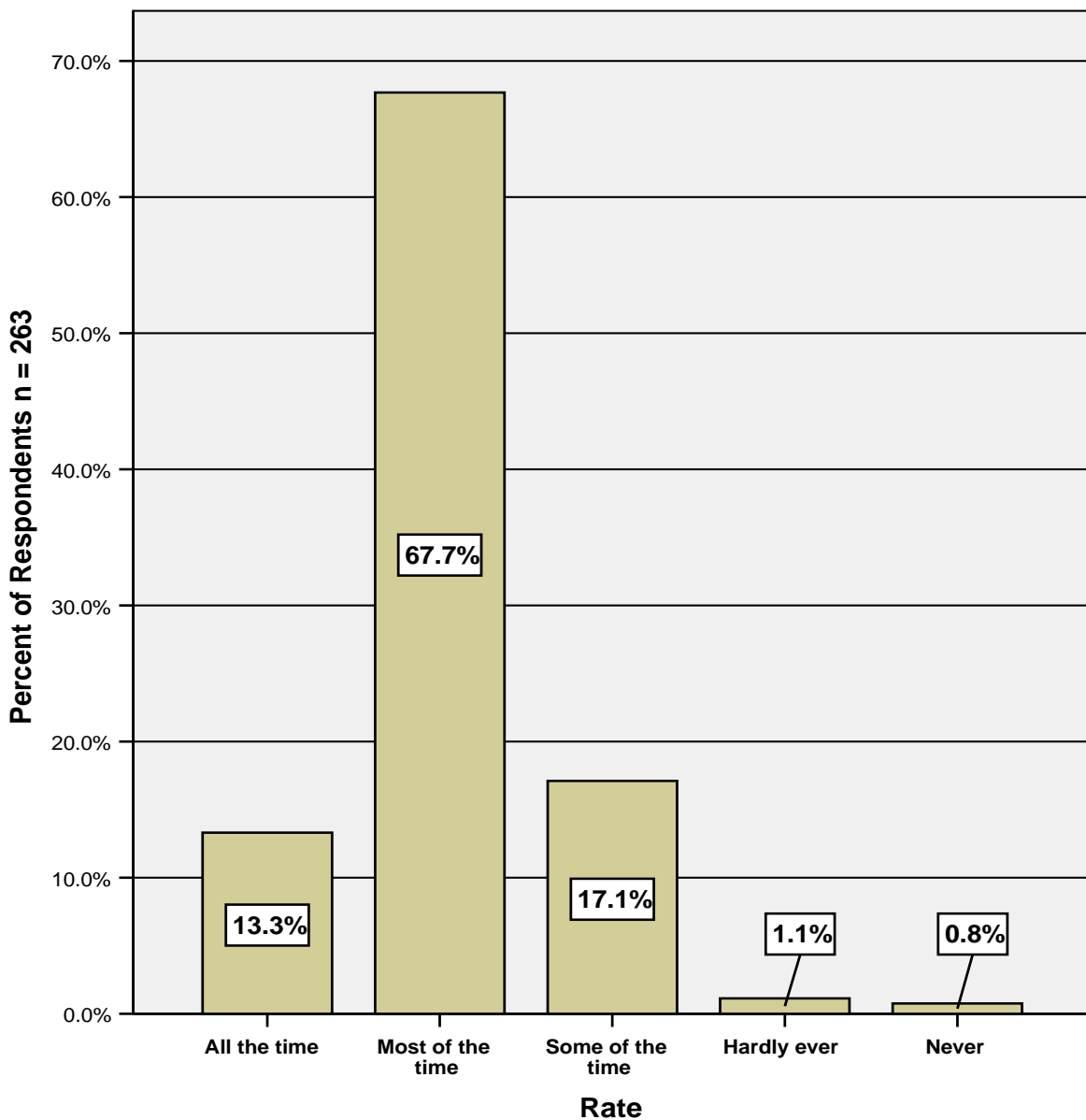
Question eight asked about fellow officer's rates of respect toward youth. The majority of the officers (61.1%) responded that other officers respected youth most of the time, a 6.3% increase (61.1%-54.8%) when compared to their own rate of respect. However, only 11.8% of officers responded that their fellow officers were respectful to youth all the time, an 11.6% decrease (23.4%-11.8%) when compared to their own reported rates of respect toward youth. Another 23.3% of officers reported that other officers were respectful some of the time, a 6.4% increase (23.3%-16.9%).

Police Perception of How Often Other Officers Respect Youth



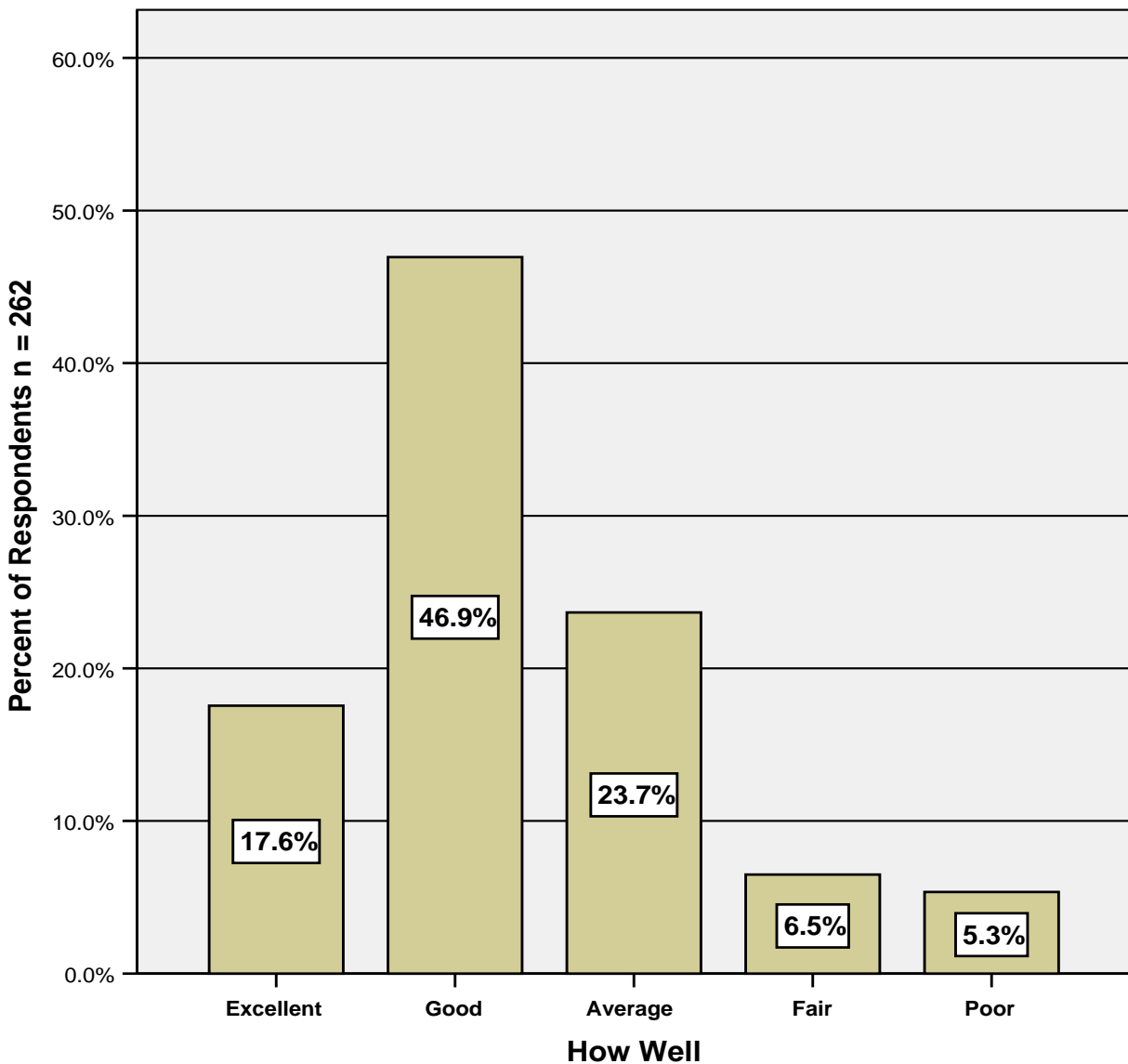
Question nine asked officers to report their department's rate of respect toward youth. The majority (67.7%) responded that their department was respectful most of the time. Another 17.1% and 13.3% responded that their department was respectful all of the time and some of the time, respectfully. Only 1.1% and .8% felt that the department respected youth hardly ever or never, respectfully.

Police Perception of How Often the Department as a Whole Respects Youth



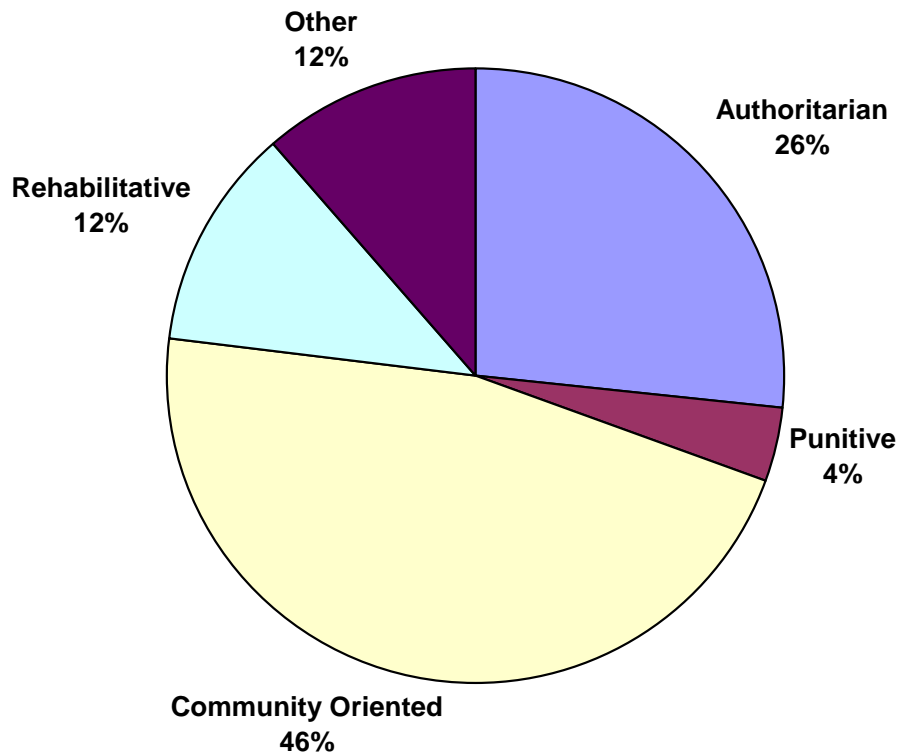
The tenth question asked officers to rate their own ability to solve problems in the community. Most officers feel that they are good (46.9%) or average (23.7%), followed by 17.6% that felt they are excellent, 6.5 % that feel they are fair, and 5.3% that feel they are poor at solving community problems.

Police Report of how Well they Solve Community Problems

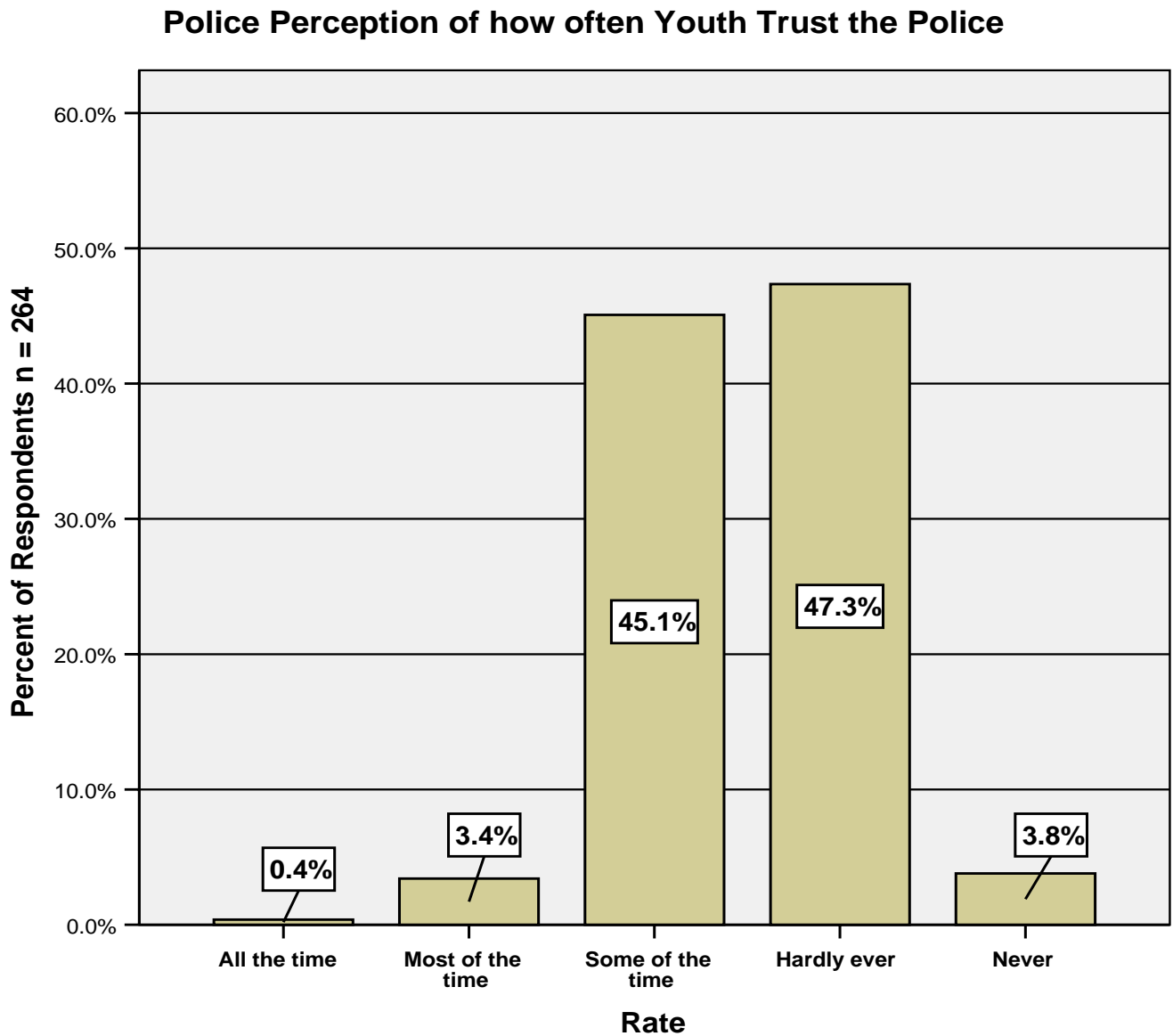


Question eleven asked officer to select the term that best describes their own policing style. The options listed were authoritarian, punitive, community oriented, rehabilitative, or other. Most (46.5%) listed that they use a community oriented approach, and another 26.7% listed that they use an authoritarian approach. Of the remaining, 11.5% reported using a rehabilitative approach to policing, 3.7% used a punitive approach, and 11.5% used a style not listed.

Respondents Listed Policing Style



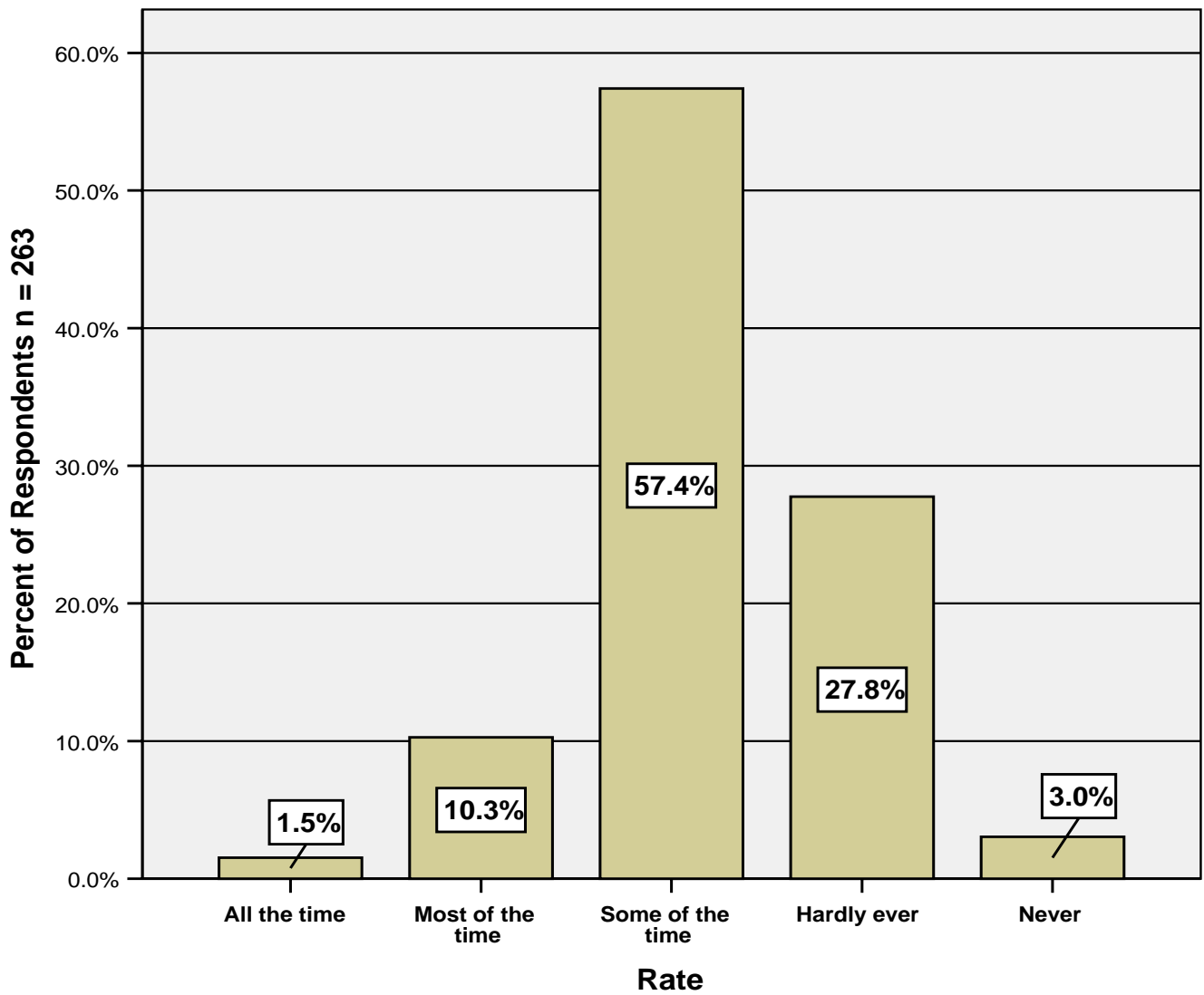
Question twelve asked officers to rate how often youth trust the police. Of the sample, 47.3% responded that youth trust the police hardly ever, and 45.1% responded that youth trust the police some of the time. Only 3.8%, 3.4%, and .4% of officers responded that youth trusted the police never, most of the time, and all the time, respectively.



Question thirteen asked officers to rate how often police in general trust youth.

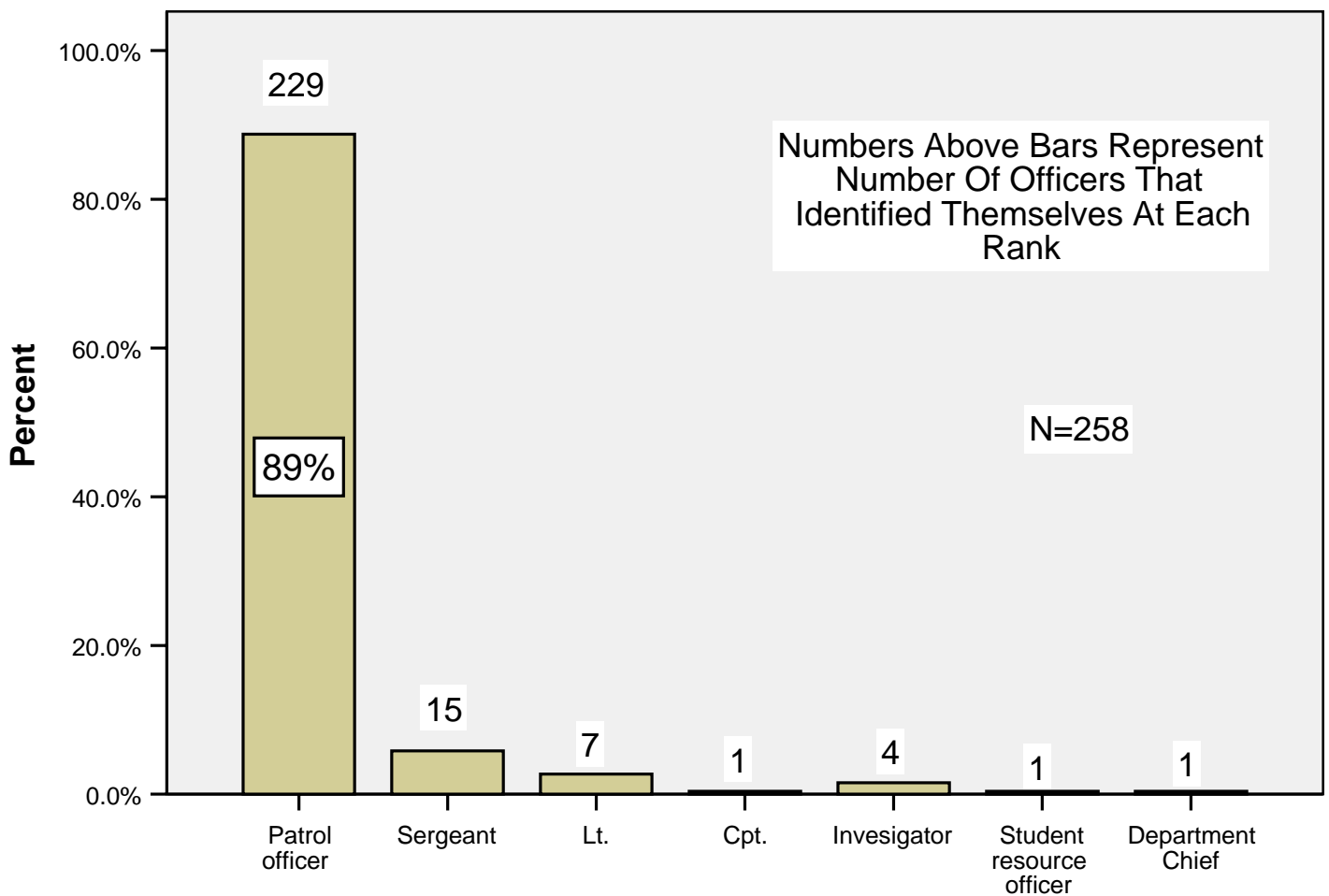
Of the sample, 57.4% responded that police trust youth some of the time and 27.8% stated that police trust youth hardly ever. The following 10.3% responded that police trust youth most of the time, but only 1.5% stated that police trust youth all the time. The remaining 3.0% stated that police never trust youth.

Police Perception of how often Police Officers Trust Youth



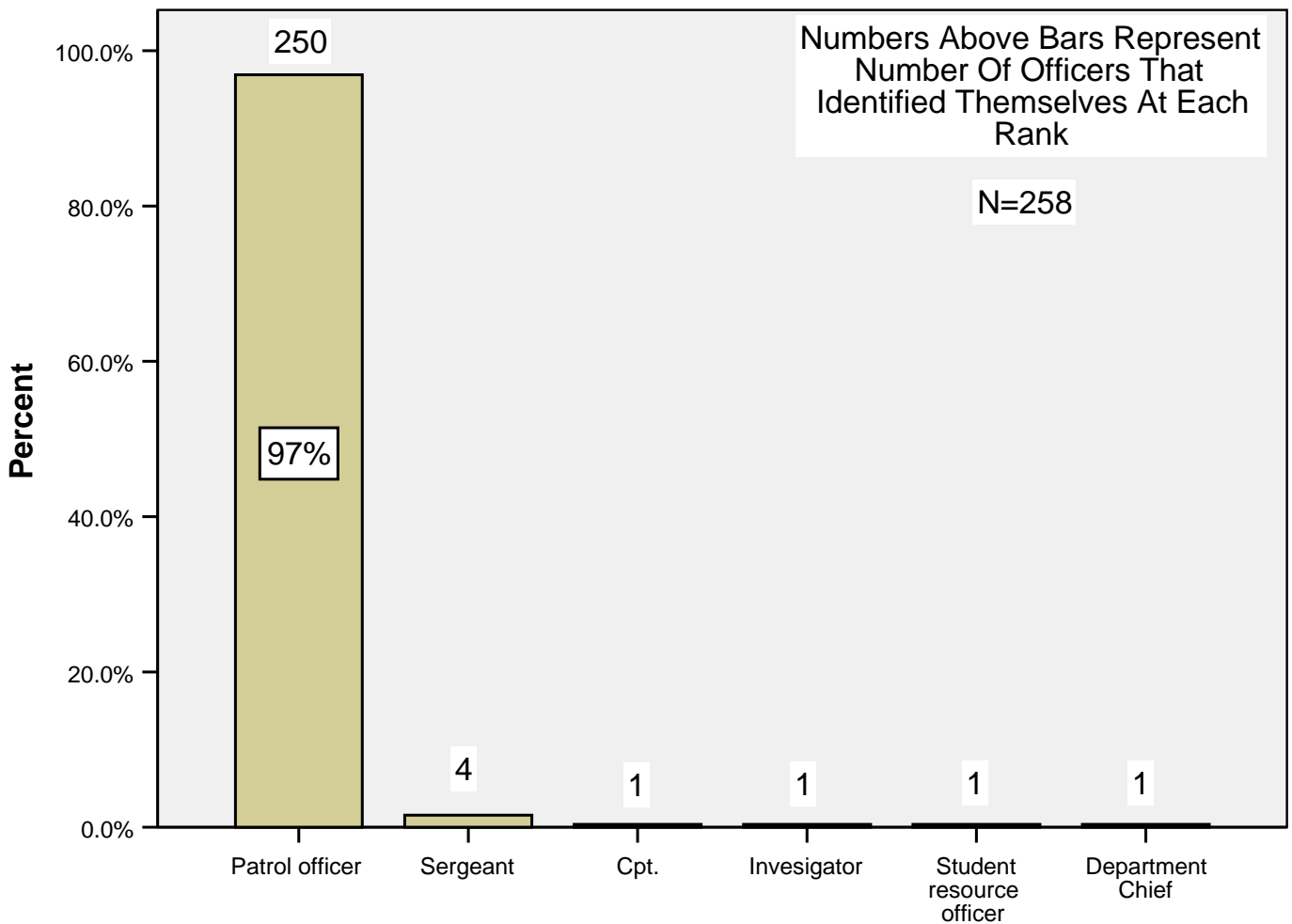
Question fourteen asked officers to list their current rank. The data shows that the vast majority of policepersons (89%) were 'Officers'. The remaining 11% of the sample was comprised of fifteen sergeants, seven lieutenants, four investigators, one student resource officer, and one department chief. With such a small sample it is ill advised to draw any generalizations about any particular rank's thoughts or attitudes at this time.

Current Rank of Respondents



Question fifteen regarded what rank these policepersons held for the majority of their careers. Ninety-seven percent of the sample stated that they were ‘Officers’. The remaining 3% was comprised of four sergeants, one captain, one investigator, one student resource officer, and one Department Chief. With the limited sample size, it is not advised to draw any generalities about the attitudes or thoughts of individuals in any particular rank except for ‘Officers’.

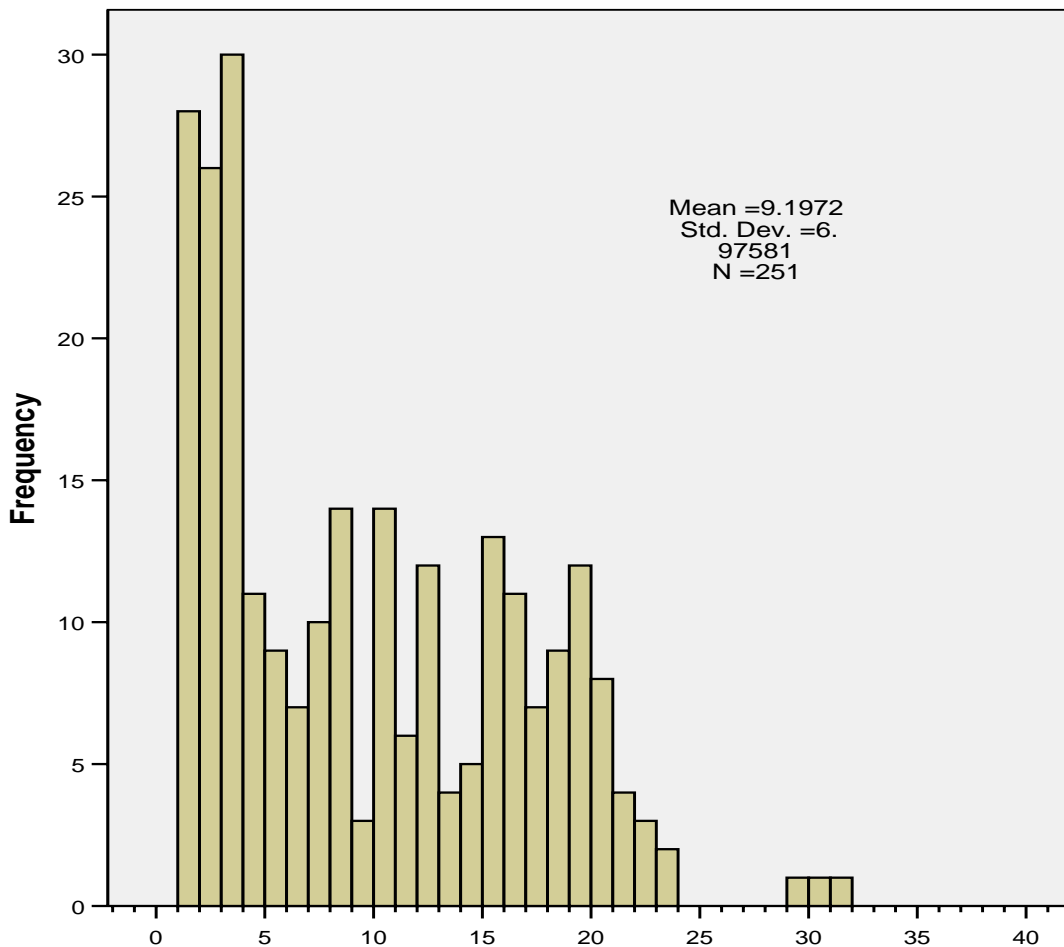
Longest Held Rank of Respondents



Question sixteen asked officers to list how long they had been a policeperson.

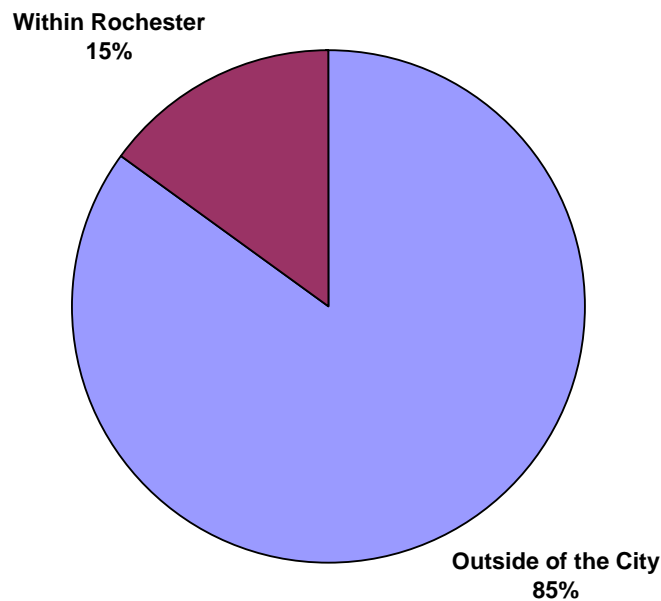
Twenty-eight officers responded that they had been policepersons for one year, twenty-six officers responded that they had been policepersons for two years, and thirty officers responded that they had been officers for three years. The rest of the sample fell between four and thirty-one years of service. The mean number of years served by the respondents was 9.2 with a standard deviation of 6.98 years.

Respondent Reported Years of Service



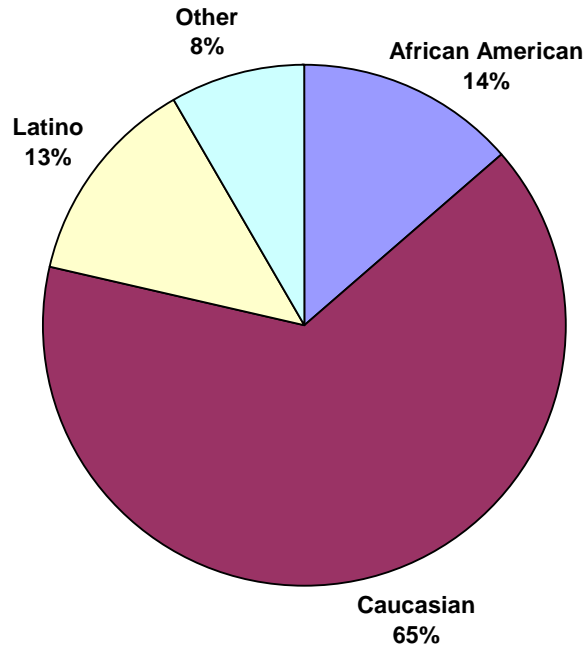
The seventeenth question asked officers to list if they lived in the city or not. Of the sample, 85% stated that they lived in the city, and 15% stated that they lived outside of the city.

Officer Residence



The eighteenth question asked policepersons to list their ethnicity. Of the 264 respondents, this section was completed by only 155. Of those 155 officers, 65% stated that they were Caucasian, 14% African American, 13% Latino, and 8% 'other'. The 'other' reply consisted of; Asian, Pacific Islander, and other undefined responses. Though not apparent in the data, many of the surveys showed extreme resistance to this question. Officers made statements that implied that they did not want to answer the question and that it was "none of [our] business" what their race was.

Police Officer Ethnicity



Analysis

Why Officers Choose Different Policing Styles

One question within the survey asked officers to write responses as to “why they chose a certain style of policing.” Responses to this question fell into a wide range and contained some interesting anecdotes. Many of the responses to these questions were short, fragmented, and often difficult to understand. This made any quantification of the data nearly impossible, but their quotes can serve as powerful information that can help future research. They can also offer some vague insight into how some officers feel about policing.

Authoritarian Policing Style

Officers that listed “Authoritarian” as their policing style and that portrayed a substantive reason for their style other than “it works” or “it fits” as their reason why generally felt that youth needed to be taught a lesson, controlled with punishment, held personally accountable, or disciplined.

Officers in this group were quoted as saying that “youth lack authority figures in their lives” and that police officers fulfill that role. Some of these officers also stated that “parents do not provide enough discipline” to their children, and held a desire for parents to be held more accountable for the actions and attitudes of their children. Another officer stated that “police are the authority and the city needs law and order.” One officer reasoned “so youth fear engaging in crime.”

These were not the only reasons for using an authoritarian approach. Some officers stated that they used the approach to gain control of a situation because “in [an] authoritarian [style of policing], [there is a] condition of control,” or that “[a police officer’s] authority is necessary for communication [with youth].” Other officers used claimed to use this style because they thought it was fair. One stated that the approach was “consistent” and another stated that “if the law is broken, [the criminal] must go to jail,” implying a balance and fairness to all people regardless of any outside factors such as race, class, or income.

One officer felt that other approaches were ineffective because “if you are nice, people [will] take advantage [of you].” There was a group of officers that showed a certain resistance to styles of policing other than authoritative. These officers made

comments such as “other styles are not [a police] officer’s job,” and “[authoritarian style policing] is all I’m paid to do,” and “[authoritarian style policing is] my job.”

Community Oriented Policing Style

Officers that used a community policing style generally felt that youth and the community should be helped to better themselves, though some officers stated that they used it because of departmental pressure.

Of those that used it by personal choice, some could relate to the problems of the community. These officers stated that “I live in the city and [I] am aware of the problems,” and “[I] live here [and] try [to] do things [to] make [it] better,” and “[I] grew up in the city and understand,” or “I grew up in a similar community.”

A few officers stated that the community was a resource and was essential for getting information. One officer stated that “the community is our biggest resource,” and another officer stated that “[the] community helps solve crime [by providing] information.” Another officer wrote that “the community helps [police] officers,” and another that “[using community policing helps get] more information from [the] community.” Two officers went so far as to say that “[police] need community support to be effective,” and “[police] need community support to function.”

Other officers stated a desire to help the community. These officers wrote that they “try to help the community,” or that they “[use community policing to] build better relationships in the community.” They also wrote that they use community policing to “try to improve the lives of people in the community.”

Police Ideas to Improve Youth-Police Relationships

Respondents to this survey were also asked to list ways that youth-police relationships could be improved. Of the 264 respondents, 136 listed a response, just over half of the sample. Again, because of the diversity and vagueness of the responses it is difficult to accurately quantify much of the data for this question. However it may prove valuable to observe the anecdotes of some officers that did respond, in regards to offering solutions or offering blunt resistance, to the notion of positive relationships with youth.

Forty-nine respondents (36%) in some form or another stated that the parents of these youth are responsible to teach them to respect and cooperate with the police, and the police take little responsibility for building the relationship. In contrast to this, 29 respondents (21.3%) stated that they wanted more positive youth-police activities outside of policing to help build positive relationships. Some officers wanted harsher punishments for the youth or for it to be easier to arrest youth as well as “continue aggressively policing.” Others wanted to enforce curfew to a greater extent. Further others wanted to find a way to show youth that they were friends and not “out to get them,” but couldn’t offer any concrete solutions. The last respondents didn’t want to hold parents entirely responsible but wanted to hold police-parent meetings to discuss problems and solutions to those problems.

Discrepancies between Police ‘Self’ Reports and ‘Other Officer’ Reports

There is some interesting information to be derived from the data. The first subject to examine is the differences between officer’s perception of their own fairness toward youth and their perception of fellow officer’s fairness toward youth, questions two and three. When responding to questions about their own fairness, almost half of the

officers say that they are always fair (48.3%), another 44.1% state that they are fair most of the time. That's 92.4% of respondents stating that they are fair either all, or most of the time. When you compare this data with officer's perception of fellow officer's fairness, there are significant differences. There is a noticeable shift of responses from all of the time to most of the time and some of the time. Sixty-eight fewer officers responded that other officers were fair all of the time then responded that they themselves were fair all of the time. This creates a decrease of 24.8% in the "fair all of the time" response and an increase in the other responses. The "most of the time response" increased by 20.8%, and the "some of the time" response increased by 4.9%.

This is a phenomenon know as Illusory Superiority or Superiority bias. This phenomenon states that when people are asked about their own and other's behaviors they are likely to over report the positives of the actions they perceive as desirable and supported by social norms, while underreporting the positives of other's actions (Kruger and Dunning 1999). When applied to these last two questions, one can see why individual officers in general report themselves in ways they perceive to be much more positive than their fellow officers.

The same phenomenon takes place when asking officers to discuss their own and their fellow officer's rates of respect toward youth. When asked to report their own rates of respect, 23.4% of officers stated "all the time, with 54.8% stating "most of the time," and only 16.9% stating "some of the time." When asked to rate their fellow officer's levels of respect, again there is a visible shift "down" in the rate of respect that is listed.

Police Perception of Police-Youth Relations

The level of trust between officers and youth is valuable to effectively solve crimes and enable police directed educational and public service programs. This section attempts to quantify the police perception of both the level of trust police have for youth, and the level of trust youth have for the police. Looking solely at the data presented in the police survey it can be seen that very little trust exists between youth and Rochester city police officers.

To more accurately look at this data, it is convenient to collapse the responses into high, neutral, and low rate. The responses, “all of the time” and “most of the time” will represent a high rate of respect. The response “some of the time” will represent a neutral rate of respect. Finally, the responses “hardly ever” and “never” will represent low rates of respect. Using this definition, only 2.7% of officers felt that they received a high rate of respect from youth. What’s more is the 57.4% of officers that feel they receive low rates of respect from youth.

Using the same collapsed responses as the respect analysis, in terms of high, neutral, and low levels, only 3.8% of officers reported that youth had a high rate of trust for the police, 45.1% responded that youth were neutral, and 51.1% perceived that youth had a low rate of trust toward police. A similar trend followed with perception of police trust of youth with slightly more positive responses. Of the sample, 11.8% perceived a high rate of police trust in youth, 57.4% perceived a neutral rate, and 30.8% perceived a low rate.

Many police officers would agree that having a youth trust them “some of the time” is not effective when gathering information on crimes or when spreading public

service information. Because of this, it could be argued that the response ‘some of the time’ can be examined with the low rates of trust category. When doing so it can be seen that 88.3% of the sample perceived police to have a low rate of trust toward youth, and 96.2% perceive youth to have a low rate of trust toward the police.

On a more positive note, when considering the implementation of police-youth relationship building initiative, those youth the police perceive as trusting the police ‘some of the time’ can be seen as sitting between extremes. These youth comprise 57.4% of the sample and may be more easily reached through a well designed initiative.

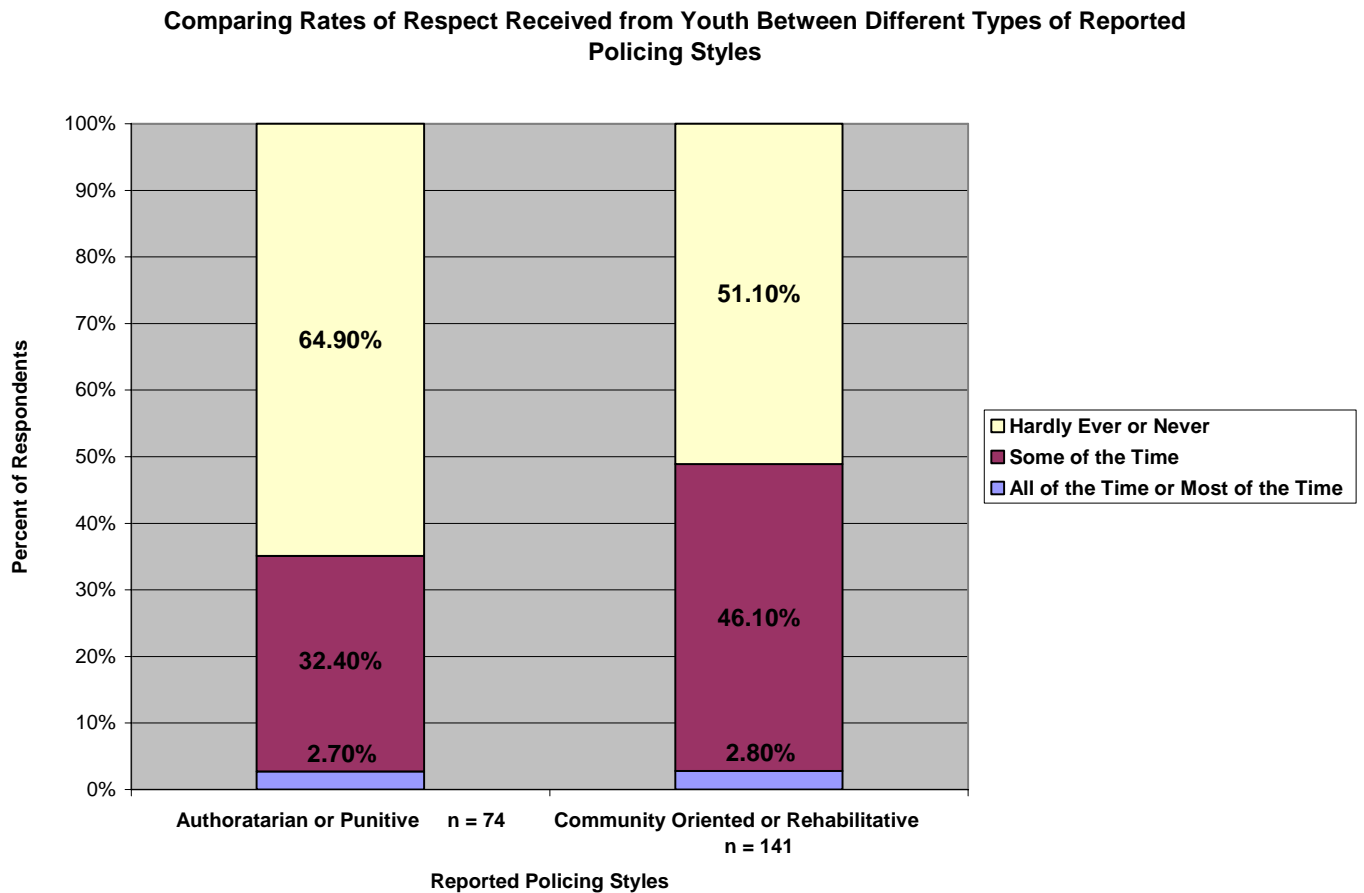
Differences in Listed Policing Style: Rates of Respect and Trust

Does police officer’s choice of policing style correlate with the way he or she reports rates of respect or trust? To determine this, the data will be collapsed into two different categories, cases where officers use authoritative or punitive styles, and cases where officers use community oriented or rehabilitative styles. Officers that use other policing styles will be excluded.

For the remaining analysis, the responses of “all the time” and “most of the time” will be collapsed as a high rate of respect, the response “some of the time” as a neutral rate of respect, and the responses “hardly ever” and “never” as a low rate of respect. When using these collapsed responses, statistical analysis¹ shows that the relationship between an officer’s reported style of policing and the rate at which the officer receives respect from youth is not statistically significant. This is seen in the data where 3% of both authoritative or punitive officers and community oriented or rehabilitative officers report having high rates of respect from youth and 65% of authoritative or punitive officers perceive that they have low rates of respect from youth compared to 51% of

¹ Chi-Square of 3.849 with significance of .146

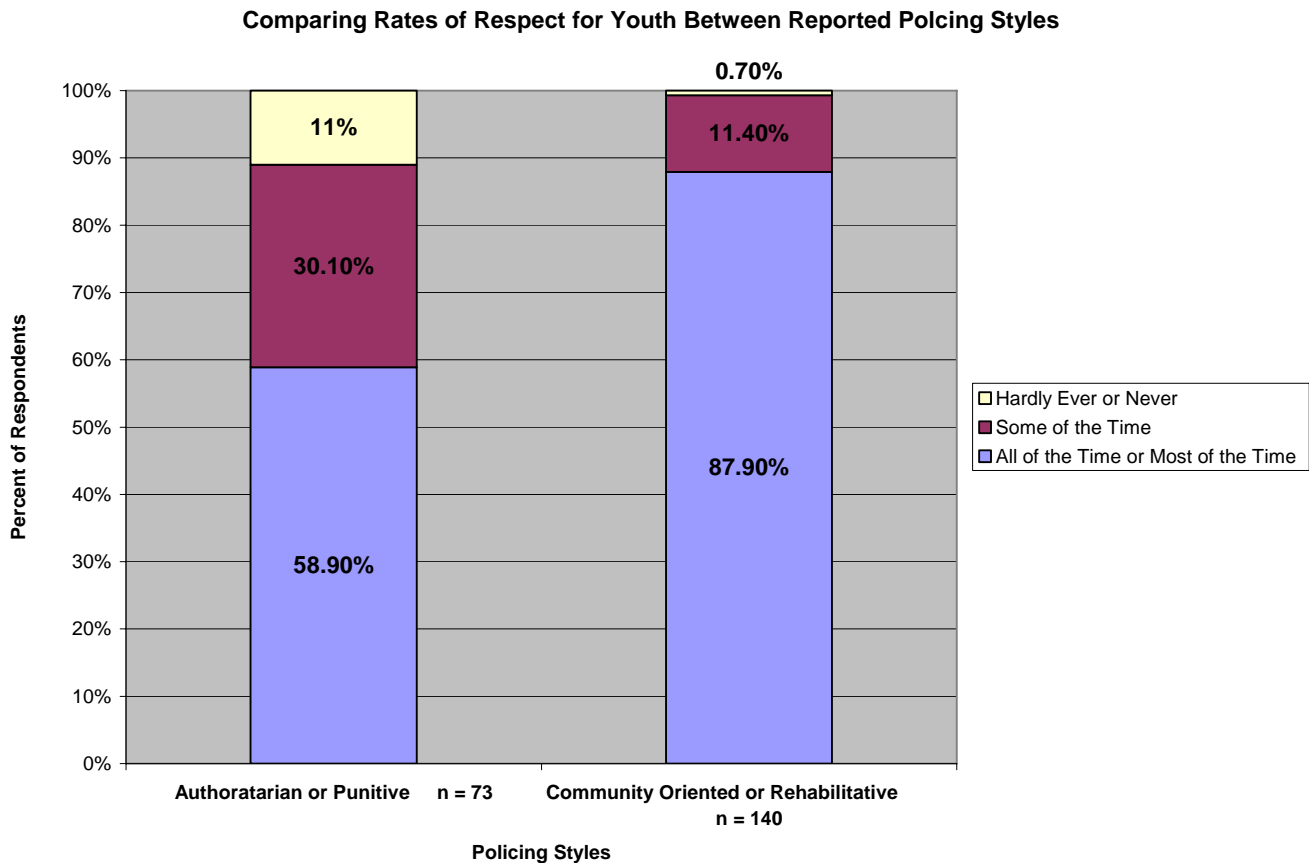
community oriented or rehabilitative style officers. However, statistical analysis² of only those officers reporting rates of respect of ‘some of the time’ and ‘hardly ever or never’ shows that there is a statistically significant relationship between officers who report using different styles of policing receive different levels of respect from youth. This finding means that, based on this sample, one can conclude that officers who use community oriented or rehabilitative styles of policing are less likely to report low rates of respect from youth.



Similar findings can be seen when looking at police rate of respect toward youth. Of the sample, 88% of community oriented or rehabilitative officers reported high rates

² Chi-Square of 3.844 with significance of .050

of respect toward youth where only 59% of authoritative or punitive style officers reported high rates of respect for youth. Statistical analysis³ shows this to be a statistically significant relationship.

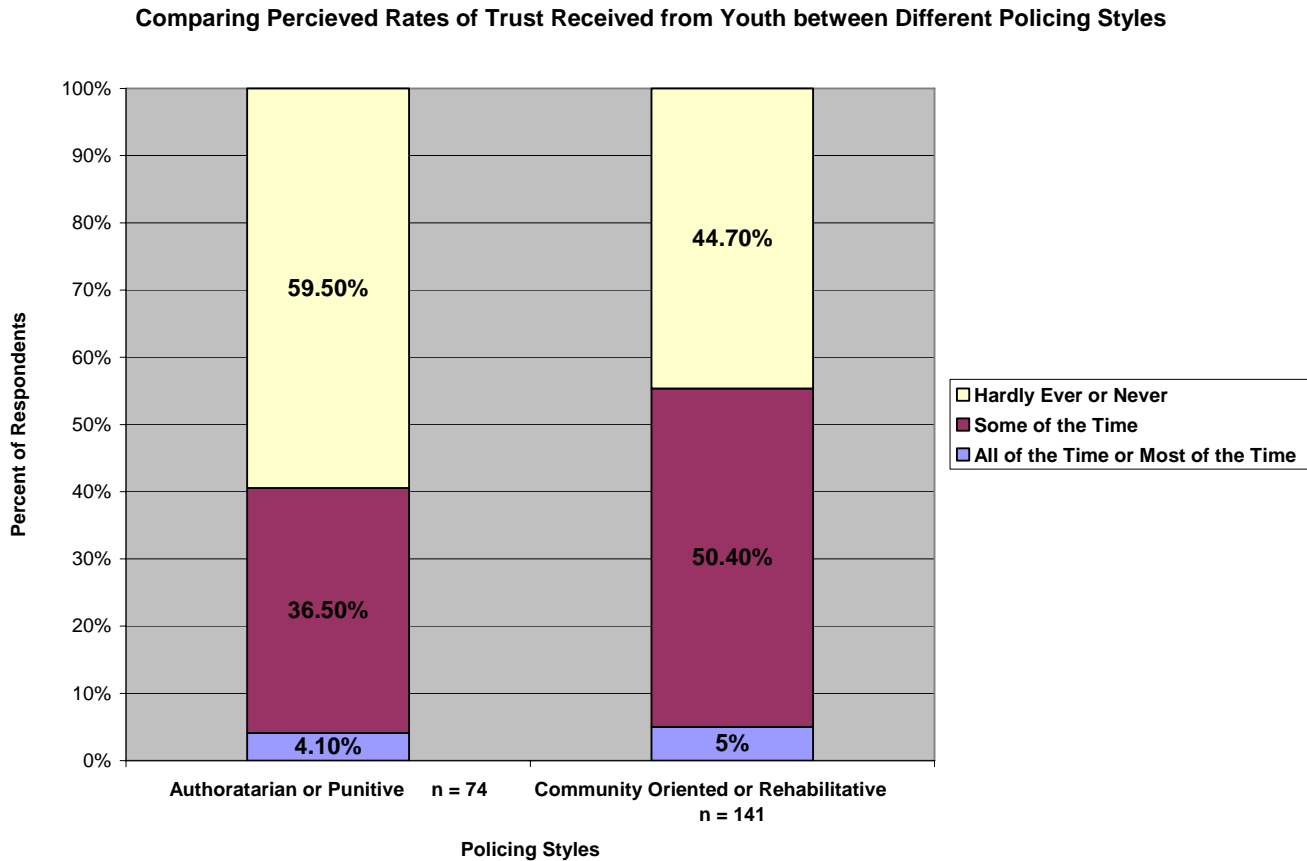


When looking at perceived rate of youth trust toward police, it can be seen that community oriented or rehabilitative police are slightly more likely to respond higher rates when asked how often youth trust them. Of the sample, 59% of authoritative or punitive officers responded low rates of youth trust in the police compared to 45% of community oriented or rehabilitative officers. Statistical analysis⁴ shows that this

³ Chi-Square of 26.492 with significance of .000

⁴ Chi-Square of 4.264 with significance of .119

relationship is not statistically significant. However, when analysis⁵ is done comparing only those respondents who report neutral, some of the time, and low, hardly ever or never, rates of trust the relationship is shown to be statistically significant.



It is possible that these different rates vary between policing styles to an even greater extent if you take into account the possibility that some youth are generally more trusting and respectful to officers that use certain types of policing styles, and generally less trusting and respectful toward officers who use other types of policing styles. This may occur if youth are in contact with multiple officers who use different types of policing styles. Contact with various policing styles may erode trust toward police officers in general because youth may not be able to tell what type of styles different

⁵ Chi-Square of 4.161 with significance of .041

police officers will use on any given day when they are approached by an officer that they do not recognize. Further research is needed to test the accuracy of this hypothesis.

Youth Survey

Data

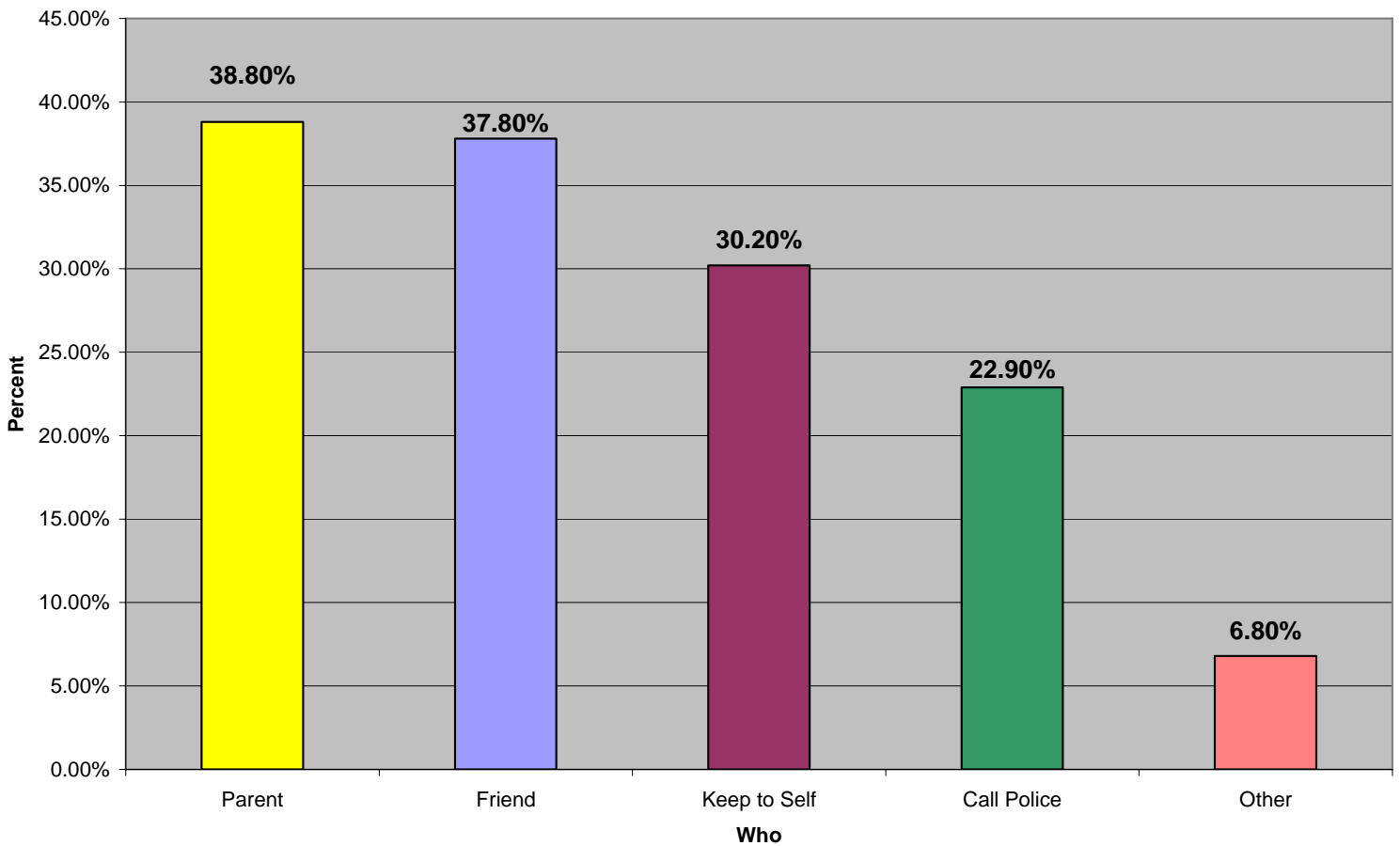
The first two questions asked the respondents if they had been stopped by the police in the past six months and if they thought the police were fair during that stop. Of the sample, only 33.3% had been stopped. Of that 33.3%, 540 cases, 77.4% felt that the police were not fair compared to 22.6% that felt that the police were fair. The term 'fair' was not defined on the survey. Each respondent was left to define it in their own way.

Questions three and four asked respondents if they had called the police in the past six months and if the police had helped them in the past six months. Of the sample, 17.6% stated that they called the police in the past six months, and 15.8% reported that the police had helped them over that time. Of the 17.6%, 282 youth, of the sample that reported they had called the police in the past six months, 48.1% stated that the police had helped them over that time. One important disclaimer to note for question four is that asks if the police had helped a youth, not if the youth needed help or if the police failed to provide it. If a youth did not need help and therefore did not request it, it is likely that he or she would state that the police had not helped them. This question therefore does not give an accurate look at how often the police help or fail to help youth requesting service.

Question five asked respondents who they would tell if they knew something violent was about to happen to them. Because of the wording of the question, many

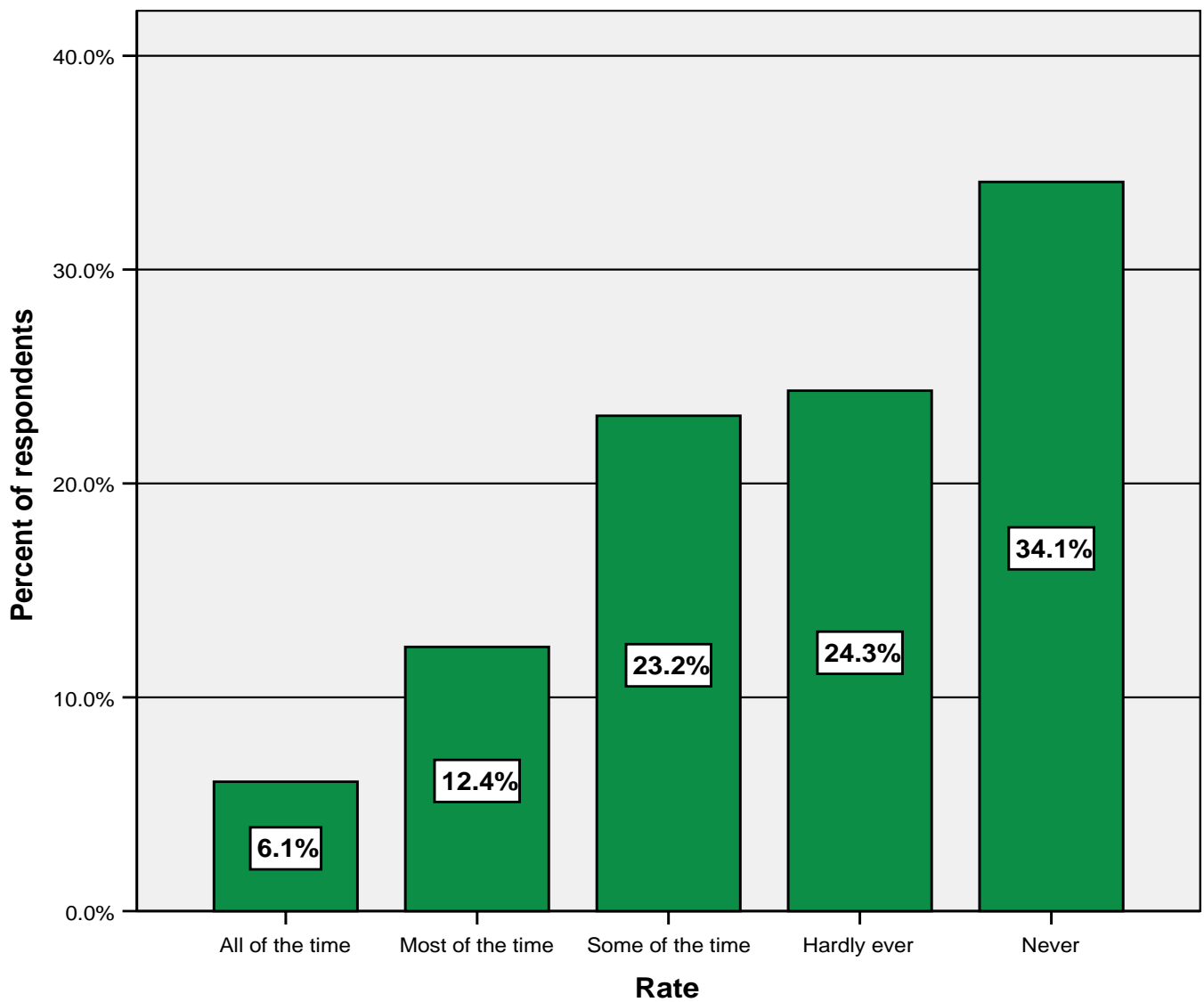
respondents listed more than one answer to the question. Because of this, each response was coded as a yes or no question. Percentages were taken as percentage of total respondents. Of the sample, 38.8% stated that they would tell a parent, 37.8% stated that they would tell a friend, 30.2% stated that they would keep it to themselves, 22.9% stated that they would tell the police, and 6.8% stated that they would tell someone other than those listed.

Who Youth Would Tell If something Violent Was About to Happen to Them



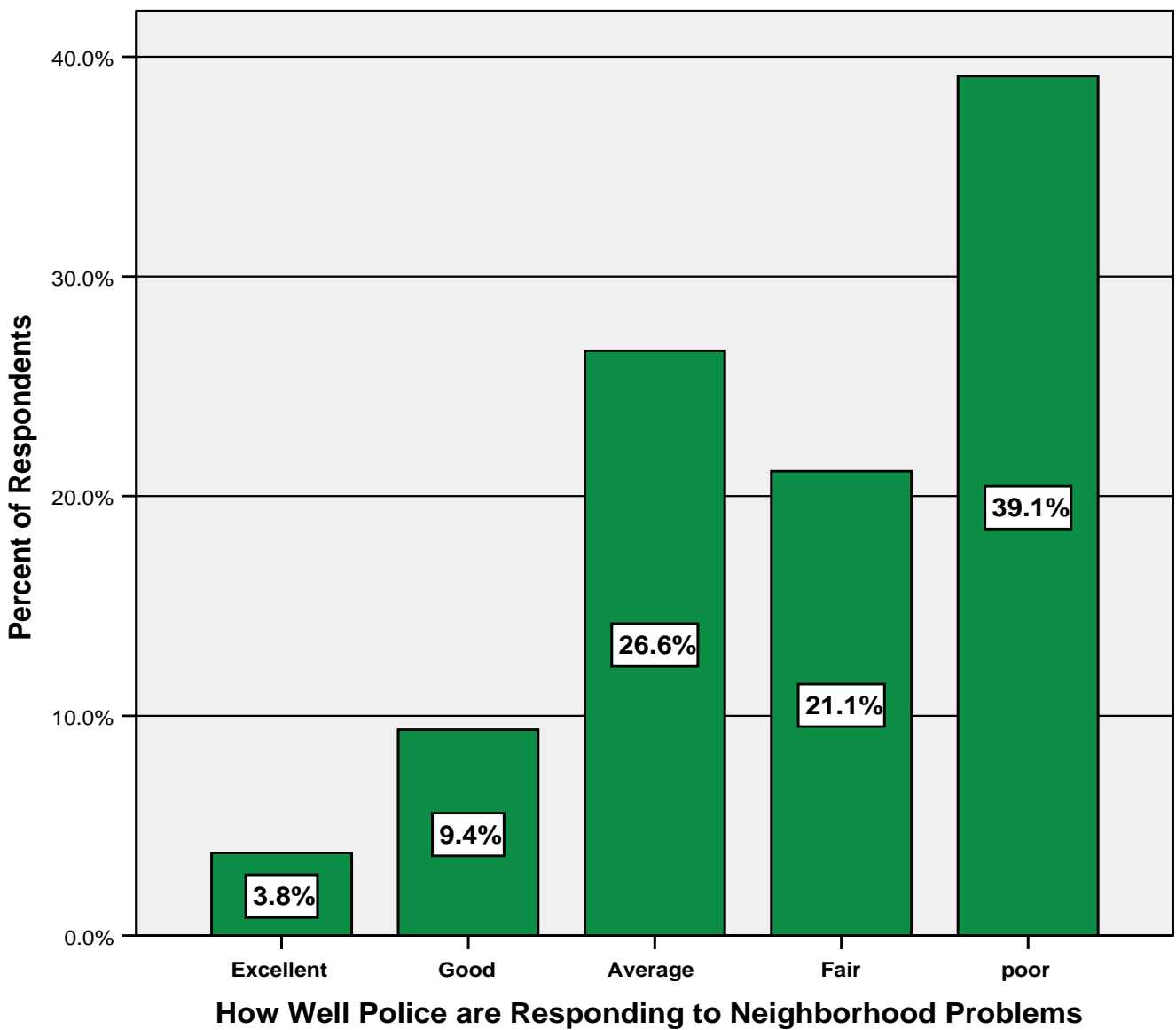
Question six asked youth how often they call the police when there is a problem with crime or violence. Of the sample, 34.1% reported that they never call the police, 24.3% responded that they hardly ever call the police, 23.2% responded that they call the police some of the time, 12.4% reported that they call the police most of the time, and 6.1% reported that they call the police all the time.

How often Youth Call the Police when there is a Problem with Crime or Violence



Question seven asked youth to rate how well the police respond to community problems. Of the sample, 39.1% stated that police are responding poorly, 26.6% stated that police are responding average, 21.1% stated that police are responding fair, 9.4% stated that police are responding good, and 3.8% stated that police are responding excellently.

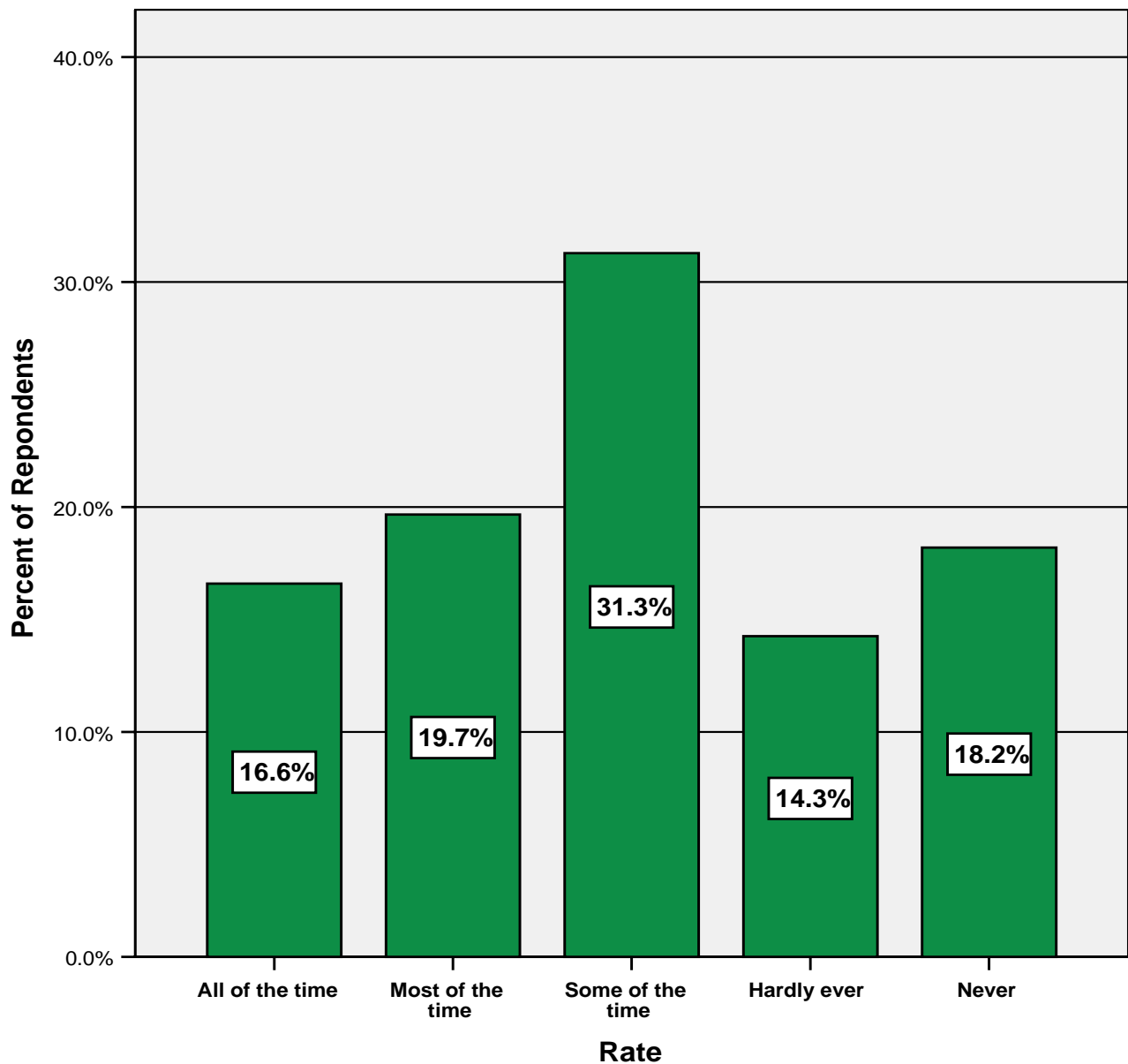
Youth Perception of how Well Police are Responding to Neighborhood Problems



Question eight asked youth to list how often they are respectful toward the police.

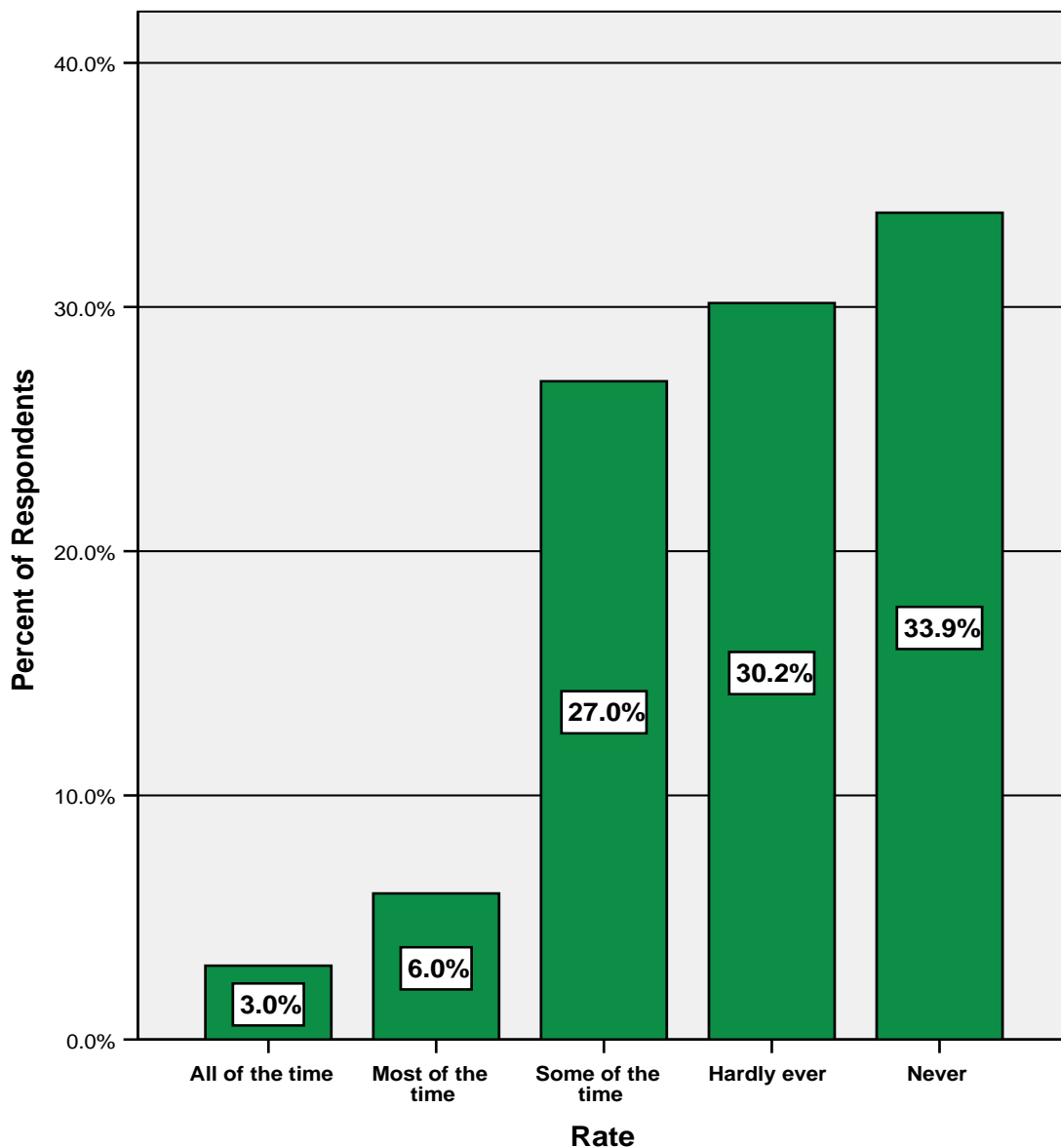
Of the sample, 31.3% responded that they are respectful some of the time, 19.7% responded that they are respectful most of the time, 18.2% responded that they are respectful never, 16.6% stated that they are respectful all of the time, and 14.3% stated that they are respectful hardly ever.

Respondent Reported Rate of Respect Toward Police



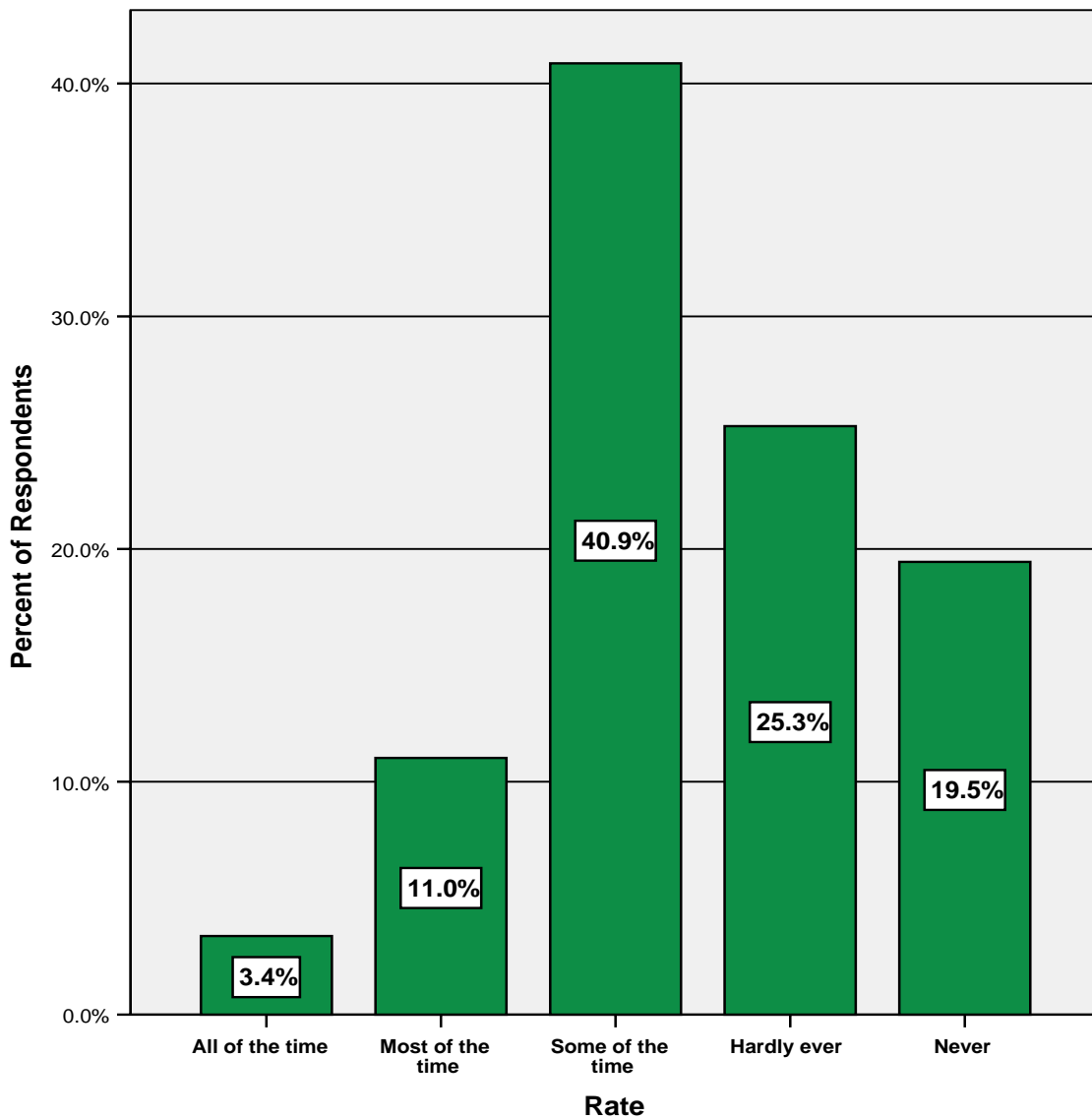
Question nine asked youth to list how often they think other kids are respectful toward the police. Of the sample, 33.9% responded that other youth are respectful never, 30.2% responded that other youth are respectful hardly ever, 27% responded that other youth are respectful some of the time, 6% responded that other youth are respectful most of the time, and 3% responded that other youth are respectful always.

Respondent Perception of how often Other Youth Respect the Police



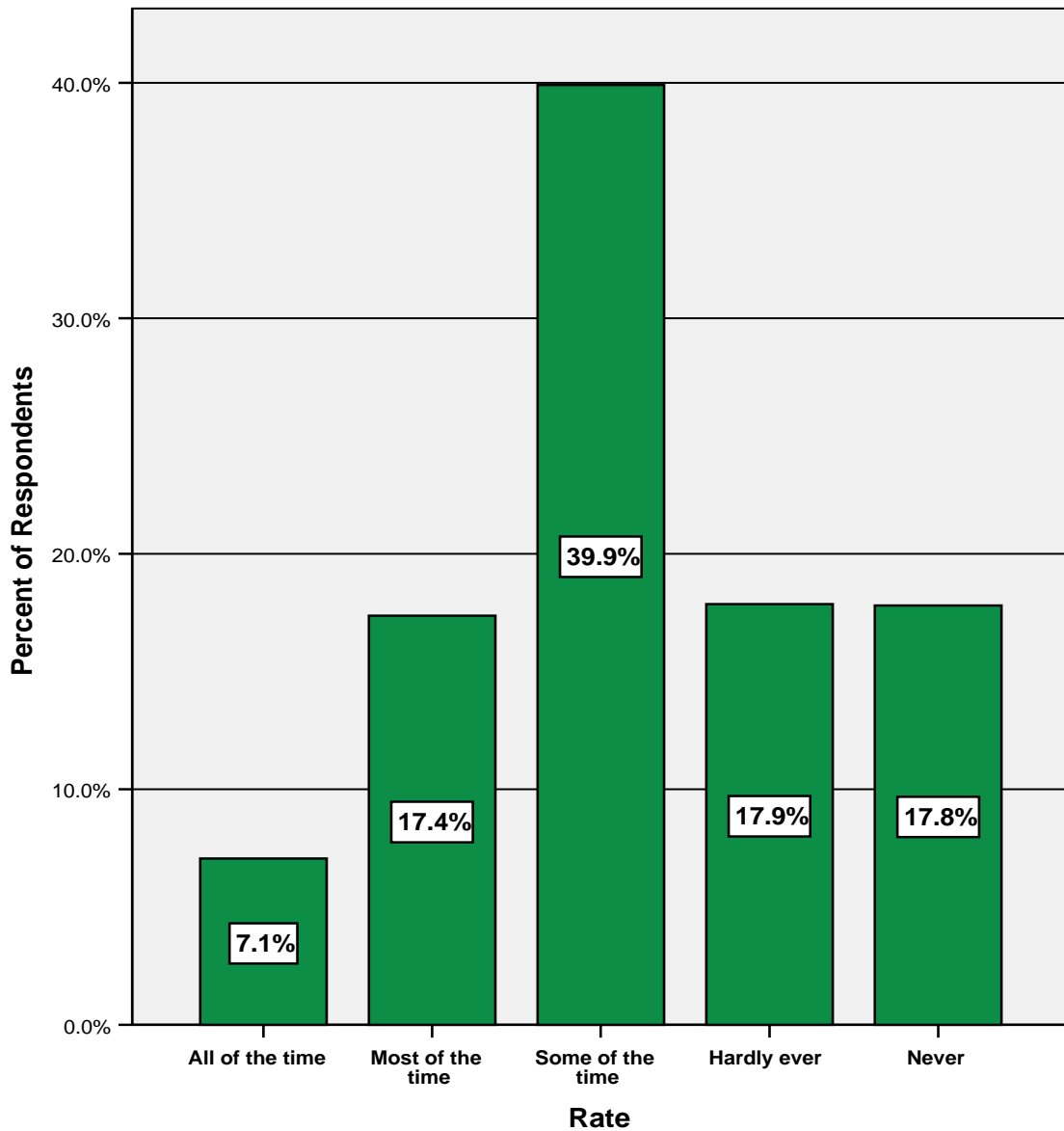
Question ten asked youth how often they thought police were respectful toward youth. Of the sample, 40.9% stated that police were respectful some of the time, 25.3% stated that police were respectful hardly ever, 19.5% stated that police were respectful never, 11% stated that police were respectful most of the time, and 3.4% stated that police were respectful all of the time.

Respondent Perception of how often Police Respect Youth



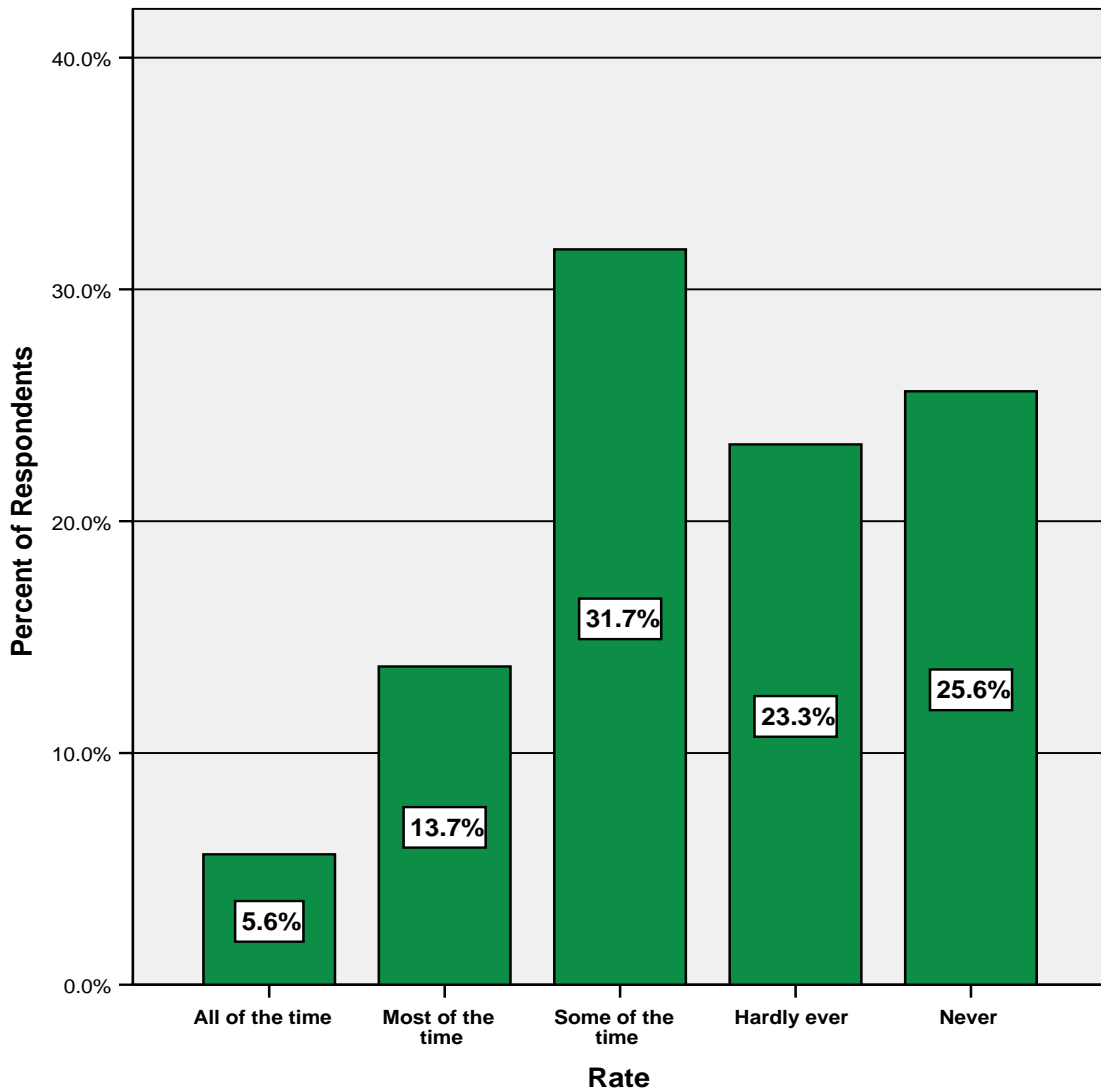
Question eleven asked youth how often they can trust the police when they need them. Of the sample, 39.9% stated that they could trust the police some of the time, 17.9% that they could trust the police hardly ever, 17.8% stated that they could trust the police never, 17.4% stated that they could trust the police most of the time, and 7.1% stated that they could trust the police all of the time.

Youth Reported Rate of Trust Toward the Police when that Youth Needs the Police



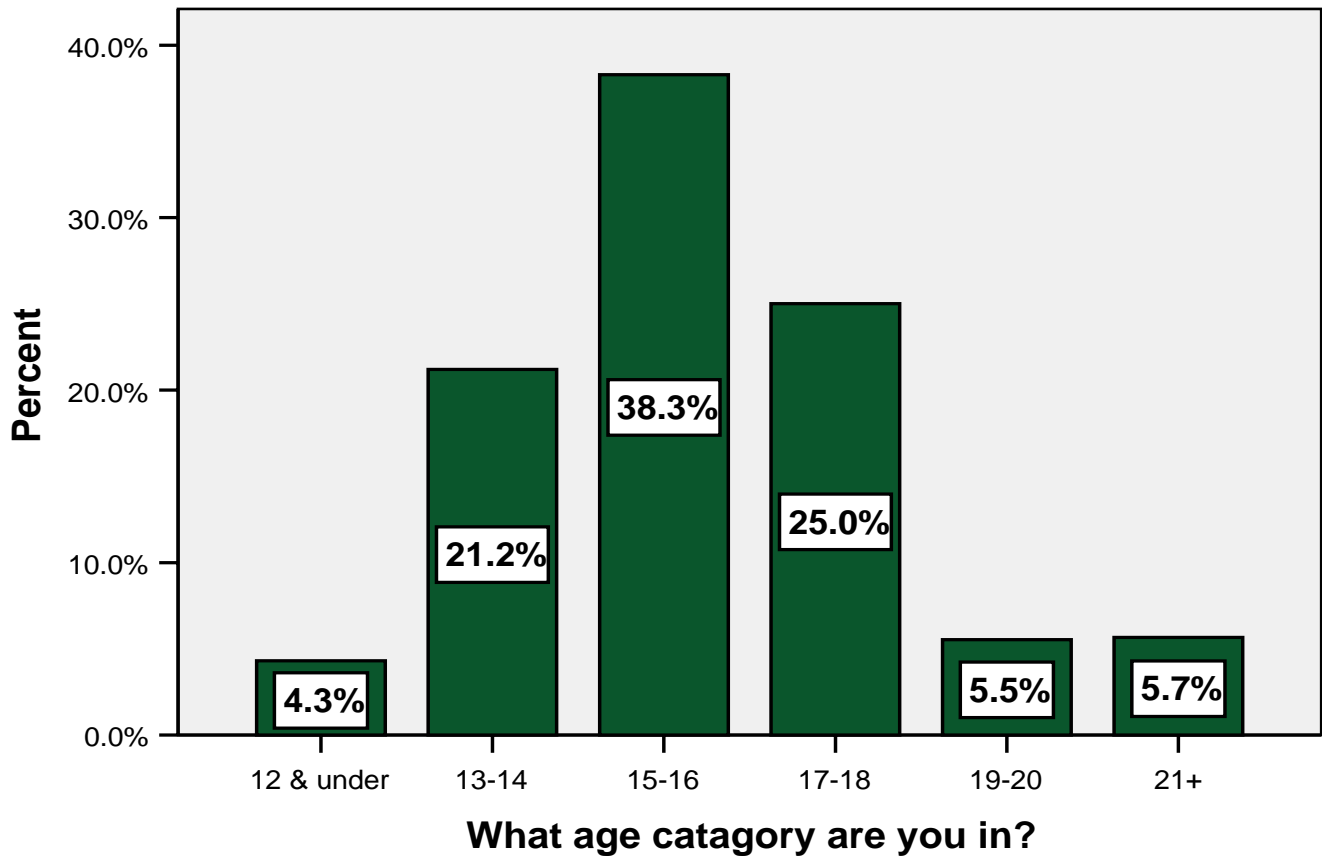
Question twelve asked youth how often their neighborhood works well with the police. Of the sample, 31.7% stated that their neighborhood works well with the police some of the time, 25.6% stated that their neighborhood works well with the police never, 23.3% stated that their neighborhood works well with the police hardly ever, 13.7% stated that their neighborhood works well with the police most of the time, and 5.6% stated that their neighborhood works well with the police all of the time.

Respondent Perception of how often Their Neighborhood Works well with Police



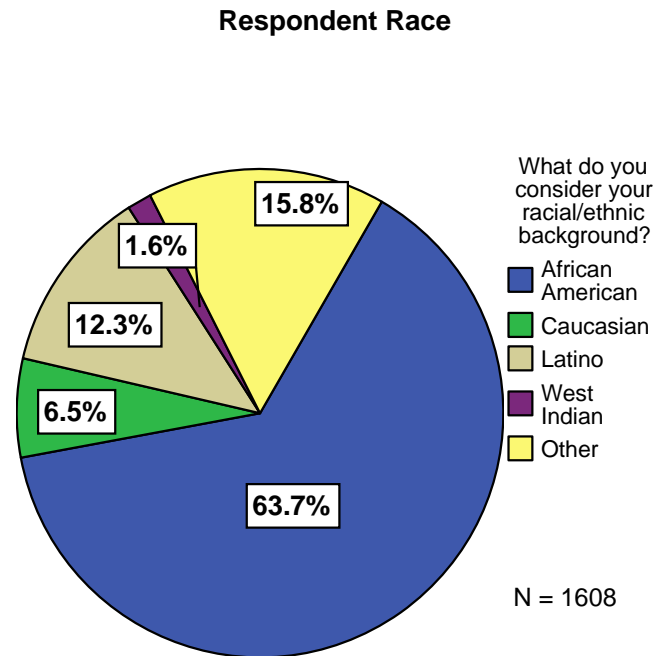
Question fourteen asked youth what age bracket they belonged in. Of the sample, 38.3 % stated that they were 15-16, 25% stated that they were 17-18, 21.2% stated that they were 13-14, 5.7% stated that they were 21 or older, 5.5% stated that they were 19-20, and 4.3% stated that they were 12 or under.

Respondent Age by Category



Question fifteen asked youth what they considered to be their race. Of the sample, 63.7% stated that they considered themselves African American, 12.3% stated that they considered themselves Latino, 6.5% stated that they considered themselves Caucasian, 1.6% stated that they considered themselves West Indian, and 15.8% stated that they considered themselves another race not listed. It is important to note that any

time a person circled more than one response to this question that person's race was coded as 'other.' The majority of these biracial respondents listed African American as one of their races.



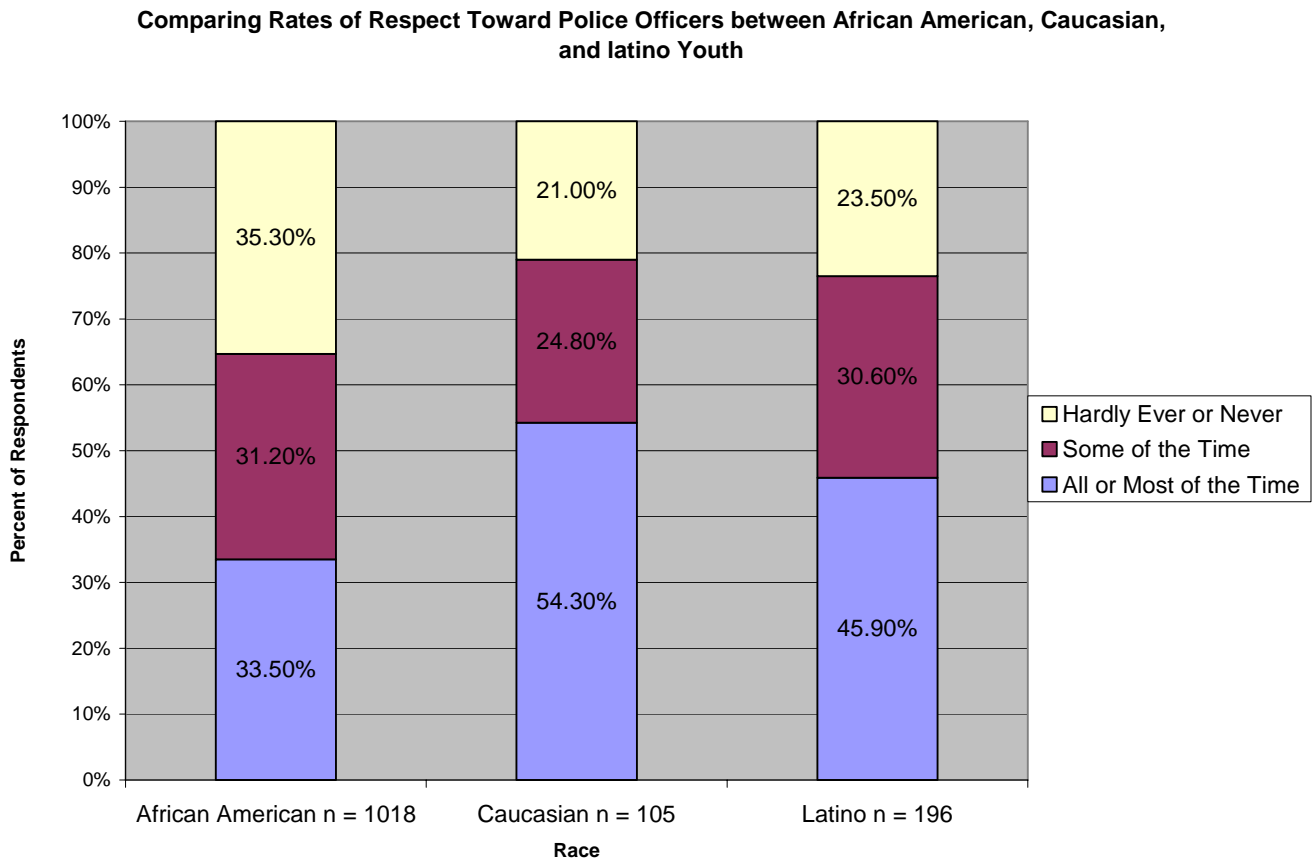
Analysis

Based on the information gathered, a few commonly asked questions can now be looked at. Firstly, “does race correlate with a respondent’s perception of youth-police relations?” To examine this question the data was broken down by racial categories. To ensure the validity and accuracy of the analysis, the racial category ‘West Indian’ was removed from the sample due to a small number of respondents within that category. The racial category ‘other’ was removed as well because the actual composition of the respondents was impossible to determine.

After removing these two categories, questions eight through eleven were analyzed while controlling for race. The responses for these questions were collapsed

from five to three categories to better show the relationship between racial groups. The responses ‘all of the time’ and ‘most of the time’ were collapsed into one variable. The same was done for the responses of ‘hardly ever’ and ‘never’. The response ‘some of the time’ was left as a neutral response between the other two.

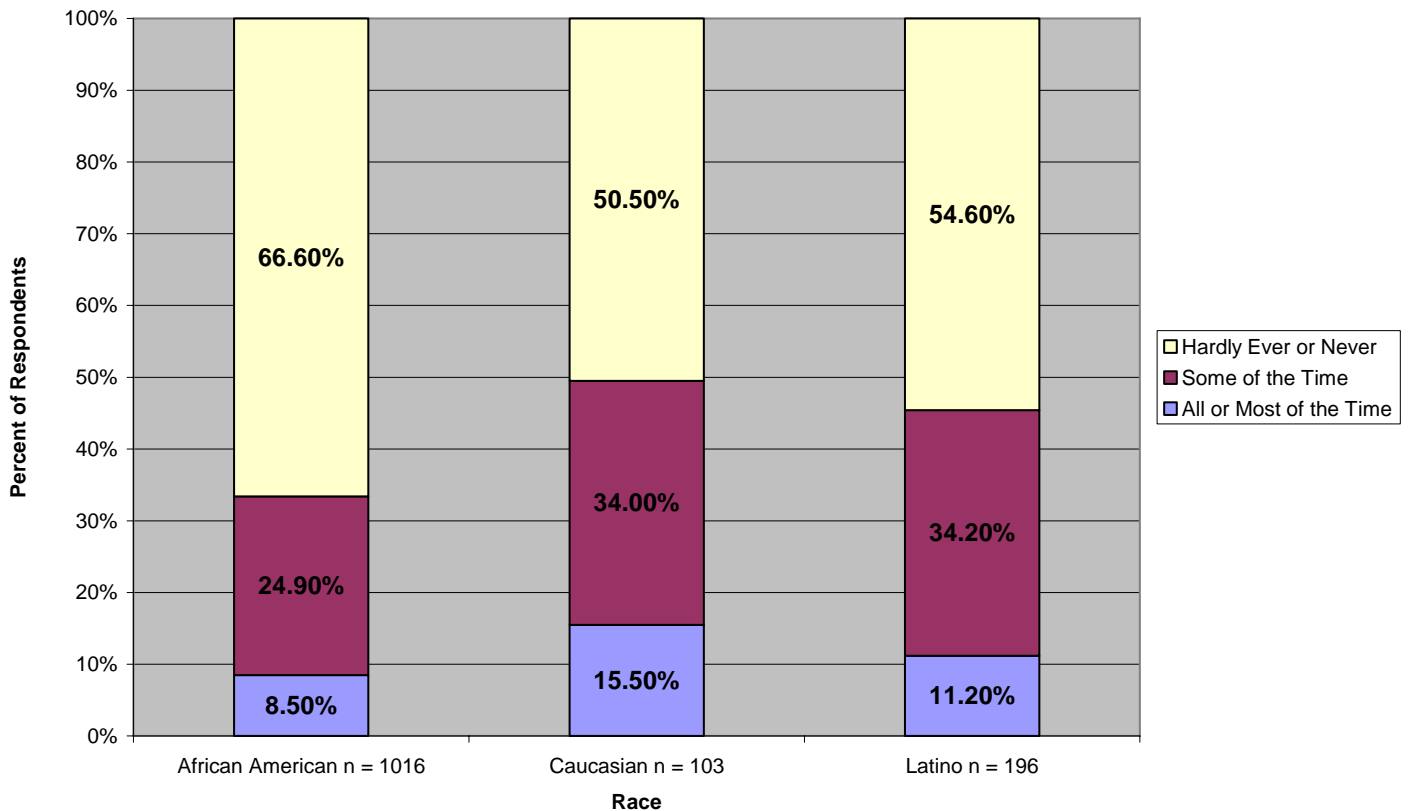
Question eight asked respondents to list how often they were respectful toward the police. African American youth reported being respectful to police officers less often than both Latino and Caucasian youth. Contrary to this, Caucasians reported being respectful to police officers more often than both Latinos and African Americans. This is further pronounced by the following figure and supported through statistical analysis⁶.



⁶ Chi-Square of 29.033 with significance of .000

Question nine asked respondents to list how often they feel other youth respect the police. When comparing across racial groups, similar trends to those in question eight were found. African American youth in general were more likely to report that other youth were less often respectful toward the police. Similarly, Caucasian youth were more likely to report that other youths were respectful toward the police. These relationships are statistically significant and supported by statistical analysis⁷. These similar trends may be as a result of youth socializing with other youth of a similar race, assuming that the reported rates of respect are accurate.

Comparing Respondent Perception of how often Other Youth Respect the Police between African American, Caucasian, and Latino Youth



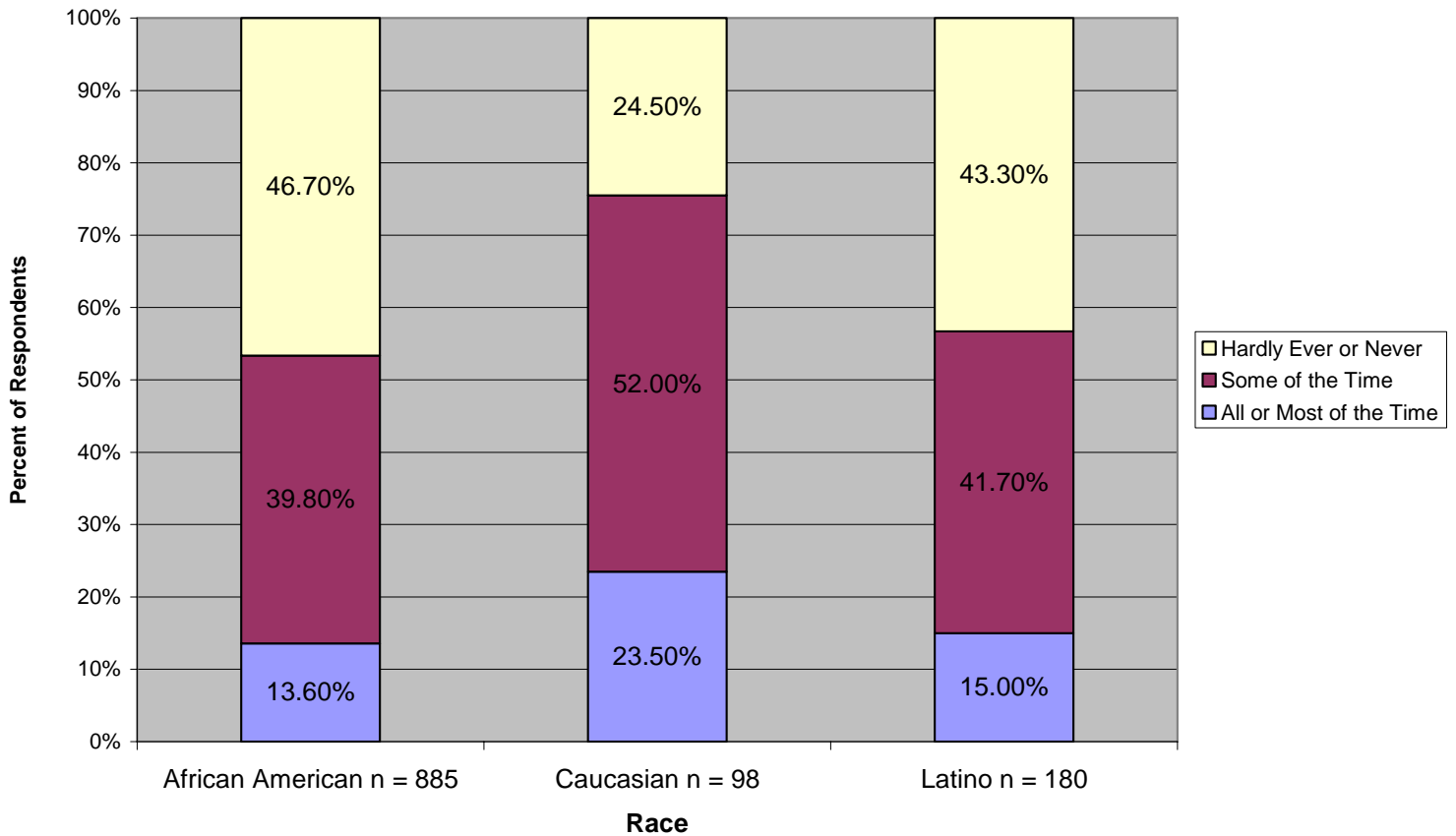
⁷ Chi-Square of 19.766 with significance of .001

Note that though the trends between racial groups are similar to those of question eight, the general trend is quite the opposite. All racial groups are less likely to respond that other youth are respectful all the time or most of the time, more likely to respond that other youth are respectful some of the time, and most likely to report that other youth are respectful hardly ever or never. This observation can be explained by the phenomenon of Illusory Superiority, as reported earlier in the paper. This states that human nature is to over report one's positives when asked about socially desirable acts and characteristics while under report one's negatives when asked about socially undesirable acts. These people are likely to *under* report the positives of and *over* report the negatives of their peers (Kruger and Dunning 1999). That being said, it is presumable that the 'true' rates of respect the youth of Rochester show towards police falls somewhere between these two figures.

Question ten asked respondents to list how often they perceived police officers respect youth. Following the trend of questions eight and nine, African American youth were less likely to report that police were respectful all of the time or most of the time, or some of the time when compared to both Caucasian and Latino youth. They were also more likely to report that police officers showed respect hardly ever or never. Statistical analysis⁸ shows this relationship to be statistically significant. Taken at face value, this could mean that African American youth are being treated differently, in this case less often with respect, than their Latino or Caucasian peers. However, one must be cautioned when making this judgment.

⁸ Chi-Square of 19.038 with significance of .001

Comparing Respondent Perceived Police Rate of Respect Toward Youth Between African American, Caucasian, and Latino Youth



There are multiple explanations for this disparity including vicariously learned social attitudes and perceptions of police learned from peers and family members. Another might be an attitude formed in response to differential levels of enforcement in high-crime neighborhoods. These neighborhoods tend contain high levels of concentrated poverty and be areas of concentrated segregation as well. Meaning that areas where crime concentrates are places where many residents are minorities.

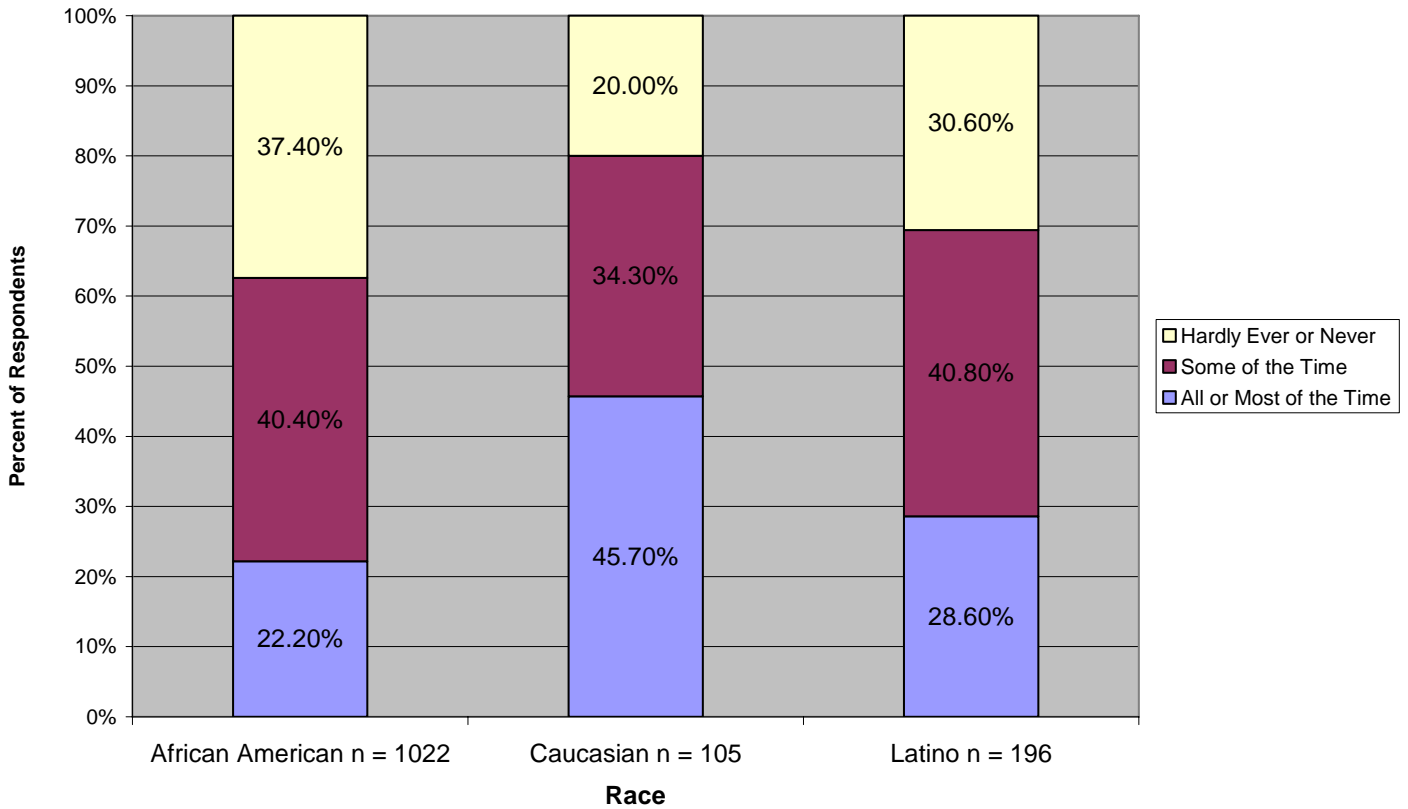
Many of these minority residents, especially the youth, may perceive police officers as agents of oppression and there responses to this question may reflect this. However, this is only one hypothesis and needs further research to support or dispute it.

Regardless of why these youth respond that they are being respected less often, the important thing to take from this analysis is that minority youth *perceive* that they are being respected less often by the police. This means that regardless of what happens in actuality, these minority youth will react accordingly to their perception of received respect. Those reactions can take various forms but if they turn violent or if they act in a way that hinders police investigations or service providing, then these perceptions can create a serious problem for both public safety and law enforcement.

Question eleven asked respondents to report how often they felt they could trust police officers when they needed a police officer. Following the trends of questions eight through ten, Caucasian youth were much more likely, for this question twice as likely, to report that they could trust the police all of the time or most of the time when they need them compared to African American youth in the sample. On the same note, African American youth were almost twice as likely to report that they trust the police hardly ever or never when they need them compared to Caucasian youth. Latino youth fall in between the two while leaning more toward the African American youth. In the sample, slightly more Latino respondents reported that they trust the police all of the time or most of the time when compared to African American youth, and slightly less Latino youth reported that they trust the police hardly ever or never, as depicted by the figure below. Statistical analysis⁹ shows this relationship to be statistically significant.

⁹ Chi-Square of 32.597 with significance of .000

Comparing Respondent Reported Rate of Trust Toward Police between African American, Caucasian, and Latino Youth

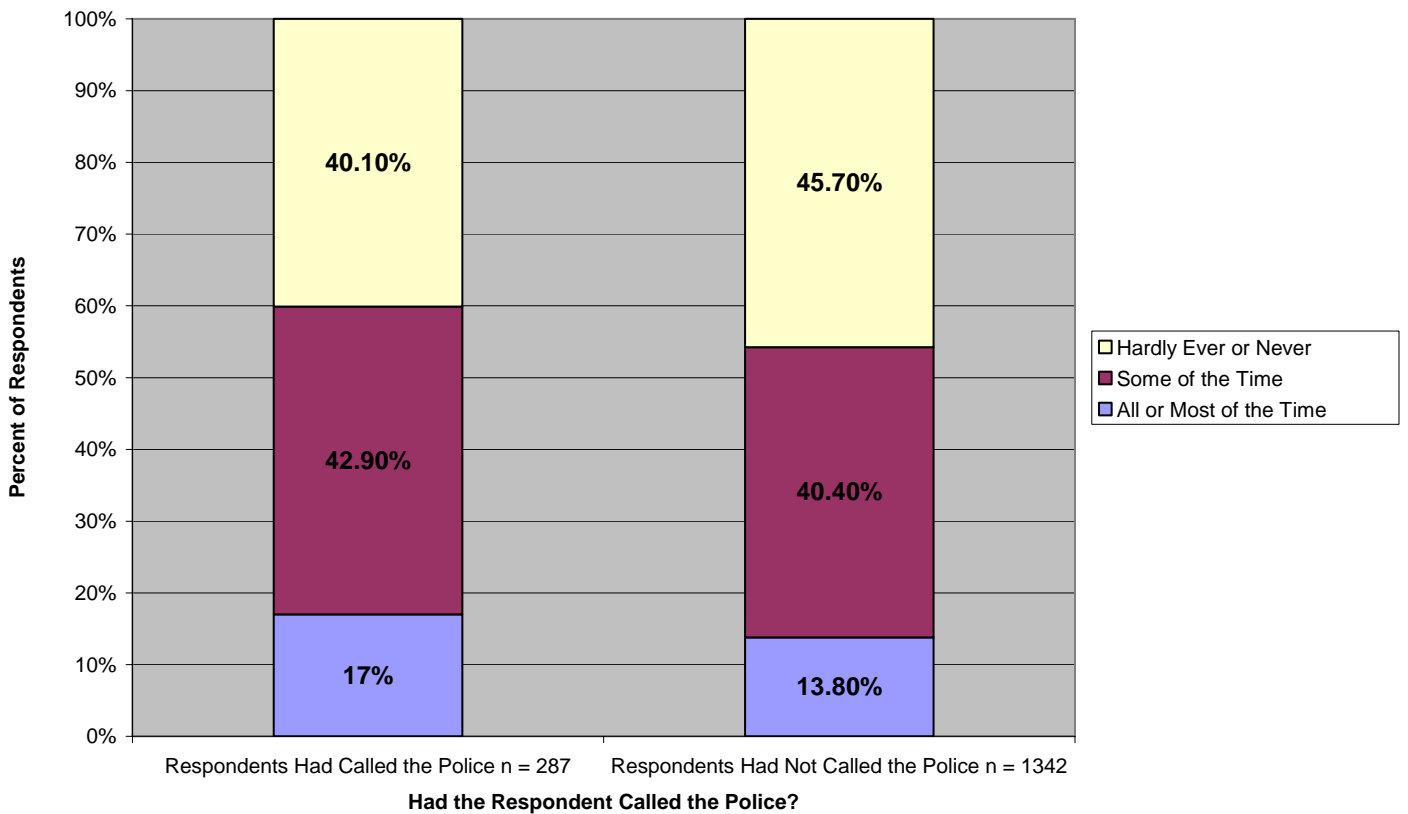


Now to discuss the second question, “does a respondent’s reported rate of calling the police correlate with that person’s attitude toward the police?” If the answer is yes than it is possible that a respondent’s negative attitude toward the police reduces that young person’s probability of calling the police for aid or if they see a crime in progress. This has the potential to create a significant problem for public safety and may hinder police investigations and the other services provided to the community by police officers.

To answer this question, statistical analysis was used to see if respondents who reported calling the police within the last six months differed from respondents who did not call the police in terms of those respondents’ reported rate of respect toward the

police. That statistical analysis¹⁰ showed that there was in fact a relationship between a respondent's reported rate of respect toward the police and whether or not a respondent called the police within the past six months. Of the respondents who report that they had called the police in the past six months, 45.8% reported that they respected the police all of the time or most of the time. Compared to that, of the respondents who had not called the police in the past six months, only 34.2% reported respecting the police all of the time or most of the time.

Respondents Perceived Rate of Respect Received from Police Among Those who Did and Did Not Call the Police in the Past Six Months



¹⁰ Chi-Square of 17.667 with significance of .000

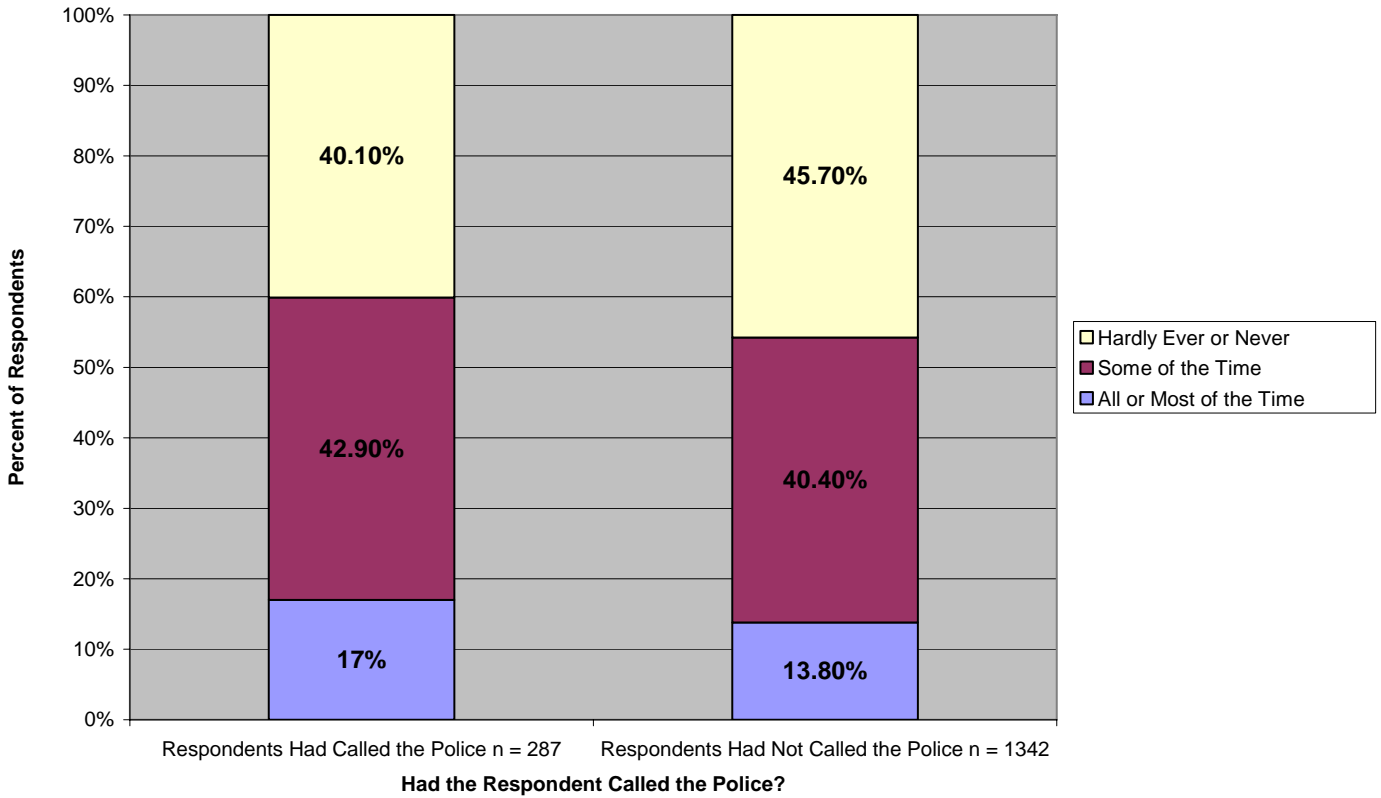
It should be noted that because there were relatively low numbers of youth who had called the police within the past six months within the sample, this conclusion is tentative and may vary in different data. Also, it is difficult to show the causation of this relationship based on this question alone. Meaning, it is impossible to tell if youth call the police because they respect the police, or if they respect the police because they had called the police. It is also possible that this relationship is not causal either way, and that there is another variable not captured in the survey that affects why or why not a person calls the police.

The next relationship to look at in context to this second question is whether or not a youth's perception of the rates of police respect toward youth correlates with if a youth has called the police in the past six months. Statistical analysis¹¹ shows that the relationship that exists between these two variables is not statistically significant.

This means that a youth's rate of respect toward the police is a better predictor of whether that youth had called the police than that youth's perception of the rate of police respect toward youth. This finding has significant policy implications for police administrators. If it is found to be accurate, policing agencies who desire greater cooperation from youth should focus on changing the attitude of those youth instead of changing the behavior of police officers so that they are perceived as more respectful by youth. However, further research is needed to support or dispute this conclusion.

¹¹ Chi-Square of 3.174 with significance of .205

Respondents Perceived Rate of Respect Received from Police Among Those who Did and Did Not Call the Police in the Past Six Months

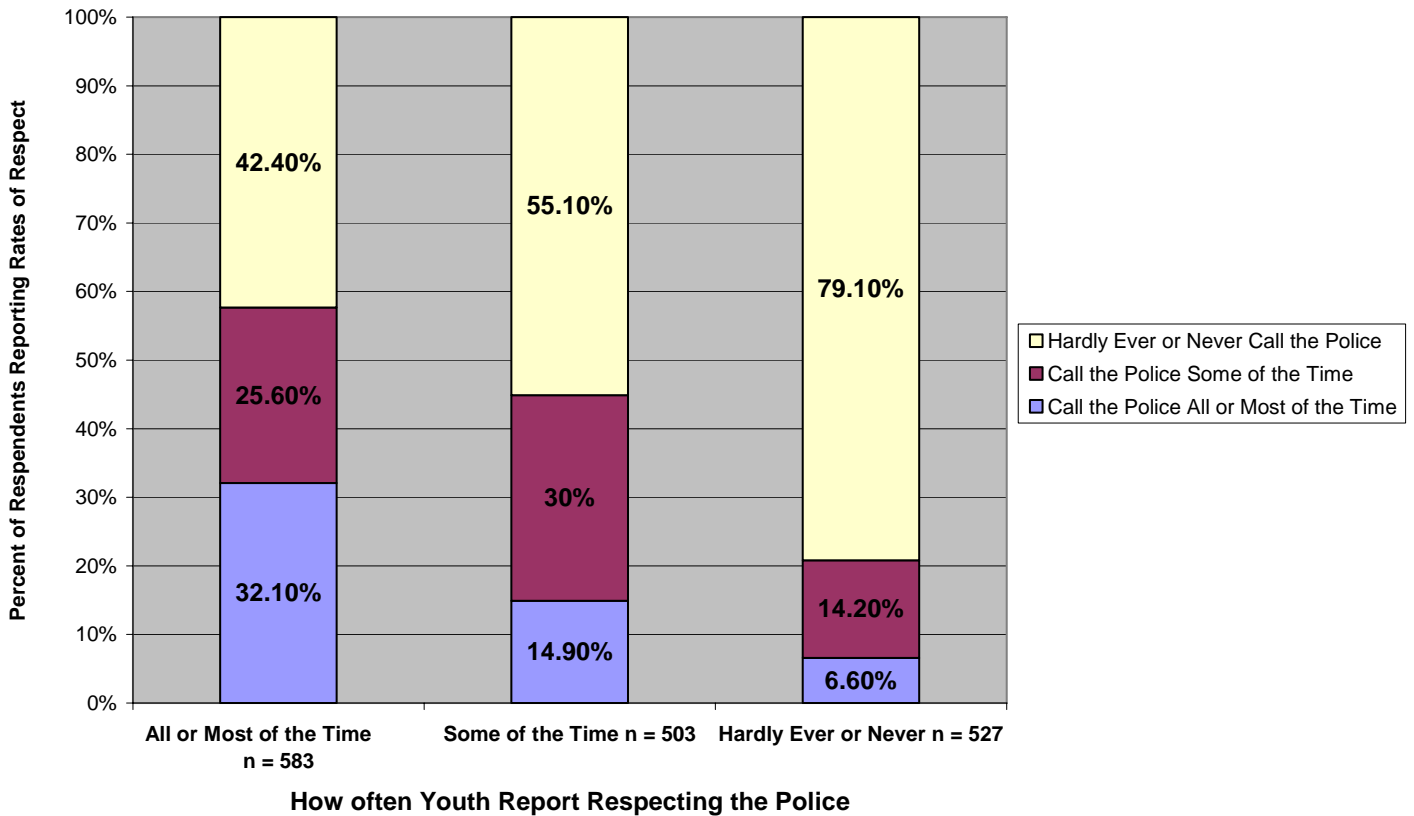


One other factor to note is that it is difficult to ascertain the *cause* of a youth's responded rate of respect toward the police. For example, there is no way of knowing how many youth reported low rates of respect toward police, hardly ever or never, because they perceived that police were respecting youth at low rates. If this is the case, then police agencies would have to focus both on officer behavior and youth attitudes toward police if they want to garner the support of youth in the community.

This second question can also be answered by examining the relationship between how often respondents report respecting the police and how often respondents report calling the police. Doing so shows, as evidenced in the graph below and through

statistical analysis¹², that youth who report respecting the police hardly ever or never, are much more likely to report that they call the police hardly ever or never, 72.1%, than that they call the police all or most of the time, 6.6%. The most interesting finding in this analysis is that of the youth who report respecting the police all or most of the time, more are more likely to call the police hardly ever or never, 42.4%, than they are to call the police all or most of the time, 32.1%. This is an important finding because where youth who report respecting the police more often are more likely to call the police than youth who respect the police less often, youth in the sample, regardless of respect for the police, are not likely to call the police often.

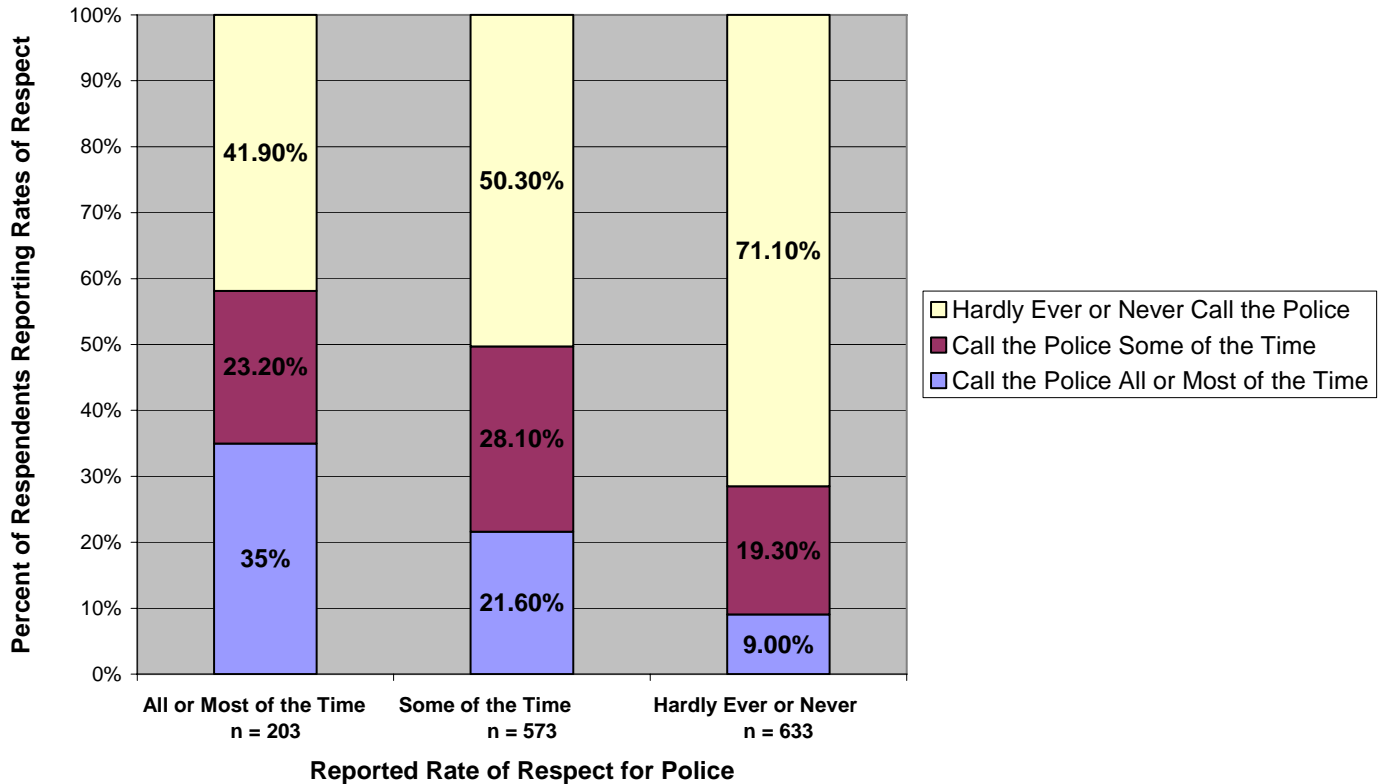
Examining the Effect of Youth Respect Toward the Police on Youth Reliance on Police Services



¹² Chi-Square of 197.255 with significance of .000

Similar findings can be seen when examining the relationship between how often youth feel police respect them and how often youth report calling the police for help when they need help, as seen below.

Examining the Effect of Percieved Rate of Respect Recieved from Police on Youth Reliance on Police Services



One significant finding in regards to this second question is the differences in the relationships regarding rates of respect received from police and how often youth report calling the police and the number of youth who report having called the police in the past six months. Note that the relationship between rates of respect received from police and if the youth had called the police in the past six months was not statistically significant, but the relationship between rates of respect received from police and how often youth reported they would call the police was significant. One would think that the

relationships would be either both significant or both insignificant. One possible explanation for this discrepancy is that some of the youth in sample stated that they would not call the police, but when it came down to an actual incident they did call the police. This is encouraging news for public safety officials. However, further research should be conducted before drawing this conclusion.

Conclusion

Positive relationships between Rochester City police officers and Rochester City youth are imperative to a myriad of social functions in the local community. Compliance with written law and other social norms, police affiliated public service initiatives, and general quality of life are all affected by these relationships. It can be seen in this analysis that, despite the attitudes and efforts of most police officers, youth in the City generally have a very negative view of police-youth relationships.

This issue is further compounded with regards to issues of race -- African Americans within the sample generally had a more negative view of police -- and reported policing style -- police officers who reported using an authoritarian or punitive style of policing generally reported lower rates of respect and trust given and received from youth.

The latter is mitigated slightly by the fact that only about one in four officers reported using authoritative or punitive policing styles. However, the fact remains that the majority of the youth within the sample, 38.5% of persons within the city, and a disproportionately high number of persons within high crime areas, are African American. These high crime areas are also areas where police are likely to have a disproportionately high rate of contact with youth, who disproportionately are African American youth. This all accumulates to evidence that negative attitudes toward police are an every-day issue for public safety officials locally in Rochester. This being said, there are a few important items that should be focused on in context to youth-police relationships.

Firstly, further research should be conducted to examine the cause of negative views of police amongst youth, in particular minority youth, in the City. The analysis in this paper showed that youth who have a negative view of the police are less likely to call the police for help. This is a potentially harmful situation for public safety officials. If the source of these attitudes can be identified, perhaps the attitudes can then be subverted. This would lead to a greater participation of youth in formal social control and public safety initiatives.

Secondly, further examinations of the effect different policing styles have on gaining the respect, trust, and compliance of youth could greatly benefit public safety officials. This research should include a specified definition of each policing style in context to an officer's contact with the public. This research should also determine which behaviors and actions performed by police officers have the greatest effect on gaining the respect, trust, and compliance of youth in Rochester.

These are just a few of the many steps needed to continue to build trust and respect between Rochester police officers and youth. However, a sustained effort towards this end should result in improved relations between the police and the public as a whole, a greater compliance with social norms by those who otherwise are likely to violate those norms, and a general improvement in the quality of life of all residents in the City of Rochester.

Appendix 1 (Police Survey)

Dear Rochester Police Officer,

Attached please find a brief survey that asks questions about youth-police relationships and attitudes in Rochester. This survey was designed by researchers with input from both youth and police and is a part of a study being conducted by the Youth-Police Unity Project. A similar survey of Rochester youth is also being conducted.

Please fill out the attached survey and return. The survey will only take a few minutes to complete.

This survey is completely anonymous and will be kept entirely confidential. Your honest answers are extremely valuable to our effort to better understand the nature of youth-police relationships in Rochester. All survey results will be reported only in the aggregate.

Thank you for helping us with this project.

Rochester Police Department Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire. All of your answers will be kept confidential and only reported as aggregate data. Do not put your name on this questionnaire. All questionnaires are anonymous. Please think carefully about each question and answer as truthfully as you can. Your answers will not be linked to you individually and the researchers will not make any effort to identify who participated in this project.

Section I – Police and Community Respect

1.) **When you contact youth on the street, are they cooperative?**

All the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Hardly ever	Never
1	2	3	4	5

2.) **When you contact youth, how often do you think that you are fair in your approach?**

All the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Hardly ever	Never
1	2	3	4	5

3.) **When you see other officers in contact with youth, how often do you think that they are fair in their approach?**

All the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Hardly ever	Never
1	2	3	4	5

4.) **How much of the time do you think youth call the police for help when they need it?**

All the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Hardly ever	Never
1	2	3	4	5

5.) **When there is youth violence, who do you think youth go to first for help (check the best answer)?**

Tell a parent ____ Tell a friend ____ Keep to themselves ____
Call the police ____ Tell someone else (who?) _____

6.) **In general, how much do you feel respected by youth in the city when you contact them?**

All the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Hardly ever	Never
1	2	3	4	5

7.) **In general, how much do you feel you respect youth in the city when you are in contact?**

All the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	Hardly ever	Never
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1 2 3 4 5

8.) **In general, how much do you feel other officers respect youth in the city when they are in contact?**

----- All the time ----- Most of the time ----- Some of the time ----- Hardly ever ----- Never -----

1 2 3 4 5

9.) **In general, how much do you feel the department as a whole respects youth in the city when they come in contact with them?**

All the time Most of the time Some of the time Hardly ever Never

1 2 3 4 5

10.) **How well do you think you solve problems in the community?**

Excellent Good Average Fair Poor

1 2 3 4 5

11.) **A. How would you describe your style of policing (check the best answer)?**

Authoritarian _____ Punitive _____ Community Oriented _____

Rehabilitative _____ Other (what?) _____

B. Why do you choose this style? _____

12.) **In general, I believe that youth trust police...**

All the time Most of the time Some of the time Hardly ever Never
1 2 3 4 5

13.) **In general, I believe that police trust youth...**

All the time Most of the time Some of the time Hardly ever Never
1 2 3 4 5

14.) **What are your ideas to improve youth and police relations?**

Section II – Demographic Information

15.) What is your title/rank?

16.) What title/rank have you held for most of your career in the department?

17.) How many years have you been an officer with the Rochester Police Department?

Circle the best answer:

18.) Do you currently reside in the city? YES NO

19.) What do you consider your racial/ethnic background?

African American Caucasian Latino West Indian Other _____

Appendix 2 (Sample Youth Survey)

Community Youth Survey

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this questionnaire. All of your answers will be kept confidential and only reported as aggregate data. Do not put your name on this questionnaire. All questionnaires are anonymous. Please think carefully about each question and answer as truthfully as you can. Your answers will not be linked to you individually and the researchers will not make any effort to identify who participated in this project.

Section I – Police and Community Respect

1.) In the past 6 months, have you been stopped by the police?

Yes ___ No

2.) If you were stopped, did you feel that the police were fair?

Yes ___ No

3.) Have you called the police in the past 6-months?

Yes ___ No

4.) Have the police helped you in the past 6-months?

Yes ___ No

5.) If you noticed something or knew something violent was about to happen would you...

Tell a parent Tell a friend ___ Keep to yourself ___

Call the police Tell someone else (who?) _____

6.) When you know there is a crime or violence problem, how often do you call the police?

All the time 1 Most of the time 2 Some of the time 3 Hardly ever 4 Never 5

7.) How well do you think the police are in responding to neighborhood problems?

Excellent 1 Good 2 Average 3 Fair 4 Poor 5

8.) In general, do you think that you respect the police...

All the time 1 Most of the time 2 Some of the time 3 Hardly ever 4 Never 5

9.) In general, do you think other kids in the neighborhood respect the police...

All the time 1 Most of the time 2 Some of the time 3 Hardly ever 4 Never 5

10.) In general, do you think police respect youth ...

All the time 1 Most of the time 2 Some of the time 3 Hardly ever 4 Never 5

11.) Do you think that you can trust the police to help you when you need them...

All the time 1 Most of the time 2 Some of the time 3 Hardly ever 4 Never 5

12.) Do you think that your neighborhood works well with the police...

All the time 1 Most of the time 2 Some of the time 3 Hardly ever 4 Never 5

13.) What are your ideas to improve youth and police relations?

Section II - Demographic Information

Please circle the best answer.

14.) What age category are you in?

12 & under 13-14 15-16 17-18 19-20 21+

15.) What do you consider your racial/ethnic background?

African American Caucasian Latino West Indian Other

16.) Have you previously taken this survey? YES NO