Police and Cross-Cultural Psychology: The Impact of Human Values on Violence

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Abstract

Researchers of police psychology must be well-acquainted with police work and culture both nationally and organizationally. However, most studies developed in police psychology do not fully account for the national context within which a study was done. In this article review, we discuss two social phenomena commonly studied by police psychologists: aggression and violence. Taking primarily a cross-national approach, we focus on the predictive role of individual values on aggression and violence. Schwartz's (1992) values theory, at the individual level of analysis, was chosen due to its importance to cross-cultural psychology, as well as its implications on well-being (e.g., Sagiv & Schwartz, 2000). We discuss how certain values may promote certain attitudes and behaviors (i.e., actions) and assert that human values affect aggression and violence. We review studies that have evidenced the relationship between values and aggression in the police context include suggestions on how to include values in a research agenda about violence and aggression. We discuss possible implications for increasing police officers' education and training, particularly reinforcing social values to guide actions. In order to foster change in aggressive and violent behaviors, it is imperative that police officers become aware of their own values. This must begin with the value of hierarchy, as well as tradition and conformity values. Finally, we pose discussion questions for researchers interested in investigating the interface between police and cross-cultural psychologies in the future, and for the use of educators to guide their in-class teaching.

Introduction

Police agencies have been working with psychologists since at least the 1960's (Reiser, 1972). However, it was only in 2013 that the American Psychological Association (APA) formally recognized police and public safety psychology as a specialty area in professional psychology (Alispahić & Alispahić, 2021). APA clearly indicated that police psychology bears no connection with what became known as the 'torture scandal' in Iraq (Borg et al., 2015) and is not connected to individual APA members who may have used questionable approaches, including obedience, groupthink, and terror management, to gather information from prisoners and alleged criminals post-September 11, 2001 (Handelsman, 2017). For APA's Division 18, Psychologists in Public Service, the area of police and public safety psychology "is concerned with assisting law enforcement and other public safety personnel and agencies in carrying out their missions and societal functions with effectiveness, safety, health, and conformity to laws and ethics" (APA, 2022).

Considering that police officers often deal with and respond to violence and aggression in various situations and contexts, researchers within the field of police psychology should go beyond individual interventions. Apart from general that aims to treat post-traumatic stress, police psychology should also assist police agencies in personnel recruitment, selection, training, coaching, organizational development, and informing interrogations and negotiations (Kurke & Scrivner, 2013). Hence, researchers in police psychology must be well acquainted with police work and culture.

Aims of this Position Paper

The aim of this article is to discuss two of the most investigated variables in police psychology;, aggression, and violence, and to discuss the predictive role of individual values from a cross-cultural perspective. We drew primarily from scientific literature derived from the police psychology field. We began by presenting a brief review of the most widely studied theory of values at the individual level of analysis, the Schwartz' Values Theory (SVT). The SVT then guides our subsequent discussions of the connections between values, aggression, and violence, in the context of police work. A few of the studies presented here aim to forecast the likelihood of violence or aggression, in part, on the basis of human (individual) values in the police arena. Note, however, that although several papers assume a causal relationship, most study designs do not result in a causal link, which can primarily be obtained by longitudinal or experimental research design studies – two approaches that are scarcely found in this literature.

As we discuss the relationships between values of aggression and violence within police organizations, we also reflect on the role of sex and national culture. In addition to police culture influencing attitudes and behaviors (Lersch & Mieczkowski, 2005), national contexts within which police work should be considered as well. This literature review reveals that most studies developed in police psychology did not fully account for national cultural context within which the studies were done. By focusing on police across cultures, we are

somewhat controlling for the shared professional culture and attending to the national cultures' influence on the behaviors of aggression and violence. We believe that by reflecting on studies of (1) similarities and differences in work behaviors amongst individuals who have been raised in different national cultures; (2) individuals in different national cultures in search of systematic relationships between features of cultures and behavioral development and expression; and (3) relationships between values and human behaviors might greatly improve scholarship on violence and aggression in the professional context of police psychology. In this article, we take a cross-cultural psychology approach (Smith et al., 2013) to discuss aggression and violence. We conclude our article with a research agenda and recommendations for future investigations and/or interventions in the field of police psychology that take values into consideration. The thesis we maintain is that as goal-directed motives, individuals' values may serve as predictors of aggressive behavior in the police context, including violence toward others (e.g., civilians and other police officers).

Values

Values are considered a central concept in psychology (Torres et al., 2022a), as well as other areas of social sciences, including sociology (e.g., Williams, 1968/1983), anthropology (Kluckhohn, 1951), and business (Hofstede, 1980). At the cultural level of analysis, values represent principles that are reinforced and guide appropriate behaviors, affects, and cognitions in a cultural entity. At the individual level of analysis, the level addressed in this article, values are cognitive structures that represent desirable end-states or attributes that transcend specific situations (Schwartz, 1992). They reflect fundamental principles that guide and shape individuals' perspectives and actions. Thus, values motivate a person's actions, thoughts, and feelings. They also motivate how people evaluate their own actions, other people, and events.

The Schwartz (1992; Schwartz et al., 2012) Values Theory was selected for two reasons. First, the SVT presents a perspective on the nature, structure, and functions of human values which is one of the most influential in general psychology as well as in cross-cultural psychology especially. It has been validated repeatedly in more than 90 cultures throughout the early 2000s (e.g., Schwartz, 2021). Moreover, a study of publications in the *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology (JCCP)* – the most influential journal in cross-cultural psychology – shows that about 20% of articles published between the years 2007 and 2009 referred to values, whereas in the 1970s and 1980s less than 8% of *JCCP* articles dealt directly with values (Knafo et al., 2011). Over the past 50 years, a bibliometric analysis of article citations by core members of the International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology showed that the most heavily cited works in the association's flagship journal, *JCCP*, focused on values (Gabrenya & Glazer, 2022). Second, as we will discuss through this position paper, the SVT has been empirically linked to counterproductive behaviors, including aggression, and unethical and delinquent behaviors (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022).

According to the SVT, values are desirable and trans-situational goals that carry different levels of importance for each person and serve as principles that guide ones's

interpretation of experiences, attitudes, feelings, and behaviors. A primary aspect of a value is the type of motivational goal it expresses. Schwartz (1999, 2004) explains that values are organized on a continuum of congruent or conflicting relationships, whereby some pairs of values are complementary (e.g., justice, and protection of all people) and others are antagonistic (e.g., power by exercising control over other people). The theory predicts a dynamic structure between the motivational categories of these values, so that individuals may exhibit high priority for compatible types and low priority for antagonistic types (Schwartz, 1992).

A large number of scientific publications address the SVT and the subsequent Refined Values Theory (see Schwartz, 2011, 2021; Schwartz et al., 2012). The variations of values measurements Schwartz and colleagues developed and validated over the course of more than 20 years are summarized in Schwartz et al. (2021). For this reason, we only provide a brief overview here. The original Schwartz (1992) Values Survey (SVS) consisted of 56 or 57 items, of which 45 items were organized around 10 motivationally distinct value orientations. By the 2010s, Schwartz et al. (2012; Cieciuch et al., 2014) refined the values theory, which expanded the 10 initial value types to 19 value types, two of which are new; face and humility values.

Both the 10 and the 19 value types can be organized into four High Order Values (HOVs). These four HOVs form two basic conceptual dimensions: (1) openness to change HOVs versus conservation HOVs and (2) self-enhancement HOVs versus self-transcendence HOVs. Openness to change HOVs emphasize independent thinking and action (i.e., stimulation, self-direction, and hedonism values), whereas conservation HOVs emphasize self-restraint, preservation of traditional practices and protection of stability (i.e., security, conformity, and tradition values). Self-enhancement HOVs represent power, achievement, and hedonism values on one end and self-transcendence HOVs represent universalism and benevolence values on the opposite end. Together, all the values create a narrative that may predict individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors, including crime prevention, aggression, and violence (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022; Schwartz et al., 2012). In this article, we establish a link between values and social phenomena related to aggression and violence.

Aggression and Violence

Aggression is a behavior motivated by the intent to cause harm to another person who wishes to avoid that harm (Bushman & Huesmann, 2010). Violence is an extreme subtype of aggression, often involving physical behavior with the intent to kill or permanently injure another person (Van Lange et al., 2017). Aggressive behavior may include intentional direct acts, such as punching someone, as well as intentional indirect acts in social relations, such as verbal behavior (cursing), and relational behavior (e.g., ostracism; Glazer et al., 2021). The goal of harming the victim often coincides with benefiting the perpetrator, comprising high levels of hostile emotion, such as anger. It is possible to understand violence as aggression in action (Shao & Wang, 2019). Two well-established models of aggression, the

General Aggression Model (Anderson et al., 2017; Anderson & Carnagey, 2014) and the Catalyst Model (Ferguson et al., 2008), suggest that aggression and violence are interchangeable terms.

Linking Values, Aggression, and Violence

Because values represent cognitive structures of principles that are hierarchically ranked by greatest to least priority in one's life, they influence which actions are considered more justified than others (Schwartz et al., 2000), and lead to actual behaviors (e.g., Bardi & Schwartz, 2003). Less known, however, is how values relate to individuals' acts of aggression and violence towards another person. How can the study of values support an understanding of why some individuals, when facing barriers that frustrate their achievement of objectives, act with creativity, resilience, and persistence, whereas others act with aggression and violence? Can values be used to forecast people's responses in different situations and contexts, particularly in police organizations, amongst police officers, and in relation to police interaction with the general population? And, how would such information support the development of police interventions, such as training, to mitigate police violence and aggression.

The SVT (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz et al., 2012) is a robust theory for the study of the relations between values and aggression. Several studies suggest that aggression strongly and positively associates with self-enhancement HOVs because power values, that focus on enhancing one's own needs with no or little consideration of the other's needs, and, to a lesser extent, the adjacent achievement values, may result in aggression (Benish-Weisman et al., 2022b). Self-enhancement HOVs include motivations that are clearly focused on the individual, even at the expense of others, positively relate with aggression (Torres et al., 2022b). In contrast, self-transcendence HOVs (universalism and benevolence values), which are opposite to self-enhancement HOVs, have an underlying motivation of caring for and helping others, and hence strongly and negatively relate with aggression. Self-transcendence HOVs, notably universalism values, which present contrasting values that privilege the interests of the individual and nature, may in fact represent a hindrance to aggressive attitudes and behaviors towards violence. In a study conducted in Israel, Knafo (2003) found that universalism and security values relate negatively to aggression, whereas power values correlate positively with it. Similarly, in another study conducted in Italy, Menesini et al. (2013) found that self-enhancement HOVs relate positively to self-reported aggression (i.e., hurting someone directly), and self-transcendence HOVs negatively relate with both direct and indirect violence.

The openness to change HOVs, including self-direction, hedonism, and stimulation values, have the underlying motivation of seeking adventure, personal pleasure, and new ideas and experiences, which may translate more easily into aggressive behavior. By "eating the forbidden fruit" (Benish-Weisman et al., 2022a, p. 95), individuals who strongly endorse openness to change HOVs may break the social norms of politeness and consideration, leading to violent behaviors, especially indirect violence. In contrast, people who endorse

conservation HOVs may exercise restraint to fulfill social expectations, thereby suggesting that these particular values relate negatively to aggression. Some evidence (e.g., Sian, 2017) suggests that conservation HOV emphasize motivations related to self-restraint, preservation of traditional practices, and protection of stability, all of which are considered important in preventing violence. Indeed, Knafo et al. (2008) observed that conservation HOVs correlate negatively with self-reported aggressive behavior, explaining 12% of the variance in aggressive behavior among Arab and Jewish Israeli. Moreover, tight cultures, such as Japan, that tend reinforce the individual level of analysis conservation HOVs, have lower crime rates than loose cultures that tend to endorse self-enhancement HOVs (Gelfand, 2022).

Unfortunately, most of the studies that show relationships between HOVs and aggression have been conducted with populations other than police officers, with few exceptions (Sian, 2017; Torres et al., 2022b). Can we infer that these relationships generalize to the police? Police officers work in a unique organizational culture that highlights authority amongst other characteristics (Baboselac-Marić, 2014). Alispahić and Alispahić (2021) suggest that "police officers perceive assigned authority as a privilege...[, while having] a sense of pride for the complexity and importance of [hierarchy and power in] the role they perform" (p. 237). Authority, hierarchy, and power all represent values in the Schwartz (1992) values theory. Thus, it seems appropriate to focus our attention on specific values studies that might be relevant in the police context.

Do Specific Values Matter?

Values and beliefs are usually seen as relatively stable (Schwartz, 2006), and considered to have direct and indirect effects on behaviors and attitudes (Sagiv & Schwartz, 2022). Studies of specific value types show that power values positively relate to aggression, whereas universalism values negatively relate to it (Benish-Weisman, 2019; Vecchione et al., 2016). In a study with the general population and police officers in Brazil, Torres et al. (2022b) investigated the relationship between values per the refined theory (Schwartz et al., 2012) and violence intention, operationalized as intention to injure, damage, or cause potential loss to others (Slovic, 2010; Webster, 1983). Openness to change HOVs (including self-direction of thought and stimulation values) positively related with violence intention. Self-transcendence HOVs (including universalism-nature and benevolence-dependability values) and conservation HOVs (including security-societal, security-personal, conformity-rules, conformity-interpersonal, and tradition values) negatively related with violence intention. Interestingly, self-enhancement HOVs, which includes power values, did not offer any individual prediction.

As human values are motivational principles in people´s lives, the inherent motives of conservation HOVs are self-restraint, preservation of traditional practices, and protection of stability. These values are consistent with self-protection and, therefore, likely mitigate violence intentions toward others. As a guide to one´s life, values that would reduce attitudes toward violence include:

❖ a sense of belonging and care about oneself, relishing secure surroundings and avoiding danger (security-personal values),

❖ appreciating social order, societal stability, and a state vigilant against threats (security-societal values),

❖ avoiding upsetting others and complying with expectations (conformity-interpersonal),

❖ respecting laws and following informal rules (conformity-rules), and

❖ preserving customs and maintaining cultural traditions (tradition values).

In contrast, values that would increase attitudes toward violence include:

1. an emphasis on autonomous thoughts (i.e., self-direction of thought values) and a
2. search for excitement and challenge (i.e., stimulation values).

These two value types refer to what the achievement literature calls "mastery" motivation, that is, the pursuit of an absolute and intrapersonal competence, not subjected to external assessments of performance (Elliot & McGregor, 2001). Thus, these values might leave police officers more vulnerable to a positive attitude towards violence (Baboselac-Marić, 2014).

Indirect Effects of Values

The aforementioned findings notwithstanding, Bardi and Schwartz (2003) recommend considering indirect effects of values on outcomes. They explain that inclusion of mediators and moderators is necessary because the associations between values and behaviors are typically not strong. Mediator variables account for the relationship between a predictor variable (e.g., values) and an outcome variable (e.g., aggression). For the most part, mediators are attitudes individuals have that are influenced by values and subsequently influence behaviors (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003). Moderator variables change the relationship between predictor and outcome variables, affecting the direction and strength of the relationship (Preacher & Kelley, 2011). Including mediators and moderators goes beyond studying the simple and direct relationship between values and aggression, thus providing opportunities to explore possible explanations for this relationship (Smith et al., 2013). Quite a lot of literature has been devoted to the investigation of mediators in the value-behavior relationship, so much so that Sagiv and Roccas (2021), in reviewing the literature proposed a conceptual model involving three principles used to explain the mechanisms linking values and behaviors, including accessibility, interpretation, and control. Less understood are which variables moderate the values-behavior relationship. Sagiv and Roccas suggested that reflection on values influences behaviors, but that distraction from values, perhaps due to cognitive or emotional overload, might prevent people from reflecting and acting on their values, but little is known on that moderating mechanism. More strides are needed to understand factors that might affect the accessibility of values on outcomes and for this

reason we focus on possible moderators of the values-aggression relationship in the police context.

Individual Difference Variables as Moderators of Values-Aggression Relationships

Researchers have identified several demographic factors that relate to violence and aggression, including age, sex, gender, and racial/ethnic background. A prominent demographic characteristic, adolescent age (i.e., Benish-Weisman, 2019; Benish-Weisman & McDonald, 2015), has been linked to violence and aggression, but as our article focuses on adults, we will not review research addressing age. Participant sex, however, has also been linked to aggression and violence. For example, Archer (2009), in a study across 12 nations, found that rates of aggression by men toward women was predominant in non-Western countries, whereas in Western countries aggression rates between different-sex partners presented no difference. Still, a predominance of aggression by men towards women was strongly and positively related with self-enhancement and openness to change HOVs across nations.

Archer's (2009) findings are consistent with earlier research that concluded that masculinity is generally associated with aggression (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984), whereas femininity is associated with nurturance (Schwartz & Rubel, 2005). Such associations are reflections of social norms or behaviors that are considered to be more 'acceptable' in a given society. Norms may affect the relationships between values and behaviors; with normative pressure, the relationships between values and behaviors are weakened (Bardi & Schwartz, 2003). Given this foundation, females with high self-enhancement HOVs will suppress the expression of these values and act less aggressively, or they may find indirect ways to express violence (e.g., verbal aggression). Moreover, males are more affected by contexts that enhance aggression than are females (Bernburg & Thorlindsson, 2005). Thus, values, especially self-enhancement and openness to change HOVs, might relate to aggression, but expressed differently by sex.

Racial or ethnic group identify may also serve as a moderator of the values-aggression relationship (e.g., Dhanani et al., 2022; Glazer & Torres, 2022). Racially-motivated actions have been the center of discussions about police operations in the police psychology literature, let alone news coverage. In a response article about police aggression against civilians, Glazer and Torres (2022) suggested that one way to mitigate racially motivated police violence might be to increase police officers' education and training, particularly in terms of reinforcing social values that can deter adverse police actions, such as aggression and violence.

Culture as a Moderator of Values-Aggression Relationships

An example of another moderator variable affecting the strength of the relationship between values and aggression is culture (Bergeron & Schneider, 2005). Bergeron and Schneider's (2005) meta-analysis revealed that aggression was less common in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic ones, probably because in the latter individual needs and competition

are pursued more, leading to a higher acceptance of aggressive behaviors when compared to the group harmony focused collectivist culture (Hofstede, 1980). Rubel-Lifschitz et al. (2021) also expected cultural differences in aggressive acts. When investigating Brazilian, Jewish Israeli, and Arab Israeli students, they found that across cultures, popularity of the perpetrator was an important moderator of the relationship between values and aggression. Moreover, aggressive behavior was highly associated with the personal values of popular classmates, whereas the behavior of unpopular students was unrelated to their values.

Another kind of culture construct that might explain the values-aggression relationship is honor cultures, that create and maintain respect for an individual as a member of a specific group through behaviors that sometimes resort to violence. In this cultural logic, honor can be gained or lost because of one's actions; those who lose honor are more likely to experience shame (Smith et al., 2020). Honor cultures may also encourage peer pressure and aggressive behaviors as an attempt to retain or regain honor by hurting those who may be perceived as having violated norms of respect (Dodge, 2006; Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Individuals belonging to a gang (a typical honor culture) might submit to peer influence (Steinberg & Monahan, 2007) and participate in aggressive acts, even if this behavior does not reflect their values. In all the aforementioned studies, there is a common finding: culture may impact whether or not individuals express their values in the form of aggression. In many cases this depends on the strength and relevance of the social norms in that context. Nonetheless, the reader might have noticed by now that the empirical studies presented in this section included general populations or students as participants. What evidence do we have specifically in the applied context of police?

The Police Context

Previously we asked whether it is possible to infer a relationship between values and violence that can be generalized to the police context? In order to address this question, we searched through a repository of literature using the Publish or Perish 7 software[1] (Harzing, 2022). Data files were organized in Excel and duplicate entries were deleted. For our first search we used the keywords "aggression," "violence," "delinquent behavior," "anti-social behavior," or "counterproductive behavior" with police-related keywords, including "police," or "police officers," or "police psychology." In a second search, we used "human values," "basic values," or "the values theory" with the police-related keywords. Finally, we aggregated the keywords of the first two searches to obtain results in a third and final search. Initially we searched for articles and book chapters published since 2018. However, the yield was a low number of publications, especially in our third search. Thus, although the time constraint/parameter was provided, the literature we review include articles published before 2005 too.

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[1] The software pulls from several databases, including PsycINFO, Proquest/Ebrary, Science Direct, Sociofile, Social Science Citation Index, PubMed, Jstor, Lyell Collection, Palgrave Macmillan, HeinOnline, Uptodate, Sci Finder Scholarship, GeoScienceWorld, and ASSIA-Applied Social Sciences Index & Abstracts.

Police Aggression and Violence

For the first review, after an initial visual cleaning was done to remove duplicates and retain only works published in scientific journals or books, over 2,000 articles were identified. Included among the articles was a large number of publications that addressed general aggression and violent behavior of police officers toward other officers and civilians (e.g., Anitei et al., 2014) and many studies investigating police officers' perceptions about specific violent acts, such as rape (e.g., Parratt & Pina, 2017). In fact, a good deal of scholarly attention has been given to police officers' perceptions of rape (e.g., Bitton & Jaeger, 2020; Garza & Franklin, 2020) and other violent crimes against women (e.g., Bull, 2019), as well as against racial minorities (e.g., Richardson, 2015; Shjarback & Nix, 2020). Studies about police violence or aggression have been conducted in different countries, including as Brazil, Croatia, Israel, Nigeria, the UK, and, especially, the USA. Interestingly, these studies (e.g., Arvate & Souza, 2022; Shjarback & Nix, 2020) investigated aggressive acts perpetrated by police, as well as those aimed at police officers (e.g., Barrick et al., 2014; Sands et al., 2023). However, none of the studies included values, which led us to the second literature search.

Police Values

For the second literature search, after cleaning for duplicates, we identified 18 potentially relevant publications. Of those, one article that seemed promising addressed 'Rabindrik value orientations' (Dutta Roy, 2015), which, although examining values amongst police in India, it was not considered, because not only is this values orientation not commonly investigated in scientific cross-cultural literature, but also the sample was small, consisting of 18 war-returned police officers. Amongst the studies reviewed for this paper, several investigated Schwartz's (1992) human values in the police context addressing different psychological variables. For example, Cohen and Shamai (2010) studied the relationships between basic human values, affective commitment, and psychological well-being amongst Israeli police officers. Basinska and Dåderman (2019) investigated values in relation to burnout and work engagement amongst Polish police officers, and Sundström and Wolming (2014) studied values priorities among police cadets in Sweden. Value priorities of police officers were also described for the Lithuanian police (Ruibytė & Adamonienė, 2012), Indian police (Raghuvanshi, 2018), and Polish police (Piwowarski et al., 2015). These studies suggest that police officers' values are an important management tool to better target the desired behavior in police organizations. In fact, in an earlier study, Zhao et al. (1998) found a high degree of consensus on value priorities among police officers across years of service, level of education, level of experience, and sex of the officer, suggesting the existence of a strong police culture. In their data, the value of "equality" (a specific value embedded within "universalism" value type in Schwartz's theory) was ranked low amongst officers.

Taken together, the studies suggest that police officers usually operate in contexts and situations that threaten their values, where there is a conflict between being secure and having a lack of security during the police operations. Such studies also indicate that studying values may help the understanding of behavioral mechanisms guiding police officers' actions. However, none of the studies in the second literature search included

variables related to aggression or violence, although when observing the low priority assigned to equality (and universalism) value as a characteristic of US police organizations, He et al. (2005) observed that values might only affect police aggressive behaviors in threatening situations, suggesting that certain values might be triggering an implicit attitudinal bias when the police officer is feeling threatened, which then results in aggressive actions (Eberhardt, 2019).

Values Linked to Violence and Aggression

Finally, the last literature review included keywords related to aggression and violence (e.g., delinquent and anti-social behavior), values, and police, in an attempt to identify publications that would empirically shed light on the values-violence relationship, specifically in the police context. Four studies (post 2005) in which the authors gave at least some implications for the values-aggression relationship were found. Most of those studies that focused on the relationship between police values and violence were directed toward civilians, especially amongst suspects of felonies. For example, LaRose et al. (2006) investigated values of Mexican police recruits and interpreted the consistent conservative set of values (e.g., conformity, security) as a catalyst for violent acts against civilians. They observed that time spent patrolling Mexico's streets and frequent exposure to violence increase potential for violence against civilians and, therefore, suggested there is increased need for social change and selection reforms within police organizations. In other words, a shift in aggressive behaviors can change by modifying strategies for the recruitment of new police officers in Mexico.

In a recent study, Torres et al. (2022b) found that Brazilian police officers had significantly higher scores on power values (i.e., power-dominance and power-resource, per Schwartz et al., 2012) when compared to the general population of civilians studied. Civilians scored higher in all types of universalism values (i.e., universalism-concern, universalism-nature, and universalism-tolerance). They observed a direct positive relationship between power values and violence intention toward civilians, and a direct negative relationship between power values and perception of risk, defined as a cognitive and conscious judgment about the subjective probability of occurrence of a dangerous event (Sjöbergl, 2000). Taken together with other studies' findings in general samples that universalism values negatively relate with violence (e.g., Benish-Weisman, 2019; Vecchione et al., 2016), Zhao et al.'s (1998) call for changes to police officers' values, so that they are more responsive to disadvantaged members in local communities and reduce aggressive acts against members of such groups, may be warranted.

However, if values are considered to be stable, can they be changed? Perhaps it is not values as desired, but values as practiced that need to be changed, that is, the norms around how values are acted upon need to be modified. A pivotal question arising from Zhao et al.'s (1998) work is what do we need to do to better align police values with police practices, including mitigating violence and aggression against civilians? Can we change the police officers' values, by changing what gets reinforced in the organizational cultural

context? Would police organizations have to hire people for police roles who have the desired values and do not have the undesired values and biases? These are just some of the questions yet to be studied.

Indirect Links Between Police Values and Police Violence or Aggression

Per an earlier section on indirect implications of values on violence or aggression, we found a few publications that specifically addressed the police context. Zedeck et al. (1981) investigated the development of work values with police science students and police officers (patrol, sergeants, and lieutenants) in the USA. The students' and current officers' values differed significantly, with officers valuing 'being active on the job' significantly more 'concern with earnings' significantly less than students. Moreover, police officers' values for social status positively correlated with rank. When looking only at patrol officers, experience positively related with concern for earnings and negatively related with pride in work, however these correlations were not significant when adding in age as a covariate. When looking only at the sergeant and lieutenant group, experience negatively related with social status and the correlation remained significant even when introducing age and education as covariates. Their results have implications for work socialization, selection, and organizational processes within the police, but the results do not provide clear insights about the relationship between values and violence.

Pulling together the available research on the relationship between values and aggression or violence, we propose that universalism values, notably, equality values, would relate with low levels of aggression. Indeed, Zhao et al.'s (1998) study hints at this relationship. This proposal is further reinforced by Walker and Kratcoski's (1985) finding that US and Canadian police officers maintain low levels of equality values, and Caldero and Larose (2001) who found a high endorsement of conservation values among US officers. However, note that all studies that addressed value priorities of police officer were samples from Western populations. Does this association hold for other regions of the world, such as Africa, Asia, Middle East, or Latin America? When working with police officers from different parts of the world, be it in well-being and stress interventions, training and development, crisis support or any other venture, can we be certain that values having a self-protection focus (i.e., conservation and self-enhancement HOVs) will relate positively with aggression, and values that promote self-expansion (i.e., self-transcendence and openness to change HOVs) will relate negatively with it? Specific studies should be conducted in order to investigate this relationship pattern in particular.

Studies that have tested a direct relationship between values and aggression have all reported small effects; this is a result consistent with other studies addressing the relationship between values and other behaviors and attitudes. In fact, discussing aggression and values with other populations, Sagiv and Schwartz (2022) observed that its relationship with openness to change and conservation HOVs are typically weak, whereas

the relationships of self-enhancement HOVs (especially power) positively and self-transcendence HOVs (especially universalism) negatively relate with aggression. Our literature review hints at a positive association between aggression and violence with self-enhancement and conservation HOVs, but a negative association with self-transcendence and openness to change HOVs, as found in other samples of police officers. This distinctive set of values resulted in Lersch and Mieczkowski's (2005) proposal of a 'subculture of policing,' which includes the violent police conduct studied in the first set of literature discussed above. The term subculture is often used to refer to a group that maintains a unique set of values and norms that differs from the overall culture of a society (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003). The dangerous nature of police work promotes an environment based on friendship and support from other police officers, which in turn isolates them, and makes them a distinctive group from mainstream society.

As pointed out by Lersch and Mieczkowski (2005), police officers are often hardened, and the conversations among themselves tend to focus on violence, aggression, and crime. The likelihood that officers engage in aggressive acts depends on several social factors, including organizational socialization and values endorsed. Research on the police force is needed to assess the generalizability of the direction of relationships (positive or negative) between certain values and the outcomes of aggression and violence, as the low number of publications indicate a dearth of generalizable information per our third and last literature search. Hence, while some studies on values, violence, and aggression have been conducted, there is still a long way to go.

We also suggest studying moderating variables to fully understand the values-aggression relationship in the context of police institutions and/or police officers' behaviors. As Sagiv and Roccas (2021) present, moderator variables of the values-behavior relationship that have not been tested are those that cause one to forget their values altogether. However, even those that might intensify attention need further inquiry. Potential moderating variables that we have not delved into include cognitive judgments, such as popularity of the aggressor (Rubel-Lifschitz et al., 2021), and cognitive orientations, such as meaningfulness in life (Torres et al., 2022a), as well as norms and interventions, such as those discussed by the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design – CPTED (Cozens & Love, 2015). Yet, these suggestions do not represent a finite list, nor are the findings conclusive regarding the relationships to be investigated. There is also a need for more studies in police psychology to include values in the explanation of aggression in different cultural contexts.

Research Agenda and Recommendations

Ilijazi et al. (2019) suggested that with extensive training, police officers are better equipped than civilians are to access relevant data and information (e.g., to where and how to pay attention for sources of violence, when and how violent acts are committed) that would support effective performance of work duties, including their perceptions of the places prone to violence (i.e., hotspots). Training might also be useful to understand some of the findings

reported here, namely that police officers in different studies presented a high endorsement of self-enhancement and openness to change HOVs (including power, achievement, self-direction, and stimulation values). Police departments are highly hierarchical organizations, and consequently self-enhancement values are often highly emphasized (Nascimento, 2014). Arieli et al. (2020) compiled nearly 30 years of theoretical and empirical literature to suggest that work and organizations have a direct implication on personal values, and that the person-organization fit positively relates to performance. Further, organizational values may shape the individual values endorsed by people in a specific occupation (Sagiv & Roccas, 2022). Still, prioritizing self-transcendence HOVs, such as family and friends, over non-transcendence values, such as privilege, is associated with positive-health and less aggressive behaviors (Tal & Yinon, 2002). Kang et al. (2016) also noticed that endorsing self-transcendence HOVs can reduce specific responses in the brain in the context of potentially threatening situations, such that attenuated neural reactivity could potentially threaten situations that may lead to positive health behaviors.

Perhaps, attitudinal training programs directed at increasing practiced self-transcendence HOVs may result in less aggression. Specific studies should be designed to test the relationship between self-transcendence HOVs and coping with threatening situations. It is not a novelty in the literature (e.g., Allport, 1955) that attitudes include the affective, cognitive, and behavioral intention components, with intention probably being the component that best predicts behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005). A training program focused on attitudinal change is also expected to promote values change (e.g., Maio, 2017).

We assert that an increase in self-transcendence HOVs, or at least practiced self-transcendence HOVs, is important to increase violence prevention (Cozens & Love, 2015). For example, strategies that provide information about security of public spaces can contribute to crime prevention. Based on the *Current Status of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design* (Robinson, 1996) research, interventions related to territoriality (e.g., lighting adequacy, pruning of tall grass etc.) can impact people's perception of violence. By engaging more with the environment, biases caused by how the terrain appears could be mitigated and could enable more self-transcendent HOVs to flourish.

There is a growing interest in the psychology of values and a growing recognition of the need for a deeper understanding of the ways in which values are embedded in our attitudes and perceptions (Schwartz et al., 2012). Also important, values can be modified to elicit different behaviors and attitudes (e.g., Maio, 2017) based on three organizing principles: accessibility, interpretation, and control (Sagiv & Roccas, 2021). By knowing how we mentally represent and draw upon our values, we can have a glimpse of how values might prevent violence and aggression. These findings may serve as bases for training designs to modify antecedents of attitudes and understanding of risky environments that are not interesting for maintaining safe situations. There seems to be a common understanding on the part of some social segments (specifically, trained police) as to the meaning of violence perception and safe attitudes. In other words, there appears to be a common understanding that values that relate to aggression can also be addressed in training to prevent crimes. Police officers are intrinsically subjected to violence due to their occupation (Eberhardt, 2019; FBSP, 2021).

Another area that could inform the role of values on aggression is the interaction of genetics and the environment (Kandler et al., 2016). Although much is known about exposure to violence at home and in the neighborhood as a correlate of values, the growing research showing its connection to low universalism and conformity values and high power values (Skinner et al., 2014) coupled with findings that being indirectly exposed to war relates to changes in values (Daniel et al., 2014), suggests that one's environment shapes values, which influence violence and aggression. In addition, social influence, such as affiliation with gangs, play an important role in aggressive behaviors (Meter & Card, 2015). Therefore, understanding cohorts' influence on the relationship between values and aggression could help in planning peer-based anti-aggression educational programs. Still, little is known about the role of genetics. Future studies could look at the contributions of both genetic and non-shared factors in the relationship between values and aggression.

Concluding Remarks

This article bridges values as a theoretical conception with professional application to real-world matters pertaining to police behaviors and attitudes that ultimately affect the public they serve. We began our piece with a review of the Schwartz Values Theory, the relationships between values and both violence and aggression, and explanatory mechanisms of intervening variables that may affect the focal relationships. Based on a review of extant literature, it is clear that research on these relationships is in its infancy in psychology, in general, and embryonic in the domain of police psychology. Therefore, current theoretical and empirical studies on these relationships need to be enhanced so as to make practical contributions for police training and development purposes, and the enhancement of public safety. Interventions might focus on inhibiting self-enhancement HOVs and promoting self-transcendence HOVs through the development of programs that make use of value instantiations (e.g., Maio, 2017). Such programs may be capable of promoting values change, in order to reduce aggressive and violent behaviors, while increasing peaceful behaviors.

There is still much to explore in the relationship between values and both violence and aggression. Can changes in values be obtained long-term, rather than merely temporary changes due to priming artifacts, as reported in literature (see Maio & Olson, 1998)? Even if such lasting change can be obtained through interventions or experiments aiming at reducing aggression, at what point might changing values be viewed as an infringement on people's cognitive freedom, and thus potentially raising an ethical concern (Handelsman, 2017)? Could central governments, especially of high-violent areas, be able to reduce violence with programs that take into consideration individuals' values, or would that be just another Walden II (Skinner, 1976) utopia? We encourage researchers to search for answers to these questions through studies designed at the intersection of cross-cultural and police psychologies.

Questions for Discussion

The discussion questions presented below are intended to stimulate future researchers interests in exploring the values and aggression literatures.

1. In addition to linking values with police aggression and violence, how else can cross-cultural psychology contribute to police psychology literature?
2. Some studies suggest that power values positively relate with aggression, whereas universalism values negatively relate with it. Considering the Refined Values Theory, how might specific power, benevolence, and universalism values, as well as face and humility values (two values not yet studied at this intersection), relate to aggression, and why?
3. Apart from age and sex, what other variables might mediate or moderate the relationship between values and aggression? And, why?
4. How could findings linking police values and aggressive behaviors inform United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, specifically, Goal 16.1, "Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere."

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