



Universiteit  
Leiden  
The Netherlands

## **Representative Bureaucracy and Public Trust in the Police: An Explorative Study in Understanding the Effects and Limits of Symbolic Representation within the Hispanic/Latino Community**

Kasakova, Elena

### **Citation**

Kasakova, E. (2023). *Representative Bureaucracy and Public Trust in the Police: An Explorative Study in Understanding the Effects and Limits of Symbolic Representation within the Hispanic/Latino Community*.

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [License to inclusion and publication of a Bachelor or Master thesis in the Leiden University Student Repository](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3608390>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).



**Universiteit  
Leiden**  
The Netherlands

**Representative Bureaucracy and Public Trust in the Police:  
An Explorative Study in Understanding the Effects and  
Limits of Symbolic Representation within the Hispanic/Latino  
Community**

Elena Kasakova

Master Thesis

MSc. Public Administration: Public Management and Leadership

Faculty of Governance and Global Affairs

Leiden University

The Hague, the Netherlands

January 6, 2023

Supervisor: Dr. Kohei Suzuki

Word Count: 19,749

## **ABSTRACT**

**Purpose:** In the United States of America, new historical lows for confidence in the police was reached in 2020 after various police brutality cases. This thesis aims to understand the effects and limits of symbolic representation and its influence on public trust in the police. In doing so, new and understudied causal mechanisms for symbolic representation will be explored in a case study interviewing residents from Salinas, California. In particular, the study will explore the effects of symbolic representation through the causal mechanisms of minority representation, lived experiences, vicarious experiences, and shared language.

**Design and Methodology:** With the nature of this study being both qualitative and exploratory, a combination of inductive and deductive research approaches will be utilized to test and develop the theoretical framework of representative bureaucracy and symbolic representation. Twelve semi-structured interviews with residents of Salinas will provide the data which this study will further analyze.

**Findings:** The interview results find that symbolic representation is observed positively through all proposed causal mechanisms, but to varying degrees and effects. The study finds that representation of race and ethnicity in the police is important in building public trust, but representation of other identities is equally important. Other findings include that vicarious experiences are equally important as lived experiences when an individual builds their perception of and trust in the police.

**Originality/Value:** This thesis contributes to the field of representative bureaucracy in multiple ways. First, this qualitative and exploratory study provides new insights into the effects of symbolic representation, the most recent field within representative bureaucracy literature. Also, providing a qualitative perspective is valuable in a field that is saturated by quantitative studies. Second, this study identifies and explores new causal mechanisms besides race and ethnicity. Third, the study focuses on the Hispanic/Latino population.

**Practical Implications:** While this study focuses on the police, the findings of this study are not exclusive to them. Findings of this study are relevant for all public institutions who provide some sort of public service. Understanding the effects of diversity and representation can be beneficial for the creation, effectiveness, and inclusivity of future public policy and management of public institutions.

**Keywords:** Representative Bureaucracy, Symbolic Representation, Police, Trust, Minority Representation, Lived Experiences, Vicarious Experiences, Language, Hispanic/Latino Population

**Acknowledgement:** I am very grateful to the residents of Salinas, California who participated in the study's interviews and shared their time, thoughts, and experiences with me. The completion of this study would not be possible without them, their voices, and their desire to support their community.

<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>PAGE NUMBER</b>
Abstract .....	2
List of Tables and Figures.....	6
List of Acronyms .....	6
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	7
1.1 Research Question .....	7
1.2 Overview of Design, Method, Theoretical Framework, and Findings .....	8
1.3 Background Info: Low Confidence and Police Brutality .....	9
1.4 Relevance and Contribution.....	11
1.4.1 Theoretical Relevance .....	11
1.4.2 Social Relevance.....	12
1.5 Thesis Outline .....	13
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	15
2.1 Representative Bureaucracy and its Subfields.....	15
2.2 Symbolic Representation .....	17
2.3 Key Previous Studies .....	19
2.4 Summary .....	21
Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework .....	23
3.1 Theory .....	23
3.2 Theoretical Propositions .....	28
3.2.1 Minority Representation .....	29
3.2.2 Lived Experiences .....	29
3.2.3 Shared Language .....	30
3.3 Summary .....	30
Chapter 4: Research Design.....	32
4.1 Design, Method, and the Case Study .....	32
4.1.1 Qualitative and Exploratory Study .....	32
4.1.2 Case Description: City of Salinas, California.....	33
4.1.3 Interviews .....	34
4.2 Operationalization.....	37
4.3 Data Collection and Limitations .....	37
4.4 Summary .....	38
Chapter 5: Findings.....	40

5.1 Regarding Representation and Identity.....	40
5.2 Regarding Lived and Vicarious Experiences.....	42
5.2.1 Lived Experiences .....	42
5.2.2 Vicarious Experiences .....	43
5.2.3 Trust in the Salinas Police .....	44
5.3 Regarding Shared Languages .....	46
5.4 Summary .....	47
Chapter 6: Analysis.....	49
6.1 Symbolic Representation .....	49
6.2 Extent of Lived and Vicarious Experiences .....	51
6.3 Extent of Shared Languages .....	54
6.4 Answering the Research Question .....	55
Chapter 7: Conclusion.....	57
7.1 Research Contribution and Direction for Future Research.....	57
7.2 Practical Implications and Policy Recommendations.....	58
Reference List .....	60
APPENDIX A: Interview Questions and Interview Guide.....	67
APPENDIX B: Interview Transcripts.....	73
APPENDIX C: Operationalization and Coding Framework .....	74
APPENDIX D: Interview Results and Data Overview.....	76

**LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES**

**PAGE NUMBER**

Figure 1. Theoretical Framework of Symbolic Representation..... 27

Table 1. Summary of Representative Bureaucracy Types..... 19

Table 2. City and Police Department Descriptive Statistics (2021) ..... 34

Table 3. Characteristics of Qualitative Sample..... 36

Table 4. Operationalization and Coding Framework..... 74

Table 5. Overview of Interview Results and Scorings ..... 76

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CA – California

PD – Police Department

US – United States

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Research Question**

Law enforcement agencies, in particular the police, are supposed to be public institutions that serve their community and enable public safety. However, in the United States (US), police brutality and accountability has increasingly become an important topic for the public. Recent killings of Black Americans by the police, such as George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Michael Brown, have garnered much public attention and protests against racial justice (Eligon, 2020a, 2020b; Silverstein, 2021; Wirtschafter, 2021). Public trust and confidence in governmental institutions have historically always been low in the US (Pew Research Center, 2020). However, in 2020, confidence in the police has hit a new low. This is especially true among Black adults, where 19% expressed they have “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in the police (Jones, 2020, 2021). This is in comparison to White adults, where 56% expressed confidence in the police (Jones, 2020, 2021). Studies have also shown that there are existing racial disparities in law enforcement, further decreasing confidence and trust in public institutions, especially in the police (Fryer, 2016; Hetey et al., 2016; Ross, 2015; Weir, 2016). This increased focus has also gained attention in the policy process. New policies have focused on directing police officers to wear body cameras and limiting certain uses of force against citizens, but these new policies have also focused on diversifying law enforcement agencies in an attempt to foster greater public trust (Allen et al., 2021; Norwood, 2020; U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2016).

Often, the police force and law enforcement agencies are the public face of local government and play an important role in society. Diversity and representation within bureaucratic agencies, such as the police, can play an important role in building trust with the public. This can be best achieved through a representative bureaucracy, when the bureaucracy attempts to mirror the demographic characteristics of the population it serves (Ricucci & Van Ryzin, 2017). Through this representation, symbolic value can also be appreciated by the public when they are able to identify a shared identity in the agency. This is known as symbolic representation. Through the perception built by an individual, representative bureaucracies can enable citizens to believe that these agencies represent and reflect them as a population, that they understand them, and are able to respond to them efficiently and substantially (Ricucci & Van Ryzin, 2017). In addition, this type of bureaucracy can also be perceived as more fair, legitimate, and accountable to the public (Theobald and Haider-Markel, 2009).

Currently, a research gap exists in the field of representative bureaucracy. Studies have confirmed that representative bureaucracies positively affect their clientele when they see a reflection of their demographic characteristics within the government (Gade & Wilkins, 2013). However, the field of symbolic representation is the most recent field of representative bureaucracy and has not been widely researched yet. Symbolic representation provides a different causal process to foster public trust, where policy change is built on the perception of citizens instead of action taken by the bureaucracy (Ricucci & Van Ryzin, 2017). Furthermore, while positive effects of representative bureaucracies have been confirmed, it is still not widely researched the causal mechanisms in which this process occurs. This thesis strives to further understand and explore the effects and limits of representative bureaucracy on public trust and confidence in the police. More specifically, this research will focus on the effects and limits of symbolic representation on trust in the police when there is increased minority representation in the police force. Hence, understanding how the public perceives the representation and diversity in a bureaucracy is vital.

Thus, this thesis provides the research question: ***Does symbolic representation have an effect on public trust in the police? If it does, in what way and under what causal mechanisms does symbolic representation occur?***

## **1.2 Overview of Design, Method, Theoretical Framework, and Findings**

With the historic low levels of confidence in the US police force, this thesis will provide an exploratory and qualitative analysis of symbolic representation in the police. A combination of both deductive and inductive research approaches will be utilized through a series of interviews. This study will focus on the American city of Salinas, California (CA), which provides an interesting case study due to its high level of crime and high level of Hispanic representation in its police force. A total of twelve semi-structured interviews with Salinas residents were conducted, with questions pertaining to their thoughts on representation, identity, and their experiences with the Salinas police. By conducting a qualitative analysis, this research adds to existing literature and research by providing a more in-depth analysis to the causal mechanisms through which the public builds trust with bureaucratic agencies.

In addition, four new and understudied causal mechanisms are explored in relation to symbolic representation: minority representation, lived experiences, vicarious experiences, and shared language. Minority representation is when the bureaucracy attempts to reflect the characteristics and values of its minority population within its bureaucracy, ensuring that their

interests are represented in the policy process (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008). Lived experiences are the personal interactions and experiences an individual has with the bureaucracy (Headley et al., 2021). In contrast, vicarious experiences are the interactions and experiences of others that influence an individual's way of thinking (Headley et al., 2021). Additionally, language can be seen a form of identity (Fan et al., 2018; Noels, 2014). In this study, the causal mechanisms "shared language" explores the idea of representation of language. Shared language means that there is a common language, other than English, that can be spoken between a citizen and bureaucrat which allows for more accessible and effective public service, as well as further understanding of certain social and cultural values. This is of a particular interest to the study as Salinas has a predominantly Hispanic/Latino population and Spanish is the second most spoken language after English.

The interview results find that symbolic representation can be observed positively through all proposed causal mechanisms, but to varying degrees and effects. The study finds that representation of race and ethnicity in the police is important in building public trust, but representation of other identities is equally important. Such identities include that of gender, morals and values, and educational levels. In particular, the intersection and combination of these different identities provide more powerful symbolic effects than when only one identity is represented. Other findings include that vicarious experiences are equally important as lived experiences when an individual builds their perception of and trust in the police. In addition, great levels of support are displayed for shared language, but more so on a technical level than cultural level. Having representation of language can be important due to its ability to reduce miscommunication and misunderstandings, which for some minority populations can reduce the possibility of loss of life. While this study focuses on the police, the findings of this study is not exclusive to them. The findings of this study are relevant for all public institutions who provide some sort of public service. Therefore, understanding the effects of diversity and representation can be beneficial for the creation, effectiveness, and inclusivity of future public policy and the management of public institutions.

### **1.3 Background Info: Low Confidence and Police Brutality**

Confidence in the police force has been decreasing in the United States. Overall, 48% of Americans stated in 2020 that they have a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the police, which has decreased in comparison to 53% from the previous year (Brennan, 2020). The level of confidence in police has seen a significant decline, especially compared to other

US institutions that are currently experiencing some of the highest levels, even amidst the current pandemic (Brennan, 2020). The 48% is also the first time in nearly three decades that this confidence measure reads below the majority line (Brennan, 2020). One reason for this reaction is the unlawful use of force by police. Unlawful use of force by the police can result in different endings, from the violation of being free from discrimination, the right of liberty and security, and the right to equal protection under the law (Amnesty International, n.d.). The most extreme result is loss of life. In the US, the police have killed 1,051 people in the year 2021 (Mapping Police Violation, 2021). Of that amount, 27% of those killed by police were Black people, despite being only 13% of the US population (Mapping Police Violation, 2021).

In many of these cases officers have shot people multiple times, where this may indicate a level of force used that was neither necessary nor proportionate (Premkumar et al., 2021). Accountability measures for police officers are small in the US, as the police unions have a strong presence and provide a strong protection for officers (Greenhouse, 2020; Scheiber et al., 2021). This points to the issue of low trust and confidence in government, particularly in the US police institution. Furthermore, this low confidence may indicate a poor quality of government as the police institutions are unable to impartially conduct their policing and enforce safety laws. The inability to impartially execute political authority may create lesser political legitimacy, as citizens usually encounter the output side of the political system (Rothstein, 2009).

Past and recent killings of Black Americans by police officers have added to the tension between Americans and the police. These recent killings expose existing racial disparities in law enforcement, as well as a lack of accountability measures for police officers. Racial disparities have been found ranging from traffic stops to drug arrests to use of force (Weir, 2016). These racial disparities target people that are Black, particularly Black men. A 2015 study of national police shootings between 2011-2014 provided evidence that there is a significant bias in the killing of unarmed Black Americans when compared to unarmed White Americans. The study stated that the probability of being Black, unarmed, and shot by the police was 3.49 times the probability of being White, unarmed, and shot by the police (Ross, 2015). Another study that examined more than 1,000 shootings among ten major police departments found no racial differences in shooting involving officers (Fryer, 2016). However, it found that for non-lethal uses of force, Blacks and Hispanics are more than 50% more likely to experience some type of force during interactions with the police (Fryer, 2016). Also, Black citizens are more likely to experience other non-lethal types of force, such as being handcuffed

without arrest, pepper sprayed, or pushed to the ground by an officer (Fryer, 2016). In addition, a Stanford study found that in the city of Oakland in California, Black residents account for 60% of police stops, even though they make up 28% of the population (Hetey et al., 2016).

## **1.4 Relevance and Contribution**

The conceptual relevance of a study can be constructed into two dimensions, theoretical (or academic) relevance and social relevance (Lehnert et al., 2007, p. 23). By identifying these two different dimensions, it also allows us not to just scrutinize research in a “general” dimension, but to identify specific weaknesses and strengths in each dimension within a study. Thus, one is more able to provide an analytical foundation for one’s research and further understand the impact of research.

### ***1.4.1 Theoretical Relevance***

Theoretical relevance refers to the contribution research may have in explaining political phenomena (Lehnert et al. 2007, p. 23). This is especially important as it takes an inside perspective by providing knowledge that adds to the theoretical discourse of the research topic (Lehnert et al., 2007, p. 25). This thesis contributes to the field and research of representative bureaucracy in a number of ways. First, this thesis will conduct a qualitative study that focuses on symbolic representation. The field of symbolic representation is the most recent field within representative bureaucracy and has yet to be widely studied (Kennedy, 2014). By focusing on symbolic representation, this thesis will contribute to further understanding of representative bureaucracy and its different forms.

Second, this thesis will be a qualitative and exploratory study. There is currently a saturation of quantitative studies focusing on active representation and its link to passive representation. Consequently, conducting a qualitative and exploratory study can provide additional findings that might not be achieved with a quantitative study. In this way, an alternative perspective is provided as to how representation can affect public trust and policy outcomes. Along with the qualitative focus, this research approach allows the researcher to observe patterns from the results and feedback from citizens.

Third, this thesis will focus on observing and identifying the causal mechanisms in which symbolic representation occurs. Previous research, such as Headley et al. (2021) and Ricucci and Van Ryzin (2017), provides useful theoretical frameworks that illustrate the causal

process of bureaucratic representation, but do not clearly identify the particular causal mechanisms. This research will attempt to do so.

Fourth, this study will explore new and understudied causal mechanisms that have yet to be explored within bureaucratic representation. Race and gender have primarily been studied in previous research. In addition to minority representation, this study will explore the use of a shared language, lived experiences, and vicarious experiences. A shared language means that there is another common foreign language, other than English, that can be spoken by both the citizen and bureaucrat which allows for business to be conducted more efficiently. This causal mechanism is a more intersectional characteristic of identity that expands on both existing social and cultural values (Fan et al., 2018; Noels, 2014). In addition, this study will attempt to disentangle the mechanisms of lived experiences and vicarious experiences, based on Headley et al.'s (2021) theoretical framework. Lived experiences are the personal experiences of an individual that can influence one's identity, thoughts, and perception of something. In contrast, vicarious experiences are the experiences of someone else, usually stories shared by a friend or the news, that an individual may adapt as their own and influence their way of thinking. By detangling these two experiences, one can further clarify how symbolic representation affects public trust and contribute to existing research.

Fifth, this thesis will focus on the Hispanic/Latino population. This is markedly different compared to previous representative bureaucracy research that has primarily focused on the interaction of Black and African American populations with the police. Only few studies have focused on the Hispanic or Latino population in this field (Meier, 1993; Wilkins & Williams, 2009).

#### ***1.4.2 Social Relevance***

Social relevance refers to the reasoning in why people should care about a particular research (Lehnert et al., 2007, p. 25). In addition, social relevance refers to the understanding of a social and political phenomenon and the different consequences and impacts it may have for various populations (Lehnert et al., 2007, p.27).

Understanding the implications and limits of representative bureaucracy is important for numerous reasons. First, the police is one of many public institutions that should provide stability and equality to citizens. The level of public trust can indicate the level of satisfaction in the public services an institution is providing. Additionally, the level of public trust can indicate whether the government is performing well or not (Rothstein, 2009). Representative

bureaucracies can be one way to identify the performance of public institutions, as well as the level of citizens' satisfaction with the services.

Second, diversity is a matter being increasingly experienced by nations around the world. With more waves of migration across the world, such as in Europe, populations are becoming more diverse and its management is crucial for social integration and effective policy implementation (Vukojičić Tomić, 2018). This brings about different concerns and needs from the public that these institutions serve. Understanding the effects of diversity and how to manage it can be beneficial for the creation of future public policy and the management of public institutions.

Third, this study can be particularly beneficial for understanding and preventing crime towards the Hispanic/Latino population (especially in the US). As mentioned, a previous study found that Hispanics, along with Blacks, are more than 50% likely to experience some type of force during interactions with the police (Fryer, 2016). As this thesis focuses on interviewing citizens in a city predominantly inhabited by Hispanic and Latino people, it can provide useful feedback and comments for policymakers and police departments to be aware of. In addition, this research can be beneficial for the Hispanic and Latino population itself, as policy resulting from such research can reduce the possibilities of experiencing police brutality and loss of life.

Fourth, this study can also help future policymakers understand which policy components are most important. This refers to how and to what extent policymakers should incorporate representation within their policies. For example, policymakers can identify what type of representation can be used (e.g. passive, active, symbolic) and from whom action can originate (e.g. from the bureaucrat, citizens).

## **1.5 Thesis Outline**

This thesis will be structured as follows. Chapter 2 will provide an overview of the literature on representative bureaucracy, as well as the three different types of representation. Three key studies that will provide a foundation for this study will be introduced. Chapter 3 will introduce the theoretical framework of symbolic representation, including that put forth by Headley et al. (2021). Based on the reviewed literature and framework, four propositions will be presented for this study to explore further. Chapter 4 introduces the research design of this study and its explorative nature. Through the use of semi-structured interviews, both inductive and deductive research approaches will be used to produce a research design not seen often in this field. Chapter 5 will present the findings of the interviews, identifying any trends and divergences in

results. Chapter 6 will discuss the findings and reflect whether the study's propositions were observed. Additionally, it will discuss where the study's propositions converge and diverge from the reviewed literature and their implications on the three key studies introduced earlier. Chapter 7 provides a conclusion to the study in which suggestions for future research and policy recommendations are discussed.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter will provide an overview of the recent research and literature about representative bureaucracy. This includes the main fields studied within representative bureaucracy, which includes passive representation, active representation, and symbolic representation. In addition, this chapter will review three main studies that will provide a foundation of knowledge for this thesis and allow it to build off of their findings. These studies include those conducted by Headley et al. (2021), Riccucci and Van Ryzin (2017), and Theobald and Haider-Markel (2009). Later on, literature pertaining to factors that influence public perception and confidence in public institutions will be reviewed. The final section will further provide a guide as to how this thesis will contribute to existing literature and missing gaps in the research, as well as how the thesis will proceed.

### **2.1 Representative Bureaucracy and its Subfields**

There is a tension that exists in contemporary bureaucracies and their connection to democratic theory. This tension lies between the large amount of power that bureaucracies hold within the policy process and the lack of accountability (Kennedy, 2014; Selden, 1997). Representative bureaucracy has tried to address this tension through the basic idea that a more diverse bureaucracy can introduce a more responsive public policy (Kennedy, 2014). The literature has tried to document how the makeup of the civil service is changing and to demonstrate the importance of representation within bureaucracy, including its role within democratic governance. By understanding the role of representative bureaucracy, it may lead to more insight into how all interests can be represented in the making and implementing of policy (Selden, 1997).

A representative bureaucracy can be defined as when “a bureaucracy is broadly representative of the public it serves, then it is more likely to make decisions that benefit that public” (Meier et al., 1999, p. 1026). The theory of representative bureaucracy can also be understood in terms of the diverse characteristics within the public workforce, where “characteristics such as race and ethnicity will help to ensure that the interests of diverse groups are represented in policy formulation and implementation processes” (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008, p. 697). While these two definitions give an idea to what the characteristics of representative bureaucracy may include, it must be noted that other definitions can provide other subtle differences, either focusing more so on the requirement of descriptive representation to be present or the requirement of certain social or demographic characteristics

(Kennedy, 2014, p. 401). However, for this study, these definitions are suitable as they underline that a representative bureaucracy is one that is representative of its population and its interest, as well as their potential in being represented in the policy process and the potential in influencing it. Here, a representative bureaucracy means that a bureaucracy that shares demographic characteristics with the public it serves may act in a way that is beneficial to the interests of the public (Mosher, 1968).

In the representative bureaucracy literature, the focus of research has been mainly placed in two main branches. These have been the fields of passive and active representation. Recently, however, there has been increased interest in studying a third field: symbolic representation. Passive representation can be seen as the first wave of research into representative bureaucracy which focuses on the descriptive aspect of representation (Bishu & Kennedy, 2020). As such, there is passive representation when a bureaucracy shares and reflects a similar proportion of demographics and social attributes that is present within the population it serves (Bishu & Kennedy, 2020, p. 564; Mosher, 1968). This type of representation can be used to measure the level of diversity within a population, as well as normative policy prescription to support traditionally underrepresented groups (Bowling et al., 2006; LeRoux, 2009; Moldovan, 2016). It is also useful to note changing compositions among organizations, indicating groups that may be underrepresented or overrepresented and at what level (Kennedy, 2014; Seldon, 1997). This type of knowledge is useful for scholars and policymakers, as this is a fundamental step in understanding the distribution of representation and whether it may be an influential factor in the change to policy outputs. Even so, depending solely on passive representation to understand the effect of representative bureaucracy can be limiting. Doing so can restrict the range of research and does not provide insight to the present causal mechanisms that influence the policy process and its outputs. It can provide an incomplete picture of what representative bureaucracy is and the context in which it occurs (Kennedy, 2014).

The following wave of representative bureaucracy literature has been active representation (Bishu & Kennedy, 2020). Active representation concerns whether the bureaucracy shares the same values as their clients and whether these shared values affect the decision making of bureaucrats (Andersen, 2017; Mosher, 1968). The difference here is that due to the shared values, action and change can be actively initiated and achieved by the bureaucracy. This brings about a long studied question in this field: does passive representation lead to active representation, and is it needed to achieve active representation? Certain

conditions can help lead passive representation into active representation, such as the organizational culture and norms of a bureaucracy (Keiser et al., 2002; Meier & Stewart, 1992). Organizational culture and norms create a structure that influences how bureaucrats achieve and do their job. When the population of the bureaucracy becomes more diverse and reflective of the population it serves, then there will also be changes in the organizational culture and norms that may embody more of the values and characteristics that the population embodies (Hindera & Young, 1998). In addition, this link between passive and active representation can mean that the bureaucracy, as a service provider, is becoming more similar to the population it serves, as clients, and that they relate to each other more through shared values and experiences (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006).

Previous studies have confirmed these expectations, where increasing the minority representation in bureaucratic agencies has brought about positive outcomes. Increasing representation has the potential to reduce teacher discrimination against minority students (Meier, 1993), to increase child support payments as agencies hire more women (Wilkins & Keiser, 2006), and to improve standardized test scores for minority and female students with the increased hiring of minority and female teachers (Keiser et al., 2002; Meier et al., 1999). In the context of policing, the increased representation of ethnic minorities on the police force has been significantly associated with a decrease in ethnic minorities being stopped and searched (Hong, 2017). Another study found that hiring more women on the police force has been positively associated with the number of reports and arrests against sexual assault (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006). Such studies point to three important conditions: (1) bureaucrats retain a level of discretion in implementing policies, (2) the policies are important to the targeted demographic group, and (3) the actions and decisions of bureaucrats can indeed have real impact for the targeted demographic group (Fernandez et al., 2018, p. 538). Concurrently, other studies have found that increasing the representation of minorities can lead to different results. In a study by Wilkins and Williams (2008), it was found that the increase of Black representation on the police force was associated with an increase in the force's use of racial profiling. This indicates that, instead, there may be support for the theory of organizational socialization, where an organizational culture or identity may transcend the ethnic identity of an individual in that organization (Hong, 2017).

## **2.2 Symbolic Representation**

Symbolic representation is a more recent field of representative bureaucracy that expands on passive representation. The main notion of symbolic representation is that the existence of a passively representative bureaucracy can by itself produce benefits for the citizenry, without the direct action from bureaucrats (Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Meier & Nicholson-Cotty, 2006; Riccucci & Van Ryzin, 2017; Riccucci et al., 2014; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009). In this way, symbolic representation can produce an alternative channel of causal processes that works through the perceptions and behaviors of citizens and clients. In particular, symbolic representation acts as an alternative to the causal channel of active representation. With active representation, the causal process lies within the bureaucracy. For symbolic representation, the causal process instead lies within the citizenry and the perceptions of citizens (Riccucci & Van Ryzin, 2017, p. 25).

The causal channel for symbolic representation builds on the importance of shared values and a shared identity between the bureaucracy and the public. Shared values and identities can strengthen the causal process by reinforcing a perception of legitimacy in the government. Theobald and Haider-Markel (2009) present this in their study where the increased representation of African Americans in the police force led to African American citizens being more likely perceiving police actions as more legitimate. This is also seen in the previously mentioned study by Meier and Nicholson-Crotty (2006). Although the study did not explicitly study symbolic representation, it found that the increased hiring of women police officers led to more willingness for women to report crimes of sexual assault, as well as the increased of filing reports and enforcing sexual assault laws. This finds that increasing representation can not only increase perceived legitimacy, but additionally fosters public trust and cooperation with bureaucratic agencies, which can result in more proactive and effective response to their clients. Thus, passive representation can be linked to active representation, with symbolic representation as an intervening factor (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006; Riccucci et al., 2014).

Symbolic representation can also result in higher satisfaction with public services, which can be an indication of the quality of services. A common identity, such as occupational identity, can also be an important factor to consider. As seen in Gade and Wilkins (2013), veterans that received rehabilitation services from other counselors that were also veterans reported higher satisfaction of the services they received. Shared identity, even those beyond ethnicity, can lead to higher levels of being understood and supported. This indicates that symbolic representation may also contain a psychological dimension that affects the perception

of and satisfaction with the bureaucracy, its services, and its effectiveness (Nunnally, 2012; Riccucci & Van Ryzin, 2017).

Consequently, this understanding of symbolic representation can have implications for the willingness of citizens to cooperate and coproduce with the government, based on their judgment and trust of the bureaucratic agency (Riccucci et al., 2014; Riccucci et al., 2016; Van Ryzin et al., 2017). It is, however, not the case that these positive effects of symbolic representation will be achieved every time. As noted in a replication study conducted by Van Ryzin, Riccucci, and Li (2017), certain conditions and context of the policy domain still play an important role. It is the case that to see these positive effects of symbolic representation, they may be policy-specific, and that replication of such effects requires the incorporation of values and behaviors that are widely shared and accepted by a broad spectrum of citizens (Van Ryzin et al., 2017, p. 1374).

**Table 1.** Summary of Representative Bureaucracy Types

<b>Representation Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Causal Process</b>
Passive	Descriptive representation	None. The objective is to increase demographic characteristics of bureaucratic agency to mirror those of the population it serves
Active	Action is done by bureaucrat on behalf of a group	Depending on the origins of the bureaucrat, they engage in decision-making behavior that advances the interests and values of citizens from their demographic group. This can affect systematically the policy outcomes, resource allocation and opportunities for members of that specific group
Symbolic	Symbolic values of representation and influences the perceptions and behaviors of citizens	Depending on the origins of the bureaucrat and if it mirrors the demographic characteristics of the public, citizens build a particular perception of the bureaucracy. Then through the perceptions and behaviors of citizens and clients, this can result in a higher level of trust and perceived legitimacy of the bureaucracy. With common values identified by the public, public cooperation and compliance can be increased, resulting in policy outcomes

### 2.3 Key Previous Studies

In the field of symbolic representation, certain studies are particularly relevant in building an important foundation of knowledge and research for this thesis. This thesis aims to contribute

to these discussions and findings, especially those from Headley et al. (2021), Riccucci and Van Ryzin (2017), and Theobald and Haider-Markel (2009). What makes these studies relevant for this thesis is their emphasis on comprehending the extent of symbolic representation and its effects on citizens, as well as studying symbolic representation in the context of the police.

Theobald and Haider-Markel's (2009) study expands representative bureaucratic theory to include the concept of symbolic representation. In comparison to active representation, where a representative acts on behalf of a group, symbolic representation works on the reasoning of the represented. This can be done by changing their attitudes without any explicit actions done by the representatives besides holding a public position or office. Theobald and Haider-Markel point out that race plays an important role in the citizen perceptions of legitimacy regarding police actions. Their findings suggest that symbolic representation does occur: Blacks are more likely to perceive police actions as legitimate if actions were committed by Black officers, and that Whites are more likely to perceive police actions as legitimate if actions were committed by White officers (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009, p. 419). This also suggests that benefits from symbolic representation can occur for both minorities and non-minorities (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009, p. 420). In this interaction of legitimacy perception, the race of the police officer, rather than the action of the officer, is important in the citizen's attitude and evaluation process (Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009, p. 421).

Providing a different perspective, Headley et al. (2021) show instead the possible limits of symbolic representation. This study focuses on supporting a new micro-theory of symbolic representation where the symbolic benefits of passive representation depend on some level of positive treatment by bureaucrats. Varying factors that relate to the benefits of symbolic representation are studied, including individual identity, lived experiences, expectations, contact with the bureaucracy, and bureaucrat behavior (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1035). The authors provide an exploratory study as this interaction of factors is studied in the setting of policing and race within the United States. Through the analysis of 70 interviews, the findings suggest that community members' views on police and law enforcement contain both positive and negative perceptions, suggesting that passive representation is not the only driving force to these perceptions (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1038). Instead, the findings suggest that symbolic representation operates independently from actual bureaucratic treatment or behavior and are derived from prior lived experiences (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1037). To fully understand the effects and benefits of passive representation, it may be important to identify the type of behavior and consistency of treatment by law enforcement with a particular context. In contexts

where there is no history of unjust or inequitable bureaucratic behavior, the benefits of symbolic representation can be realized. Similarly, in contexts where past inequities from law enforcement have been high, continued injustice will only hinder the full enjoyment of positive symbolic benefits of representation.

The theory of representative bureaucracy and symbolic representation puts forward that demographic representation matters because it results in a shared experience. This shared experience can be seen also as an affinity or shared understanding that further supports a shared identity between both the citizen and bureaucracy. In accordance with representative bureaucracy theory, this shared experience would lead either the civilian or bureaucrat to behave differently. However, when an interaction between a civilian and bureaucrat is at odds with the shared belief that originally thought to be held in common, this may exceed the symbolism derived from a shared identity (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1041).

Coming together, Riccucci and Van Ryzin's (2017) article underscores the importance of symbolic representation and real-life implications on policy making. As mentioned, symbolic representation can affect the willingness for a citizen to cooperate with the government. Governments are facing increasing pressure to deliver high quality services while at the same time not increasing their budgets. Thus, the perception of the bureaucracy is important as citizens are necessary as partners in maintaining quality public services. Increasing representation in the bureaucracy increases the legitimacy and accountability of the bureaucrats (Riccucci & Van Ryzin, 2017, p. 27). But, increasing diversity can also increase potential problems and misunderstandings. Overall, despite how great the effects of symbolic representation may be, increasing representation and diversity in an organization can be interdisciplinary and dynamic. Thus, effective management of diversity and collaborative networks is necessary to fully account for the accountability and integrity of such policies. With the increased attention on accountability in police forces and the challenges they face today, focusing on the practical applications of symbolic representation is key.

## **2.4 Summary**

As presented in this chapter, representation within a bureaucracy can be achieved through various forms and produce different types of effects. Most notably, these types of representation work through different causal processes. While passive representation focuses on the descriptive aspect of representation, active representation works through the bureaucrat who advocates for a particular social group and symbolic representation works through the

perception of citizens. Representation within a bureaucracy can bring about genuine positive effects. Previous studies have suggested that symbolic representation can produce real benefits without active action done by bureaucrats (Ricucci et al., 2014, p. 537). It has been noted in multiple systematic reviews that there is still room to expand and develop the theoretical framework of representative bureaucracy. This includes limits in the selected factors that are used in research. A lot of attention has been placed on studying representation through a narrow set of demographic identities such as race and gender. There is room to expand on this by studying more in depth through intersectional identities that can come in different forms other than race and gender (Bishu & Kennedy, 2020, p. 583). This thesis will aim to explore the benefits and limits of symbolic representation. In doing so, it will also aim to contribute to selected articles reviewed in detail. The next chapter will further introduce the theoretical frameworks used in Headley et al. (2021) and Ricucci and Van Ryzin (2017), which will be used to form theoretical propositions and observe if they are present in the intended interviews.

### **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter further explains the theoretical framework of symbolic representation and different causal mechanisms can affect one's perception and trust in the police, as explained by Headley et al. (2021) and Riccucci and Van Ryzin's (2017) frameworks. As this study is qualitative and exploratory, a combination of both deductive and inductive research approaches will be used. Deductive reasoning and theory-testing is achieved through the testing of existing causal mechanisms, as discussed previously. Specifically, this refers to the role of ethnicity and race in representative bureaucracy. Inductive reasoning and theory development are achieved through the exploration of new and not widely researched mechanisms such as shared language, lived experiences, and vicarious experiences. In this chapter, four theoretical propositions are presented to further investigate and understand the role of these four causal mechanisms. As this research will adopt both inductive and deductive approaches, the focus on theory is important to understand how this study can contribute to it.

#### **3.1 Theory of Symbolic Representation**

The effects and benefits of bureaucratic representation are not only defined by passive and active representation. They are not the only way to produce tangible outcomes in the policy process. Passive representation can also produce effects through its symbolic value for citizens and clients (Riccucci et al., 2014, p. 539). Recent research and literature suggest that if the identity of the bureaucrat matches that of the client or citizen, then it can positively affect citizens' perceptions of the bureaucratic and its legitimacy (Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009). This is done independently of any actual accomplishment or policy output as a result of the representation, but rather passive representation can influence how citizens perceive an agency's legitimacy and performance (Riccucci et al., 2014, p. 537).

Symbolic representation works through an alternate causal mechanism as opposed to passive or active representation. The main idea of symbolic representation is that "the mere existence of a passively represented bureaucracy can itself translate into benefits for the citizenry—without any actions taken by bureaucrats" (Riccucci & Van Ryzin, 2017, p. 25). With active representation, the causal process lies within the bureaucracy. For symbolic representation, the causal process instead lies within the citizenry and its perceptions. Symbolic representation occurs when the motivations and behaviors of citizens are influenced by the identity of the bureaucrats. When they begin to identify and share more values with the

bureaucrats, then citizens are more likely to perceive them in a more positive light and be influenced by this shared identity. It can lead to more cooperation and compliance with the bureaucracy, this resulting in some outcome or change in policy. This does not require any direct action to be taken from the bureaucrats and, in this way, symbolic representation differs from active representation.

Identity can be defined by various social attributes: race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, social status, or even profession (Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Headley et al., 2021; Riccucci et al., 2014). Previous studies have shown that these shared identities can play an important role in building shared values and trust for citizens, resulting in a positive perception of the bureaucratic agency's legitimacy. Such studies include Gade and Wilkins (2013), where they studied the effects of symbolic representation based on veteran status. They find that counselors that share this veteran status with their veteran clients resulted in higher levels of satisfaction. Theobald and Haider-Markel (2009) studied the context of policing, where they concluded African Americans are more likely to connect to , resulting in a higher level of trust and confidence in police performance. In addition, Meier and Nicholson-Crotty (2006) suggest the same results, as they found that female victims of sex crimes were more willing to report these crimes to female police officers, thus signaling the ability to foster a higher level of trust and cooperation with the bureaucratic agency. Furthermore, there is the understanding that passive representation indicates shared values and experiences, which can lead to greater levels of trust in the citizenry (Riccucci & Van Ryzin, 2017; Childs and Lovenduski, 2013; Wise, 2003).

One main study that provides a micro-theory of symbolic representation is that of Headley et al. (2021). They state that the theory of representative bureaucracy, including all three fields, "starts with individual identities" (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1034). An individual's identity can provide an origin for a set of their characteristics. However, identities are not always permanent characteristics that are created at birth and stay unchanged for the duration of one's life. Instead, one's identity can be shaped by their lived experiences as well. A person's identity can be influenced by how that person sees themselves, as well as how others perceive and treat them. This suggests that identity can be fluid and endogenous, where identities can "vary across and within individuals, space, and time" (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1034). This provides an additional interesting point that members of a particular social group will not have formed the same identical identity simply because of their membership, but there can be variation in identity and experiences among the same group as well. Nonetheless,

commonalities across these identities and groups can exist that allows for people to feel connected and understood by each other. Thus, the previously mentioned provides three distinct complications when studying representative bureaucracy (Headley et al., 2020, p. 1034). First, the variation across individuals can mean that the relevance of an individual's identity may vary in magnitude and produce different values that each might consider in representation. Second, the variation across space and time can mean that some identities, such as race and gender, can be different in different countries and even locations within the country. Third, an individual's identity can change over time as one's lived experiences develop or deteriorate in relation to the identity. All of this points to the fact that identity is fluid and is continuously developed.

That being said, the combination of an individual's identity and lived experiences can create particular expectations when encountering a bureaucratic agency. These expectations have to do with how one may be treated by the bureaucratic agency. They can range from positive to negative, regardless of the bureaucracy's identity. For example, a person of color might perceive the whole of society as prejudiced and hold these same expectations of prejudice to any bureaucracy, regardless of the context (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1034). Aside from these expectations, an individual can be influenced by the bureaucrat's identity and the passive representation within the bureaucracy when the individual comes into contact with the bureaucrat. In line with the theory, the passive representation in the bureaucracy (the extent to which the population of the bureaucracy is reflective of the citizen population) will move an individual's expectations in a positive direction and thus create greater trust in the bureaucracy (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1035; Riccucci & Van Ryzin, 2017, p. 21). Then, a greater level of trust can also result in a higher motivation to cooperate and coproduce with the bureaucracy (Riccucci et al., 2016; Vinopal, 2018). This process happens through the perception of a shared identity and shared values between both the bureaucrat and individual, and not necessarily because the bureaucrat has taken a particular action (Riccucci et al., 2016). It is this process that distinguishes symbolic representation from other types of representative bureaucracy.

While the contact between an individual and the bureaucrat can be due to various reasons and purposes, the bureaucratic behavior in response to the individual can also influence how they perceive the bureaucracy (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1035; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009). The result of this contact can influence whether the individual determines if the encounter with the bureaucratic agency was a positive, neutral, or negative experience. In relation to symbolic representation, it is not only important how the individual responds to the

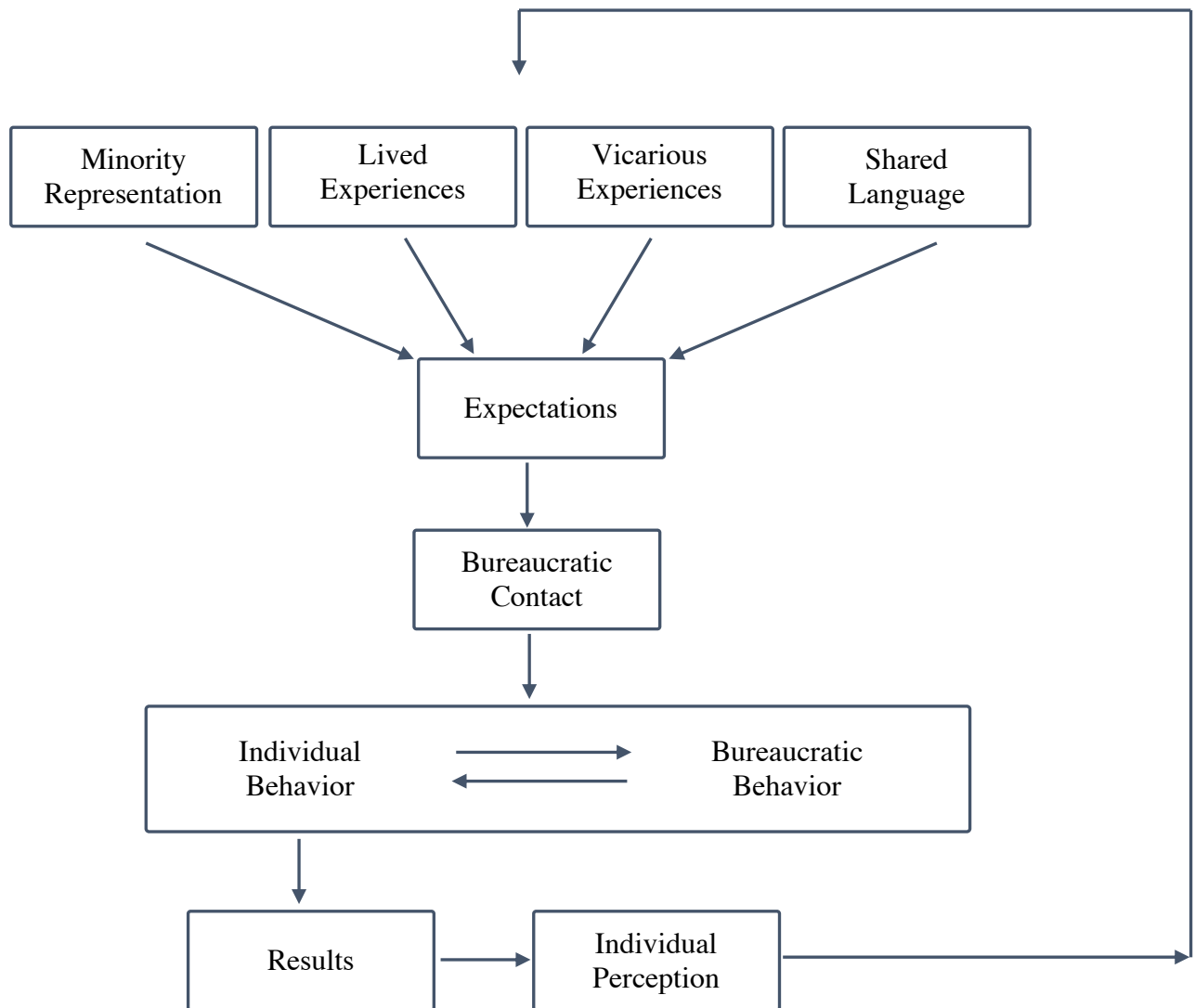
bureaucrat, but also how they perceive the end result of the interaction “rather than the actual outcome of the encounter per se” (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1035).

This points to the importance and effects of an individual’s experiences and not only the representation of their identities. Headley et al. (2021) include an individual’s lived experiences in their micro-theory of symbolic representation, including vicarious experiences in that category. In contrast to Headley et al., this study will attempt to detangle these experiences into two categories. A lived experience is experienced personally by an individual, whereas a vicarious experience is experienced by another person but an individual can relate to the imagination through the feelings or actions of the other person. Such vicarious experiences can be a story shared by a friend or a story shared widely through the media. The importance of detangling these experiences is that vicarious experiences can still trigger a result worthy of the individual to consider. One can give or take away more weight to the experience, depending on how closely one identifies with the individual in that interaction.

Another important mechanism to consider is the use of language. The representation of language is understudied in the field of public administration and representative bureaucracy. More so, the intersection of language and identity is studied among sociolinguists and social psychologists (Noels, 2014). Language skills are an important extension and indicator of identity (Fan et al., 2018; Noels, 2014). Having a shared language allows for one to manage their identity where they can lower or raise certain social and communication barriers with another. Working as an extension of one’s cultural values, a shared language can also allow for an increased perception of ethnic similarity by others (Fan et al., 2018). While it might be a challenge to accommodate for a diversity of language, it can help further increase the feeling of being understood and represented. Additionally, language can also play an important role in hindering or enhancing cooperation within an organization, as well as its performance (Chen et al., 2006; Lüdi, et al., 2010; Welch & Welch, 2008). Language inclusion and practices constructs the existing cultural and linguistic boundaries of an organization as it forms and identifies how certain cultural and linguistic group memberships are made (Yanaprasart, 2016). In this way, language can be a way to create, change, reinforce, or remove particular bridges or barriers between group members (Yanaprasart, 2016, p. 94). Nonetheless, language as a form of identity is yet to be researched in the field of public administration and representative bureaucracy.

This proposed theoretical framework of symbolic representation is much more dynamic and intersectional than previous studies that utilize race and ethnicity as their sole causal

mechanisms. Consequently, identity may not be the sole motivator for an individual perceiving a bureaucratic agency and its legitimacy in a positive light. In addition to identity, the importance and role of an individual’s lived experiences and expectations leading up to a contact with the bureaucracy should be considered more. The result of an encounter with the bureaucracy can become a lived experience and build into a feedback process between how the individual felt about the interaction (e.g. in terms of fairness, equity, etc.) and the individual’s identity (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1036). This means that symbolic representation cannot exist within a vacuum. The theory of symbolic representation proposes that the client must interpret passive representation in at least a neutral manner, if not favorable. However, symbolic representation exists alongside one’s lived experiences. Here, previous negative experiences



**Figure 1.** Theoretical Framework of Symbolic Representation

can influence an individual's expectations as "expectations for treatment rely on perceptions of past treatment—that is lived experiences, either real or vicarious" (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1036). This link to both lived and vicarious experiences may reveal more how previous treatments influence how an individual relates to a shared identity and their final perception of the bureaucratic agency.

As mentioned, symbolic representation begins with an individual's identity. How an individual relates to the shared identity of the bureaucrat can also be influenced by other factors such as lived experiences, expectations of treatment, and bureaucratic behavior. These additional factors do provide some limitations in how symbolic representation does occur. Nevertheless, it also provides more depth for exploring this process of how passive representation can provide symbolic value to citizens and its effects on public perception and trust with the bureaucracy.

### **3.2 Theoretical Propositions**

Independent and dependent variables are used to assist researchers in their explanations of a particular phenomenon and propose a specific relationship between them in doing so (Buttolph Johnson et al., 2016). An independent variable can be used to provide possible influences or behaviors of the phenomenon under study, while a dependent variable is the outcome or effect under study, thought to be caused by a function of the independent variable (Buttolph Johnson et al., 2016). For this study, the dependent variable will be the level of citizens' trust in the police force. The independent variable will be the level of minority representation within the police force.

As this study is exploratory research, it is also an attempt to understand and explore a particular topic that is new and interesting (Swedberg, 2020, p. 17). Oftentimes the answer to the research question in exploratory research is not known at the beginning and one has to wait until they are well into the research process to find an answer. However, based on the previous studies reviewed in this chapter, we have some idea of what has been studied so far and where this study can contribute. This section provides theoretical propositions that will be explored further in this study's research process. These theoretical propositions are based on previous studies and theoretical frameworks provided by Headley et al. (2020) and Riccucci and Van Ryzin (2017), but the particular causal mechanisms of these frameworks were not detailed. In this sense, the following propositions are proposed as possible causal mechanisms for how

symbolic representation affects public trust in the police. These propositions will be explored in the next chapters.

### ***3.2.1 Minority Representation***

Symbolic representation can promote greater legitimacy in government, as well as develop psychological satisfaction with the bureaucracy and its services. The main idea of symbolic representation is that the existence of passive representation within a bureaucracy should translate to benefits for citizens, without direct action from bureaucrats (Riccucci & Van Ryzin, 2017, p. 25). Thus, symbolic representation is an alternative channel of the causal process through the perceptions and behaviors of citizens and clients. The social origin of a bureaucrat can result in a type of shared identity and values between them and the citizenry, which can produce a sense of greater trust and legitimacy. This can result in more willingness for cooperation and ultimately the production of more effective and inclusive policy outcomes. Consequently, increased representation can lead to a more positive perception of the bureaucracy because of these commonalities identified by the individual and that is thought to be reflective of themselves. This results in the following proposition.

*Proposition 1 (Minority Representation) → A more (minority) representative police force will lead to a higher level of trust in the police.*

### ***3.2.2 Lived Experiences***

As mentioned, symbolic representation does not occur in a vacuum as current expectations of treatment can be based on previous experiences of treatment. These lived experiences become part of one's feedback process and inform how they expect and perceive future interactions with the bureaucracy. While Headley et al. (2021) included both categories of lived and vicarious experiences as one, this study will consider them as separate items. This is done in order to be able to better identify the influential factor of each type of experience in the causal process. While it needs to be noted that it may be hard to separate, as the experiences of others can still influence one's perception and feelings toward the bureaucracy, it can still be useful to identify if and when vicarious experiences shared through the media, for example, have an equal or greater impact than one's one personal experiences. This separation of experiences highlights the exploratory nature of this study in particular. This results in the following propositions.

*Proposition 2 (Lived Experiences) → More lived experiences with the police, either positive or negative, will lead to a higher or lower level of trust, respectively.*

*Proposition 3 (Vicarious Experiences) → More vicarious experiences of others and media platforms concerning the police, either positive or negative, will lead to a higher or lower level of trust, respectively.*

### **3.2.3 Shared Language**

Much of existing research on representative bureaucracy has been based on and limited to studying the identities of race and gender, which can provide an incomplete image of representative bureaucracy (Kennedy, 2014, p. 404). Previous systematic reviews have noted that future research should include more intersectional identities and social attributes as possible variables (Bishu & Kennedy, 2020; Kennedy, 2014, p. 405). This study proposes language to be further studied as one of these intersectional forms of identity, holding both cultural values and social context. As discussed, language is understudied in the field of public administration and representative bureaucracy. Language is an important extension of identity and indicator of certain social or cultural barriers for members of a specific group. A shared language here is theorized to be when there is a common language of use, other than English, that can be used between both a citizen and bureaucrat and allows for more services to be received by the individual. Following the logic of symbolic representation and language as a form of identity, if more bureaucrats can speak the same foreign language as the population it serves, this can lead to greater levels of trust and confidence. This can be due to other shared characteristics of identity, besides just looking like a minority population, but also encompassing other characteristics and values. This results in the following proposition.

*Proposition 4 (Shared Language) → A police force with a higher level of diverse/shared foreign language with the public will lead to a higher level of trust.*

### **3.3 Summary**

In this chapter, the theory of representative bureaucracy was explained by introducing more specifically the theoretical framework of symbolic representation, especially those proposed by Headley et al. (2021) and Riccucci and Van Ryzin (2017). In addition, propositions drawn

from this framework were produced. This study will conduct a combination of inductive and deductive research approaches by exploring the effects of this framework in the context of policing. In the next chapter, the context, data, and research methods will be expanded on. The dependent and independent variables will also be operationalized to show how they will fit into the greater study.

## **4. RESEARCH DESIGN**

In this chapter, the intended research design that will be used to investigate the research question is introduced. This thesis will conduct a qualitative analysis to provide a more in-depth view of the chosen case study to understand the proposed causal mechanisms. For this type of study, an exploratory research will be done. Twelve semi-structured interviews will be held with citizens to provide insight on their perception of the Salinas police department and what they consider when deciding to trust them.

### **4.1 Design, Method, and the Case Study**

#### ***4.1.1 Qualitative and Exploratory Study***

There is a saturation of quantitative studies in the field of representative bureaucracy (Bishu & Kennedy, 2020; Kennedy, 2014). Thus, a qualitative analysis will greatly contribute to the field of representative bureaucracy. It allows us to further understand the perceptions, experiences, and reasoning behind individuals in the representative bureaucracy process. Qualitative studies, including interviews and case studies, provide a way to explore how an individual builds their perception and go beyond simply descriptive statistics (Kennedy, 2014, p. 403).

To better achieve this, this study will also be an exploratory study and will use a combination of both inductive and deductive research approaches. Inductive research is a process that begins with empirical facts and builds up to abstract theoretical propositions (Toshkov, 2016, p. 38). This process is often known as theory generation. Deductive research is a process where one begins with abstract propositions and then tests them within an empirical reality (Toshkov, 2016, p. 39). This process follows that of theory testing. This combination of research approaches, within an exploratory framework, allows for observation and then understanding how expectations and propositions may play out in reality.

Exploratory research is, at the core, an attempt to understand and explore something new and interesting (Swedberg, 2020, p. 17). Oftentimes the answer to the research question in exploratory research is not known at the beginning and one has to wait until they are well into the research process to find an answer. While this may be risky and broad in definition, it also helps produce new knowledge and not simply repetition and replication of what is already known. This is especially useful for a research topic that may already exist but new ideas and hypotheses are still to be discovered and produced in new forms (Swedberg, 2020, p. 18). This is especially a useful method for this thesis as it strives to look at unexplored causal mechanisms to link symbolic representation in police and its effects on public trust.

Thus, this study utilizes inductive research methods by reviewing previous research and using it as a foundation. From this, possible theoretical propositions can be constructed to be tested later on. It is natural for theory generation to grow out of previous descriptive research (Toshkov, 2016, p. 38). After evaluating the key studies, reviewed earlier in Chapter 2 and 3, a basis can be constructed to build possible theoretical propositions for identifying the causal mechanisms for this study. Some of these key studies, such as Headley et al. (2021) and Riccucci and Van Ryzin (2017), do not formally identify the causal mechanisms within their theoretical frameworks. This step in this study builds on former research and explores which parts of these previous proposed frameworks can be applied in reality. This work has been mainly conducted in Chapter 2 and 3.

In addition, this study utilizes deductive research methods by later testing the proposed causal mechanisms and confirming whether these propositions align with reality or not. This particular step occurs during the interviews with citizens and after the analysis is conducted (Chapter 4 and 5). Theory testing does not always aim to confirm a theory in order to provide more information, but refutation can also reveal useful information as well (Toshkov, 2016, p. 39). By generating theoretical assumptions, and then further testing these propositions, this process is contributing to further developing and refining the theory of symbolic representation and its greater role within representative bureaucracy. As a result, this exploratory approach allows for the combination of both inductive and deductive research methods and creates a cycle of continuous observation, testing, and refinement to representative bureaucracy theory.

#### ***4.1.2 Case Description: City of Salinas, California***

This study will focus on citizen and police interaction in the city of Salinas, California in the United States of America. The city of Salinas provides an interesting case study for various reasons. The main industry of the city is agriculture and, since the mid-1800s, experienced large waves of migrant workers from different backgrounds, such as Japanese, Chinese, Filipino, and Mexican workers (City of Salinas History, n.d.; Seavey, 2010). As many of these families began to settle into the area, their future generations now make up a large portion of the surrounding area's population. The current demographics of Salinas is 79.2% Hispanic or Latino, 12.1% White (no Latino or Hispanic), 6.4% Asian, and 2.3% Black or other race (United States Census Bureau, 2021). It is also projected that 71.5% of families in Salinas speak another foreign language other than English at home (United States Census Bureau,

2021). Based on this census data of Salinas and history of migration from Mexico and South America, it can be assumed that one of the major foreign languages spoken at home is Spanish.

The Salinas City Police Department also has an interesting demographic background. The demographics of the Salinas City Police Department (PD) is 48.9% Hispanic, 40.6% White, 2.1% Black, and 8.4 % Other Races (Police Service of Salinas, 2021, p. 9). Also, according to their 2021 Annual Report, 41.3% of their police force also speaks the Spanish language (Police Service of Salinas, 2021, p. 9). This provides an additional factor that can bring a unique perspective to this study. As noted by Bishu & Kennedy (2020), there is a need for future research to look into representation in terms of intersectional identities, as well as forms of demographic identities other than only gender and race (p. 583). In comparison to neighboring cities, such as Monterey and Carmel, the demographics of the citizens and the police department in Salinas are more diverse and representative of its population. Furthermore, the city of Salinas has had a history of high rate of violent crime and gang violence, which indicates that the citizen interaction with the police is high (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2019; Szydlowski, 2018). Therefore, the city of Salinas provides an interesting and favorable case study for symbolic representation.

**Table 2.** City and Police Department Descriptive Statistics (2021)

	Salinas Citizens	Salinas Police Department
Population/Department Size	162,791	143
Racial and ethnic breakdown		
Hispanic or Latino	79.2%	48.9%
White	12.1%	40.6%
Black	1.4%	2.1%
Asian	6.4%	-
Other	0.9%	8.4%

#### **4.1.3 Interviews**

The main research method for data collection in this study will be the use of interviews. Interviews are a prominent method of collecting data in qualitative studies, in which questions are used to find out answers (Halperin & Heath, 2020). This allows for further investigation in one’s thoughts, feelings, motivations, and experiences. This research method is appropriate for the study as it provides a method to achieve exactly what the research question is investigating: what causal mechanisms affect or limit symbolic representation on citizens' trust towards the police? As this study involves citizens, using interviews provides a direct way to learn and ask

about how citizens formulate their trust towards others. They provide detailed, often specialized information from a number of individuals (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 310). While one may not be able to make generalizations with the use of interviews, using interviews can provide a way to explore nuances across a variety of individuals and, thus, to gain a depth of knowledge (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 310).

The interviews will be semi-structured, using a combination of structured questions (to obtain factual information) and unstructured questions (to probe deeper into people's experiences) (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 313). An interview guide was created to help guide the interviews, which lists a combination of structured and unstructured interview questions to further explore the citizens' thought process and feelings towards the police (see Appendix A). All of the interviews were conducted online, using the platform of Microsoft Teams or Zoom. This was done because of time and cost limitations that restricted the researcher to travel to Salinas, CA to conduct in-person interviews. Nonetheless, the researcher aimed to provide a comfortable setting to allow the interviewees to freely express and share their thoughts. The interviews were conducted in English, as the researcher's Spanish abilities are limited and not enough to conduct an entire interview in Spanish as a second option. The average duration of the interviews was 37 minutes, with the shortest being 18 minutes and the longest being an hour and two minutes.

A sample size between 12 and 30 should be sufficiently large enough to reveal key patterns and understand common perceptions (Creswell, 2007; Saunders, 2012). Thus, this study will aim to collect at least 12 interviews to provide sufficient enough data for a representation of the population. This is also done due to the time restriction of a master's thesis. Key respondent attributes will be kept in mind. These will include a variation in age, gender, ethnicity, language spoken, and educational level. Table 3 provides an overview of the characteristics of the study's sample group.

**Table 3.** Characteristics of Qualitative Sample

	Salinas, CA	
	n=12	Percent
<b>Race/Ethnicity*</b>		
Asian/Pacific Islander*	2	16.7
Black/African American*	1	8.3
Hispanic/Latino/Chicano	5	41.7
Middle Eastern/North African	1	8.3
White	4	33.3
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	7	58.3
Male	5	41.7
<b>Age</b>		
26-30	6	50
31-35	0	0
36-40	1	8.3
41-45	2	16.7
46-50	0	0
51-55	1	8.3
56-60	1	8.3
61-65	1	8.3
<b>Education</b>		
Some college credit	1	8.3
Associate degree	1	8.3
Bachelor's degree	7	58.3
Graduate degree	3	25
<b>Primary Language</b>		
English	10	83.3
Spanish	2	16.7
<b>Secondary Language</b>		
Bulgarian	2	16.7
English	2	16.7
Farsi	1	8.3
German	1	8.3
Spanish	3	25
Tagalog	1	8.3
Vietnamese	1	8.3
None	1	8.3
<b>Years Living in Salinas</b>		
11-15	7	58.3
16-20	2	16.7
21-25	1	8.3
26-30	0	0
31+	2	16.7

\*One interviewee identified with more than one race/ethnicity group.

## **4.2 Operationalization**

As introduced in Chapter 3, several propositions were presented after the overview of previous studies. These propositions include particular variables that will be explored as causal mechanisms for the citizens building trust in police. This section will explain how these variables will be identified and measured for our analysis.

When using interviews as a method of data collection, the collected data first needs to be processed before it can be further analyzed and be able to draw any final conclusions. Generally, this process includes the steps of data reduction, coding, and drawing conclusions (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 329). The first step, data reduction, refers to selecting, simplifying, and transforming the given data in order to observe redundancies and identify the most interesting parts that need to be analyzed. This step is done during the transcription of interviews and creating profiles of each interviewee (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 329). Because this research is using interviews that are semi-structured, this includes the use of both structured and unstructured interview questions. While the use of unstructured interview questions allows for more exploration, it is also not as easy to code or quantify compared to structured questions or data collected from a survey.

There can be variation in the interview responses so providing a coding framework is essential in order to properly organize and interpret the information (see Appendix C). Different sections of the interview guide have been categorized as to which causal mechanism they refer to. With the coding framework, depending on the interviewee's answer, a level of high, moderate, low, or none will be assigned depending on the presence of the causal mechanism in the answers given during the interview. Such a coding guide also allows for the researcher to note the types of differences in answers among interviews. Thus, particular categories, themes, and motifs that identify any patterns and relationships will be created to better organize, interpret, and analyze the data (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 329). It will also help to create certain profiles of each interviewee, which can also provide a summary of their background, experiences, and opinions (see Appendix D). To do this, this study will create various categories to help identify and reflect the causal mechanisms and other variables that are to be studied.

## **4.3 Data Collection and Limitations**

When using interviews or surveys as a means of data collection for a study, there can be the issue of sampling design (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 296). These types of research methods

rely on samples of the intended population to act as a general representation of what we wish to study. For data collection, this study will use snowball sampling in order to collect interviews. Snowball sampling is a use of non-probability sampling that is used often in qualitative studies and used when it is hard to reach the population of interest (Halperin & Heath, 2020, p. 300). However, the use of the snowball sampling in collecting interviews presents a limitation. This type of sampling can introduce a level of bias as it involves finding respondents who meet some level of criteria of interest, but can belong to similar groups. This limitation is also due to time restrictions that are inherent within a master's thesis and the difficulty in reaching out to citizens. Therefore, a purely random sampling of the population was unable to be done. However, this thesis tries to control for this limitation by keeping the research question and purpose in consideration. This is done by allowing for variation within the selected interviewee sample, keeping in mind the various key respondent attributes and assuring enough variation amongst them. Therefore, this keeps the sample selection from being based solely on the researcher's personal judgement. With this case selection, there is a high level of internal validity, but may lead to a low level of external validity.

Another limitation with this case selection is that there may be some overlap in citizen interaction with police departments from neighboring cities with different levels of representation. It is impossible to isolate citizens' experiences to only include interactions within the city limit. Citizens will interact with others from different cities and with different types of police officers that may influence one's thoughts and expectations. Additionally, the media can influence one's thoughts regarding law enforcement when hearing certain narratives. This limitation is acknowledged and is one of the main focuses within the research to identify and disentangle different paths of information that influence a citizen's thought and trust process towards the police. Finally, the sensitivity of the topic can be challenging. Participants may be hesitant or unwilling to express their honest thoughts or share their experiences. This presents itself as bias in answers and may not give a full picture to what is being studied.

#### **4.4 Summary**

As an exploratory and qualitative study, this thesis will conduct interviews as part of its data collection. Twelve semi-structured interviews were conducted with residents from Salinas, California in the US. The focus on Salinas provides an interesting case study for a few reasons: (1) high crime rate, (2) predominant Hispanic population, and (3) high Hispanic representation in the city's police. For the interviews, snowball sampling will be used to gather interview

participants mainly due to the time restrictions a master's thesis presents. Nonetheless, the interview sample group provides a variation in age, gender, education, and language. After the interviews are conducted, a coding framework will be used to indicate the different levels of importance and presence of the causal mechanisms in the given answers. The next chapter will present the findings of the interviews and trends in answers regarding the importance of representation in the police.

## 5. FINDINGS

This chapter will provide an overview of themes and patterns in the responses from the twelve interviews conducted. A closer look into similarities and differences in responses, as well as nuances, will also be discussed.

### 5.1 Regarding Representation and Identity

Symbolic representation follows the idea that it can operate independently of bureaucratic action behavior (Headley et al., 2021). During the study's interviews, this idea could be seen, but not without its limits. For this, the interviewees were asked their thoughts on representation, identity, and the importance of seeing this reflected within the police. All interviewees expressed that minority representation is of high importance to them. Furthermore, all interviewees agreed that it was important for representation to be included in a bureaucratic agency such as the police. Some responses to explain the reasoning include:

- *“In order for the government and the government’s representatives to serve the people, they have to understand their cultural background”* (Interview 1)
- *“I feel that not alot of higher places of institutions really realize how important how marginalized individuals in groups are...It is very important how they are represented because sometimes—they don’t advocate—or can’t advocate—their concerns out of fear”* (Interview 3)
- *“I would say, yes, it is highly important. Just as a reminder that we live in a society that is rapidly diverse demographically”* (Interview 6)
- *“It’s important to have that representation so that even community members feel comfortable reaching out to law enforcement”* (Interview 7)
- *“I feel like every minority, or every race, should be comfortable and be represented. Like feeling comfortable in talking to someone who they can relate to”* (Interview 8)
- *“Historically, the police force has been White and it was created to be a source of oppression for minorities... So if you can’t relate to the police or match their identities, it’s going to lead to more distrust and conflict that could be easily avoided”* (Interview 12)

In summary, a common theme among the interview group was that representation is important because it is a way to allow the public to feel more comfortable and able to relate with those serving in the police or government. Additionally, representation can also provide a sense of

respect and confidence for citizens that are afraid of voicing their opinion. It seems that representation can reduce the perceived gap between citizens and the bureaucracy.

However, when asked about the importance of representation of their own background within the Salinas police, answers varied. The interviewee group included individuals that identified as different race and ethnicity groups: 5 as Hispanic, 4 as White, 1 as Asian, 1 as Asian and Black, and 1 as Middle Eastern. At some point in every interview, interviewees acknowledged the dominant Hispanic community in Salinas. This reflected in responses, as interviewees emphasized that the priority of representation should be of the community in Salinas, which is mainly Hispanic, rather than their own identities. Interviewee 3, a non-Hispanic, states *“I don’t mind being represented... The only thing I would mind or care for is if there is more representation in the police force of the community that is most prevalent here”*. Interviewee 4 also states *“80% of what I see on the news, the police interactions are with the Spanish-speaking community. So I feel that they should be represented because they are the ones most impacted by the police”*. This seemed to emphasize the support and need for community building.

Interviewees that identified as Hispanic built upon the idea of community as well. One interviewee mentioned:

*“I think when there is representation in the police force, there’s also an understanding of the community itself. When there is not as much representation, there can be a lot of assumptions, a lot of ways that the police can’t necessarily connect with the people they’re trying to serve. It leads to a state of mistrust... Growing up, just seeing them having contact with the police when there was that representation there, I saw they were more comfortable”* (Interview 7).

Four interviewees identifying as Hispanic mentioned that when encountering other Hispanic police officers at community events also makes them feel more comfortable to interact with the police and that they might be better understood (Interview 5, 7, 8, 11). This was especially true in situations when the police officer shared some cultural connection with the interviewee, such as having the same hometown in Mexico or being able to speak Spanish (Interview 5, 7, 8). Two interviewees also expressed that Hispanic representation was important to them, especially in the case for their parents or other relatives interacting in the community as they did not speak any English (Interview 8, 11).

Race and ethnicity was not the only factor mentioned for interviewees to feel understood by the Salinas police. Other forms of identity were used to express the feeling of

representation, or lack of representation. Lack of gender representation, particularly lack of female representation, as other form of identity was mentioned by five interviewees (Interview 1, 4, 8, 11, 12). Two interviewees in particular noted that female representation is important because being stopped by a female police officer makes them feel more comfortable and safer than with a male police officer (Interview 8, 11). Two male interviewees expressed they only felt represented by their gender but did not feel represented by their culture or values (Interview 2, 9). This feeling was echoed by multiple other interviewees, stating that they don't agree with the way the Salinas police have treated victims and suspected offenders, or that they don't agree with the institutional structure of the overall police system (Interview 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 12). For example, one interviewee expressed that seeing someone from the same race might bring slight comfort, but that doesn't always make them feel more understood. Instead, relating to similar moral characteristics can bring a better sense of comfort and like-mindedness (Interview 2). Additionally, one interviewee commented they never believed in the "the old boy network" culture that is prevalent in the police (Interview 4). Another interesting form of identity mentioned was also that of educational level, where one interviewee viewed this as a possible extension of common lived experiences (Interview 6).

In summary, representation of race and ethnicity in the Salinas police seems to have a positive effect to some level. It was expressed that minority representation was of high importance and that it made them feel more comfortable and understood, though perhaps more on a subconscious level. An interesting theme that echoed through multiple interviews was the emphasis on representation of the Hispanic community in Salinas. Representation seemed to be one manner to build community, which was indicated as more important than strict representation of the individual interviewee. Other forms of identities besides race and ethnicity were mentioned as equally important. This included gender, values and morals, and educational level. These other identities can also form a type of shared experiences and sense of belonging. This indicates that a common background based solely on race or ethnicity may not always result in shared experiences, but can be one of many factors.

## **5.2 Regarding Lived and Vicarious Experiences**

### ***5.2.1 Lived Experiences***

Interviewees expressed a mixture of positive and negative experiences with the police. When asked about the extent of their interaction with the Salinas police, three individuals answered "none", eight individuals answered "low", and one individual answered "high". When asked if

they feel safe being served by the Salinas police, one individual answered “none”, nine individuals answered “moderate”, and two individuals answered “high”. Positive perceptions of the Salinas police seemed to be mainly passive personal interaction, where interactions were either short or observed. This may indicate that the Salinas police has a very strong public presence. Four of the twelve interviewees commented that they have seen or interacted with police officers at various city and community events, resource fairs in schools, and community athletic leagues (Interview 1, 4, 5, 8). One interviewee commented that seeing the Salinas police representatives at the community celebration for Dia de los Muertos allowed for more engagement, stating that *“a lot of the time you see police, and they don’t want to talk and to give space. But no, they’re real people just like you and me”* (Interview 5). It seems one reason for appreciating the presence of Salinas police at these events is that such events allow for more comfortable, less tense, and low stakes interaction.

In spite of that, this was the extent of positive remarks as there were much more negative feelings shared during the interviews. One individual who had a negative interaction was in response to a home burglary, where they had to wait more than two hours for an officer to respond (Interview 4). The interviewee attributed this to their lack of attention and sense of urgency, as well as maybe living in a less affluent neighborhood in Salinas. Another interviewee expressed strong negative feelings toward the Salinas police, and the general police system, criticizing how they and other victims have been disrespectfully treated by the police (Interview 9). Speaking from their experience, they viewed that the main purpose of the police system is to put people in jail, and that *“they’re not going to prevent someone from doing harm to me. They’re just going to address it after the fact”* (Interview 9).

### ***5.2.2 Vicarious Experiences***

Furthermore, additional negative feelings were expressed, but through vicarious experiences. Every interviewee mentioned the news or social media as one of the main ways that they have interacted or heard about the police. This also included a few mentions of police reality shows and podcasts, such as Cops, that featured police activity and crimes in Salinas (Interview 2, 6). For example, interviewee 6 learned through a podcast about a Salinas police officer that was fired, but then rehired in a nearby city. He also learned that not all Salinas police officers lived in Salinas, but that some came from outside of the city as far as Gilroy, indicating these officers were not local and not familiar with the community's experiences or culture. This tarnished the

public image of the Salinas police department for him, having built up a sense of wariness and doubtfulness regarding their transparency.

An interesting mention was the social media presence of the Salinas police department. Four interviews noted the Salinas police's social media accounts as a great general way to stay informed about the current safety situation in the city (Interview 3, 5, 7, 8). However, two individuals specifically disapproved of the department's Facebook and Instagram accounts regarding the inappropriate language and caption descriptions the department used. They stated that this showed a lack of professionalism and ill intent. One interviewee describes their thoughts on a Facebook post where the Salinas police captioned a photo of an arrested individual with a joke about their appearance:

*“Even though it was an individual that is gang affiliated or has unregistered firearms or has substances that shouldn't be allowed, I still don't think that it's right to dehumanize a person, even though they did something wrong. I agree it was wrong for whatever they arrested them for, I have no opinion on that. I think that the response from the police department should be more informative, a learning opportunity. Maybe something else than doing a mockery. At least let them be arrested with dignity”* (Interview 3).

Another interview comments on the Salinas police department's Instagram account:

*“I feel like there's a lot more going on in the community and it helps shed some light, I guess. But I feel like the attitude, or some of the language on how some of it is presented, it makes me feel like some of the officers or police force in general can have an ill intent. I don't know if that makes sense, but that's what makes me feel a bit uneasy. It's showing me how they think about things and that's not how I think they should view things”* (Interview 7).

The two interviewees continued to say that seeing such unprofessional actions from the Salinas police simply reinforce negative perceptions about police that they might hear elsewhere. They noted that such behavior by the police did not meet their expectations and was not a good representation of what police should stand for or how they should act. Seeing such negative actions, as well as those portrayed by the news, reinforces any negativity or suspicions already present towards the police.

### ***5.2.3 Trust in the Salinas Police***

From this combination of experiences, there also seems to be mixed levels of trust in the Salinas police. Interviewees were asked if they trust the Salinas police department. The average score was a 3 out of 5, indicating either a neutral or indifferent position. The highest answer to this question was a 4.5, indicating that they trust the police, and the lowest was a 1, indicating that they greatly distrust the police. One common response was that the interviewees did not have a lot of personal experience or interaction with the Salinas police and have not had the need to call the police for help (Interview 3, 4, 8). Another common response was that they have a general positive perception of the Salinas police, but know that they are not perfect and more can be done (Interview 2, 6, 7, 10). Other responses included a great distrust in the general police system (Interview 9, 12), general anxiety about police and their share of institutional power (Interview 3, 6, 9, 11), and that the Salinas police is not the perfect representation of their morals and values (Interview 2, 4, 9).

Interviewees were further asked if their opinion about representation affects their level of trust in the Salinas police. Four individuals indicated “high”, two indicated “moderate”, two indicated “low”, and four indicated “none”. Those that answered with a “high” or “moderate” expressed that seeing representation in the Salinas police force makes them feel more comfortable, more understood, and more able to relate with the officers based on a shared culture, language, or life experience. One interviewee stated that seeing any type of representation, even if it’s not their own, indicates that the police department is trying to understand the community, and this is a positive effort (Interview 12). For those that answered with a “low” or “none”, various reasons were given. One interviewee emphasized the importance of shared morals and values rather than racial representation (Interview 2). Another interviewee, who identified as White, commented “*I think that the people that represent me are not the people who are necessarily out there doing the day to day work*” (Interview 4). Another response was that the interviewee valued more their trust in the police to be impartial officers of law and to serve everyone (Interview 5, 10).

Another repeated response was the role of unconscious bias and that seeing someone who looked like them would make them feel more at ease. Interviewee 6 commented that it’s a “*sort of a reflection of an idea in my head that ‘Oh, this person might understand me or get me’ or had a similar upbringing*” (Interview 6). He also commented “*I would be anxious a little bit if the officer was White or not White, but probably on a subconscious level a little less anxious with a White officer*” (Interview 6). Interviewee 9 also shared similar feelings, but drew an important line: “*I think when representation is there, you’re more likely to trust. And so, I*

*know that if I saw someone who looked more like me, I would immediately be less on guard than if someone didn't... But I still wouldn't trust them*" (Interviewee 9). He continued, *"I think if you just have one more officer that views Brown people as them and not as "other", then you're in a great space... [But] I will always see the uniform before I see the race"* (Interview 9). Representation can positively impact one's trust in the police, even on an unconscious level, but it seems to have its limits. This is especially true when there have been existing negative experiences with the police and get reinforced with further negative perceptions.

### **5.3 Regarding Shared Language**

This section of the interview included questions pertaining to having a shared language between citizens and the police. The different types of languages represented among the interviewees included English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, German, Farsi, and Bulgarian. Of the interviewees, five individuals spoke Spanish, the dominant language spoken by citizens in Salinas besides English (Interview 5, 7, 8, 9, 11). Of these five individuals, two identified Spanish as their primary language of use (Interview 5, 8). Besides using Spanish for grocery shopping, both individuals mentioned they have also used Spanish when interacting with police in casual settings such as community or school events. Interviewee 8 stated that using Spanish allows for her to feel a higher level of trust, making her feel more comfortable. This is especially true when she thinks of her parents, who do not speak English, and would need help in translating if there were no other Spanish speakers present (Interview 8, 11). Additionally, interviewee 5 states that being able to speak Spanish allows her to better express herself and feel more confident. When interacting with the police in Spanish, she met an officer from her hometown in Mexico where they continued to share memories and shopping recommendations. In this case, a combination of representation and language helped to build a better connection for these individuals.

Nonetheless, all interviewees expressed a high level of importance and support regarding the representation of language in the police. All interviews acknowledged that among the dominant Hispanic community in Salinas, there might be people who cannot speak English fluently. Thus, police officers that speak some basic level of Spanish should be a critically important requirement for the city's police department. One individual commented with the following response:

*"It's not only important, but I think it's critical. How does someone come to your door when there's a problem at home and you can't communicate with them? Then, how are*

*you to trust them and know they will help you?...If they don't speak the language, then it's like speaking to a mute. They have no idea what they're saying to them. You may have a major crisis and how are they going to help you if they can't understand what the crisis is?"* (Interview 4).

Interestingly, interviewees mainly commented that having a shared language between citizens and police officers would mainly be beneficial on a practical and technical level. This mainly refers to reducing the possibility of miscommunication and misunderstanding in interactions with the police, especially during tense situations. For some, eliminating miscommunication and misunderstanding can help avoid arrest or even loss of life. One interviewee stated:

*"Being in a community that primarily speaks Spanish, I think it would be beneficial for the police department – for all of them – to learn to speak Spanish, or even try to learn some Spanish, because I think that it would have lower risks of confusion, lower risks of assuming, lower risks of arrest"* (Interview 3).

Another interviewee stated:

*"Police have shot a lot of people in Salinas...the homie with shears walking in the street or a couple of other situations – there was a language barrier. And when you can't communicate and someone is doing something weird and you're not understanding, then everything sounds threatening...It's important when you're facing these types of situations, where people can be hurt and where tensions can be high, it's just a pivotal thing to save people's lives"* (Interview 9).

As expressed in the words of the interviewees, having a shared language with the bureaucracy can have positive effects, both in a cultural and technical sense.

## **5.4 Summary**

From the data gathered in the interviews, various key findings are uncovered. First, representation is perceived to be an important public topic. This confirms that representation is important, but it can have its limits. Representation helps make people feel understood and more comfortable in approaching the police, additionally hinting at the role of unconscious bias. But representation in police alone might not be enough, and its effects can possibly be strengthened when in combination with other identities or a positive public image. Second, public perceptions and expectations of the police are an important consideration. The different ways an individual experiences and interacts with the police, directly or indirectly, can influence how the public trusts the police. The way in which these experiences amplify positive

or negative feelings towards the police, as well as expectations of them, needs to be further reviewed and understood.

## 6. ANALYSIS

Having presented the findings in the previous chapter, this section will present an analysis of the data collected in the interviews and identify the connections between the theoretical propositions from this study and the expectations from the reviewed literature. As this study is an explorative study, the research's objective is to explore whether symbolic representation has an effect on public trust in the police and what are its limits. If symbolic representation is found to have an effect, then in what way and under what causal mechanisms does it occur? Through what identities does one feel represented and which values are present? If it's not found to have an effect, then what else is happening? Below will provide a discussion and analysis into these questions.

### 6.1 Symbolic Representation

As introduced before, symbolic representation builds on the importance of shared values and a shared identity between the public and the bureaucracy. In this manner, symbolic representation can reinforce perceptions of legitimacy and higher satisfaction in the government and their services (Gade & Wilkins, 2013; Theobald & Haider-Markel, 2009). In this study, we can see some achievement of this theoretical expectation.

The study presented the following proposition: *Proposition 1* → *A more (minority) representative police force will lead to a higher level of trust in the police.* As mentioned, all interviews indicated that minority representation is of high importance to them, especially when related to the police. However, answers varied when asked the importance of representation of their own background in the police and instead emphasized that representation of the community is most important, that being the dominant Hispanic community. Interviewees reasoned that because they are the most dominant members of the community in Salinas with a lot of history in the area, it is only fair that they are represented. Nonetheless, all interviews built on the idea of representation as a form of community building and improving community relations. This was an interesting trend to observe, as benefits of minority representation does not seem to be limited to a singular or individual experience. This may suggest that minority representation can be beneficial and a positive experience for all members of community, minorities and non-minorities. Understandably, context is important for understanding the benefits of symbolic representation (Van Ryzin et al., 2017). This might be only true because there is currently an equal representation of Hispanics and Whites in the Salinas police department. For example, if Hispanic representation in the Salinas police was to

reach 80% and match the city demographics, this may produce different feelings or perceptions from non-minorities. Because historically White individuals have benefitted from the police and not have been unjustly treated, perhaps the expectation is that this will continue unchanged when there is high representation of White individuals (Headley et al., 2021).

Those that did identify as Hispanic did appreciate the representation in the police, stating that seeing this representation made them feel more comfortable, more understood, and more able to approach a police officer who might be Hispanic. This follows previous studies, such as Meier and Nicholson-Crotty (2006) and Gade and Wilkins (2013), where minority representation allows for a shared identity, leading to increased levels of trust and satisfaction. This was especially true for one interviewee who was born and raised in Salinas and did not meet other cultures until they attended university (Interview 8). Because their previous lived experiences mainly were with their Hispanic community growing up, seeing the representation in the Salinas police strongly builds a shared lived experience that they do appreciate.

Interestingly, White individuals also expressed appreciating some benefits from White representation when interacting with White officers. Interviewees did acknowledge that White police officers, as non-minorities, have historically and politically possessed a larger share of the institutional power than they should. Nonetheless, they did express a sense of ease when interacting with White officers, though probably as a sort of unconscious bias. This follows the study by Theobald and Haider-Markel (2009), which suggests that the benefits from symbolic representation can be felt by both minorities and non-minorities. While Theobald and Haider-Markel refer to higher perceptions of legitimacy, this cannot fully be confirmed here as this was not specifically asked in the interviews. Even so, benefits from representation can be seen here on both sides.

When considering Proposition 1 presented in this study, benefits from a more (minority) representative police force can be seen. For those participating in this study and identifying as Hispanic, the symbolic representation did seem to result in a generally higher level of trust, or at least a higher level of comfort (as stated in their words). Thus, having a shared identity and background can be seen as influential here. However, representation of race and ethnicity alone has a limited effect in its symbolic value. Instead, the combination and intersection of different types of identities can help increase the symbolic value for an individual and more positively influence their level of trust in the police.

Another benefit from representation could be seen on a community level. As mentioned, symbolic representation works through an alternate causal process through the

perceptions and behaviors of citizens and clients (Ricucci & Van Ryzin, 2017). The selected case study of Salinas provided an interesting perspective into this. From the interview sample, community seems to be highly valued. This suggests that if the community perceives a Salinas police force that is more representative of the community itself, this can produce a higher level of trust and perception of legitimacy for all. The effects of symbolic representation do not have to focus on the experiences and feelings of solely the individual, but also on a group level. Although the community is predominantly minority, being Hispanic, this sentiment was seen to be true for both minorities and non-minorities (Theobald and Haider-Markel, 2009).

## **6.2 Extent of Lived and Vicarious Experiences**

In Headley et al.'s (2021) study, the categories of lived and vicarious experiences were categorized together as "lived experiences". Though noted as difficult, this study attempts to separate these two types of experiences from each other to better identify if and when one plays a more dominant role than the other in influencing an individual's trust in the police. While lived experiences can greatly influence how one builds their perception and feelings towards the bureaucracy, vicarious experiences can also have a great impact.

The study presented the following proposition for lived experiences: *Proposition 2* → *More lived experiences with the police, either positive or negative, will lead to a higher or lower level of trust, respectively.* The effect of lived experiences is undoubtedly important in understanding how it plays into the extent of benefits of symbolic representation. However, deciphering the extent of lived experiences and their effect for this interview sample was a bit difficult. The difficulty faced may come from three reasons: the small sample size, the sensitivity of the interview topic, and possible social desirability bias. First, the sample size might be too small to include a large enough variety of direct experiences with the police. Second, the nature of the study and the interview's topic is sensitive, and people might be hesitant to go into detail about their experiences with the police. Third, there might be a level of social desirability bias present, where one tends to give responses that would be viewed more positively and acceptable socially (Bergen & Labonté, 2020). At least three interviewees expressed some type of nervousness or apprehension talking about the police before or during the interviews, stating "I'm a good person, I don't call the police" (Interview 1, 5, 8). Interviewees were reminded that the interviews were simply part of data collection for the thesis and they were allowed to share their honest opinions to the extent they were comfortable,

but the sensitivity of the topic still was present. These two challenges must be taken into account, especially in future research.

After reviewing the interactions with the Salinas police of the study's interview group, lived experiences can be divided into direct lived experiences and passive lived experiences. In the entire interview group, only four mentioned explicitly that they had direct interactions with the Salinas police, either because of a traffic incident that required the police's assistance or being stopped by the police (Interview 4, 6, 8, 9). Of these direct interactions, one was expressed as positive and three as negative. The positive experience was due to the helpfulness and kind treatment of the police officer in helping deal with the accident. However, the negative experiences ranged from a lack of attention and sense of urgency to the situation to the mistreatment due to race. Another interesting response was that no experience with the police is a positive experience, but leaving safely and unharmed from a police interaction is always considered positive. This was mentioned explicitly by two interviewees, also referring to the expectation a police interaction would end negatively due to the unpredictability of an interaction and the bureaucratic power police hold (Interview 3 and 6). Another response pointed out the institutional history of the police (Interview 9, 12).

As mentioned, another observation was that the majority of lived experiences for this interview sample was that of passive experiences. This means that either an individual interacted with the Salinas police in public events, but not necessarily direct interaction as if for an accident. The majority of interviewees stated that they observed the Salinas police having a strong public presence at community events, thus having people feel that there is a smaller gap between the police and citizens. This suggests that having a positively perceived public presence can lead to a higher level of trust and sense of successful job fulfillment. Thus, public image and public perception seems to play an important role in public trust in this process, especially when one might have little direct experience with the police.

As suggested in Headley et al.'s (2021) micro-theory of symbolic representation, the combination of an individual's identity and lived experiences can create particular expectations when interacting with a bureaucratic agency. Expectations can be positive or negative regardless of the bureaucracy's identity. This also means that it is important how an individual perceives the end result of the interaction with the bureaucracy rather than the actual outcome (Headley et al., 2021, p. 1035). The overall findings provide an interesting combination of results. As the proposition suggests, it seems that more positive experiences can lead to a higher level of trust. This was seen mainly in the passive lived experiences. This also seemed true that

negative experiences can lead to a lower level of trust, but even more strongly. This was seen especially in the direct lived experiences. Expectations seem to play a larger role for negative experiences, magnifying any preconceived notions of or previous experiences with the police.

The study presented the following proposition for vicarious experiences: *Proposition 3* → *More vicarious experiences of others and media platforms concerning the police, either positive or negative, will lead to a higher or lower level of trust, respectively.* From the interview sample, it was observed that social media played an important role in building their perception of the Salinas police. Both positives and negatives were mentioned about the Salinas police's social media accounts. Positive comments expressed appreciation for the Salinas police department in sharing information and updates about current safety situations. Individuals expressed that they felt more knowledgeable about current events in the city. Negative comments focused on the inappropriate use of language for caption descriptions for their posts.

Every interviewee did mention that the news was one of the main media platforms in which they are exposed to information about the police, but no one gave further comments about the news. This might point to an interesting difference between news reports and social media accounts for influencing an individual's feelings and perception towards bureaucracy. As opposed to news reports prepared by an outside news network, social media accounts are managed and written by the police departments themselves. In this sense, the police department has a higher degree of control in what type of content they share and post. They have control in the narrative, how they represent themselves, and these accounts can be seen as an extension of the police department. In this case, the use of language and caption descriptions was criticized. The effects of how the Salinas police is perceived on their social media may influence one's perception of them even more negatively than a news report because the content is coming directly from the police department

For this proposition, it seems to be true especially when considering news and social media platforms. For those that consumed positive news and stories about the Salinas police, this seemed to result in positive, or at least neutral, feelings. For those that consumed negative news and stories, it seemed to reinforce negative feelings or wariness. Overall, this points to the importance of public image and public perception for the police. This is especially true when content is produced by the police themselves. For example, Interviewee 7 points out that seeing such action by the police went against their expectations of an impartial police and began

to doubt their intentions. This presents a clash of reality and expectations, diminishing the level of trust.

### **6.3 Extent of Shared Languages**

This study presented the following proposition: *Proposition 4* → *A police force with a higher level of diverse/shared foreign language with the public will lead to a higher level of trust.* At first, this proposition was constructed with the idea that a shared language would build a stronger public trust through a shared cultural connection or background. In this sense, language would act as another form of identity. From the data collected during the interviews, the effects of this proposition seem to be limited. The extent to which having a shared language can affect public trust in the police is unclear in this study, mainly due to the small number of interviewees which spoke Spanish as a primary language. Additionally, these interviewees were fluent in both English and Spanish, thus not making one language more important than the other as they could use both without trouble (Interview 1, 5).

Even so, those that did speak a secondary language (Spanish and Vietnamese) expressed that a shared language would be perceived positively. For Interviewee 3, who spoke Vietnamese, it was indicated that a bureaucratic agency being able to speak their language allows for more understanding of cultural nuances and their background. This was especially true when translating for their non-English speaking parents, so that misunderstandings would be avoided. This was echoed by interviewees 5, 8, and 11 who mentioned that speaking in their native language (Spanish) allowed them (as well as their parents) to feel more comfortable and better express themselves. Accordingly, shared language can be observed to be an extension of a shared culture or background in these instances. It can also be perceived as a communication tool to reduce miscommunication and misunderstandings, referring to a more technical role than cultural.

In addition, having the police speak a shared language with the greater community was received very positively by all interviewees. This interestingly refers back to the high value of community in the study's interview sample. The importance of context can be an explanation for this observation. As indicated by Riccucci and Van Ryzin (2017), symbolic representation and real-life implications from policy making are interconnected. The interview group seems to greatly consider the dominant population of Salinas. The predominant Hispanic population are the most vulnerable in this situation and have the most to lose or win if more Salinas police officers were to speak more Spanish. Again, this refers to a greater technical role of a shared

language as it has more potential to reduce misunderstandings and defuse tense situations. In a situation where your life can be at risk, this is important. The interview group seemed to be aware of this and can affect the police's public image. A shared language can be another consideration when perceiving the police, especially in a more diverse community. Thus, a shared language can lead to a higher level of public trust, though to what extent is hard to say with the limited observations in this study.

#### **6.4 Answering the Research Question**

This thesis asked the following research question: Does symbolic representation have an effect on public trust in the police? If it does, in what way and under what causal mechanisms does symbolic representation occur? As an exploratory study, four theoretical propositions were presented as possible causal mechanisms for this process. Discussed above, all propositions were observed to some positive extent in this study. First, minority representation was considered as a possible influence on public trust. This was positively observed where individuals felt more comfort and the hope that they would be more understood when seeing representation of their background in the police. Representation was expressed by interviewees by different identities, going beyond race and ethnicity, to include representation of one's morals and level of education. It was also observed that the increase of minority representation can lead to increased trust for both minorities and non-minorities. This suggests that context is important, especially for building a sense of community, as the interview group was aware of Salinas' dominant Hispanic population and the power dynamics between minorities and the police. Thus, increased minority representation can be one avenue to increase public trust, on an individual and community level.

Second, lived and vicarious experiences were considered. Here, the two types of experiences were explored separately and the respective propositions were positively observed. An individual's expectations played a role in the effects of both types of experiences. When one had positive experiences with the police, either lived or vicarious, this seemed to either increase one's trust in the police, or at least remain neutral. When one had a negative experience with the police, either lived or vicarious, this reinforced negative feelings or assumptions about the police, resulting in greater loss of trust. Negative experiences seemed to have a stronger impact as such actions broke expectations and introduced doubt into the relationship, resulting in lower expectations for the next encounter. When considering which of the two experiences might have a greater impact in public trust, this was difficult to conclude as both played

important roles. However, perhaps future research or policy making should consider both experiences separately. This was seen in the section concerning vicarious experiences and the importance of a bureaucracy's public image and their role in managing it. On public and online platforms where the police have a level of control in the content produced, how it is managed can influence the way an individual builds their perception of the police.

Third, shared languages were considered. This proposition was also positively observed, though to an unknown extent. A shared language between an individual and the bureaucracy can be an extension of a shared understanding and background. This can be in a cultural sense, but more importantly it seems to play a technical role in reducing misunderstandings by providing a common language. For this, context plays an important role as the dominant Hispanic population would benefit the most from this. In the United States, cities are becoming increasingly diverse and English may not be the dominant language in some communities. Having a shared language between an individual and the bureaucracy levels out the playing field by giving more power to citizens and increasing their voice in the policy making process.

By reviewing the findings of these four propositions, it can be said that symbolic representation was observed throughout this study and it does have an effect on public trust in the police. However, it is not the only influential factor in this process. Focusing representation solely on race and ethnicity can be limiting, and more dynamic identities should also be considered. As Headley et al. (2021) suggest, symbolic representation does not occur in a vacuum and an individual's experiences, especially those that are negative, can have a profound impact on their trust. Differing from Headley et al., these experiences need to be studied closer and acknowledge the different effects of lived and vicarious experiences on one's expectations of the police. This proposes that understanding the effects of symbolic representation on public trust requires a dynamic and holistic approach, as symbolic representation is not the sole answer to increasing public trust but requires considerations on all fronts.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Observing all the propositions presented in this thesis is encouraging for bureaucratic agencies that want to increase their minority representation within their departments. Below are some points on how this research can further add to the field of symbolic representation.

### **7.1 Research Contribution and Direction for Future Research**

The findings of this thesis contribute to the field of representative bureaucracies and symbolic representation. This was done in two main ways: (1) focusing on a minority population that is understudied in this field and (2) exploring different causal mechanisms in how the public perceives representation and trusts bureaucracies. In doing so, three main studies were used as a foundation for this study. One of the objectives of this thesis was to contribute to the findings of these studies, as well as literature concerning symbolic representation. First, this study confirms Theobald and Haider-Markel's (2009) findings that race and ethnicity still play an important role in the perception of a bureaucracy's legitimacy. Interestingly, it was observed in this study that race and ethnicity were not the only important identities to be represented. Other identities matter too, if not equally, such as representation of moral, values, gender, and education level. This points to how dynamic representation and identity can be. Future studies should widen their definition of representation and identity, allowing for more exploration of different motivational factors. In addition, it was also observed that the benefits of symbolic representation can be felt by both minorities and non-minorities. In this study, the role of community was highly valued. Thus, benefits can also be appreciated on an individual level, as well as a group level.

Second, observations made in this thesis can confirm theoretical expectations put forward by Headley et al. (2021). Headley et al. suggested that while symbolic representation is important and can be beneficial for the public, it is not the only motivating factor in trusting a bureaucratic agency. Throughout the interviews, representation within the police was appreciated but did not trump negative experiences an individual might have had with the police. When creating their expectations, the effects of representation was often limited if an individual was mistreated or experienced something that lowered their confidence in the police. Where this study digressed from Headley et al. was the separate evaluation of lived and vicarious experiences. Indeed, both lived and vicarious experiences are important sources for building one's expectations of the police. Nonetheless, it is crucial for future research to separate these experiences to better identify which factors influence one's trust of a

bureaucratic agency and where in the causal process. Vicarious experiences can equally be as impactful as lived experiences, and dependent on what is important to the individual.

Lastly, Riccucci and Van Ryzin (2017) emphasize the real-life implications of the policy making process. This was observed in the interviews, as participants revealed the complexity of identities and the police system. Here, understanding the context of policies and those affected by them is crucial. Increasing diversity can bring about more understanding and empowerment for citizens. This is especially important for those that are most vulnerable and impacted by such policies. However, increasing diversity and representation can also bring challenges and is not the simple solution or the only solution.

Notably, this study provides a unique and exploratory approach that is not frequently seen in the field of symbolic representation. One strength of this study is the use of semi-structured interviews that allow for more exploration of different causal mechanisms and avenues of public trust. Though hard to generalize the findings to other communities, the utilized interview questions allow for replicability for other future studies. At the time, some challenges were met in this study that would be useful for future research to be aware of. One challenge was the sensitivity of conducting interviews concerning race and police and hesitancy of participants. Another limitation was the use of snowball effect for interview selection. It would be better for future research to ensure randomness among interview participants, as well as a larger sample size, to provide a greater understanding of the effects of symbolic representation.

### **7.3 Practical Implications and Policy Recommendations**

This study was identified especially relevant for policy makers and bureaucratic agencies that provide public services. As studied in this thesis, the police are one of the most important public institutions that provide stability and safety to the public. Understanding the effects of representation within the bureaucracy can help identify the level of satisfaction of public services and public trust towards the institution. Following the results and analysis of the data, a few policy recommendations can be made.

First, minority representation was observed to be an important public topic and benefits from symbolic representation can be seen on both individual and group levels. Representation does not exist in a vacuum and can be multi-dimensional. Bureaucratic agencies should consider how they present themselves to the public and which identities they emphasize. As diversity increases across the world with the movement of people, representation is

increasingly relevant. Public institutions and bureaucratic agencies need to expand their view and understanding of what representation means. For example, representative bureaucracies can also be representative through a community's language. With this, bureaucratic agencies should reflect on the community they serve and have representation of not only ethnicity, but also language. This can help reach out to more citizens and empower them by reducing misunderstandings and increasing accessibility to their services. Police interactions can be tense and anxiety-driven for many. Situations can be unpredictable and high risk, where loss of life is possible if the interaction turns for the worst – especially when you're not speaking the same language. Language representation can be a simple way to reduce this risk of miscommunication or understanding. Police departments should consider implementing language requirements that are representative of their communities in their hiring practices. Additionally, police departments can also include trainings on at least the basics of a community's language. This can lead to greater public cooperation and public trust.

Second, bureaucratic agencies need to be aware of how they present themselves publicly. As mentioned, representation does not exist in a vacuum and various other factors need to be considered. One of these factors is an individual's experience with the bureaucratic agency and how they form expectations of the bureaucracy. As observed in this study, social media is an interesting way that stood out in which citizens interacted with the police. Proper management is crucial to upholding a positive public image for the police, especially when the public depends on them to provide public information on safety and current events. This is a direct line to the public where the bureaucracy has control in their output and must be considered when thinking of one is perceived is publicly. It is evident that understanding the effects and limitations of symbolic representation is imperative to produce more inclusive and effect policies. In addition, this process is ever evolving as identities, communities, and technologies develop and change over time.

## 8. REFERENCE LIST

- Allen, K., Park, B., & Silverman, H. Minneapolis police officers must keep body cameras turned on during entire response to a call, new policy says. *CNN*. <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/02/02/us/minneapolis-police-body-worn-camera-policy/index.html>
- Amnesty International. (n.d.). *Police Violence*. Amnesty International. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/police-brutality/>
- Andersen, S. C. (2017). From Passive to Active Representation – Experimental Evidence on the Role of Normative Values in Shaping White and Minority Bureaucrats’ Policy Attitudes. *Journal of Public Administration and Theory*, 27(3), 400-414.
- Bergen, N., & Labonté, R. “Everything Is Perfect, and We Have No Problems”: Detecting and Limiting Social Desirability Bias in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative Health Research*, 30(5), 783-792.
- Bishu, S. G., & Kennedy, A. R. (2020). Trends and Gaps: A Meta-Review of Representative Bureaucracy. *Review of Personnel Administration*, 40(4), 559-588.
- Brennan, M. (2020, August 12). *Amid Pandemic, Confidence in Key U.S. Institutions Surges*. Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/317135/amid-pandemic-confidence-key-institutions-surges.aspx>
- Bowling, C., Kelleher, C., Jones, J., & Wright, D. (2006). Cracked ceilings, firmer floors, and weakening walls: Trends and patterns in gender representation among executives leading American state agencies, 1970-2000. *Public Administration Review*, 66(6), 823-836.
- Bradbury, M. D., & Kellough, J. E. (2008). Representative bureaucracy: Exploring the potential for active representation in local government. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), 697-714.
- Buttolph Johnson, J., Reynolds, H.T., & Mycoff, J.D. (2016). Selection of the chapter “The Building Block of Social Scientific Research”. In *Political Science Research Methods (8th ed.)* (pp. 104-127).
- Chen, S., Geluykens, R., & Choi, C. (2006). The importance of language in global teams: a linguistic perspective. *Management International Review*, 46(6), 679-695.
- Childs, S., & Lovenduski, J. (2013). Political Representation. In G. Waylen, K. Celis, J. Kantola, & L. Weldon (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics* (pp. 489-513). Oxford University Press.

- City of Salinas History. (n.d.). Salinas History. *City of Salinas*.  
<https://www.cityofsalinas.org/visitors/salinas-history>
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.
- Eligon, J. (2020a, July 30). No Charges for Ferguson Officer Who Killed Michael Brown, New Prosecutor Says. *The New York Times*.  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/us/michael-brown-darren-wilson-ferguson.html>
- Eligon, J. (2020b, August 4). Distrust of the Minneapolis Police, and Also the Effort to Defund Them. *The New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/08/04/us/minneapolis-defund-police.html>
- Fan, S. X., Cregan, C., Harzing, A., & Köhler, T. (2018). The benefits of being understood: The role of ethnic identity confirmation in knowledge acquisition by expatriates. *Human Resource Management, 57*, 327-339.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2019). *2019 Crime in the United States*. FBI – California.  
<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/tables/table-8/table-8-state-cuts/california.xls>
- Fernandez, S., Koma, S., & Lee, H. (2018). Establishing the link between representative bureaucracy and performance: The South African case. *Governance, 31*(3), pp. 535–553.
- Fryer, R. G., Jr. (2016) *An Empirical Analysis of racial Difference in Police Use of Force*. NBER Working paper Series No. 22399. National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Gade, D. M., & Wilkins, V. M. (2013). Where did you serve? Veteran identity, representative bureaucracy, and vocational rehabilitation. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, 23*(2), 267-288.
- Greenhouse, S. (2020, June 18). How Police Unions Enable and Conceal Abuses of Power. *The New Yorker*. <https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/how-police-union-power-helped-increase-abuses>
- Halperin, S., & Heath, O. (2020). *Political Research: Methods and Practical Skills* (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.
- Headley, A. M., Wright II, J. E., & Meier, K. J. (2021). Bureaucracy, Democracy, and Race: The Limits of Symbolic Representation. *Public Administration Review, 81*(6), 1033-1043.

- Hetey, R. C., Monin, B., Maitreyi, A., & Eberhardt, J. L. (2016). Data for Change. A Statistical Analysis of Police Stops, Searches, Handcuffings, and Arrests in Oakland, Calif., 2013-2014. Stanford University, SPARQ: Social Psychological Answers to Real-World Questions.
- Hindera, J. J., & Young, C. D. (1998). Representative bureaucracy: The theoretical implications of statistical interaction. *Political Research Quarterly*, 51(3), 655-671.
- Hong, S. (2017). Black in Blue: Racial Profiling and Representative Bureaucracy in Policing Revisited. *Journal of Public Administration Research And Theory*, 27(4), 547-561.
- Jones, J. M. (2020, August 12). *Black, White Adults' Confidence Diverges Most on Police*. Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/317114/black-white-adults-confidence-diverges-police.aspx>
- Jones, J. M. (2021, July 14). *In U.S., Black Confidence in Police Recovers From 2020 Low*. Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/352304/black-confidence-police-recovers-2020-low.aspx>
- Keiser, L. R., Wilkins, V. M., Meier, K. J., & Holland, C. A. (2002). Lipstick and logarithms: Gender, institutional context, and representative bureaucracy. *American Political Science Review*, 96(3), 553-564.
- Kennedy, B. (2014). Unraveling Representative Bureaucracy: A Systematic Analysis of the Literature. *Administration & Society*, 46(4), 395-421.
- Lehnert, M., Miller, B., & Wonka, A. (2007). Increasing the Relevance of Research Questions: Considerations on Theoretical and Social Relevance in Political Science. In T. Gschwend & F. Schimmelfennig (Eds.), *Research Design in Political Science: How to Practice What They Preach* (pp. 21-33). Palgrave Macmillan.
- LeRoux, K. (2009). The effects of descriptive representation on nonprofits' civic intermediary roles. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 38(5), 741-760.
- Lüdi, G., Höchle, K., & Yanaprasart, P. (2010). Plurilingual practices at multilingual workplaces. In B. Meyer & B. Apfelbaum (Eds.), *Multilingualism at Work: From Policies to Practices in Public, Medical and Business Settings* (pp. 211-234). John Benjamins.
- Mapping Police Violence. (2021, December 23). Mapping Police Violence. <https://mappingpoliceviolence.org/>

- Meier, K. J. (1993). Latinos and representative bureaucracy: Testing the Thompson and Henderson hypotheses. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 3(4), 393-414.
- Meier, K. J., & Nicholson-Crotty, J. (2006). Gender, representative bureaucracy, and law enforcement: The case of sexual assault. *Public Administration Review*, 66(6), 850-860.
- Meier, K. J., & Stewart, J. (1992). The impact of representative bureaucracies: Educational systems and public policies. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 22(3), 157-171.
- Meier, K. J., Wrinkle, R. D., & Polinard, J. L. (1999). Representative bureaucracy and distributional equity: Addressing the hard question. *Journal of Politics*, 61(4), 1025-1039.
- Moldovan, O. (2016). Representative bureaucracy in Romania? Gender and leadership in central public administration. *Transylvanian Review of Administrative Sciences*, 48, 66-83.
- Mosher, F. C. (1968). *Democracy and the public service*. Oxford University Press.
- Noels, K. A. (2014). Language variation and ethnic identity: A social psychological perspective. *Language & Communication*, 35, 88-96.
- Norwood, C. (2020, June 25). Body cameras are seen as key to police reform. But do they increase accountability? *PBS*. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/politics/body-cameras-are-seen-as-key-to-police-reform-but-do-they-increase-accountability>
- Nunnally, S. C. (2012). African-American Perspectives of the Obama Presidency. In W. J. Crotty (Ed.), *The Obama Presidency: Promise and Performance* (pp. 127-150). Lexington Books.
- Pew Research Center. (2020, September). *Americans' Views of Government: Low Trust, but Some Positive Performance Ratings*. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2020/09/14/americans-views-of-government-low-trust-but-some-positive-performance-ratings/>
- Police Service of Salinas. (2021). 2021 Annual Report. *Police Service of Salinas*. [https://salinaspd.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TAKE3FINAL\\_Print\\_2021-Annual-Report.pdf](https://salinaspd.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/TAKE3FINAL_Print_2021-Annual-Report.pdf)
- Premkumar, D., Gumbs, A., McConville, S., & Hsia, R. (2021, October). Police Use of Force and Misconduct in California. *Public Policy Institute of California*. <https://www.ppic.org/publication/police-use-of-force-and-misconduct-in-california/>

- Riccucci, N. M., & Van Ryzin, G. G. (2017). Representative Bureaucracy: A Level to Enhance Social Equity, Coproduction, and Democracy. *Public Administration Review*, 77(1), 21-30.
- Riccucci, N. M., Van Ryzin, G. G., & Lavena, C. F. (2014). Representative Bureaucracy in policing: Does It Increase Perceived Legitimacy? *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 24(3), 537-551.
- Riccucci, N. M., Van Ryzin, G. G., & Li, H. (2016). Representative Bureaucracy and the Willingness to Coproduce: An Experimental Study. *Public Administration Review*, 76(1), 121-130.
- Ross, C. T. (2015). A Multi-Level Bayesian Analysis of racial bias in Police Shootings at the Country-Level in the United States, 2011-2014. *PLoS ONE*, 10(11).
- Rothstein, B. (2009). Creating political legitimacy: Electoral democracy versus quality of government. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(3), 311-330.
- Saunders, M. N. K., Symon, G., & Cassell, C. (Eds.). (2012). *Qualitative organizational research: Core methods and current challenges*. Sage Publications.
- Scheiber, N., Stockman, F., & Goodman, J. D. (2021, April 2). How Police Unions Became Such Powerful Opponents to Reform Efforts. *New York Times*. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/06/us/police-unions-minneapolis-kroll.html>
- Seavey, K. (2010). A Short History of Salinas, California. *Monterey County Historical Society*. <http://mchsmuseum.com/salinasbrief.html>
- Selden, S. (1997). Representative bureaucracy: Examining the linkage between passive and active representation in the Farmers Home Administration. *American Review of Public Administration*, 27(1), 22-42.
- Silverstein, J. (2021, June 4). The global impact of George Floyd: How Black Lives Matter protests shaped movements around the world. *CBS News*. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/george-floyd-black-lives-matter-impact/>
- Swedberg, R. (2020). Exploratory Research. In C. Elman, J. Gerring, & J. Mahoney (Eds.), *The Production of Knowledge: Enhancing Progress in Social Science* (pp. 17-41). Cambridge University Press.
- Szydłowski, J. (2018). Analysis: Crime drops in Salinas, but city still no. 1 in homicides. *The Californian*. <https://thecalifornian.com/story/news/2018/02/02/analysis-crime-drops-salinas-still-no-1-homicides/303142002/>

- Theobald, N. A., & Haider-Markel, D. P. (2009). Race, Bureaucracy, and Symbolic Representation: Interactions between Citizens and Police. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 19(2), 409-426.
- Vukojičić Tomić, T. (2018). The Challenges of Diversity Management to Migrant Integration in the European Union. *Croatian and Comparative Public Administration*, 18(2), 223-246.
- United States Census Bureau. (2021). US Census Bureau QuickFacts: Salinas city, California. *Census.gov*. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/salinascitycalifornia>
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2016). *Advancing diversity in law enforcement*. U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. <https://www.eeoc.gov/advancing-diversity-law-enforcement>
- Van Ryzin, G. G., Riccucci, N. M., & Li, H. (2017). Representative bureaucracy and its symbolic effect on citizens: a conceptual replication. *Public Management Review*, 19(9), 1365-1379.
- Vinopal, K. (2018). Understanding Individual and Organizational Level Representation: The Case of Parental Involvement in Schools. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 28(1), 1-15.
- Welch, D. E., & Welch, L. S. (2008). The importance of language in international knowledge transfer. *Management International Review*, 48(3), 339-360.
- Weir, K. (2016). *Policing in black & white*. American Psychological Association. <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2016/12/cover-policing>
- Wilkins, V. M., & Keiser, L. R. (2006). Linking passive and active representation by gender: The case of child support agencies. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 16(1), 87-102.
- Wilkins, V. M., & Williams, B. N. (2008). Black or Blue: Racial Profiling and Representative Bureaucracy. *Public Administration Review*, 68(4), 654-664.
- Wilkins, V. M., & Williams, B. N. (2009). Representing Blue: Representative Bureaucracy and Racial Profiling in the Latino Community. *Administration & Society*, 40(8), 775-798.
- Wirtschafter, V. (2021, June 17). *How George Floyd changed the online conversation around BLM*. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/techstream/how-george-floyd-changed-the-online-conversation-around-black-lives-matter/>
- Wise, L. R. (2003). Representative Bureaucracy. In B. G. Peters & J. Pierre (Eds.), *Handbook of Public Administration* (pp. 343–353). Sage Publications.

Yanaprasart, P. (2016). Managing Language Diversity in the Workplace: Between '*One Language Fits All*' and '*Multilingual Model in Action*'. *Universal Journal of Management*, 4(3), 91-107.

## **APPENDIX A: Interview Questions and Interview Guide**

### **Interview Questions**

#### **1. Interviewee's Demographic Background**

- What is your name and age?
- What gender do you identify with?
- What ethnicity/race group do you identify with?
- What is your highest achieved degree of education?
- Where do you come from originally and how long have you lived in Salinas?
- What is your primary language of use? What other languages do you use in your daily life? (Secondary language)

#### **2. Questions relating to Representation/Identity [IDEN]**

- To what extent is minority representation important to you (in general)? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- To what extent do you think representation is important to be reflected in the police in Salinas? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- What about representation of your background in the Salinas police?
- Do you generally feel more understood when you are surrounded by people with the same background/identity as yourself? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- Do you feel represented in the Salinas PD? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- Do you know the diversity demographics in the Salinas police department?

#### **3. Questions related to Lived Experiences with the Police [LEXP]**

- How often do you interact with the police or law enforcement? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- In what way(s) have you interacted with the police?
- What are your feelings and thoughts of the police in Salinas?
- Do you feel safe being served by the Salinas PD? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- Do you trust the Salinas Police Department? (Please rate on a scale of 1 → 5?)
  - 5 – Trust greatly
  - 4 – Somewhat trusts
  - 3 – Neutral
  - 2 – Somewhat distrusts
  - 1 – Distrusts greatly
- Does your feeling of representation in the police influence your level of trust in the police? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- Do you feel safer being served by a police department in Salinas, if they were to be more representative of your background? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]

#### **4. Questions related to Vicarious Experiences with the Police [VEXP]**

- Besides personal interactions, in what other ways or formats do you interact or hear about the police? (i.e., In person interaction, stories from friends/family, social media, the news - TV or articles?)

- How do these stories and experiences of others affect you? Or lack of?
- What do you think of the police/community relations currently in Salinas?
- Do you think there are any particular efforts, or events, done by the Salinas police that have affected community relations positively or negatively? (or that has affected their behavior, or how they are perceived by the community or by yourself)

**5. Questions related to Shared Language [SLAN]**

- How often do you use your primary language? Secondary language? Where do you use it?
- Have you interacted with the Salinas police in a language other than English?
- Do you feel more understood by someone who can speak the same language as you?  
[Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- Do you think representation of language is an important thing to have in the police?  
[Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]

## Interview Guide

### 1. Introduction

>> Hello and thank you for your time in being part of this interview.

- My name is Ellen, and I am conducting these interviews as part of completing my master's thesis and master's degree in Public Administration. My thesis will be studying representation (specifically symbolic representation) and its effects on public trust in the Salinas police force.
- In this interview, you will be asked questions concerning your thoughts on the importance of representation and identity, experiences with the Salinas police, and your level of trust in the Salinas police.
- So, all interviews will be recorded. The only use of these recordings will be to transcribe your responses and use them for data analysis for the thesis. I expect this interview to last about 30 minutes. No confidential information or personal data will be included in the research outcome. Your participation in this interview is voluntary, and you can stop at any time.
- Do you have any questions for me at this moment?
- Okay. Do I have your permission to record this interview?

>> Before we begin, I will also provide you with three basic definitions as a basis for the interview.

- *Representative bureaucracy* – “a bureaucracy is broadly representative of the public it serves, then it is more likely to make decisions that benefit that public” (Meier et al., 1999, p. 1026).
- *Representation* – When “characteristics such as race and ethnicity will help to ensure that the interests of diverse groups are represented in policy formulation and implementation processes” (Bradbury & Kellough, 2008, p. 697)
- *Identity* – characteristics or details used to associate or describe yourself with (e.g. race, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, religion, family, profession, etc.)

### 2. Interviewee's Demographic Background

>> First, I will ask some questions simply to gather some demographic background about the interviewees. So, tell me about yourself...

- What is your name and age?
- What gender do you identify with?
- What ethnicity/race group do you identify with?
- What is your highest achieved degree of education?
- Where do you come from originally and how long have you lived in Salinas?
- What is your primary language of use? What other languages do you use in your daily life? (Secondary language)

### 3. Questions Related to Representation/Identity [IDEN]

>> The next section will be questions pertaining to representation and identity. Feel free to answer honestly, and please go into as much depth as you'd like.

- IDEN 1 - To what extent is minority representation important to you (in general)? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
  - Why do you think so?

- IDEN 2A - To what extent do you think representation is important to be reflected in the police in Salinas? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- IDEN 2B - What about representation of your background in the Salinas police?
  - Can you tell me more about your thoughts?
  - Why is that?
- IDEN 3 - Do you generally feel more understood when you are surrounded by people with the same background/identity as yourself? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
  - Why do you think so? Are there specific values that are present there?
  - Do you think that representation allows for certain values that you share to be present? Which values, and why?
- IDEN 4 - Do you feel represented in the Salinas PD? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
  - Why do you think so?
  - What makes you feel represented/not represented?
  - Are there certain values that you think are shared/not shared?
  - Which values, and why?
- IDEN 5 - Do you know the diversity demographics in the Salinas police department?
  - Answer → From Salinas Police Annual and Biannual reports, US Census Bureau

	Police (2021)	Police (2020-2019)	Citizens (2021)
Hispanic or Latino	48.9%	47.5%	79.2%
White	40.6%	43%	12.1%
Black	2.1%	1.9%	1.4%
Asian	-	-	6.4%
Other	8.4%	7.6%	0.9%

#### 4. Questions Related to Lived Experiences with the Police [LEXP]

>> The next section will be questions pertaining to personal lived experiences you may have had with the police. Again, feel free to answer honestly, and go into as much depth as you'd like.

- LEXP 1 - How often do you interact with the police or law enforcement? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
- In what way(s) have you interacted with the police?
  - Have they been largely positive or negative?
  - Are there any examples that you feel comfortable sharing with me?
  - What do you think has made these experience positive or negative?
- What are your feelings and thoughts of the police in Salinas?
  - What do you think is positive or negative about the Salinas PD?
  - Why do you think so?
  - Do you have any examples that you feel comfortable sharing with me?
- LEXP 2 - Do you feel safe being served by the Salinas PD? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
  - What exactly makes you feel safe/unsafe?
  - Is this because of your own personal interactions, representation, or something else?
  - Do you have any examples that you feel comfortable sharing with me?

- LEXP 3 - Do you trust the Salinas Police Department? (Please rate on a scale of 1 → 5?)
  - 5 – Trust greatly
  - 4 – Somewhat trusts
  - 3 – Neutral
  - 2 – Somewhat distrusts
  - 1 – Distrusts greatly
  - Why do you think so?
  - Alternatively, do you trust the police (in general)? Why?
- LEXP 4 - Does your feeling of representation in the police influence your level of trust in the police? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
  - Why do you think so?
  - Do you have any examples that you feel comfortable sharing with me?
- LEXP 5 - Do you feel safer being served by a police department in Salinas, if they were to be more representative of your background? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
  - Why do you think so?
  - Do you have any examples that you feel comfortable sharing with me?

### **5. Questions Related to Vicarious Experiences with the Police [VEXP]**

>> This next section will be questions pertaining to vicarious experiences. This refers to experiences that you have experienced personally but have experienced through others or other platforms. Again, feel free to answer honestly, and go into as much depth as you'd like.

- VEXP 1 - Besides personal interactions, in what other ways or formats do you interact or hear about the police? (i.e., In person interaction, stories from friends/family, Social media, the news - TV or articles?)
- VEXP 2 - How do these stories and experiences of others affect you? Or lack of?
  - Do you think this affects your level of trust in the police?
  - Why do you think so?
  - Do you have any examples that you feel comfortable sharing with me?
- What do you think of the police/community relations currently in Salinas?
  - Why do you think so? What else do you think?
  - Do you have any examples that you feel comfortable sharing with me?
- Do you think there are any particular efforts, or events, done by the Salinas police that have affected community relations positively or negatively? (or that has affected their behavior, or how they are perceived by the community or by yourself)
  - Why do you think so?
  - Do you have any examples that you feel comfortable sharing with me?

### **6. Questions Related to Shared Language [SLAN]**

>> This last section refers to how you use your primary and secondary language. If your primary or secondary language of use is Spanish, then the following questions will be asked.

- SLAN 1 - How often do you use your primary language? Secondary language?
  - Where do you use it? Just at home/in public? (shopping, banking, police interactions, etc.)
  - How does receiving services in your secondary language make you feel? (More confident, respected, included, etc.?)
  - Why is that?
- SLAN 2 - Have you interacted with the Salinas police in a language other than English?

- How did this make you feel? Did it affect your level of trust towards the police?
- SLAN 3 - Do you feel more understood by someone who can speak the same language as you? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]
  - Why do you think that is?
  - What values do you think this represents?

>> If interviewee does not speak another language, or not a language that is spoken by the Salinas police, then the following question will be asked.

- SLAN 4 - The Salinas Police department states that almost 50% of their police officers are Spanish speakers. What are your thoughts about this, maybe in regard to community engagement and public trust?
- Do you think representation of language is an important thing to have in the police? [Please rate from High, Moderate, Low, None]

### **7. Cool-Off**

- Is there anything else you would like to add? Or any questions for me?
- Do you have anyone else you can recommend or refer to me as another interviewee?
- Thank you for your time!

## **APPENDIX B: Interview Transcripts**

Interview transcripts (1-12) removed from this version due to confidentiality.

## APPENDIX C: Operationalization and Coding Framework

**Table 4.** Operationalization and Coding Framework

<b>Symbolic Representation [SREP]</b>	<b>Definition</b>
SREP	Interviewee indicates that representation provides a symbolic value to them in building trust with the police.
<b>Identity [IDEN]</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Identity	Interviewee mentions identity, including different forms other than race and gender, is important to them.
More Identity	Interviewee mentions identity is very important to them in building trust with the police.
Moderate Identity	Interviewee mentions identity is not very important to them in building trust with the police, but still plays some role.
Less Identity	Interviewee mentions identity is not very important to them in building trust with the police, but still plays some role.
No Identity	Interviewee mentions identity is not important at all to them in building trust with the police.
<b>Lived Experiences [LEXP]</b>	<b>Definition</b>
No Lived Experiences	Interviewee has no personal lived experiences with the police.
Little Lived Experiences	Interviewee has little personal lived experiences with the police.
More Lived Experiences	Interviewee has a lot of personal lived experiences with the police.
LEXP High Importance	Interviewee expresses that their lived experiences with the police have a high level of importance in building trust with the police.
LEXP Moderate Importance	Interviewee expresses that their lived experiences with the police have a moderate level of importance in building trust with the police.
LEXP Little Importance	Interviewee expresses that their lived experiences with the police have a low level of importance in building trust with the police.
LEXP No Importance	Interviewee expresses that their lived experiences with the police have no importance in building trust with the police.
<b>Vicarious Experiences [VEXP]</b>	<b>Definition</b>

No Vicarious Experiences	Interviewee is exposed to no vicarious experiences with the police.
Little Lived Experiences	Interviewee is exposed to a low level of vicarious experiences with the police.
More Lived Experiences	Interviewee is exposed to a lot of vicarious experiences with the police.
VEXP High Importance	Interviewee expresses that vicarious experiences with the police have a high level of importance in building trust with the police.
VEXP Moderate Importance	Interviewee expresses that vicarious experiences with the police have a moderate level of importance in building trust with the police.
VEXP Low Importance	Interviewee expresses that their vicarious experiences with the police have a low level of importance in building trust with the police.
VEXP No Importance	Interviewee expresses that their vicarious experiences with the police have no importance in building trust with the police.
<b>Shared Language [SLAN]</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Present SLAN	The interviewee expresses that they have a shared language with the police.
No Present SLAN	The interviewee expresses that they do not have a shared language with the police.
SLAN High Importance	Interviewee expresses that a shared language with the police has a high level of importance in building trust with the police.
SLAN Low Importance	Interviewee expresses that a shared language with the police has a low level of importance in building trust with the police.
SLAN No Importance	Interviewee expresses that a shared language with the police has no importance in building trust with the police.

## APPENDIX D: Interview Results and Data Overview

**Table 5.** Overview of Interview Results and Scorings

#	IDEN 1	IDEN 2A	IDEN 2B	IDEN 3	IDEN 4	LEXP 1	LEXP 2	LEXP 3	LEXP 4	LEXP 5	VEXP 2	SLAN 1	SLAN 2	SLAN 3	SLAN 4
1	High	High	High	Mod	Mod	None	High	4	Low	Mod	Low	-	-	-	High
2	High	Mod	Low	Low	Mod	None	Mod	3.5	None	Low	High	-	-	-	High
3	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Mod	3	High	High	High	-	-	High	High
4	High	High	Low	Low	Low	None	Mod	3	None	None	High	-	-	-	High
5	High	High	High	High	High	Low	High	4.5	None	None	High	High	Yes	Mod	High
6	High	High	Mod	Low	Mod	Low	Mod	3	Low	Low	Low	-	-	-	High
7	High	High	High	High	Mod	Low	Mod	3.5	High	High	High	-	-	-	High
8	High	High	High	High	High	Low	Mod	3	High	High	Mod	Mod	Yes	High	High
9	High	High	High	High	Low	High	None	1	Mod	Low	High	-	-	-	High
10	High	Mod	Mod	High	Low	Low	Mod	4	None	Mod	Low	-	-	-	High
11	High	High	High	Mod	Mod	Low	Mod	4	High	Mod	High	High	No	Mod	High
12	High	High	Mod	Mod	Low	Low	Mod	2	Mod	High	High	-	-	-	High