

# ASSESSMENT OF YOUTH PERCEPTION TOWARDS POLICE: A REVIEW

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**Abstract:** *Youth perception on police is crucial since they are future leader of the society. Despite the significant of the issue, there is a little review paper found. Hence, this paper will be looking into the youth perspective on police. It was motivated by the belief that the perception on police in a massive pedagogy that needs to scrutinize perspective of its context. The goal of this review is to synthesize literature from 2017 to 2022 on the context of youth perception on police using ATLAS.ti 8. 24 article journals from four databases namely Scopus, Web of Science, Science Direct and Emerald Insight are taken in analyzing the current trend of the issue and vectors involved. Throughout the analysis, ethnic has been identified as the main vector to the issue, followed by other factors; procedural justice which is referred to personal experiences, media and other demographic profile elements. The results benefit future study as it can be a guideline for enhancing perception on police.*

**Keywords:** *Police Integrity, Youth Perception, Ethnic, Media, Personal Experience, Procedural Justice and Police Misconduct*

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## Introduction

The term youth perception on police is loaded with two terminologies: youth and perception on police. Youth is also known as young adult, adolescent, kid, or even the famous term juvenile. While a general definition of perception which emerges is that of imposing meaning on experience (Bunting, 1988). Hence, the youth perception on police would imply their experience; direct and indirect experience with the police. The perception of this segment of society is important as adolescent development also may frame both how these interactions unfold and how they are interpreted (Fagan & Tyler, 2005). By understanding youth perceptions is important since perceptions lead to attitude and behaviour towards police since they are the potential future leader (Sihombing, 2018). This is important to acknowledge because juveniles or young people, due to different experiences, may view the police differently from that of the adult population (Boateng, 2019). In general, positive treatment appears to improve perceptions and negative treatment appears to worsen perceptions (Johnson et al., 2017). Hence, the underpinning of this paper is to do a review on the literature of 24 chosen articles, from 2017 to 2022 on the youth perception on police context through the following research question:

1. What is the current pattern of vectors of Youth Perception on Police from 2017 to 2022?

### Materials And Method

In this paper, a total number of 24 articles has been analysed from the four mentioned databases including Scopus, Web of Sciences, Wiley Online Library and ScienceDirect. The tenets of the paper are to analyze and interpret the findings for youth perception on police subject. The selection of literature was performed according to several selection criteria: 1) publication from 2017- 2022, 2) Have at least keyword(s) “youth”, “young adults”, “adolescents”, “juvenile”, “kids” 3) Focusing on perception on police problems and issues; mainly contributed factors to youth perception or trust on police. The decision to put certain limitation was made to help define the issues and problems in the published literature context.

### Search strings

#### Phrase searching

With double quotes to get higher relevancy boost over the same word e.g.: “youth perception on police” AND “juvenile perception on police”

#### Boolean operator:

Use OR, AND or NOT. In this paper, there is no Boolean operator used. This is because, the usage of Boolean operator will result to different outcome from youth perception on police context. The usage of OR, AND or NOT for example [youth perception AND police] will produce result for youth perception and police in a separate context. However, during the searching is made, the AND is automatically inserted by the database used, for example in Scopus database, when the searching is made with “youth perception on police”, it appears to be TITLE-ABS-KEY ( youth AND perception AND on AND police ).

#### Truncation

Enables to search different forms of words by placing symbol at the end of the word (\*/?/\$). The truncation is not used in this particular paper.

### Analysis, Result And Discussion

#### Name of Journals from 2017 to 2022

The analysis has been done to the 24 mentioned article journals. This analysis is done with intention to look into the current pattern of vectors of youth perception on police from 2017 to 2022. Among all, the findings are including name of the journals appeared from 2017 to 2022, name of authors for the selected articles, the most appeared words used from the articles selected shown in word cloud, the initial coding and overall network for pattern of vectors of youth perception on police, the countries involved in the discussion of the selected articles and not to forget the methodology used for every articles. This paper also discussed about limitation of the study and potential future research gaps to be narrowed down. The discussion are as following:

**Table 1: Name of Journals by years of publication**

Name of Journals	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Juvenile and Family Court Journal				1		
Children						1
Criminal Justice Review					1	

Journal of Experimental Criminology						1
Police Practice and Research	1					
International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice		1				
Australian & New Zealand Journal of Criminology			1			
Criminology and Criminal Justice		1				
Journal of Criminal Justice				1		
Journal of Community Psychology			1			
Journal of Criminal Justice				1		
American Journal of Preventive Medicine		1				
Safer Communities	1					
Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy	1					
Race and Justice	1					
Sociological Focus	1					
Law & Social Inquiry				1		
Criminology & Criminal Justice		1				
Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences		1				
Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology			1			
Policing & Society				1		
Policing: An International Journal				1		
Justice Quarterly	1					
Journal of Adolescent Health					1	
<b>Total by years of publication</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>

Finding shows the publication pattern by name of journals and years. Overall there are 24 articles that has been used and analysed in this paper which differ for every journals. From the analysis, it is found that, there is no repetition in term of the journal names as it only appears at once for each journal names. In term of the total numbers articles according to years of publication, the highest numbers of articles is found in year 2017 and 2020 with 6 articles in each, followed by year 2018 with 5 articles, 2019 with 3 articles and both for 2021 and 2022 are 2 articles each.

### Name of Author from 2017 to 2022



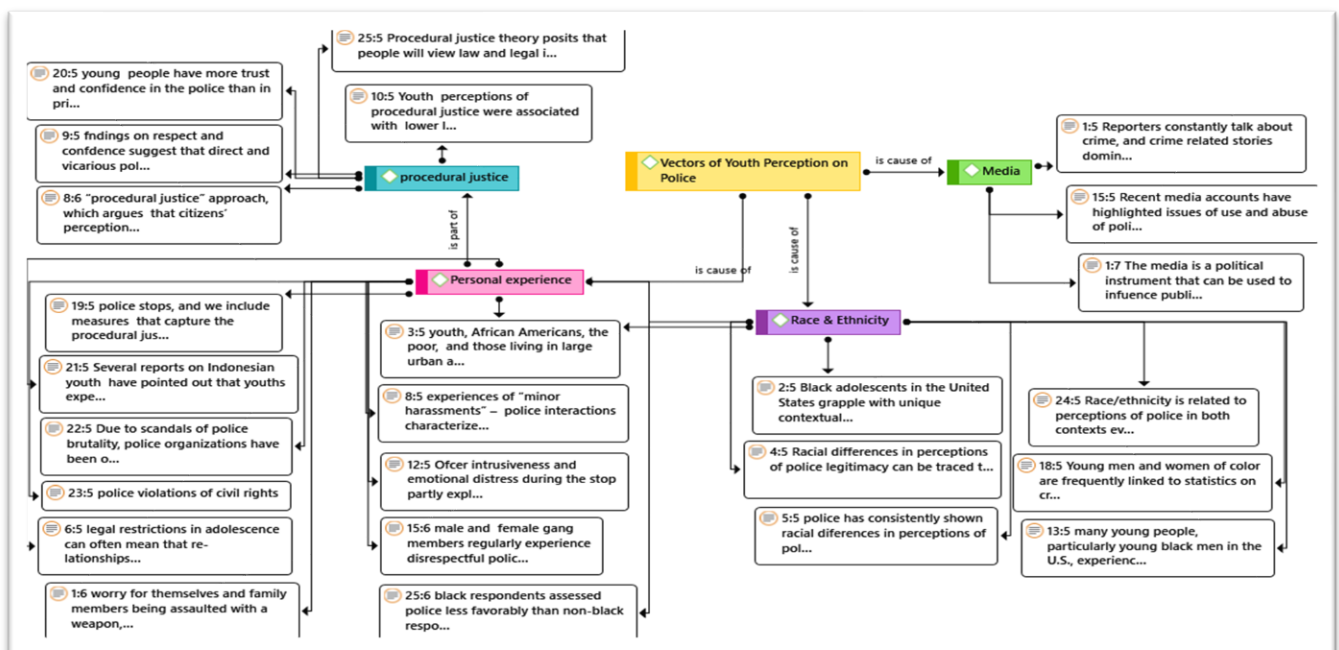
Figure 1: Name of authors by years of publication



In the first round, the initial coding on youth perception on police is made. According to the literature from 24 articles chose from 2017 to 2022. From the four stated databases, the code youth perception on police usually are contributed by personal experience which also related to procedural justice, race and ethnicity, and media. The frequency of appearance of the mentioned vectors can be seen in table 2.

**Table 2: Numbers from each categories of vectors of youth perception on police.**

	● Media	● Personal experience	● Race & Ethnicity	Totals
Youth Perception on Police	5	11	8	24



**Figure 4: Overall network of current pattern on vectors of youth perception on police.**

Figure 4 has shown the overall network of current pattern on vectors of youth perception on police while table 2 has shown the frequency numbers from each categories of vectors of youth perception on police. Looking closer to table the highest vector said to be contributed towards youth perception on police is the personal experience with 11 of articles have been discussing about it. It is followed by race and ethnicity with 8 articles have been discussing on this issue, while the least discussed is media vector.

### Personal experience

Personal experience can be defined as a process of interaction between the environmental stimuli and the cognitions of the individual that results in the experience of perception (Bunting, 1988). The concept of personal experience among student or youth have been discussed widely by scholars (Claxton, 1982; Tyler, 1990, 2003; Wu & Sun, 2010). Basically the youth direct and indirect experience with police will determine their perception on police. Scholar has suggested that people's personal experiences with the police will impact the judgments they make about those experiences and in the incidents people had a personal experience with the police, they had to infer why that experience occurred (Tyler, 2003). The personal experience

with the police is usually closely related to procedural justice carried out by police personnel. Procedural justice is defined as the elements used by people particularly citizen in assessing the fairness of lawful procedures (Donner et al., 2015). In Figure 4, it can clearly be seen that personal experience is a part of procedural justice. It is depending on how the legal procedures practiced by police on the people.

In the articles found, the procedural justice approach argues that citizens' perceptions of being treated with trust, participation, respect and fairness in the criminal justice process promote both compliance with law enforcement representatives and a sense of being generally respected within the society (Haller et al., 2020). Procedural justice literature suggested that people will view law and legal institutions as more legitimate and will be more willing to cooperate and comply with these institutions and their agents when treated in a procedurally just manner (Johnson et al., 2017). Youth perceptions of procedural justice were associated with lower legal cynicism. Situational features of police contact such as harsh language and frisking were related to higher legal cynicism (Hofer et al., 2020). Findings on respect and confidence suggest that direct and vicarious police stops are catalysts of negative attitude formation, also show that direct and vicarious stops play an important role in curbing negative sentiments of police injustice (Harris & Jones, 2020).

The youth or young adults personal experience are ranging from disrespectful of police behaviour in term of physical or verbal abuse (Novich & Hunt, 2017) including the experiences of "minor harassments" which is police interactions characterized by low-level reciprocal intimidations and subtle provocations, exhibited in specific forms of body language, attitudes and a range of expressions to convey derogatory views (Haller et al., 2020), the use of force, made threats, pulled their weapon during police stops, through actions that can be seen as coercive or intrusive (Jackson et al., 2020; Rengifo & Slocum, 2020) and the worries for themselves and family members being assaulted with a weapon, sexually assaulted, attacked while driving a car, and getting murdered (Allen & Whitt, 2020). Not only that, several reports on corruption made by police (Harris & Jones, 2020) for instances, Indonesian youth have pointed out that youths experience corruption especially when they have to deal with the police (Sihombing, 2018).

Discussion on personal experience usually has to do with race and ethnicity issues as shown in Figure 4. This is because the youth who reported to have low-level treatment or degrading treatment are reported to have skin colour issues (Zimmerman et al., 2021). In the analysis, it is found that youth, African Americans, the poor, and those living in large urban areas are significantly more likely than others to believe they were treated outside of the scope of acceptable police conduct (Carmichael et al., 2021) and when legal restrictions in adolescent mirroring the relationship between young people and legal authorities are problematic (Gleeson, 2018).

### **Race and Ethnicity**

Race and ethnicity is another issue highlighted under the umbrella of youth perception on police. Race and ethnicity had a very long winded discussion on police subject. Research has shown that race has majorly contributed to the perception on police (Cao & Wu, 2019; Graziano & Gauthier, 2017; Jang et al., 2010). Through past research, scholars have suggested that the treatment of blacks by the police has contributed to their perception, opinion and trust on police (Benton, 2020; Todak et al., 2018; Wozniak et al., 2021). The same stances adult's perception on police when compared to young adults suppose in the race and ethnicity issues.

Findings on the literature of 24 articles found that black respondents (youth) assessed police less favourably than non-black respondents; while, the positive effect of procedural justice was larger when the driver was white (Johnson et al., 2017). The discussion on the race and ethnicity in this paper can be understood better by doing analysis on the countries involved as shown in Table 3.

**Table 3: Name of the countries and frequency of appearance in total 24 articles.**

Name of the countries	Frequencies
United States	17
Ireland	1
Australia	1
Sweden, Norway, and Denmark	1
New Zealand	1
Finland	1
Indonesia	1
Trinidad and Tobago	1

Looking back into the articles found in the databases, United States of America is at top in the discussion, followed by other countries. Table 3 above has shown the frequency of the countries involved in the literature of the articles found. The most appeared country is United States of America with the frequency 17, followed by others with the frequency of one for each states. According to the scholars, race and ethnicity among young adults have bring a significant impact towards their perceptions on police in that contexts even after accounting for structural factors, with Blacks and Hispanics having less positive perceptions than Whites and Asians (Zhang et al., 2020). Young men and women of colour are frequently linked to statistics on criminal victimization and encounters with the police, particularly involuntary contacts (Rengifo & McCallin, 2017) and racial differences in perceptions of police legitimacy can be traced to childhood (Fine et al., 2022). Furthermore, African American young adults; the poor and those living in large urban areas are significantly more likely than others to believe they were treated outside of the scope of acceptable police conduct (Carmichael et al., 2021). Police has consistently shown racial differences in perceptions of police behaviour including mistreatment by the police (Girgenti-Malone et al., 2017), police brutality against Black people, terrorism, crime and racism (Boyd et al., 2022) and experiencing violence in series of incidences as either a victim, witness, or perpetrator (Jones-Webb et al., 2018). This phenomenon explaining the relationship between the race and ethnicity; and the personal experience as shown in the Figure 4.

### Media

The last but not least vector in shaping the youth perception on police is media. For years, media has impacted towards public perception on police; and the youth either. Media promotion, media crisis and media power has been as a useful tool to synthesis, analyse, portray, and interplay the issues, that bring along opportunities and threats to the police institution (Barnes, 2014; Chermak & Weiss, 2005).

There are two types of media; traditional (radio, television, news, and printed version of media) and contemporary media which is referring to the streaming of social media including internet,

blogs, social media; Facebook, twitter, telegram, tik tok, youtube and etc (Barnes, 2014; Dekker et al., 2020; Moule, 2020; Mullis, 2009; Surette, 2015). Finding has shown that, the media has been as a tool that can be used to influence public perception and youth perception (Benthaus et al., 2016; Choi, 2018; Claxton, 1982; Sadaf, 2011). In this paper, scholar has discussed that the media constantly talk about crime, and crime related stories dominate the headlines of local and national newspaper outlets; and the focus of these mediums on youth portrayed invoke stereotypes that lead to fear and inflammatory remarks (Allen & Whitt, 2020). Exposure to media coverage and highly publicized incidents of police misconduct have also been found to negatively impact perceptions of the police, especially among blacks and Hispanics (Girgenti-Malone et al., 2017). The overrepresentation of unjust police practices through the media, hence, the youths' expectations on police in negative side (Harris & Jones, 2020).

On the other stance, some scholars has highlighted that the media consistently portrays police officers as significantly more prone to violence, aggression, and corruption than they are in reality (Harris & Jones, 2020). Furthermore, the literature that focus on perceptions of the police expressed by survey respondents in such studies are likely not based on lived experiences but, rather, prejudice, stereotypes, vicarious experiences (Carmichael et al., 2021). This is because, Americans were relying too greatly on circumstantial evidence and videos released to the public by the media rather than on accurate and complete information (Girgenti-Malone et al., 2017; Haller et al., 2020).

#### **Other vectors**

The other factors highlighted by literature are migrant status, socioeconomic status, family and neighbourhood (Nakhid, 2017), how police perceived to use their power and carry out their duties (Gleeson, 2018), demographic characteristics other than race factor per se (Hofer et al., 2020), public and private policing (Saarikkomäki, 2018), and also corruption and integrity (Sihombing, 2018). However, these vectors are not discussed in this study since they are mentioned only once and there is no repetition on these vectors in the article journals found compared to the three; personal experience, race and ethnicity and media.

#### **Discussion on Data Collection Methodology**

An analysis has been done to the selected articles of youth perception on police. Among those, the methodologies used are different for every author(s) as highlighted in the table 4 below:

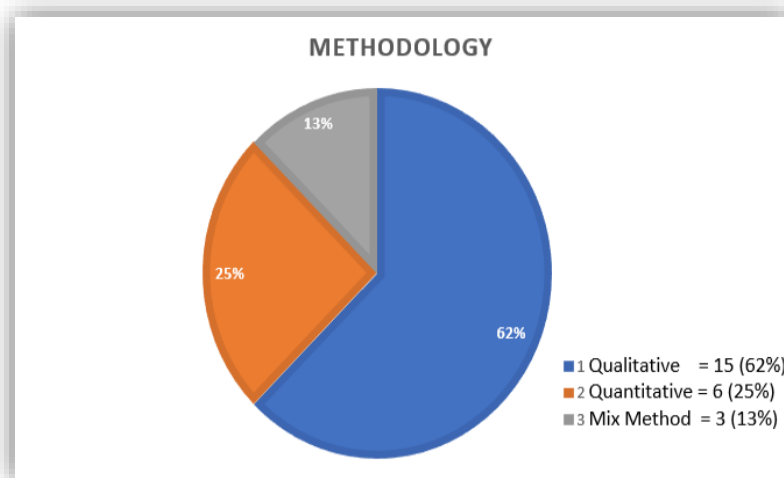
**Table 4: The methodologies of data collection for 24 selected articles**

<b>Author (s)</b>	<b>Data Collection Method</b>
Allen, Whitt - 2020	The data is taken from the National Opinion Survey of Crime and Justice (NOSJC) (N=1003) and it is included the randomly selected adults representing 533 different counties and 65% was original telephone surveys conducted in June 1995. The data collection was done by the Inter University Consortium for Political and Social Research.
Boyd et al. - 2022	The data was gathered from the parent study, the Resilience Project collected in 2013–2014, among Black adolescents living in four urban neighborhoods of concentrated poverty in Chicago: Englewood, Woodlawn, Kenwood, and South Shore. Youth were recruited from three high schools, one youth church group, two community youth programs, and four public venues (e.g., parks and fast-food venues). The response rate for this study was 87% and the total participants for the study were 548 Black adolescents, ages 12 to 17.
Carmichael et al. - 2021	The data was collected from Police-Public Contact Survey (PPCS) and was administered to 49,246 of the 62,280 eligible individuals in the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The sample size is taken from as young as 12 years and up, while the PPCS restricts interviews to individuals 16 years of age and older.



Fine, Padilla, Tom - 2022	A cross sectional sample (N=959) of youth ages 7 to 14 was used to assess age-graded perceptions of police legitimacy in study one. In study two, a 4-school, randomized controlled trial was conducted in Compton, California (N = 499).
Girgenti-Malone et al. - 2017	The college student sample consisted of 300 participants. Students from various disciplines were surveyed across campus with 44.3% of the sample majoring in science, technology, engineering, or math, 32.3% in the social sciences, 22.7% in education or human development, and less than 1% of the sample was undeclared
Gleeson - 2018	The data gathered from 20 respondent and 16 of them were male, and all were in full time second level education at the time of interview. All were aged between 12 and 18 years old, one was aged 12, four were 13, two were 14, four were 15, four were 16, three were 17 and, two were 18. Four participants had previously been cautioned for minor offences, none had been prosecuted through the courts
Green et al. - 2019	The study was conducted in Melbourne and Sydney and encapsulated different legislative and policy environments. This paper focusses on 25 semi-structured interviews conducted with staff from the NSW Police Force (n = 12) and Victoria Police (n = 13). Twenty worked in ‘frontline’ (operational) or youth specialist roles in inner-city Sydney and Melbourne. A small number of the Victorian sample (n = 5) worked in relevant policy positions and had specialist knowledge of youth diversion programs (three had previous experience in frontline policing).
Haller et al. - 2018	Data were collected from in-depth, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews as well as focus groups with 121 ethnic minority young people (97 male) between the ages of 15 and 26 (with one exception of a 30-year-old informant in Sweden). We also interviewed 24 young women, who in general had experienced less direct encounters with the police compared with the young men. 64 interviews were conducted individually and an additional 21 took place in focus groups
Harris, Jones - 2020	Data are drawn from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing (FFCW) Study, a birth-cohort, longitudinal study with an oversample of unmarried parents. The study follows individual “focal children” born between 1998 and 2000 in 20 major U.S. cities. Baseline interviews were conducted with the mothers and fathers of focal children soon after their birth. The baseline response rate for mothers was 86%. The FFCWS participants were contacted for follow-up interviews over the phone with a variety of in-home assessments five times, when the focal child was one, three, five, nine, and fifteen years old. The focal child was interviewed in year 9 and year 15, with response rates of 76% and 74%, respectively. Considering the roughly 4700 families in the sample.
Hofer, Womack, Wilson - 2020	Participants were a subsample of 2,406 adolescents and their caregivers selected from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing (FFCWS). The FFCWS is a longitudinal national cohort study of 4,898 families in 20 large cities (populations over 200,000) across the U.S.
Jackson, Testa, Vaughn - 2020	Data for the present study come from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCWS). The FFCWS is a national, longitudinal study of approximately 4800 children who were born between the years of 1998 and 2000. The study includes six waves of data collection to date, with the most recent wave of data being collected between 2014 and 2017
Jones-Webb, Calvert, Brady - 2018	Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 48 key stakeholders from four groups (young black men aged 14 to 24 years, parents and educators, police officers, and staff in youth serving organizations) in 2017.
Nakhid - 2019	Qualitative data shared by 32 African youth living in Auckland showed that police encounters had left the youth emotionally fearful and wary of any future contact with the police, and had negatively affected their employment opportunities. The family and community were unwilling to seek assistance from the police in times of need with members becoming depressed and withdrawing from community contact because of the shame brought on by these encounters.
Novich, Hunt - 2017	The research team partnered with community-based organizations (CBOs) and invited gang involved youth to participate in the study. Additional data were collected via chain-referral sampling. The in-depth, one-on-one interviews had pre-coded quantitative and qualitative questions that captured socio-demographics and background data as well as data regarding the individuals’ specific history including gang involvement and arrests. The interviews lasted approximately two hours and were held at various locations including libraries and youth centers. The interviews were primarily conducted in English and respondents were paid if they successfully recruited up to two additional interviewees. The interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim by a project staff member. Total number of respondent is N=249. The data included men (N = 112) and women (N= 137). The largest ethnic group was African

	American (54%, N=137) followed by Latino/a (primarily Chicano/ Mexican, but also including Central American) (27%, N= 68). These groups were followed by Asian American or Pacific Islanders (API) (10%, N= 25) and the sample included 17 individuals who identified as multi-racial, four Whites, and one that identified as Other. The respondents' age ranged from 14 to 39 years old.
Novich, Hunt - 2018	The data were originally collected in San Francisco, CA, between 2007 and 2009 and included men and women who self-identified as drug- dealing gang members
Rengifo, McCallin - 2017	This study draws on interview data (N = 43). The data for this article were collected as part of a broader project on youth and police practices in New York City. The methodology included one-on-one interviews with young people ages 13 to 21 residing in neighborhoods
Rengifo, Slocum - 2020	Surveys collected as part of a multimethod study of young people in New York City (N = 451) to model how experiences with law enforcement by police.
Saarikkomäki - 2019	The data consists of nine in-depth focus group interviews with 31 young people (16 girls and 15 boys). The participants were 14 to 17 years of age (besides one person who was 18). Participants were recruited from one popular youth club in Helsinki in 2012–2013. All the participants had previous “street-level” encounters with police or security guards. Among other pastimes, they spend their free time in shopping malls, in city spaces and in the youth club. The participants were from a variety of different backgrounds (e.g. differing class status, ethnicity, resident in different parts of the capital)
Sihombing - 2018	Open-ended questionnaires (500) and in-depth interviews (6) were conducted. In total, 454 questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 90.8 percent.
Stamatakis - 2019	This study collected all quantitative data in March and April 2017 by the youth from 13 to 23 years old (N=113). The methodological tool consisted of a short questionnaire printed on a legal size paper. Once the questionnaire was pre-tested for biases and ambiguities in terms of context and language used and it was confirmed that juveniles could clearly understand the questions,
Walzak et al. - 2020	The data used in this study come from the Americas Barometer public opinion survey conducted by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP). LAPOP researchers contracted with local agencies in 26 countries to conduct a representative survey of the non-institutionalized voting age population in each country. The surveys were conducted using a multistage cluster design and included quotas for age and gender to avoid sampling error due to differential nonresponse. Selected individuals participated in face-to-face interviews with LAPOP researchers as a means to collect cross-sectional data about a range of public attitudes. This study used the publicly available micro data obtained from 2012 surveys conducted in Argentina (N = 1,462), Brazil (N = 1,471), and the United States (N = 750) with total number of 3,682 respondents collected during the 2012 survey
Zhang, Nakamoto, Cerna - 2020	The study uses data from over 17,000 youth in high school who completed the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) in 2017 to 2018. The survey was designed to be administered at least once every two years to youth in Grades 5, 7, 9 and 11 attending California public schools and focuses specifically on youth in 67 high schools in eight districts located in thirteen cities.
johnson 2017	Although there are numerous empirical studies on procedural justice, most of this research uses cross-sectional data and does not rely on methodologies that allow for rigorous assessment of cause and effect. However, several recent studies have employed randomized experimental designs to discern the effects of procedural justice in the context of police traffic stops. The first such study was the Queensland Community Engagement Trial in Australia, in which drivers were stopped by police officers for random breath tests. A similar randomized experiment tested the effects of a procedural justice intervention during police traffic stops in Scotland. On top of that, three laboratory-style experiments have focused on the effects of procedural justice in the context of policing. The randomly assigned participants were assigned to read a vignette describing a procedurally just or unjust police traffic stop.
Jackson et al. - 2021	A national sample of urban-born youth in the U.S. from the most recent wave (2014 to 2017) of the Fragile Families & Child Wellbeing Study was used in the present study, with a particular focus on youth who report having witnessed police stops, despite not being directly stopped by the police (N= 1,488).



**Figure 5: Data Collection Methodology**

Referring to table 4 and Figure 5, there are different types of methodology used in the data collection of the articles discussed. Majority numbers of articles conducted qualitative data collection for their studies with biggest percentage of 62% representing 15 articles. In these selected articles, some of the respondents (youth) have been interviewed including through in depth interviews, semi-structured interviews or phone interviews themselves, and some of the interviews have been conducted among parents in getting their point of views. Besides that, there is an article discussed the finding from the interview that has been conducted to the youth expert which is the police staff themselves and youth specialist who are having knowledge and expertise on youth focus policy (Green et al., 2020). In term of the quantitative data in contrast which has been ranked at 2<sup>nd</sup> place with 25% representing 6 articles, the quantitative survey and questionnaires have been distributed to the respondents. On top of that, the least is 13% with three articles have discussed about the findings from mix methodology which combined both types of data collection methods.

### **Discussion And Future Studies**

This paper discusses that youth perception or trust on police is mainly contributed by personal experience, race and ethnicity issues as well as the media. However, it is less focusing on Asian, instead West countries mainly in United States of America (Graziano & Gauthier, 2017). Hence, there would be a great opportunity to conduct the study in multiracial country such as Malaysia and contributing towards the understanding on youth perception on police. Not only that, the limitation on this paper is the number of the literature used in it, thus, in the future, the quantity of the literature might be added and the sources could be improved too instead of four databases (Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect and Wiley Library Online) only.

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