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Prosecutors' and Police Chiefs' Perception of Crime in South Dakota

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Abstract:

PURPOSE:

This exploratory study regarding prosecutors' and police chiefs' perceptions of crime in South Dakota covers many aspects of crime, including available resources to address crime, perceptions of the criminal justice system, fear of crime, concern for specific crime categories, and crime-reducing measures. Studies specifically focusing on Criminal Justice actors' perception of crime prove low in number at the national and state levels.

FINDINGS:

Findings indicate that prosecutors lack enough time, financial resources, and staff to effectively address crime, while police chiefs primarily view inadequate staffing as their biggest resource concern. While personal fear of crime or victimization for both groups prove of low or minor concern, they agree that crime rates have been increasing in their communities in the last five years. The most notable differences between prosecutors and police chiefs show in Criminal Justice perceptions, with police chiefs mostly disagreeing that the criminal justice system effectively addresses crime and that it should prioritize violent offenders over nonviolent. Drug-related offenses, interpersonal crimes, and alcohol-related crimes proved the most concerning of the categories listed for both prosecutors and police chiefs. Increasing staffing for police and police patrols was identified as some of the most effective crime-reducing measures.

IMPLICATIONS:

By measuring the distribution of perception using descriptive statistics, this study aims to discover differences in perception between respondents and provide a background for future research on subjective views of crime, specifically regarding criminal justice system actors.

Introduction

  While an objective view of crime includes reports that show what type of crimes are being committed and the frequency they occur, a subjective view of crime brings into question crime seriousness or community concern for crime (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Furstenburg, 1971). Subjective studies of crime, specifically regarding criminal justice system actors, prove few and far between yet likely carry high significance (Amerio & Roccato, 2005). Prosecutors and police chiefs are seen as gatekeepers of the criminal justice system with high levels of discretion (Rowe, 2016). Their views on crime and their perceptions of the criminal justice system can and likely do influence policing objectives, charging decisions, and sentencing suggestions.

  Crime makes people vulnerable, it changes emotions, it turns people against people, it makes people isolate, and it can tear down the trust of a neighborhood (Furstenburg, 1971); (Hale, 1996); (Moore and Trojanowicz, 1988). It is no wonder why the fear of crime is studied so heavily.

  This study examines prosecutors' and police chiefs' perceptions of crime in South Dakota. Results give a preliminary understanding of prosecutors' and police chiefs' subjective views of crime and offer a starting point for future research

Fear of crime versus concerns about crime

  Although social science researchers have extensively studied fear of crime and its underlying causes for decades, they have comparatively conducted far fewer measurements on broader concerns about crime (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Baba & Austin, 1989); (Hale, 1996); (Levi & Jones, 1985); (Roth, 1978); (Rountree & Land, 1996); (Salvatore et al., 2013); (Smith & Hill, 1991). While fear of crime is based on or related to one's anxiety regarding their safety or property, concern about crime takes into consideration the safety and well-being of the

community as a whole. Individuals' fear of crime may differ significantly from their concern for crime (Amerio & Roccato, 2005). Studies have identified that distrust of others and frequent news watching could contribute to a greater concern about crime (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Baier et al., 2016); (Hale, 1996); (Rountree & Land, 1996); (Scarborough et al., 2010). Due to fear of crime research being much more substantial than concern about crime, many contributing variables have been studied, such as gender, race, age, and education (Adams & Serpe, 2000); (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Baier et al., 2016); (Fattah &Sacco, 2012); (Hale, 1996); (Levi & Jones, 1985); (Newhart et al., 1991); (Sacco, 1990); (Salvatore & Kelly, 2013); (Scarborough et al., 2010) .

Perception of crime

Several publications have also discussed the concept of Perception of Crime. This term points to the subjective side of crime research. Perception of crime focuses on an individual's opinion of crime, such as crime seriousness or prevalence (Amerio & Roccato, 2005). There are some reasons for this, as fear of crime is perceived to have a more significant effect on an individual's actions (Adams & Serpe, 2000); (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Baba & Austin, 1989); (Baier et al., 2016); (Moore and Trojanowicz, 1988); (Rountree & Land, 1996); (Smith & Hill, 1991).

In contrast, an individual's opinion on what crimes are more severe or prevalent may have less relevance or importance. Most fear of crime, concern about crime, and perception of crime research have focused on sampling the public (Adams & Serpe, 2000); (Baba & Austin, 1989); (Baier et al., 2016); (Hale, 1996); (Furstenburg, 1971), (Levi & Jones, 1985); (Mrozla et al., 2018); (Newhart et al., 1991); (Scarborough et al., 2010). However, few studies have examined the fear of crime of other actors in the criminal justice system, such as police officers,

prosecutors, judges, or public defenders (Levi & Jones, 1985); (Roth, 1978). Studying criminal justice professionals' concerns about crime and their perception of crime might be incredibly impactful. They must consider the well-being of the community they serve, crime seriousness, and trends when they use their discretionary power (Lawrence et al., 2019); (Roth, 1978); (Savit, 2023); ("Standards for the prosecution function," 2017).

Fear of crime research

Fear of crime literature has existed for decades, with a high volume of articles and studies published during periods when fear of crime was high among the public (Hale, 1996). Academics and politicians alike have realized that fear of crime can significantly impact how individuals act, perceive, and even vote. Individuals with a high fear of crime might be more likely to avoid specific areas or stay inside after a particular time (Adams & Serpe, 2000); (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Hale, 1996); (Moore & Trojanowicz, 1998).

Vulnerability

The research on the fear of crime is mixed. One could attribute this to differences in methods, sampling, research design, and many other variables (Hale, 1996). Some supported theories include the vulnerability theory, which states that different sociodemographic groups perceive crime differently, specifically the elderly and women (Adams & Serpe, 2000); (Baier et al., 2016). They may view themselves as less able to defend themselves, making them seem like an easier target for criminals. Women have been found to report a greater fear of crime than men, even though crime statistics have shown that they are less likely to be victims of crime. Literature has pointed to women's perception of greater personal vulnerability or possible underreporting in criminal statistics regarding female victims (Hale, 1996); (Sacco, 1990). Age has also been shown to elicit feelings of vulnerability. The elderly show similar vulnerability to

women as they tend to have a higher fear of crime yet lower risk of victimization. Some academics account for such results as the elderly irrationally fearing crime; however, some note that although individuals may have the same level of risk, they may produce different levels of fear (Fattah & Sacco, 2012); (Hale, 1996).

Demographics

People of color, those of low socioeconomic status, and those less educated tend to fear crime more than their counterparts- whites, affluent individuals, and those with a high level of education (Adams & Serpe, 2000); (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Baier et al., 2016); (Braunstein & Schweinle, 2005); (Hale, 1996); (Salvatore & Kelly, 2013). Many factors could help explain this, such as more people of color and low-income individuals living in urban city areas, which usually exhibit a higher crime rate. Those less educated and with a lower income also tend to have a more challenging time protecting their resources and have a decreased ability to replace them (Hale, 1996). In addition, urban areas may lack neighborhood trust and social cohesion (Adams & Serpe, 2000); (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Rountree & Land, 1996). Blacks, in particular, prove overrepresented in communities with high disorganization and disorder, which further links to a high level of poverty. White individuals and those with higher education also have greater confidence in the criminal justice system (Hale, 1996); (Salvatore & Kelly, 2013).

Urban versus rural fear of crime

Evidence has shown that residents of urban areas tend to be more afraid of crime than smaller suburbs or rural areas (Ceccato, 2017); (Gainey & Seyfrit, 2001). Urban areas also tend to have higher crime rates, which could rationalize inner city residents to produce a higher fear of crime (Hale, 1996). However, many studies have pointed to a different relationship. Higher population density is typically mixed with more diversity, whether that be culturally or racially.

That diversity among a population can also lead to lower social ties between neighbors and communities (Amerio & Roccato, 2005); (Rountree & Land, 1996);. Low social ties and trust in a neighborhood can lead to greater isolation among individuals, which causes further uncertainty. High disorganization and lack of community events in a neighborhood have shown a positive correlation with a higher fear of crime (Rountree & Land, 1996); (Scarborough et al., 2010). Such results do not mean the high fear of crime in urban areas cannot be remedied or prevented. Research has shown that strengthening neighborhood social integration and support can lead to a lower fear of crime and perceived seriousness of victimization (Adams & Serpe, 2000); (Rountree & Land. 1996).

Rural areas tend to have more social cohesion among neighbors and communities (Ceccato, 2017); (Gainey & Seyfrit, 2001). However, they may face challenges similar to those in urban areas when an influx of new residents occurs, for example, in oil boomtowns (Mrozla et al., 2018).

Victimization and Fear of Crime

Research has also shown that factors besides demographics influence fear of crime. Numerous studies have hypothesized that being victimized is likely to result in a higher fear of crime in an individual. Results regarding that hypothesis have illustrated mixed findings (Arnold, 1991); (Baba & Austin, 1989); (Hale, 1996); (Roundtree & Land, 1996); (Tyler, 1980). One reason for this may be the type of crime an individual experiences. Few studies look at specific victims of crimes and then measure whether they have a higher fear of crime for that particular offense or category (Hale, 1996). Those studies that have, tend to find a strong relationship between property crime victims and fear of crime (Hale, 1996); (Smith, 1991). Surprisingly, those with a violent victimization history usually exhibit less related fear levels. Other reasons

for conflicting correlations between prior victimization and fear include an individual's personal beliefs (how they may have processed being a victim of crime), not accounting for the number of victimizations per individual, and prior victimization being only one amongst many other factors that can determine fear of crime (Hale, 1996).

While direct prior victimization shows mixed results, indirect experiences of crime reveal somewhat contradictory results. An indirect experience of crime includes hearing another individual's experience, whether from a friend, family member, or neighbor. Some studies found significance between indirect experience of crime and higher reported fear of crime compared to no significance when measuring direct prior victimization and fear of crime (Arnold, 1991); (Hale, 1996); (Tyler, 1980).

Police fear of crime

Research measuring the effects of police presence, confidence in the police, community policing, or foot patrols on fear of crime encompasses many studies (Hale, 1996); (Levi & Jones, 1985) (Moore & Trojanowicz, 1998); (Salvatore & Kelly, 2013). However, police fear of crime or even perception of crime in the community they serve proves fewer in number. Police, like prosecutors, have an incredible amount of discretion, and they are often called "the gatekeepers of the criminal justice system."

Research surrounding police perceptions versus public perceptions of crime seriousness shows they have similar views on crimes. Police perceptions were more homogenous than the public, perhaps showing the internal organization's views on crime categories. Such homogenous results among police officers also support the concept of policing by objectives. The personal and organizational views of the Police Chief can impact what the whole policing unit views as a concern in the community they serve. (Levi and Jones, 1985).

Prosecutor's fear of crime

While prosecutors have an incredible amount of discretionary power, specifically in the charging stage, few studies have tackled their fear of crime, concern about crime, or perception of crime. Studies have examined a prosecutor's perception of crime seriousness, such as whether or not personal characteristics like race or gender could affect a prosecutor's perception of crime seriousness. Many of the characteristic factors proved insignificant in their effects when rating crime seriousness (Roth, 1978)). When compared to the public's view of crime seriousness, criminal justice bureaucrats (including prosecutors and judges) were less tolerant of violent crimes against persons, crimes against public trust such as bribery, and crimes against public order. However, the bureaucrats ranked victimless crimes such as marijuana use less severe than the public. Most crimes' rankings proved similar between criminal justice actors and the public (McCleary et al., 1981).

While the prosecutor's fear of crime is understudied in many areas, their decision-making and strategies are more researched. When using their overwhelming discretion, studies have suggested that prosecutors rely on legally relevant factors such as the strength of evidence or sentencing guidelines (Kuateladze et al., 2015); (McCoy et al., 2012); (Votruba & Tisdale, 2021). Other factors that influence prosecutorial decisions include efficiency of case disposition, victimology, or predicted trial outcome (Pierce et al., 2014); (Vito et al., 2014). Even factors such as the perpetrator's criminal history or the race and gender of the defendant or victim (Votruba & Tisdale, 2021).

According to Savit (2023), a prosecutor's power in the criminal justice system should not be understated as they make choices about an individual's liberty and even their life depending on their location. Differences in charging methods, recommended sentences, and even the

decision to charge at all can vary incredibly depending on the state, the county, the city, or even the prosecutor. While prosecutors are required to charge cases, personal judgment or perhaps even a push from the legislative or executive branches to "deal" with a rising crime issue can impact prosecutorial discretion. Some prosecuting offices have declination policies that refuse to charge certain crimes, such as small-scale possession. While there may be downsides to the lack of checks on a prosecutor's discretion, one should not expect nor want a prosecutor to charge every crime in the books (Savit, 2023). The public should know what their prosecutors view as a community concern, while prosecutors should consider their constituent's concerns.

Cooperation Among Police and Prosecution

As the police and prosecutor encompass some of the most prominent actors in the pre-trial and trial stages, one would assume they have an effective cooperation strategy. That may not always be the case, as research has identified a lack of feedback and consultation, insufficient police sway in charging decisions and plea deals, police shortfall in producing evidence to charge, and misunderstanding of one another's jobs as barriers to such cooperation. (McDonald et al., 1982) (Rowe, 2016). Checks built into the criminal justice system insist on such barriers as prosecutors having to act in the interest of justice ("Standards for the Prosecution Function, 2017), even when that entails not charging a case when police violate one's constitutional rights (Rowe, 2016).

There are ways to improve the lack of cooperation and communication between police and prosecutors. Some suggestions include vertical prosecution (which entails having the same prosecutor from pre-trial to final disposition), community prosecution (prosecutors work closer with the police, other governmental agencies, and community members), and more police input in charging and plea negotiations (McDonald et al., 1982); (Rowe, 2016).

Perception of the South Dakota Criminal Justice System

Research explicitly done regarding the South Dakota criminal justice system proves sparse. Every year, the South Dakota Attorney General's office and the Division of Criminal Investigation compile a report detailing the objective side of crime in South Dakota, including the number of crimes committed, crime trends from previous years, type of offender, and many other factors (Office of Attorney General, 2023). While such a report gives a good picture of what crimes might be on the rise in South Dakota and the number of crimes committed in specific categories (ranging from felonies to misdemeanors), it does not address the subjective side of crime. Once again, there may be a reason why such research has yet to be published. Policymakers and the public may be more concerned about what type of crime is happening and to what degree rather than the subjective view of Criminal justice actors.

Comprehensive studies regarding the South Dakota criminal justice system, specifically recent ones, are few and far between. However, some research has been conducted on racial disparities in sentencing and incarceration in South Dakota (Braunstein & Schweinle, 2005).

Braunstein and Schweinle's study pointed to disparities, particularly socioeconomic, that impact outcomes within the South Dakota criminal justice system. Native Americans were found to be more often plagued by such socioeconomic disparities due to achieving less education, having more dependent children, and having negative employment histories than their white counterparts. Due to many factors and variables at play, race was not directly related to outcomes in the South Dakota criminal justice system.

While the objective side of crime has a wide breadth in criminal justice research, one may ask why the subjective perceptions of crime from those making charging decisions prove less

surveyed (Savit, 2023). Studies regarding fear of crime have shown that certain variables may impact an individual's actions (Hale, 1996); (Killias, 1990); (Moore & Trojanowicz, 1988). This creates many questions. Would a prosecutor who was a prior victim of crime be more likely to view that crime as a concern, therefore creating a need for harsher sentencing? Or would a judge who lives in an area with more community resources and good neighborhood morale opt for a more lenient sentence as they do not view crime as a major concern? While these specific questions are not specifically addressed in this paper, this study may provide a background for such questions as researchers have yet to broadly investigate such questions nationally, let alone in South Dakota.

Method:

To answer these questions I utilized a survey-based quantitative research approach and collected data from the South Dakota Police Chief's Association and the South Dakota State's Attorney's Association using an online Qualtrics survey. The survey was sent out to these organizations and they then forwarded it to the individuals in their associations. All data was anonymous and there was no requirement to complete the online survey. While information could have been taken regarding what county or municipality they came from, it was decided that providing a layer of anonymity would produce more honest results as information could not be linked back to the respondent. It should also be taken into account that the views of the police chief may not correspond to those of the police officers in their community. Previous literature has however shown that survey findings about police tended to have homogenous results among their internal organization (Levi and Jones, 1985)

The structure of the survey fell into categories such as available resources, personal fear of crime, criminal justice system perceptions, concern for specific categories of crime, perceived

effectiveness of crime-reducing measures, and demographics. Participants had two weeks to complete the survey and were informed of the time frame.

The data was then analyzed using descriptive statistics. Difference of agreement (the prosecutor's total agreement minus the police chief's total agreement) was analyzed to offer a quick overview of similarities or differences between the two populations. A total of thirty police chiefs and prosecutors took the survey. The split was fourteen police chiefs to sixteen prosecutors. While the number of respondents may look small, South Dakota has few counties that are heavily populated and some state's attorneys or police chiefs may watch over multiple counties simultaneously. However, this study did not include any incentives to participate. Statistical significance testing was also not completed on the results. Future research on this topic might benefit from offering incentives for participants and further statistical analysis.

Results:

The survey questions fall into these categories: demographics, available resources, personal fear of crime, criminal justice system perceptions, concern for specific categories of crime, and perceived effectiveness of crime-reducing measures. These questions were asked to get the prosecutor's and police chief's broad perceptions of crime in the communities they serve.

Demographics

The survey asked individuals about their political ideology, age, duration of their work as a police chief or prosecutor, the population size of the community they serve, gender, and the highest education they have completed. Although several variables could have influenced the results, the survey participants were only requested to provide information about their demographic groups to see who was represented in the survey. Most individuals who took the

survey identified politically as conservative or moderate. Prosecutors were more likely to identify as liberal than police chiefs.

The average age of prosecutors and police chiefs who took the survey was 44.13 and 48.18, respectively. The average number of years worked was 10.81, with police chiefs' average totaling 11.46 and prosecutors reporting an average of 10.3 (shown in Table 7.2).

Around 51% of individuals who took the survey served communities that had a population from 0-9,999. Just under 38% hailed from communities with populations ranging from 10,000-19,000, and 6.9% of respondents came from areas with 20,000-29,999 people. Only 3.4% of respondents serve a community of 50,000 and above (results shown in Table 7.4).

While it is evident that all prosecutors have at least a Juris Doctor degree, police chiefs had a range of degrees obtained. The survey also asked about their highest level of education completed. About 15.4% of police chiefs reported a high school diploma or GED, 7.7% had gone to some college but did not obtain a degree, 38.5% had an associated or technical degree, 30.8% received a bachelor's degree, and 7.7% earned a graduate or professional degree as shown in Table 7.5). Overall, more males took the survey than females; however, most prosecutors who took the survey identified as female. No police chiefs identified as female, and it is unknown if there are any current female police chiefs in South Dakota. The split combining both prosecutors and police chiefs was 65.5% male and 34.5% female (shown in Table 7.6).

Available Resources to Prosecutors and Police Chiefs

The available resources section encompasses questions about adequate staffing, financial resources, time, and physical maintenance of public spaces and homes. Police Chiefs' and Prosecutors' views on resources differ, with prosecutors disagreeing more when it comes to having adequate financial resources, time, and overall public maintenance (shown in table 1.2,

1.3, and 1.4). Regarding staffing, police chiefs' views diverge from prosecutors, showing more disagreement with the statement that they have adequate staffing to address crime in the community they serve (shown in figure 1 and table 1.1).

Figure 1
The organization I work for is adequately staffed to address crime in the community I serve.
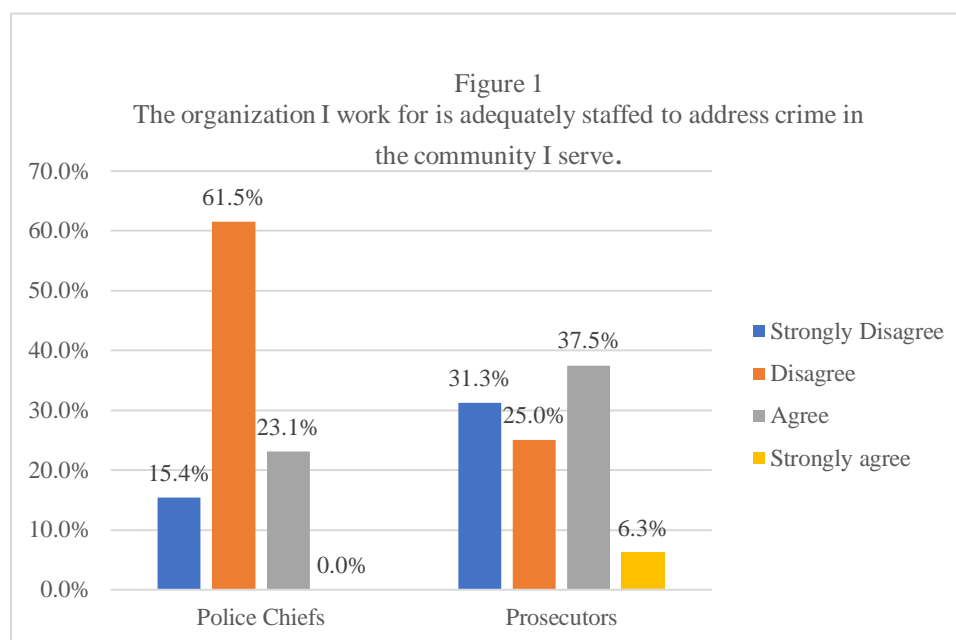
The most substantial difference in perception was in the maintenance and upkeep of buildings, public spaces, and homes, with 50% of prosecutors disagreeing and 0% of police chiefs disagreeing (shown in table 1.4). It is not readily apparent why prosecutors disagree more on the overall maintenance of public spaces and buildings.

The results point to prosecutors disagreeing more than police chiefs regarding having enough time or financial resources. However, both disagreed with having adequate staff. When analyzing the prosecutor's results, one could speculate that not having enough financial resources could impact their views on having adequate staffing due to budget constraints, therefore affecting having enough time to address crime. While police chiefs may have enough financial resources and time to address crime, current reports, and studies show that police, both in South

Dakota and around the United States, are observing a lower number of recruits (Baker et al.,

2023); (Dunteman, 2023); ("Hope for the best"); (Hult, 2023).

Personal Fear of Crime

Fear of crime questions focused on personal fear of victimization of property and violent

crimes, community trust, view on crime increase, and prior victimization. Overall, prosecutors

and police chiefs had a relatively similar fear of crime. Prosecutors and police chiefs had the

most similar view throughout the survey on trusting the people in their community, with almost

all individuals agreeing (shown in table 2.1). The high community trust of police chiefs and

prosecutors might be due to most of the survey respondents being from smaller communities,

which tend to have high social cohesion and familiarity (Ceccato, 2017); (Gainey & Seyfrit,

2001). Another effect of most respondents being from rural areas is the fear of property and

violent crime questions. The majority of police chiefs and prosecutors reported being not fearful

or only slightly fearful of becoming a victim of property or violent crime, with prosecutors being

slightly more fearful of victimization (as shown in Figure 2, table 2.3, and 2.4).

Figure 2
How fearful are you of becoming a victim of property crime
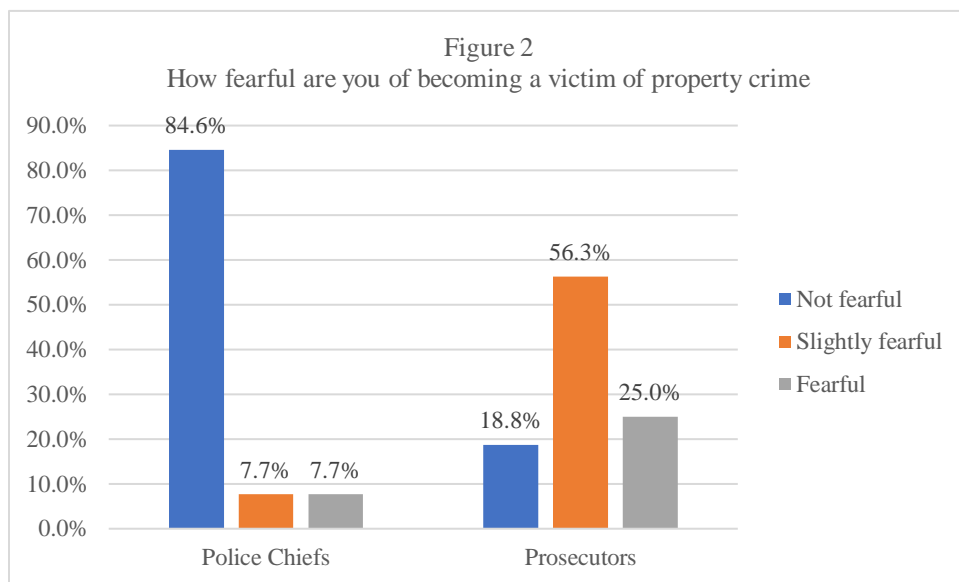
A possible reason for prosecutors having a slightly higher fear points to gender influence on fear of crime in prior literature. A majority of the prosecutor respondents identified as female. Further analysis showed that those who identified as female did have a higher fear of victimization of both property and victim crime (shown in table 6.1 and 6.2). However, gender is likely not the only factor influencing fear of victimization.

Most prosecutors and police chiefs agreed that crime rates in their community have increased over the past five years (shown in table 2.2). The crime rate for specific crimes over the past five years has increased, as has the crime rate in some counties (Office of Attorney General, 2023). While this study did not identify the counties where prosecutors and police chiefs were from, most respondents still agreed that crime rates in their community have increased. Their subjective view might differ from the public as they address crime and interact with offenders daily. Regardless, their opinion could influence the way they arrest and charge individuals.

Reported prior victimization showed that a majority of both prosecutors and police chiefs had no prior victimization or had a family member or close friend who was a victim of crime in the past year (shown in table 2.5). Again, most of the respondents were from rural areas where there tend to be lower rates of crime (Ceccato, 2017); (Gainey & Seyfrit, 2001). When prior victimization (either personal or that of a friend or family member) was compared to fear of victimization of property crime and violent crime, it showed higher levels of fear of victimization for both crime categories (shown in tables 6.5 and 6.6). Results from other studies have found mixed findings on whether prior victimization affects fear of crime (Hale, 1996); this study did not separate direct prior victimization from indirect prior victimization (the crime

victim is someone you know), so overall observations are limited. Either direct or indirect prior victimization or both could have caused a higher fear of victimization for property and violent crime, along with many other possible factors.

Criminal Justice System Perceptions

Another set of questions focused on Criminal Justice perceptions. The topics ranged from whether the criminal justice system has a deterrent effect, if it prioritizes serious crimes, treats individuals fairly, has adequate cooperation and communication, and if it effectively addresses crime. All questions were about the community they serve. Total agreement on topics varied. The question regarding whether the criminal justice system in the community they serve effectively addresses crime showed the most significant difference in opinion. Over 80% of prosecutors agreed with that statement, while 69.2% of Police Chiefs disagreed or strongly disagreed as shown in Figure 3 and Table 3.1.

Figure 3
The criminal justice system effectively addresses crime in the community I serve.
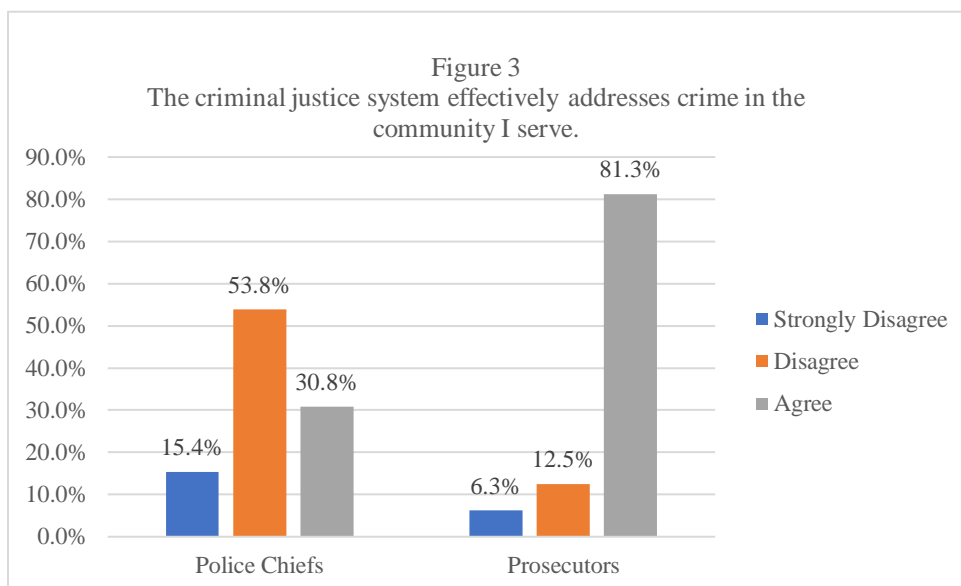
Since prosecutors are the ultimate authority on charging decisions, the police may not see their efforts or objectives being used or addressed during subsequent charging stages, therefore not effectively addressing crime (Vortuba & Tisdale, 2021).

The prosecutor and police chief's views also conflicted on whether the criminal justice system should prioritize violent offenders over nonviolent offenders. Most Police chiefs disagreed with the statement, while over 85% of prosecutors agreed or strongly agreed as shown in Figure 4 and table 3.6. Such results somewhat agree with prior studies as prosecutors tend not to view nonviolent crimes as serious as violent crimes and often classify nonviolent crimes as less of a concern than the public when surveyed (McCleary et al., 1981). Due to limited knowledge of what the police think about nonviolent crimes, one could speculate that since a high volume of police calls is generally about nonviolent events or crises (Baker et al., 2023), there should be more attention towards fixing that problem. Alternatively, perhaps, they view nonviolent crimes as a steppingstone to violent crimes, for example, a substance abuse problem later turning into assault or theft.

Figure 4
The Criminal Justice system should prioritize violent offenders over nonviolent offenders.
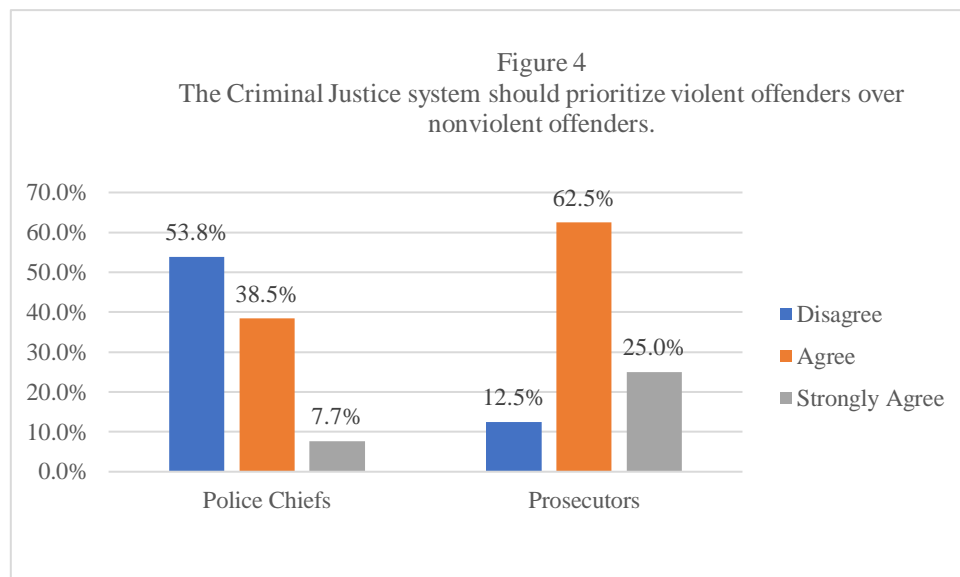
The survey also asked whether the criminal justice system prioritizes the investigation of serious crimes. A majority of both groups agreed. However, the police chiefs were more split between agreeing and disagreeing than prosecutors as shown in Table 3.2. Literature points to crimes against persons, whether that be homicide, assault, rape, etc, as being classified as the most serious. Prosecutors had a higher total agreement on prioritizing violent crimes versus nonviolent crimes compared to police chiefs. While most police chiefs surveyed agreed that the criminal justice system should prioritize serious crimes, over half disagreed on prioritizing violent offenders over nonviolent.

When asked if the criminal justice system deters potential offenders, most police chiefs and prosecutors disagreed with police chiefs having a slightly higher disagreement (shown in Table 3.3). The three-year recidivism rate in South Dakota sits around 40.3% (South Dakota Department of Corrections, 2023); this is 27.7% lower than the national state prisoner three-year recidivism rate (68%) (Alper et al., 2018). Police chiefs, prosecutors, and academics likely know that the criminal justice system's deterrent effect is not as powerful as one may hope, with police chiefs and prosecutors getting first-hand knowledge of habitual offenders. While police and prosecutors might disagree that the system has a deterrent effect, decreasing the recidivism rate requires more research, more resources, a different allocation of resources, and many other changes. Such an overhaul of the South Dakota criminal justice system would be complicated as police chiefs and prosecutors already reported understaffing.

Another topic addressed in the survey was fairness in the criminal justice system. The question posed to both groups was whether the criminal justice system treats individuals fairly and equally regardless of socioeconomic status or background. Over half of Police chiefs and prosecutors agreed or strongly agreed. Police chiefs were more split between agreement and

disagreement than prosecutors, with 30% of police chiefs disagreeing and 0% of prosecutors disagreeing (shown in Table 3.4). While academics might have a different view or opinion on this question, actors in the criminal justice system are to act "in the interest of justice ("Standards for the prosecution function, 2017)". While there are guidelines, there is still an overwhelming amount of discretion in police chiefs and prosecutor's jobs. They likely view that they use their discretion justly, even if some research points to the opposite.

As police chiefs and prosecutors depend on each other for offenders to get charged, collaboration and communication between the two groups are essential. Literature and the results from this survey show that collaboration and communication between police chiefs and prosecutors may need improvement (Rowe, 2016). The survey asked if there is a need for increased collaboration and communication between the police and prosecution to enhance the criminal justice system's effectiveness. Prosecutors split between agreeing and disagreeing, with 18.8% strongly disagreeing or strongly agreeing and 31.3% agreeing or disagreeing. Police chiefs overwhelmingly agreed with the statement, with a little over 75% of the total agreement. Most police chiefs (53.8%) strongly agreed with the statement. Such results as shown in Figure 5 and Table 3.5 have a prior background in literature as police report feeling like they have insufficient sway in plea deals or charging decisions (McDonald, 1982); (Rowe, 2016). That, however, may not be the only factor impacting results. Different counties may vary the way the police and prosecutors interact and collaborate. Analyzing the differences in agreement between prosecutors and police based on county could not be done in this study due to respondents remaining anonymous.

Figure 5
There is a need for improved collaboration and coordination between police and prosecution to enhance the effectiveness of the Criminal Justice system.
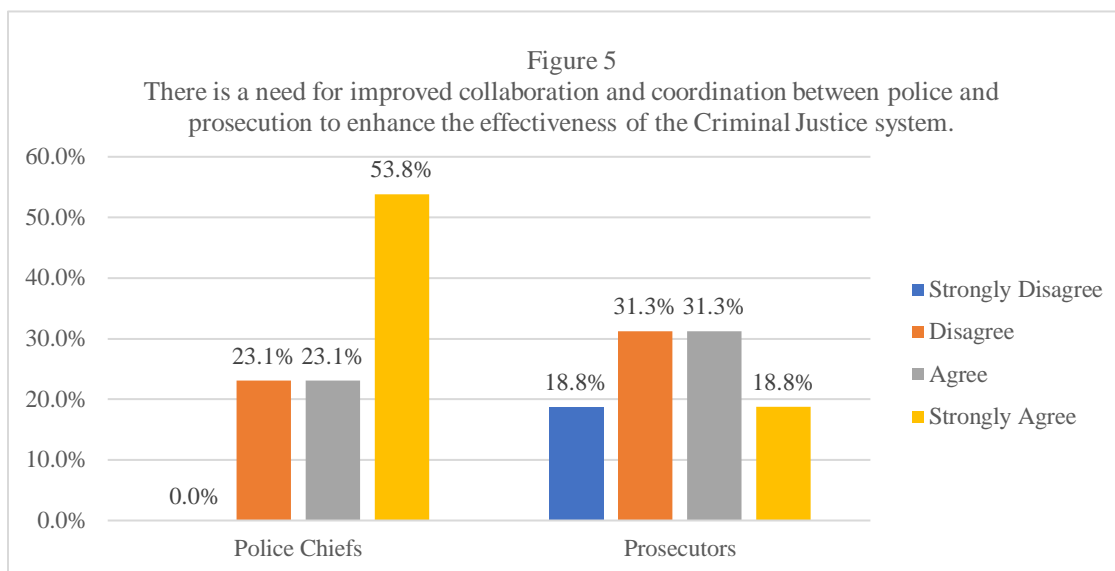
Concern for Specific Categories of Crime

A significant section of the survey encompassed concern for specific crimes. Prosecutors and Police chiefs were given a category of crime, such as Drug-related crime, and were asked to rate their concern for said crime in the community they serve. An overview of the results of this section shows greater agreement between police chiefs and prosecutors than other questions.

When asked about their concern for property crimes, more than half of police chiefs and prosecutors rated it medium concern as shown in Table 4.1. Police chiefs had slightly less overall concern than prosecutors regarding property crimes. A possible reason for the differences is the population size that the police chief or prosecutor serves, as crimes are less common in rural areas where community trust is likely higher (Ceccato, 2017); Gainey & Seyfrit, 2001). On the state level, property crime decreased from 16,792 instances with 1,714 total arrests in 2022 to 14,744 incidents with 1,670 arrests in 2023 (a direct comparison made in the 2023 South Dakota crime report).

White-collar crimes proved to be the category of least concern for prosecutors and police chiefs. Most respondents rated white-collar crimes as not a concern or minor concern, with only 7.7% rating them as medium concern (shown in Table 4.2). With many of the respondents' communities they serve being rural or below 30,000 in population, white-collar crimes are likely less common or at least less reported. In 2023, white-collar crimes totaled around 546, a decrease of 136 from the previous year (including bribery, counterfeiting/forgery, and fraud) (Office of Attorney General, 2023).

Drug-related crimes were rated one of the categories with the highest overall concern as shown in Figure 6 and Table 4.3. Around 80% of prosecutors rated drug-related crimes as high concern, with 0% ranking it below medium concern. Police chiefs also appeared to agree, with 69.2% rating it as a high concern and 23% designating it as a medium concern. In the 2023 annual South Dakota crime report, total offenses reported went up, from 6,269 reported in 2022 to 6,315 in 2023 (a direct comparison taken from the 2023 South Dakota crime report).

Figure 6
To what extent do you think Drug Crimes are a concern in the community you serve?
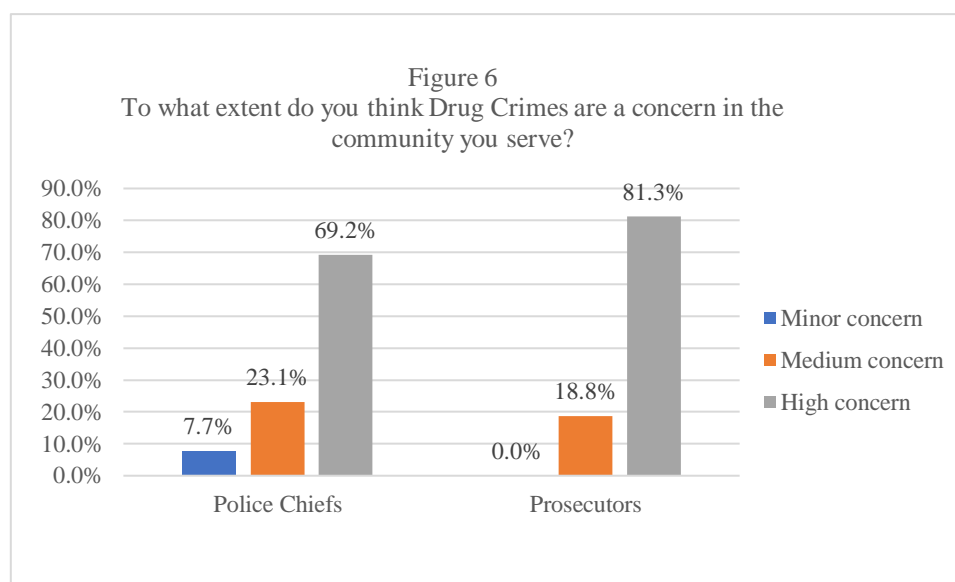
Interpersonal crimes, including offenses such as assault or battery, demonstrated a high concern among prosecutors and police chiefs. A majority of both respondents rated interpersonal crimes as a high concern. Police chiefs were more spread across medium and high concern, while 81% of prosecutors ranked it in high concern. Only 7.7% rated interpersonal crimes below a medium concern. Interpersonal crime arrests totaled 4,767, a decrease of 171 arrests from last year (shown in Table 4.4). An interest of note was that total arrests were a little more than half of the total reported offenses (9,422) (Office of Attorney General, 2023).

One of the most serious categories of crime- homicide had much more varying concerns, specifically among prosecutors. About 50% of prosecutors rated it as either not a concern or minor concern, and 50% rated it as either medium concern or high concern (37.5% ranked it as high concern). Police chiefs were more homogenous in their results, with more than half rating it as a minor concern, around 30% rating it as not a concern, and 15.4% designating it as a medium concern in the community they serve (results shown in Table 4.5). In 2023, homicide arrests stayed consistent, totaling 24 (this number includes murder and negligent manslaughter).

Alcohol-related crime had uniform results across both survey-takers. Prosecutors tended to rank it higher in concern, with 50% ranking it as a high concern and 37.5% rating it as a medium concern. Police chiefs agreed that alcohol-related crime was a concern, as over 50% designated it as a medium concern, and 38.5% ranked it as a high concern (shown in Table 4.6). Alcohol-related offenses in South Dakota went from 6,628 in 2022 to 6,802 in 2023 (this includes DUI, drunkenness, and liquor law violations) (Office of Attorney General, 2023).

The sex crime category had prosecutors and police chiefs grading it on the higher end of the scale. Prosecutors ranked it of more concern overall, with a little more than 60% rating it of high concern, while only 30.8% of police chiefs classified it as such. Most police chiefs

designated it as a medium concern, and 15.4% ranked it as not a concern or a minor concern. Prosecutors also had disagreements with each other, with 12.6% thinking of sex crimes as not a concern or of low/minor concern (shown in Table 4.7). State offenses reported in 2023 totaled 891 in comparison to 1,104 in 2022 (this number includes rape, sodomy, sexual assault with an object, fondling, incest, prostitution, and statutory rape.) However, there were only 89 total arrests for said crimes (Office of Attorney General, 2023).

A related category included sex-trafficking crimes, which proved of overall less concern among police chiefs and prosecutors, with results being much more spread out. About 68% of prosecutors viewed such crimes as a minor concern in the community they serve. The other 31.2% of prosecutors split between classifying sex-trafficking crimes as a medium or high concern, with 18.8% designating it as a high concern and 12.5% ranking it as a medium concern. Police chiefs' views split between not a concern, minor concern, and medium concern, with each ranking not exceeding over 39%. However, slightly more viewed it as not a concern than the other two rankings with 38.5% (results shown in Table 4.8). There were six reported sex trafficking offenses in 2023 and four in 2022; however, none of those resulted in arrest (Office of Attorney General, 2023).

Crime Reducing Measures

The survey also inquired about what crime-reducing measures police chiefs and prosecutors felt were most effective. The measures listed included increasing police patrols, longer sentences for offenders, increased staffing for police, legalizing drugs, increasing funding for community programs, increasing staffing for prosecutors, and focusing on violent offenders. The survey asked the participants to assign a rank of one to ten for each measure, with ten being the most effective and one being the least. The results of prosecutors were averaged separately

from police chiefs to look at any possible differences. Increasing staffing for police proved the measure with the highest average among prosecutors, with an average of 6.9. It was followed closely by longer sentences for offenders and focusing on violent offenders, which averaged 6.7. The crime-reducing measure with the lowest average (by far) was legalizing drugs, with an average of 2.3.

Police chiefs viewed increasing police patrols as the most effective crime-reducing measure listed, with an average of 7.6. The following highest averages for police chiefs included increasing police staffing and focusing on violent offenders, with 7.5 and 7.4, respectively. Once again, the measure with the lowest average for police chiefs was legalizing drugs, with an average of 1 (the lowest average possible). Both police chiefs and prosecutors averaged results for each crime reducing measure is shown in Figure 7 and Table 5.

Figure 7
Prosecutors and Police Chiefs peceived effectiveness of Crime Reducing Measures

Measure	Average of Prosecutors	Average of Police Chiefs
Longer sentences for offenders	6.8	7.2
Legalizing drugs	2.3	1
Increasing police patrols	5.9	7.6
Increase staffing for prosecutors	5.6	6.7
Increase staffing for police	6.9	7.5
Increase funding for community programs	6.1	6.6
Focusing on violent offenders	6.7	7.4

Other Notable Results

Although the survey analysis mainly focused on differences between prosecutors' and police chiefs' perceptions, a few other factors were also analyzed for the sake of possible further research and analysis. For example, fear of victimization of property crime compared to concern for property crime in the community they serve. Those who reported being fearful of victimization of property crime tended to view property crime as of higher concern. In comparison, those who were not fearful reported lower overall concern for property crime as shown in Table 6.4. Again, many other factors may have influenced such results and statistical significance testing was not done.

Another comparison made was between prior victimization and fearfulness of victimization of both property and violent crime. This comparison was aimed at analyzing if prior victimization made one more fearful of victimization. Results showed that those who had prior victimization, either directly or indirectly, tended to report an overall higher fear of victimization. This same tendency was shown in both property crime and violent crime (shown in Tables 6.5 and 6.6). Other elements could be at play, and differences between direct and indirect victimization history were not taken into account.

Discussion:

As shown in the results, prosecutors disagreed with questions pertaining to having adequate staffing, enough financial resources, sufficient time, and overall maintenance and

upkeep of buildings and structures. Police chiefs agreed with having enough time and available financial resources but disagreed when it came to adequate staffing. Such findings suggest possible burnout among prosecutors and police chiefs, as shown in previous research (Baker et al., 2023); (Lawrence et al., 2019). A lack of suitable applicants or poor retention could cause the struggle for adequate staffing as shown in the results. Police departments in South Dakota appears to already be struggling as shown in investigative reports (Dunteman, 2023); ("Hope for the best"); (Hult, 2023). In the case of prosecutors, all have their Juris Doctor or higher, which opens the door to many job opportunities that may pay more than a county attorney position. As counties may need more financial resources to hire a sufficient number of attorneys, they may have to take on a more significant caseload. Technological advances, as well as new case law, can also create additional hurdles as prosecutors have to consider and analyze more evidence such as body camera footage and adhere to and keep up to date with new case law (Lawrence et al., 2019).

Prosecutors and police chiefs are some of the most prominent actors in the criminal justice system, so having adequate staffing, financial resources, and time to address crime should be a big priority for counties. Researchers should conduct further studies, particularly in South Dakota, to determine the needs of prosecutors and police chiefs to address crime in the communities they serve effectively. Having responsive and efficient prosecutors and police could also help with negative perceptions of said actors and overall fear of crime.

Fear of crime responses showed that both prosecutors and police chiefs had high trust in the communities they serve, which possibly influenced other questions, such as fearfulness of becoming a victim of crime. A majority of respondents reported being not fearful or only slightly fearful of becoming a victim of both property and violent crime. Such results may be due to

many of the individuals being from communities ranging from 0-9,999 in population. Prior literature points to rural areas having higher social and community trust than urban areas (Ceccato, 2017); (Gainey & Seyfrit, 2001). While population size was not the primary variable studied, it would prove a fruitful topic for further research, specifically regarding prosecutors and police chiefs who serve rural populations. While their fear of becoming a victim was low, both police chiefs and prosecutors agreed that crime rates in their community have been increasing over the past five years. As a result, they may take different actions in the arrest/pre-trial stage to address rising crime rates. The constituents in the counties they serve might take a different view on rising crime rates as they likely do not interact with crime as often as police chiefs or prosecutors do.

Prior victimization, both direct and indirect, was also asked about in the survey. While a majority of police chiefs and prosecutors disclosed that they had not been a victim of a crime or knew a close friend or family member who had in the past year, it proved an interesting point when analyzed in comparison to the fearfulness of victimization. No significance testing was done, but results show that those with prior victimization history (both direct and indirect) tended to be more fearful of becoming a victim of property or violent crime. These findings somewhat align to previous literature which states that prior victimization can cause a higher fear of crime (Arnold, 1991); (Hale, 1996); (Tyler, 1980). Unfortunately, the survey question did not distinguish between indirect and direct victimization so either could have had an effect. Also, when fearfulness of victimization was compared to concern for property crime, those who reported being more fearful of becoming a victim ranked property crime higher in concern.

The section regarding the perception of the criminal justice system yielded very interesting results, specifically in the differences between police chiefs and prosecutors. Perhaps

the most striking contrasts of opinions were criminal justice effectiveness, the prioritization of violent offenders over nonviolent, and collaboration between police and prosecution.

Most police chiefs disagreed that the criminal justice system effectively addresses crime in the community they serve, while most prosecutors agreed. This broader question could be a result of other significant differences. Perhaps police chiefs view that such prioritization does not effectively address crime, as nonviolent crimes do make up a large portion of police calls. Prior research also shows that police chiefs have reported feeling that their sway in charging decisions and plea bargains is inadequate. Perhaps, they view that prosecutors are not taking effective steps to address crime in their communities due to a lack of input from police.

While police chiefs do not agree with prosecutors on prioritizing based specifically on nonviolent versus violent, they did agree that the criminal justice system should prioritize the investigation and prosecution of serious crimes. However, the split between disagree and agree was close (46.2% disagreeing and 53.1% agreeing.) These results might cause one to assume that police chiefs view nonviolent crimes as serious. Why they do this is not explained in this study, but further expansion is needed. One possible explanation could be that, left unchecked, nonviolent crimes could turn into violent crimes. Also, while nonviolent offenses might be seen as less severe, nonviolent crimes such as driving while intoxicated or distracted driving can prove quite serious in their harmful effects.

While prosecutors had split results in their view regarding a need for improved collaboration between police and prosecution, most police chiefs either strongly agreed or agreed. The contrast points to previous literature, which states that police often feel that they are left out of plea bargaining, charging decisions, or overall case disposition (McDonald et al., 1982); (Rowe, 2016). Police chiefs also may want prosecutorial input during investigations. The

amount of disagreement both from this question and the one regarding whether the criminal justice system effectively addresses crime in the community may point to a difference in priorities, objectives, and even personal philosophies between police chiefs and prosecutors. Further research should be done regarding police chief's views on the seriousness and prioritization of nonviolent versus violent crimes, how to improve collaboration and cooperation between police and prosecution, and what ways the criminal justice system can address crime more effectively.

Other interesting results of note show that most prosecutors and police chiefs disagree with the criminal justice system having a deterrent effect on potential offenders. While they may disagree with the deterrent effect, they also rated longer sentences for offenders a 7.2 out of 10 on effectiveness (10 being most effective). Perhaps they know that while prison does not effectively deter offenders, prison or jail temporarily incapacitates offenders. Subjective opinions of police chiefs and prosecutors regarding possible criminal justice reform are not addressed in this study. However, this study may provide a background in possible ideas they would be interested in.

While academic research, both nationally and specifically in South Dakota, has discovered possible unfairness or at least inconsistencies in the criminal justice System (Braunstein and Schweinle, 2005), a majority of prosecutors and police chiefs agreed that the criminal justice system treats all individuals fairly and equally, regardless of their socioeconomic status or background. Due to both prosecutor's and police chiefs' immense discretion, they have to balance adherence to guidelines and the law as well as act "in the interest of justice ("Standards for the prosecution function"). Actors of the criminal justice system itself may view their use of discretion as just, even though social research may find otherwise. Furthermore, as

"the gatekeepers" of the criminal justice system, admitting that the system may treat individuals differently based on unfair characteristics would admit that the system they work under and even the individuals they work with could be relying on a subjective opinion that is not inherently fair. While only 30%, made up solely of police chiefs, disagreed with the question regarding fairness, it still shows that some actors of the system do believe there is a need for enhanced efforts in regard to all citizens being treated fairly and equally under the law.

Questions regarding prosecutors' and police chiefs' perceived concern for specific crime categories offered a different and subjective view on crime in South Dakota. Objective crime rates in the state or county may, in some cases, be different from the prosecutor's and police chiefs' concern for said crime, which brings into question the power of respondents' subjective views.

The crime categories with a higher reported offense total did tend to show higher concern among prosecutors and police chiefs. For example, drug-related crimes and interpersonal crimes were rated of high concern for prosecutors and police chiefs and also totaled in the thousands for objective crime rates. White-collar crimes were also low in number and subjective concern. There were, however, some exceptions; property crime seemed high in number for offenses, while most concern was in the medium and minor range. Many different crimes fit into that category and perhaps are more common in bigger cities, while most respondents were from smaller areas. Sex trafficking crimes proved the smallest in number for objective crime rates but did yield some concern as the majority of prosecutors and police chiefs rated it as a minor concern or more. One might expect lower concern, considering there were only six reported offenses and zero arrests made. Previous literature has pointed to prosecutors being less tolerant of violent crimes against persons, however, that study compared prosecutors and the public. The

homicide category also had similar results as prosecutors were split evenly between not a concern or minor concern and medium or high concern.

An interesting factor not considered here is the charges brought and recommended sentences compared to prosecutors' subjective crime concerns. Perhaps if they rated drug-related crimes as a concern, they would be more willing to bring harsher charges or recommend longer sentences for offenders.

Out of all the categories given, prosecutors and police had the most similar results in the specific crime categories. One could expect such similarities between the two actors as they both have first-hand experience of crime as they are in charge of arrests and make all charging decisions. Studying county differences in objective crime rates versus prosecutors' and police chiefs' subjective views could bring interesting results.

Out of the options given regarding crime-reducing measures (increasing police patrols, longer sentences for offenders, increasing staffing for police, legalizing drugs, increasing funding for community programs, increasing staffing for prosecutors, and focusing on violent offenders), prosecutors viewed increasing staffing for police as the most effective crime-reducing measure. In contrast, police chiefs ranked increasing police patrols the highest. Collectively, the lowest-rated measure was legalizing drugs. Although drug-related crimes hold high concern, legalizing drugs is not an effective crime-reducing measure among prosecutors and police chiefs. While the list is not exhaustive by any means, it gives a background into possible avenues actors of the criminal view as an effective way to address crime. One interesting result showed that police chiefs rated focusing on violent offenders higher than prosecutors, even though earlier in the survey, they disagreed that the criminal justice system should prioritize violent offenders over nonviolent. Why police chiefs would rank them differently is unknown but should be

investigated further. Due to little previous research on police and prosecutor's opinion on crime-reducing measures, it is unknown if this would hold consistent with other state's police chiefs and prosecutors. Perhaps political affiliation, size of the state, or the respondant's subjective view of crime creates those differences.

Conclusion:

Research regarding South Dakota prosecutors' and police chiefs' perception of crime in the communities they serve is relatively new both nationally and within the state. It offers valuable subjective insights from some of the most powerful actors in the criminal justice system. While sample size is limited, this study offers some background for future studies. However, broad generalizations regarding this data might not truly reflect South Dakota Prosector's and Police Chiefs' perception of crime due to the low number of survey respondents and lack of significance testing.

The outcomes of this study done on prosecutors and police chiefs highlight possible resource concerns, display personal fear of crime for the "gatekeepers of the criminal justice system," question elements of the system as a whole, present concern for specific crime categories, and offer insight into crime reducing measures.

Results and discussion regarding available resources to address crime indicated that both police chiefs and prosecutors are facing staffing concerns. Prosecutors also reported having inadequate time and financial resources to effectively address crime in the communities they serve.

Despite exhibiting a low personal fear of crime, perhaps a result of high community trust, respondents expressed a shared belief in increasing crime rates over the past five years, showing a distinction between personal fear and concern about crime trends.

Contrasting views on the criminal justice system showed a want among police chiefs for improved collaboration and communication, a possible difference in prioritization of violent and nonviolent offenders, and a contrast in perceived effectiveness of the criminal justice system. Nevertheless, there is consensus among respondents regarding the system's equitable treatment of individuals and lack of deterrence among new offenders.

Drug-related crimes, interpersonal crimes, and alcohol-related crimes ranked the highest in concern, indicating shared perceptions of specific categories of crime. In terms of crime-reducing measures, prosecutors ranked increased staffing for police as the most effective crime-reduction method listed, while police chiefs' favored increasing police patrols. Both viewed legalizing drugs as the least effective crime-reducing measure.

Further research can be built upon any section of the paper. Analyzing the perceptions of Criminal Justice "gatekeepers" can yield insight into policing objectives, charging decisions, and overall case dispositions making it an understudied topic in fear of crime research.

<div style="text-align:center"><u>Appendix</u></div>

<u>Available Resources:</u>

Table 1.1
The organization I work for is adequately staffed to address crime in the community I serve.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	31.3%	25.0%	37.5%	6.3%
Police Chiefs	15.4%	61.5%	23.1%	0%
Grand Total	**24.1%**	**41.4%**	**31.0%**	**3.4%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 20.7				

Table 1.2
The organization I work for has enough financial resources to address crime in the community I serve.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	43.8%	31.3%	18.8%	6.3%
Police Chiefs	7.7%	38.5%	46.2%	7.7%
Grand Total	**27.6%**	**34.5%**	**31.0%**	**6.9%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: -28.8				

Table 1.3
The organization I work for has enough time to address crime in the community I serve.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	31.3%	25.0%	37.5%	6.3%
Police Chiefs	7.7%	38.5%	53.8%	0%
Grand Total	**20.7%**	**31.0%**	**44.8%**	**3.4%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: -10				

Table 1.4
The community I serve keeps up with the maintenance and upkeep of buildings, public spaces, and homes.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	0%	50.0%	43.8%	6.3%
Police Chiefs	0%	0%	84.6%	15.4%
Grand Total	**0%**	**27.6%**	**62.1%**	**10.3%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: -49.9				

Personal Fear of Crime:

Table 2.1				
Most people in the community I serve can be trusted.				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	0%	6.3%	93.8%	0%
Police Chiefs	0%	7.7%	69.2%	23.1%
Grand Total	**0%**	**6.9%**	**82.8%**	**10.3%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 1.5				

Table 2.2				
Crime rates in our community have been increasing over the past five years.				
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	0%	12.5%	68.8%	18.8%
Police Chiefs	0%	23.1%	46.2%	30.8%
Grand Total	**0%**	**17.2%**	**58.6%**	**24.1%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 10.7				

Table 2.3				
Fearfulness of Being a Victim of Property Crime				
	Not fearful	Slightly fearful	Fearful	Very fearful
Prosecutors	18.8%	56.4%	25.0%	0%
Police Chiefs	84.6%	7.7%	7.7%	0%
Grand Total	**48.3%**	**34.5%**	**17.2%**	**0%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs fearfulness: 17.3				

Table 2.4				
Fearfulness of Being a Victim of Violent Crime				
	Not fearful	Slightly fearful	Fearful	Very fearful
Prosecutors	18.8%	62.5%	18.8%	0%
Police Chiefs	69.2%	23.1%	7.7%	0%
Grand Total	**41.4%**	**44.8%**	**13.8%**	**0%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs fearfulness: 11.1				

Table 2.5			
Have you, a family member, or a close friend been the victim of a crime in the past year?			
	Yes	No	Unsure

Prosecutors	43.8%	50.0%	6.3%
Police Chiefs	38.5%	53.8%	7.7%
Grand Total	**41.4%**	**51.7%**	**6.9%**

Criminal Justice Perceptions:

Table 3.1
It effectively addresses crime in the community I serve.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	6.3%	12.5%	81.3%	0%
Police Chiefs	15.4%	53.8%	30.8%	0%
Grand Total	**10.3%**	**31.0%**	**58.6%**	**0%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 50.5				

Table 3.2
It prioritizes the investigation and prosecution of serious crimes.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	6.3%	6.3%	68.8%	18.8%
Police Chiefs	0.0%	46.2%	53.8%	0%
Grand Total	**3.4%**	**24.1%**	**62.1%**	**10.3%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 33.8				

Table 3.3
It has a deterrent effect on potential offenders in the community I serve.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	6.3%	68.8%	25.0%	0%
Police Chiefs	38.5%	53.8%	7.7%	0%
Grand Total	**20.7%**	**62.1%**	**17.2%**	**0%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 17.3				

Table 3.4
It treats all individuals fairly and equally, regardless of their socioeconomic status or background.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	0%	0%	56.3%	43.8%
Police Chiefs	0%	30.8%	55.2%	15.4%
Grand Total	**0%**	**13.8%**	**55.2%**	**31.0%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 29.5				

Table 3.5
There is a need for improved collaboration and coordination between police and prosecution to enhance the effectiveness of the criminal justice system.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	18.8%	31.3%	31.3%	18.8%
Police Chiefs	0.0%	23.1%	23.1%	53.8%
Grand Total	**10.3%**	**27.6%**	**27.6%**	**34.5%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: -26.8				

Table 3.6
It should prioritize violent offenders over nonviolent offenders.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Prosecutors	0%	12.5%	62.5%	25.0%
Police Chiefs	0%	53.8%	38.5%	7.7%
Grand Total	**0%**	**31.0%**	**51.7%**	**17.2%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 41.3				

Concern for Specific Categories of Crime:

Table 4.1
Property Crimes

	Not a concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern
Prosecutors	0%	25.0%	62.5%	12.5%
Police Chiefs	7.7%	30.8%	53.8%	7.7%
Grand Total	**3.4%**	**27.6%**	**58.6%**	**10.3%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 13.5				

Table 4.2
White-Collar Crimes

	Not a concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern
Prosecutors	37.5%	62.5%	0%	0%
Police Chiefs	30.8%	61.5%	7.7%	0%
Grand Total	**34.5%**	**62.1%**	**3.4%**	**0%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: -7.7				

Table 4.3
Drug-related Crimes

	Not a concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern

			18.8%	81.3%
Prosecutors	0%	0%	18.8%	81.3%
Police Chiefs	0%	7.7%	23.1%	69.2%
Grand Total	**0%**	**3.4%**	**20.7%**	**75.9%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 7.8				

Table 4.4
Interpersonal Crimes

	Not a concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern
Prosecutors	0%	0%	18.8%	81.3%
Police Chiefs	0%	7.7%	30.8%	61.5%
Grand Total	**0%**	**3.4%**	**24.1%**	**72.4%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 7.8				

Table 4.5
Homicide

	Not a concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern
Prosecutors	25.0%	25.0%	12.5%	37.5%
Police Chiefs	30.8%	53.8%	15.4%	0%
Grand Total	**27.6%**	**37.9%**	**13.8%**	**20.7%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 34.6				

Table 4.6
Alcohol-related Crimes

	Not a concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern
Prosecutors	0%	12.5%	37.5%	50.0%
Police Chiefs	0%	15.4%	46.2%	38.5%
Grand Total	**0%**	**13.8%**	**41.4%**	**44.8%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 2.8				

Table 4.7
Sex Crimes

	Not a concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern
Prosecutors	6.3%	6.3%	25.0%	62.5%
Police Chiefs	7.7%	7.7%	53.8%	30.8%
Grand Total	**6.9%**	**6.9%**	**37.9%**	**48.3%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 2.9				

Table 4.8
Sex-trafficking crimes

	Not a concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern

Prosecutors	0%	68.8%	12.5%	18.8%
Police Chiefs	38.5%	30.8%	30.8%	0%
Grand Total	**17.2%**	**51.7%**	**20.7%**	**10.3%**
Prosecutor-Police Chiefs agreement: 0.5				

Crime Reducing Measure Results

Table 5		
Perceived Effectiveness of Crime Reducing Measures Averaged		
	Prosecutors	Police Chiefs
Increasing Police Patrols	5.9	7.6
Longer Sentences for Offenders	6.8	7.2
Increase Staffing for Police	6.9	7.5
Legalizing Drugs	2.3	1
Increasing Funding for Community Programs	6.1	6.6
Increase Staffing for Prosecutors	5.6	6.7
Focusing on Violent Offenders	6.7	7.4

Other Notable Results:

Table 6.1			
Gender compared to fearfulness of victimization-Property crime			
	Not fearful	Slightly Fearful	Fearful	Very Fearful
Female	10.0%	50.0%	40.0%	0%
Male	68.4%	26.3%	5.3%	0%
Grand Total	**48.3%**	**34.5%**	**17.2%**	**0%**

Table 6.2			
Gender compared to fearfulness of victimization-Violent crime			
	Not fearful	Slightly Fearful	Fearful	Very Fearful
Female	10.0%	80.0%	10.0%	0%
Male	57.9%	26.3%	15.8%	0%
Grand Total	**41.4%**	**44.8%**	**13.8%**	**0%**

Table 6.3
Prior Victimization Compared to Concern for Property Crime

	Not a Concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern
Yes	0%	16.7%	75.0%	8.3%
No	6.7%	33.3%	46.7%	13.3%
Unsure	0%	50.0%	50.0%	0%
Grand Total	**3.4%**	**27.6%**	**58.6%**	**10.3%**

Table 6.4
Fear of Victimization of Property Crime Compared to Concern for Property Crime

	Not a Concern	Minor Concern	Medium Concern	High Concern
Not Fearful	7.1%	35.7%	50%	7.1%
Slightly Fearful	0%	30.0%	60.0%	10.0%
Fearful	0%	0%	80.0%	20.0%
Grand Total	**3.4%**	**27.6%**	**58.6%**	**10.3%**

Table 6.5
Prior Victimization Compared to fearfulness of victimization-Property Crime

	Not fearful	Slightly Fearful	Fearful	Very Fearful
Yes	33.3%	41.7%	25.0%	0%
No	60.0%	26.7%	13.3%	0%
Unsure	50.0%	50.0%	0%	0%
Grand Total	**48.3%**	**34.5%**	**17.2%**	**0%**

Table 6.6
Prior Victimization Compared to fearfulness of victimization-Violent Crime

	Not fearful	Slightly Fearful	Fearful	Very Fearful
Yes	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	0%
No	46.7%	40.0%	13.3%	0%
Unsure	50.0%	50.0%	0%	0%
Grand Total	**41.4%**	**44.8%**	**13.8%**	**0%**

Demographics:

Table 7.1 Political Ideology					
	Very Liberal	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative	Very Conservative
Prosecutors	6.3%	12.5%	43.8%	37.5%	0%
Police Chiefs	0%	0%	40.0%	60.0%	0%
Grand Total	**3.8%**	**7.7%**	**42.3%**	**46.2%**	**0%**

Table 7.2 Average Age of Prosecutors and Police Chiefs	
Prosecutors	44.13
Police Chiefs	48.18
Grand Total	**45.85**

Table 7.3 Prosecutors and Police Chiefs Average Year Worked	
Prosecutors	10.3
Police Chiefs	11.46
Grand Total	**10.81**

Table 7.4 Population Size				
	0-9,999	10,000-19,000	20,000-29,999	50,000 and above
Prosecutors	43.8%	43.8%	6.3%	6.3%
Police Chiefs	61.5%	30.8%	7.7%	0%
Grand Total	**51.7%**	**37.9%**	**6.9%**	**3.4%**

Table 7.5 Highest Level of Education You have Completed?						
	Some High School or less	High School diploma or GED	Some college, but no degree	Associates or technical degree	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or Professional Degree (MA, MS, MBA, PhD, JD, DDS)
Prosecutors	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Police Chiefs	0%	15.4%	7.7%	38.5%	30.8%	7.7%
Grand Total	**0%**	**6.9%**	**3.4%**	**17.2%**	**13.8%**	**58.6%**

Table 7.6		
What Gender Do You Identify With?		
	Female	Male
Prosecutors	62.5%	37.5%
Police Chiefs	0%	100%
Grand Total	**34.5%**	**65.5%**

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