

TAKING THE PULSE

The economy

Aboriginal Issues

Assisted suicide

1,750 SURVEYS.
THOUSANDS OF OPINIONS.
A SNAPSHOT OF THE NEW
SASKATCHEWAN.

Abortion

Crime

Health



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN



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The StarPhoenix LEADER-POST

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan: Crime and Public Safety in Saskatchewan

October 2012



SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH LABORATORIES



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

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- To enable and support investigator-driven and community-engaged research.

The SSRL and its component laboratories have been made possible by the combined support of the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the Government of Saskatchewan, the University of Saskatchewan, and several of its colleges, schools and supporting units.

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METHODOLOGY

The Study

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 was launched by the University of Saskatchewan with the intention of ongoing research and public engagement. This innovative initiative brought together interdisciplinary research teams and an assertive public outreach strategy to create new research products that will inform research, policymaking and community life.

Thirty-two faculty members from across the social sciences contributed to the development of the Taking the Pulse questionnaire, covering a variety of topics and themes, including: sustainable resource development; crime and public safety; Saskatchewan's economy; Aboriginal issues; immigration and diversity; health, wellbeing and Saskatchewan families; and moral issues.

The Survey

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 was administered as a 15-minute telephone survey from March 5, 2012 to March 19, 2012. The survey resulted in 1,750 completed interviews among randomly-selected Saskatchewan residents, 18 years of age and older. Results of the survey, which generated a response rate of 34.3%, are generalizable to the Saskatchewan population (18 years of age and older) \pm 2.34% at the 95% confidence interval (19 times out of 20).

Presentation of Findings

Stacked bar graphs presented in this report depict unrounded percentages generated by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), whereas percentages presented in the text are rounded to the nearest whole number.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Canadian crime rate is declining. In 2010, the nation saw its lowest crime rate since the 1970's (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011), a 30% decrease from its peak in 1991 (Silver, n.d.). There were approximately 77,000 fewer police-reported crimes in 2010 than in 2009, with substantial decreases in property crime, mischief, motor vehicle theft, and break and enters (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011). In addition to a decline in the volume of crime, the severity of crime also reached its lowest point since 1998 (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011). In 2010, the severity of crime decreased or remained stable across the country, with the exception of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011). Police also reported the largest drop in violent crime severity since 1999, with notable declines in murder, homicide, robbery, and serious assault (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011).

Saskatchewan followed the national pattern and reported a decrease in crime rates and crime severity in 2010. However, Saskatchewan reports the highest crime rate and greatest crime severity in the nation, followed by Manitoba, British Columbia, and Alberta (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011). Provincial robbery rates are the second highest in the country, and Saskatchewan reported the highest rate of non-violent crime severity for 2010 (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011). Although most of Canada's census metropolitan areas (CMA's) report declines in crime rates and crime severity (including Regina and Saskatoon), Regina and Saskatoon still report the highest crime severity index among all CMA's and Regina reports the highest crime rate among CMA's, followed by Kelowna and Saskatoon (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011). Saskatoon and Regina also occupied Canada's second place position for number of homicides, only to be surpassed by Thunder Bay, Ontario (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011).

Considering these indicators, Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 evaluates' residents opinions regarding crime in their neighbourhoods and across the province. Taking the Pulse addressed six issues that are relevant to crime and public safety in Saskatchewan, including: perceptions of crime rates, perceptions of youth crime rates, how safe individuals feel in their neighbourhoods, methods of

crime reduction, methods of youth crime reduction, and satisfaction with policing in the province. Results indicate that most Saskatchewan residents feel that crime rates are not increasing, leading most respondents to state that they feel safe in their neighbourhoods, are satisfied with policing, and have high support for traditional methods of crime control.

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME

Saskatchewan continues to have the highest provincial crime rate. With 12,578 police-reported crimes in 2010, Saskatchewan's crime rate is more than double the national average (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011). However, 2010 marked the sixth time in seven years that the Saskatchewan crime severity index and crime rate fell (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011). Across the province in that year, the violent crime rate and violent crime severity rate remained stable, robbery remained stable, the rate of serious assaults declined by 7%, the rate of sexual assault declined by 5%, the number of homicides were down by two, and property crime decreased by 4% (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011). In Saskatchewan's two major CMA's (Regina and Saskatoon), crime rates declined by 8% in 2010 (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011). Over the past decade the Regina and Saskatoon crime severity indexes decreased by 38% and 31% respectively (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011).

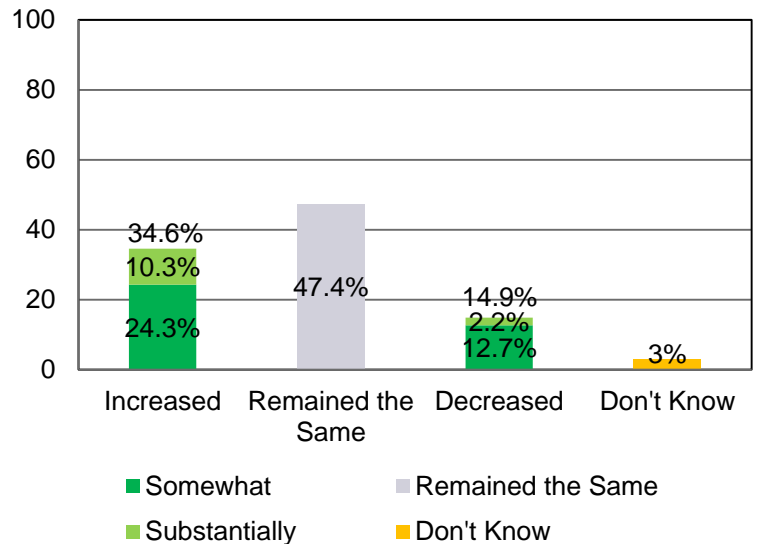
Despite decreases in crime rates and crime severity, statistics indicate that many Canadians do not perceive that crime is declining in their neighbourhoods. The 2009 General Social Survey (GSS) found that, when asked about the level of crime in their neighbourhood compared to five years ago, 62% of Canadians felt that crime levels had remained the same, 26% felt that crime levels had increased, and only 6% felt that crime levels had decreased (Brennan, 2011). These statistics indicate that there is a gap between actual crime rates and perceived levels of crime.

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan asked respondents if crime in their neighbourhood has "increased", "remained the same", or "decreased", over the last three years (see Figure 1). Results indicate that opinions in Saskatchewan are similar to national

opinions on crime rates: the highest proportion of respondents think that crime rates in their neighbourhoods have "remained the same" (48%) while a higher proportion than the national average think that crime has "increased" (36%), and the smallest percentage of respondents think that crime has "decreased" (15%). Analyzing results by education groups reveals some differences of opinion. Respondents with a high school education or less are more likely to think that crime rates have "increased" (41%) than respondents with technical college/some university (37%) or respondents with a university education (25%), and a majority of university respondents think that crime has "remained the same" (51%), while respondents with a high school education or less and respondents with technical college/some university are less likely to think that crime has "remained the same" (both agree at a rate of 46%). Whether a respondent resides in a rural or urban area of the province has an influence on responses. While both rural and urban residents are most likely to state that crime rates have "remained the same" (49% and 46% respectively), rural residents are more likely to think that crime rates have "increased" (39%) than urban respondents (32%), and urban residents are more likely to think that crime rates have "decreased" (17%) than rural respondents (11%). Women and men have different perceptions regarding crime rates in the province, where men are far less likely to feel that crime rates have "increased" (29%) than women (40%), and women are less likely to feel that rates have "decreased" (11%) compared to men (19%). Differences are evident among respondents who identify as Aboriginal and those who do not. Respondents identifying as Aboriginal are more likely to state that crime rates have "increased" (48%) than non-Aboriginal respondents (34%), and non-Aboriginal respondents are more likely to state that crime rates have "remained the same" (49%) in comparison to Aboriginal respondents (33%). Canadian-born and foreign-born respondents have distinct views on the subject, where Canadian-born respondents are much more likely to feel that rates have "increased" (36%) than foreign-born respondents (22%). Finally, results indicate that region of residence has an influence on responses. A majority of respondents in small cities believe that crime rates have "increased" (50%), while respondents in the rural south and rural north are less likely to state that rates have "increased" (39% and 37% respectively), and respondents in Saskatoon

and Regina are even less likely to state that rates have "increased" (34% and 16% respectively). Most respondents living in Regina, the rural south and Saskatoon feel that rates have "remained the same" (53%, 50% and 48% respectively), whereas most respondents in smaller cities and the rural north feel that rates have "increased".

Figure 1. Over the last three years, do you think crime in your neighbourhood has...?



PERCEPTIONS OF YOUTH CRIME

Canada has two separate justice systems: one for adults (18 years of age and older) and one for youth (12-17 years of age). In 2003, The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) replaced the *Young Offenders Act* as the legislative framework governing criminal justice for youth (Government of Canada, 2012). The Young Offenders Act had charged and incarcerated a large number of youth, sometimes along with adults and without satisfactory results. The principals of youth justice were conflicting and vague, and inconsistencies in sentencing were prevalent (Government of Canada, 2012). The new approach to youth criminal justice was an attempt to create a fairer and more effective youth justice system. Considering that crimes are disproportionately committed by youth and young adults, the effectiveness of the youth justice system is especially important. Statistics indicate that the rate of those accused of a criminal offence peaks at 18 years of age, and decreases as age increases (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011).

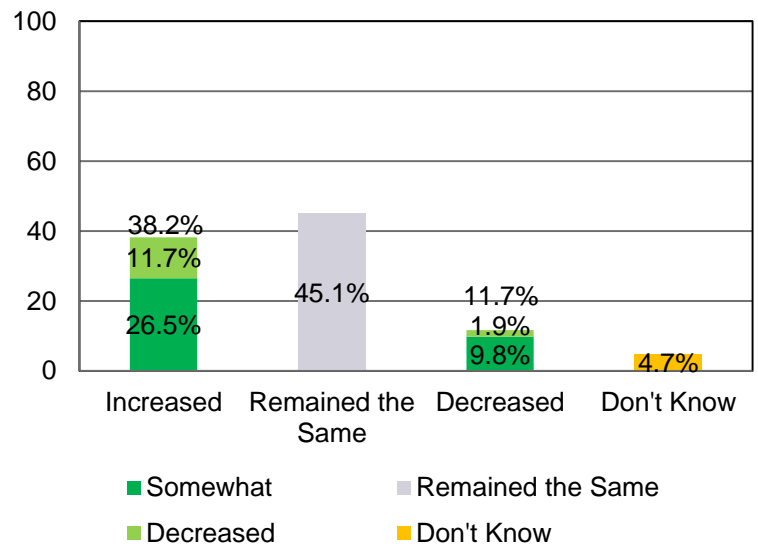
Youth crime rates and youth crime severity have generally been declining in Canada (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011). In 2010, the youth crime rate fell 7% from the year before, approximately 11% lower than it was decade ago (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011). Similarly, the severity of youth crime decreased 6% between 2009 and 2010 (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011). However, the severity of youth violent crime has seen increases over the last ten years. While youth violent crime severity decreased by 4% between 2009 and 2010, it was still 5% higher than in 2000 (Brennan and Dauvergne, 2011).

Saskatchewan has had the highest provincial youth crime rate and youth crime severity rate for nearly a decade (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011). The Saskatchewan youth crime rate did decline by 4% to 17,657 crimes in 2010, but this number is still 2.9 times the national average (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011). Youth crime severity in the province peaked in 2007, and despite a 5% decrease in 2010, is still at approximately the same rate as ten years previous (Ministry of Justice and Attorney General, 2011).

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 asked respondents if youth crime in their neighbourhood has “increased”, “remained the same”, or “decreased”, over the last three years (see Figure 2). Most commonly, respondents think that youth crime in their neighbourhood has “remained the same” (45%). The second most frequent answer is that youth crime has “increased” (39%), followed by “decreased” (12%). Results vary according to education level. While the most likely response for all three education groups is “remained the same”, respondents with technical college/some university and respondents with a high school education or less are more likely to feel that youth crime rates have “increased” (42% and 40% respectively) than respondents with a university education (32%). Age also has an impact on responses: as age increases, the likelihood of stating that youth crime rates have “remained the same” increases. Respondents aged 18-34 are the least likely to state that youth crime has “remained the same” (41%) in comparison to respondents aged 35-54 (45%) and respondents aged 55 and older (49%). Differences are evident among sexes, where men are less likely to feel that youth crime rates have “increased” (35%) than women (41%). Whether a respondent identifies as Aboriginal influences responses. Aboriginal

respondents are much less likely to feel that youth crime has “remained the same” (22%) than non-Aboriginal respondents (47%), and Aboriginal respondents are significantly more likely to feel that youth crime has “increased” (67%) than non-Aboriginal respondents (36%). Canadian-born and foreign-born respondents have divergent views regarding youth crime rates, as Canadian-born respondents are more likely to state that youth crime has “increased” (39%) than foreign-born respondents (22%). Again, it is evident that region of residence has an impact on perceptions of youth crime rates. The majority of respondents in smaller cities and in the rural north feel that youth crime rates have “increased” (56% and 53% respectively), whereas respondents in Saskatoon, the rural south, and Regina are less likely to feel that youth crime has “increased” (39%, 38% and 23% respectively). Respondents in Regina, the rural south and Saskatoon are more likely to state that youth crime has “remained the same” (55%, 48% and 43% respectively) than respondents in smaller cities (32%) and the rural north (25%).

Figure 2. Over the last three years, do you think youth crime in your neighbourhood has...?



NEIGHBOURHOOD SAFETY

According to the 2009 GSS, most Canadians are satisfied with their personal safety from crime (Brennan, 2011). In 2009, approximately 93% of Canadians said they were satisfied with their personal safety from crime, down only 1% from the

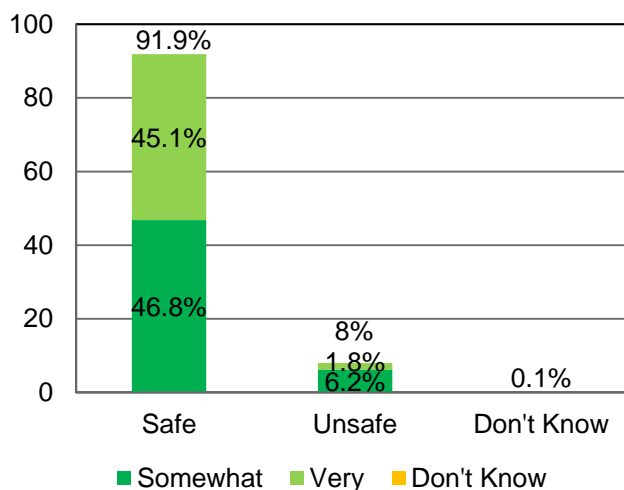
last time this information was collected in 2004 (Brennan, 2011). However, residents of eastern Canada were more likely to express satisfaction with their personal safety than Canadians residing in the western provinces (Brennan, 2011). These differences have been linked to crime rates and victimization rates, which are generally higher in western provinces than eastern provinces (Brennan, 2011). Similar findings are evident at the local level, where the majority of Canadians living in CMA’s expressed satisfaction with their personal safety (Brennan, 2011). Again, the CMA’s reporting the lowest levels of satisfaction were located in western provinces (Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Edmonton) (Brennan, 2011).

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 asked respondents how safe they feel from crime in their neighbourhoods (see Figure 3). Although respondents are most likely to respond that crime rates overall and crime rates for youth stayed the same or increased, an overwhelming majority state that they feel safe from crime in their neighbourhood (92%). Results indicate that income has an impact on responses, where respondents with incomes between \$50,000-\$100,000 and respondents with incomes above \$100,000 are more likely to feel safe (95% and 94% respectively) than respondents with incomes below \$50,000 (88%). A pattern is evident among education levels: as education increases, the likelihood of feeling safe increases. Respondents with a university education are the most likely to report feeling safe (95%), followed by respondents with technical college/some university (92%) and respondents with a high school education or less (89%). Differences are found according to sex, where men are more likely to report feeling safe (94%) than women (90%), and men are most likely to state that they feel “very safe” (49%), whereas women are most likely to report that they feel “somewhat safe” (49%). Significant variations are found between respondents who identify as Aboriginal and respondents who do not identify as Aboriginal. Aboriginal respondents are much less likely to state that they feel safe (81%) than non-Aboriginal respondents (93%). Whether a respondent identifies as a visible minority also has an impact on responses, as visible minorities are less likely to feel safe (85%) than respondents who are not visible minorities (93%). Region of residence again has an influence on responses. Respondents in smaller cities are the

least likely to report feeling safe (85%), followed by Saskatoon residents (92%), residents of the rural south (93%), residents of the rural north (94%), and Regina residents (95%).

Despite Saskatchewan being plagued by some of the most severe crime statistics in the country, respondents are overwhelmingly likely to feel safe in their neighbourhoods. Although trends arose that indicated residents in the north feel less safe than those further south, the majority still agree that they felt safe.

Figure 3. How safe do you feel from crime in your neighbourhood?



METHODS OF CRIME REDUCTION

Although many respondents think that crime rates in their area are increasing or staying about the same, many of these respondents support the use of traditional crime reduction approaches that have been in use for many years, for example, punishment such as jail time. This may potentially highlight disconnect between respondents’ view of crime reduction approaches and their actual effect on crime rates in their area.

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 asked respondents what the most effective way to reduce crime in Saskatchewan is (see Figure 4). Respondents were given a choice between “increase policing”, “increase punishment, such as prison sentences”, “increase treatment and rehabilitation”, “increase restorative justice, such as sentencing circles”, “increase prevention programs”, or, “increase social

equality". Results indicate mixed opinions on what method of crime reduction is the most effective, where no approach is seen as a clear-cut and effective approach to crime reduction by a majority of respondents. Overall, the top three approaches supported by respondents are "increase punishment, such as prison sentences" (29%), "increase prevention programs" (18%), and "increase social equality" (17%). Further analysis of the data indicates that men are more likely to support "increase punishment" than women (31% compared to 27%). Whether a respondent resides in a rural or urban area yields significant differences in opinion. Rural residents are much more likely to support "increase punishment" (32%) than urban residents (26%). Urban residents are supportive of other approaches: "increase prevention programs" garners 19% support from urban residents compared to 16% support from those in rural areas, and "increase social equality" garners 19% support from urban residents compared to 13% support from rural residents. Results reveal a pattern based on income level, where there is a positive relationship between income levels and support for "increase policing". Respondents with incomes below \$50,000 show support for "increase policing" at a rate of 11%, while respondents with incomes between \$50,000-\$100,000 show support at a rate of 12%, and respondents with incomes over \$100,000 show support at a rate of 17%. On the other hand, a negative relationship between income and support for "increase treatment and rehabilitation", "increase prevention programs", and "increase social equality" is evident. For example, support for "increase treatment and rehabilitation" in the income group earning less than \$50,000 annually is 16%. This support falls as the income bracket increases. Respondents earning \$50,000-\$100,000 support "increase treatment and rehabilitation" at a rate of 15%, and respondents earning \$100,000 or more support "increase treatment and rehabilitation" at a rate of 11%. Results indicate that there are significant differences of opinion between education levels. As education increases, support for "increase punishment" falls dramatically: 33% support among those with a high school education or less, 31% support among those with technical college/some university, and 17% support among those with a university degree. A positive relationship between education level and support for both "increase prevention programs" and "increase social equality" is evident. 14% of

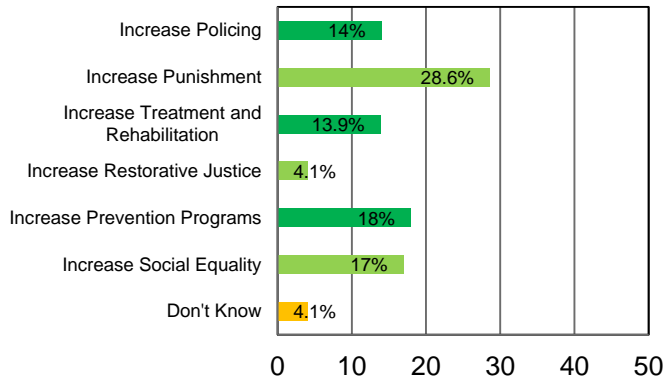
respondents with a high school education or less support "increase prevention programs", while 20% of respondents with technical college/some university support "increase prevention programs", and 21% of respondents with a university degree support "increase prevention programs". In addition, support for "increase social equality" is 12% among those with a high school education or less, 14% among those with technical college/some university, and 27% among those with a university education. When controlling for respondent's region of residence, results indicate that the rural north has different opinions than other regions. While the most common response for all groups is "increase punishment," the rural north shows its highest support for "increase prevention programs" (29%). The rate of respondents from the rural north preferring to "increase punishment" is only 4%, while the response rate for all other regions is between 22%- 34%.

When looking at differences in opinion concerning punitive methods of crime reduction compared to preventative methods, the results indicate a tendency for respondents to prefer punitive measures ("increase punishment") at a rate of 29% compared to 18% of respondents preferring preventative measures ("increase prevention programs"). When combining "increase policing" and "increase punishment" within the punitive category and contrasting it to a combined variable of rehabilitative strategies, which includes "increase restorative justice" and "increase treatment and rehabilitation," the difference becomes even more pronounced. 43% of respondents choose the punitive response, while only 18% choose the rehabilitative response. If "increase prevention programs" and "increase social equality" are combined in order to create a measure of increasing equality, the combined rate is 25%.

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 also asked respondents what the most effective way to reduce **youth** crime in Saskatchewan is (see Figure 5). Respondents were given a choice between "increase policing", "increase punishment, such as prison sentences", "increase treatment and rehabilitation", "increase restorative justice, such as sentencing circles", "increase prevention programs", or, "increase social equality". Responses about reducing youth crime compared to overall crime show an

increase in support for prevention programs, which is the most common response at a rate of 30%.

Figure 4. Which of the following do you think would be the most effective way to reduce crime in Saskatchewan?



The second most popular opinion is “increase punishment” (27%). These results highlight public recognition of youth crime existing as a separate issue from adult crime, and as such, requires a different approach in order to be effective.

Results indicate that there are differences of opinion according to sex, where men most commonly show support for “increase punishment” (28%), while the most common response for women is “increase prevention programs” (33%). Both rural and urban respondents are most likely to support “increase prevention programs”, and rural respondents are more supportive than urban respondents (31% and 29% respectively). In relation to youth crime, no significant differences are found among income groups. The most likely response for all income groups is "increase prevention programs" (all between 30%-32% support), while the second most likely response for all income groups is "increase punishment," which shows a positive relationship with income. Respondents with incomes below \$50,000 support “increase punishment” at a rate of 22%, followed by respondents with incomes between \$50,000-\$100,000 at a rate of 28%, and respondents earning more than \$100,000 at a rate of 29%. As is seen with the question regarding general crime reduction, a very significant difference exists between education level and opinion on youth crime reduction approaches. Increasing education level is associated with a decrease in support for “increase punishment”. Those with a high school education or

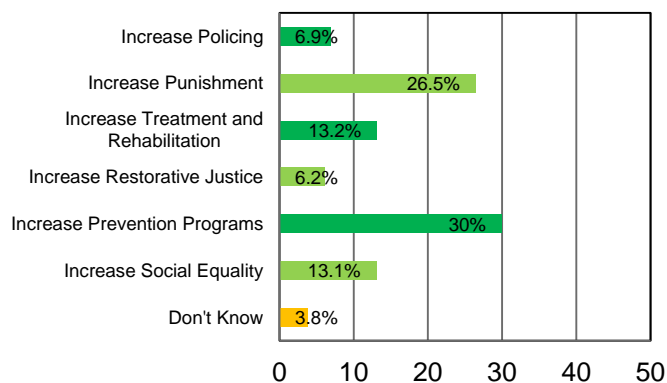
less support “increase punishment” at a rate of 34%, while 28% of those with technical college/some university support “increase punishment”, and those with a university degree support “increase punishment” at a rate of only 17%. However, support for “increase prevention programs” increases with education levels, where those with a high school education or less show support at a rate of 24%, 29% of those with technical college/some university show support, and 39% of respondents with a university degree show support. Support for “increase social equality” also demonstrates a positive relationship with education level. 19% of respondents with a university degree support “increase social equality”, while only 12% of respondents with a high school education or less say the same. Differences according to region of residence again show some differences, with “increase prevention programs” being the most favoured response from those in the Saskatoon CMA (28%), Regina CMA (33%), and those in the rural north (38%). “Increase punishment” is favoured by those in smaller cities (31%) and those in the rural south (31%). “Increase punishment” is only supported by 6% of respondents in the rural north, whereas they showed 32% support for “increase restorative justice” and the other regions favoured this approach at a rate of 6% or less.

Approaching response options in terms of punitive and preventative approaches for youth shows differences when compared to opinions regarding overall crime. When comparing opinions between “increase punishment” and “increase prevention programs”, the favoured method is switched, with 30% favouring “increase prevention programs” and 27% of respondents favouring “increase punishment”. When combining variables to create a punitive category (“increase policing” and “increase punishment”) and comparing it to a rehabilitative category (“increase restorative justice” and “increase treatment and rehabilitation”), the punitive measures are still favoured at a rate of 33% compared to 19%; however, the most favoured option by respondents is the combined “increase prevention programs” and “increase social equality” option, at 43%.

When looking at the combined responses of crime reduction measures, one cannot help but notice that respondents feel that crime has stayed the same or increased, yet still advocate for maintenance of

existing crime reduction methods for overall crime. However, when looking at preferred methods of youth crime reduction, tendencies towards social equality and prevention become the more popular choice.

Figure 5. Which of the following do you think would be the most effective way to youth reduce crime in Saskatchewan?



POLICE SATISFACTION

Satisfaction with police rests on a number of different factors. A 2002 report from the U.S. Department of Justice explains the results of an inquiry into the influences on public perceptions of police performance. People’s perceptions regarding the quality of their lives were reported to have the largest effect on perceptions of police performance (Ashcroft, Daniels and Hart, 2002). This finding indicates that people who have a high sense of personal safety and rate their neighbourhoods as favourable places to live are the most likely to report satisfaction with policing (Ashcroft, Daniels, Hart, 2002). The report also notes that residents who perceive themselves as having a high quality of life report satisfaction with police despite individual demographics such as race or age (Ashcroft, Daniels and Hart, 2002). While police can do little to influence how individuals perceive their quality of life, the research found that the second most influential factor is people’s actual interactions with police (Ashcroft, Daniels and Hart, 2002).

Considering that Saskatchewan residents report high levels of personal safety, it can be expected that they are satisfied with policing regardless of interactions. For example, in 2011 the Saskatoon Police Service commissioned a survey entitled “Community Satisfaction and Policing Priority” and

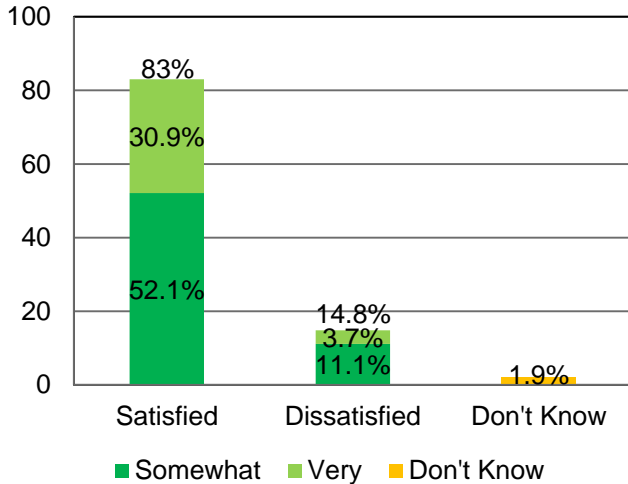
found that Saskatoon residents are increasingly satisfied with policing in the city (Edwards, 2012). The levels of overall satisfaction and satisfaction among people who have had contact with police has been increasing steadily since 2005 (Edwards, 2012). The level of overall satisfaction with policing was 91.8% in 2011, compared to 90.3% in 2008, 85% in 2005, and 89% in 2002 (Edwards, 2012). Furthermore, the results indicate that progress is being made involving the police relationship with the Aboriginal community (Edwards, 2012). The level of overall satisfaction among the Aboriginal community was 89% in 2011, compared to 80% in 2008, 59% in 2005, and 76% in 2002 (Edwards, 2012).

Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 asked respondent’s how satisfied they are with policing in Saskatchewan over the past twelve months (see Figure 6). A large majority of respondents are satisfied with the province’s policing (83%). Only 15% of respondents reported dissatisfaction, with 4% being “very dissatisfied”. Variations between education levels are present, where respondents with a university education are more likely to be satisfied (87%) than those with a high school education or less (83%) or those with technical college/some university (81%). Whether a respondent resides in a rural or urban area of the province influences responses. Rural residents are less likely to be satisfied (79%) than urban residents (86%). A pattern among age groups is evident: as age increases, the level of satisfaction increases. Respondents aged 55 and older are the most likely to be satisfied (86%) followed by those aged 35-54 (83%) and those aged 18-34 (80%). Differences of opinion are also found among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents. Aboriginal respondents are much less likely to report satisfaction (61%) than non-Aboriginal respondents (85%). Respondents who identify as a visible minority have different views than respondents who do not identify as a visible minority. Visible minorities are less likely to be satisfied (76%) than respondents that are not visible minorities (84%).

Finally, controlling for region of residence yields divergences in opinion regarding satisfaction with policing (see Appendix A). All regions are most likely to respond that they are “somewhat satisfied”, with the exception of respondents from the rural north who respond this way at half the frequency of the other regions. Respondents in the rural north are the

least satisfied with policing (50%) and are the most likely to state that they are “somewhat dissatisfied” (36%) while this is the third most likely response across the other regions. Respondents in the rural south are satisfied at a rate of 81%, followed by Saskatoon and smaller cities (both at a rate of 84%), and Regina is the most likely to be satisfied (90%).

Figure 6. How satisfied are you with policing in Saskatchewan over the past 12 months?



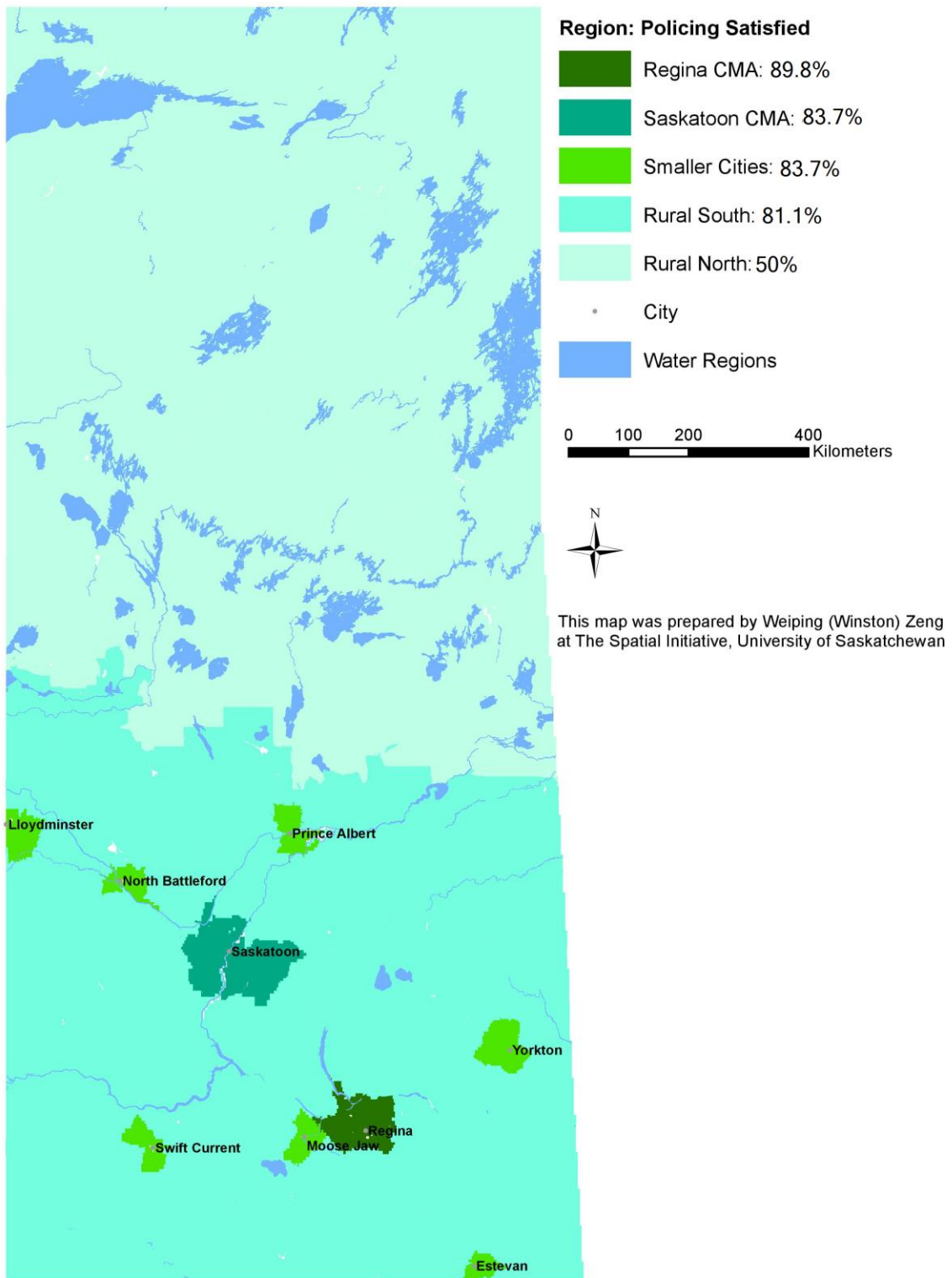
CONCLUSION

Results of Taking the Pulse of Saskatchewan 2012 indicate that Saskatchewan residents feel safe and are generally pleased with the state of public safety and policing in the province. Although crime rates across Canada and in the province are generally declining, respondents are most likely to feel that overall crime rates and youth crime rates have “remained the same” or “increased”. However, the perception of overall crime rates and youth crime rates does not seem to impact how safe respondents feel in their neighbourhood, as most respondents indicate that they feel safe in their neighbourhoods.

This perception of safety can be linked to responses regarding satisfaction with policing, where most respondents indicate that they are satisfied with policing in Saskatchewan. The fact that most respondents feel that crime rates and youth crime rates have “remained the same”, feel safe in their neighbourhoods, and are satisfied with policing, accounts for why most respondents are supportive of traditional crime reduction approaches when it comes to overall crime. If respondents feel that crime rates are stable, their neighbourhoods are safe, and police are doing a satisfactory job, than they do not feel there is any reason to change the justice system. However, when it comes to crime reduction approaches for youth crime, many respondents are aware that youth crime requires a different method, and most respondents are in favour of preventative measures.

Of course, different demographic groups vary in opinion. Differences are found according to income, education, age, sex, region, identification as Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, identification as a visible minority or not a visible minority, and country of birth. For example, discrepancies between perceptions and reality are lessened when looking at the response difference between respondents who identify as First Nations, Métis and Inuit and those who do not. Aboriginal respondents were much more likely to respond that crime had increased substantially, and felt that youth crime had increased while respondents not identifying as Aboriginal felt it had stayed the same. Aboriginal respondents were less likely to feel “very safe” in their neighbourhoods and were also less satisfied with policing compared to non-Aboriginal respondents. This difference may be indicative of the different realities these two groups face in regard to police, crime and public safety within the province.

Appendix A.



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