



Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management

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Ivan Y. Sun Jianhong Liu Ashley K. Farmer

Article information:

To cite this document:

Ivan Y. Sun Jianhong Liu Ashley K. Farmer , (2016), "Chinese police supervisors' occupational attitudes", Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, Vol. 39 Iss 1 pp. 190 - 205

Permanent link to this document:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-04-2015-0048>

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Chinese police supervisors' occupational attitudes

Role orientation, community policing, and job satisfaction

Ivan Y. Sun

*Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, University of Delaware,
Newark, Delaware, USA*

Jianhong Liu

Department of Sociology, University of Macau, Macau, China, and

Ashley K. Farmer

*Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, University of Delaware,
Newark, Delaware, USA*

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to assess factors that influence Chinese police supervisors' attitudes toward police roles, community policing, and job satisfaction.

Design/methodology/approach – Survey data were collected from police supervisors in a major Chinese city. Multivariate regression was used to assess the effects of officers' background characteristics and assignments on their occupational attitudes.

Findings – Ethnic minority supervisors were more likely to have a broader order maintenance orientation, a narrower crime fighting orientation, and supportive attitudes toward quality of life activities. Less experienced supervisors were more inclined to favor the order maintenance role. Supervisors with a stronger order maintenance orientation tended to support problem solving activities and have a greater level of job satisfaction. Officers with military service experience also expressed a higher degree of job satisfaction.

Research limitations/implications – Survey data collected from a single Chinese city may not be generalizable to officers in other regions and departments.

Practical implications – Police administrators should screen all applicants on attitudes that reflect departmental work priorities and styles of policing during the initial selection process. Desirable attitudes can be further molded into officers during their academic training, field officer training, and in-service training. Police administrators should continue their recruiting efforts targeting former military personnel. With adequate training in fulfilling civilian tasks and displaying proper outlooks, these individuals could become effective members of the forces.

Originality/value – Despite a growing number of studies on crime and justice in China, empirical research on policing in general and on officers' occupational attitudes in particular remains very limited. This study represents one of the first attempts to assess factors related to police occupational outlooks in China.

Keywords China, Job satisfaction, Community policing, Police attitudes, Role orientation

Paper type Research paper



Introduction

A substantial amount of research has been devoted to investigating police job-related attitudes in the USA since the 1960s. Early studies tended to depict officers as a monolithic group of individuals who tended to display a high degree of solidarity, suspiciousness, authority, and cynicism due primarily to a strong socialization process and an unpredictable and unfriendly work environment (Niederhoffer, 1969;

Reiss, 1971; Skolnick, 1966; Van Maanen, 1974). Later research on police typologies revealed that officers were not psychologically and attitudinally homogenous (Brown, 1988; Muir, 1977). Patrol supervisors also varied in their attitudinal propensities, leading to distinctive supervisory styles (Engel, 2001). Studies also suggested that officers' background characteristics and assignments, organizational structures and leadership styles, and community contexts may shape their occupational belief systems (see Worden, 1995). Evidence accumulated from this line of inquiry is pivotal as it not only signals key elements of police culture but also sheds light on the likelihood of successful police reforms, such as the implementation of community- and problem-oriented policing and the integration of racial/ethnic minorities and women into police forces (Crank, 2010; Martin and Jurik, 2006; Skogan, 2006).

The purpose of this study is to assess factors that influence Chinese police supervisors' work-related attitudes. Although scholars have acknowledged the impediments to conducting criminological research in China (Liang and Lu, 2006; Zhang, 2014), the past two decades can be regarded as the golden era of Chinese criminology, with a large number of studies on various crime and justice issues being published (Cao *et al.*, 2014). In the arena of policing, researchers have studied Chinese police strategies and tactics (e.g. Deng and O'Brien, 2013; Dutton, 2005; Tanner, 2005; Trevaskes, 2003; Xu, 2014), organizational reforms and legislations (Fu, 2005; Ma, 1997, 2003; Wong, 2009), people's armed police (Cheung, 1996; Sun and Wu, 2009), police-community relations and trust in the police (Du, 1997; Sun *et al.*, 2013; Wu and Sun, 2009), and community policing (Jiao, 1995; Wong, 2001; Zhong, 2009).

Despite two decades of noticeable growth in Chinese policing literature, this broad vein of investigation has focussed predominately on aggregate-level (e.g. city, provincial/regional, and national) phenomena without much attention to individual officers' beliefs, attitudes, skills, and work habits. Indeed, studies on Chinese officers' occupational outlooks and operational styles remain surprisingly scant. To date, only three studies have analyzed factors related to attitudinal tendencies of contemporary Chinese police officers (Cuvelier *et al.*, 2015; Sun *et al.*, 2009, 2010), all relying on data collected from cadets in the same police college. The use of police cadets as study samples is problematic as new recruits have little or no experience with the important contributing force to their occupational outlooks – the formal and informal socialization processes that involve regular dealings with various tasks and constant interactions with supervisors, co-workers, and citizens. This study attempts to address this deficiency in the existing literature.

Policing in China has entered a new era since 2002, when community policing was officially adopted as the guiding strategy of the police (Sun and Wu, 2010). Under the comprehensive management of social order policy, community policing focussed on an integrated system that anchored on crime prevention, control and management, and aggressive enforcement. Like the similar reform in the USA, the Chinese style of community policing emphasized the importance of involving citizens in policy making, improving police-community relations, enhancing quality of life in the community, and utilizing problem solving techniques (Jiao, 1995). Nonetheless, research has shown that the adoption of community policing was nothing more than old wine in new bottles, with local policing continuing to be characterized as traditional ideologies and practices (Zhong, 2009). Due to the absence of research on officers' occupational attitudes, little is known about how Chinese police officers view different roles of the police and key components of community policing in the new era of Chinese policing. This study helps us fill this void.

Using survey data collected from approximately 200 police supervisors in a Chinese metropolitan area, this study assessed the effects of officers' demographics and assignments on occupational attitudes and job satisfaction. Two research questions guided this study:

- RQ1.* Do officers' demographics and assignments affect their role orientations toward crime fighting and order maintenance?
- RQ2.* Do officers' demographics and assignments directly or indirectly (through role orientations) influence their attitudes toward problem solving and quality of life and their levels of job satisfaction?

This study thus examined the possible connections between officers' personal background characteristics and assignments and work-related attitudes, identified salient factors in predicting officers' occupational attitudes, and assessed the interconnectedness among officers' professional outlooks in the Chinese context. Findings of this study not only expand our understandings of police officers in China but also generate useful implications for policy and future research.

Police occupational attitudes

Police occupational attitudes are complicated phenomena that can be defined as "a constellation of beliefs, sentiments, and behavioral tendencies concerning some object" (Worden, 1995, p. 51). Although prior research has assessed an array of attitudinal propensities, this study concentrated on officers' attitudes toward crime fighting, order maintenance, problem solving, quality of life, and job satisfaction. These attitudinal dimensions were chosen for two reasons. First, they represent critical aspects in policing, including the traditional role orientations (crime fighting and order maintenance), the underlying elements of community policing (problem solving and quality of life), and the direct indicator of employee behavioral characteristics and performance (job satisfaction). Second, these dimensions have been analyzed to a certain extent in the US policing literature, allowing the researchers to draw upon prior work. The following sections provide a brief review of the three groups of dimensions and past findings on the connections between officers' background characteristics and such attitudinal constructs. Whenever appropriate, prior research on the Chinese police is also included.

Role orientation

Role orientation refers to officers' attitudes toward the proper scope of police work and the priority of various police tasks. Traditionally, the police have been expected to fulfill three broad roles: law enforcement, order maintenance, and service. Prior research found that police departments have multiple cultures with which different officers connect (Paoline, 2001) and that officers are not a homogeneous group in their perceptions of proper police roles (Brown, 1988; Muir, 1977). Some officers view their primary role as crime fighters whose top priorities are crime control and law enforcement. Other officers define their role more broadly and consider the order maintenance role as part of legitimate police business (Worden, 1995). Those officers may even prioritize order maintenance in their work, as a focus on disorder problems could improve the quality of neighborhood life, reduce fear of crime, and eventually lead to less crime (Goldstein, 1977; Skogan, 1990; Wilson and Kelling, 1982).

Although past studies have assessed the connections between key officer demographics (e.g. gender, race, education, and experience) and perceptions of police

roles, their findings are mixed and far from conclusive. For example, while most studies showed no gender differences in officers' role orientation (Brooks *et al.*, 1993; Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Paoline *et al.*, 2000; Worden, 1993, 1990), some found that female officers tended to have a broader role orientation (Sun, 2003), and others found that females display less favorable attitudes toward order maintenance duties (Paoline *et al.*, 2015). Similarly, the influences of race/ethnicity and educational attainment are not consistent. Some studies indicated a broader role orientation or supportive attitudes toward order maintenance among minority or non-white officers (Paoline *et al.*, 2000, 2015; Sun, 2003), whereas others suggested a nil or weak racial effect (Worden, 1993, 1990). Studies focussed on the impact of educational attainment revealed that education was weakly associated with role orientation (Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Paoline *et al.*, 2015; Worden, 1990), but a few others demonstrated that better educated officers tended to be less favorable toward the role of crime control, law enforcement, and order maintenance (Brooks *et al.*, 1993; Paoline *et al.*, 2000). Finally, police experience was found to be unrelated to officers' role orientation (Brooks *et al.*, 1993; Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Worden, 1993), positively associated with the order maintenance role (Paoline *et al.*, 2000), and inversely connected to the scope of the police role and the order maintenance orientation (Sun, 2003; Worden, 1990). It appears that the influences of key officer characteristics on attitudes toward the police role remain unsettled.

Research also found that police supervisors can be distinguished along key attitudinal dimensions, with the traditional style of supervisors showing a strong orientation toward aggressive enforcement (Engel, 2001). One recent study found that supervisors' experience and education were not predictive of their perceived goals of making arrests and seizing guns and drugs, but supervisors with a strong law enforcement orientation were more likely to endorse the goals of making arrests and seizing guns and drugs (Phillips, 2014). These findings suggest that supervisors' role orientations may influence other occupational attitudes. In a comparative study of police supervisors in Taiwan and the USA, better educated and less experienced supervisors displayed a broader role orientation, and American supervisors tended to have a broader role orientation than their Taiwan counterparts (Chu and Sun, 2007).

Using survey data from police cadets in a Chinese police college, three studies assessed the linkage between cadets' background characteristics and their perceptions of police roles. One study found that cadets' age, gender, and educational attainment were unrelated to their attitudes toward the law enforcement and order maintenance roles (Sun *et al.*, 2009). A comparative study of Chinese and American cadets' occupational attitudes found that Chinese cadets were less supportive of the order maintenance role than their US counterparts, but both groups' attitudes were not influenced by their age, gender, and education (Sun *et al.*, 2010). In a replication of Sun *et al.* (2009), researchers confirmed a relatively weak linkage between officers' background characteristics and their order maintenance and law enforcement role orientations (Cuvelier *et al.*, 2015). Although these studies showed little attitudinal differences in role orientations across cadets' key demographics, it is unknown whether findings based on data from fledgling officers can be applied to seasoned officers with supervisory and management responsibilities.

Community policing

Community policing has become the dominant theme of policing for police forces worldwide since the 1980s (Bayley, 1999). Two of the popular models of community policing are broken windows and problem solving (Mastrofski *et al.*, 1995). The broken

windows approach emphasizes greater police attentiveness to minor crimes and disorders, as these relatively small and often quality of life issues, if left unaddressed, are likely to grow into bigger problems and even serious crimes (Wilson and Kelling, 1982). A focus on quality of life thus is instrumental in preventing neighborhood deterioration and reducing fear of crime. The problem solving model draws mainly from Goldstein's (1990) work that stresses police using multiple-party resources to proactively intervene into underlying causes of neighborhood problems. Although Goldstein did not view problem solving as a component of community policing, his problem solving approach has been widely used by police departments to involve local residents in the process of identifying, prioritizing, and addressing neighborhood problems. The ultimate goal of both approaches is to cultivate strong and healthy communities that have low levels of fear of crime, crime, and incivility, and are capable of handling most of their concerns with the support from the local police.

Past research has yet to generate consistent evidence in support of the connections between officers' demographics and their attitudes toward community policing. Officers' background characteristics, for example, failed to account for changes in their acceptance of and receptiveness to community policing (Lord and Friday, 2008). Likewise, no gender-related differences were found in officers' attitudes about community policing (Haarr, 2001; Pelfrey, 2004; Sims *et al.*, 2003; Winfree *et al.*, 1996), with the only exception being Schafer's (2002) study, which found that female officers possessed greater global attitudes toward community policing. A few studies also found that non-white, experienced, and better educated officers were more likely to support community policing (Paoline *et al.*, 2000, 2015; Skogan and Hartnett, 1997; Sun and Chu, 2008). Studies on police supervisors indicated that supervisors' attitudes toward problem solving were weakly linked to patrol officers' views on problem solving (Engel and Worden, 2003). Police supervisors with an aggressive law enforcement orientation were less inclined to favor the notions of getting the public involved and reducing fear (Phillips, 2014).

Two of the studies on Chinese cadets' attitudes touched on a third model of community policing – community building – which emphasizes police establishing concrete rapport with neighborhood residents and deemphasizing the use of law enforcement activities in favor of the coproduction of public order through neighborhood collective action and resiliency building (Mastrofski *et al.*, 1995). One study found that cadets with a stronger motivation toward crime fighting and law enforcement were more likely to support community building as an important police goal (Sun *et al.*, 2009). A second study showed that cadets who were motivated by the desire to protect and serve the community displayed greater support for community building (Cuvelier *et al.*, 2015). Neither study assessed cadets' attitudes toward problem solving and quality of life, however. This study would fill this knowledge gap in the literature by assessing factors related to police supervisors' attitudes toward problem solving and quality of life.

Job satisfaction

A third attitudinal dimension that has attracted some research attention is job satisfaction. This line of research is vital, as job satisfaction is linked to important employee behavioral characteristics, which could potentially influence the overall performance of a department (Buzawa, 1984). Indeed, previous studies have shown an association between police officers' job satisfaction and employee turnover, absenteeism, and productivity (Buzawa, 1984; Dantzer and Surrette, 1996; Hoath *et al.*, 1998).

Past research has failed to confirm a consistent effect of officers' gender, race, and education on their job satisfaction. For example, most studies showed a weak gender difference in job satisfaction (e.g. Carlan, 2007; Dantzker and Kubin, 1998; Halstead *et al.*, 2000; Hassell *et al.*, 2011; Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Johnson, 2012; Miller *et al.*, 2009; Paoline *et al.*, 2015; Zhao *et al.*, 1999), with the exception of two studies. A. Worden's (1993) study revealed that female minority officers are more positive in their workplace evaluations than their male counterparts, and Winfree and colleagues (1997) found that male officers expressed higher levels of support for their organizations than do female officers.

Racial/ethnic difference in job satisfaction is also less apparent, with the majority of past studies finding no such distinction between white and minority or non-white officers (e.g. Carlan, 2007; Dantzker and Kubin, 1998; Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Miller *et al.*, 2009; Paoline *et al.*, 2015; Zhao *et al.*, 1999). One study reported a higher level of job satisfaction among black officers, compared to their white colleagues (Johnson, 2012). Officers with varying educational attainment were found to be similar in their levels of job satisfaction (Carlan, 2007; Dantzker and Kubin, 1998; Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Johnson, 2012; Miller *et al.*, 2009; Zhao *et al.*, 1999), but a recent study showed that officers with a bachelor's degree or higher were less satisfied with their job (Paoline *et al.*, 2015). Among officers' background characteristics, experience or years of police service stands out as the most consistent predictor of job satisfaction, with experienced officers showing a lower level of job satisfaction than their less experienced counterparts (Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Johnson, 2012; Miller *et al.*, 2009; Paoline *et al.*, 2015; Zhao *et al.*, 1999).

In addition to background characteristics, whether officers' individual role orientations are in line with the department's work priorities or style of policing (Wilson, 1968) may be also linked to their job satisfaction. For example, officers with a strong law enforcement orientation may have higher levels of job satisfaction in a department that emphasizes aggressive enforcement strategies (e.g. traffic and suspicion stops, drug enforcement, and arrests) as their occupational outlooks and operational practices are likely to receive administrative endorsement. Similarly, if both officers and the agency favor an order maintenance approach that focusses on disorder or quality of life issues, then such congruence may enhance officers' job satisfaction. Past research has included both officers' role orientations and job satisfaction in assessing their occupational attitudes (see Paoline *et al.*, 2015), but the effects of role orientations on job satisfaction have rarely been analyzed.

A few studies published in Chinese have analyzed police officers' job satisfaction. Based on survey data collected from 263 traffic police in Beijing, one study found that officers' levels of job satisfaction were not influenced by their age, education, and experience, but police supervisors reported higher degrees of job satisfaction than rank and file (Liu and Zhao, 2010). Drawing on data from a district police bureau in Chongqing, another study reported a lower level of job satisfaction among officers with better education and aged between 36 and 45, a group of individuals who were likely to carry the heaviest duties and responsibilities in the agency (Diao, 2007). A third study of Shanghai police reported that male officers expressed lower levels of satisfaction with job stability and salary than their female counterparts, and criminal police had lower job satisfaction than non-criminal police (Ye, 2004). Although these studies have improved our understanding of police job satisfaction in China, one common limitation associated with this line of research is the use of bivariate analysis, usually mean comparisons, to assess officers' job satisfaction across demographics, making their

results primitive and less reliable. Using multivariate regression analysis, this study examined the impact of officers' demographics and role orientations on their job satisfaction.

Methodology

Data collection and sample

Data used in this study were collected from a police college located in a major city in southwest China. Founded in the 1950s as a basic training school for police officers, the college has gradually grown into a higher education institution that currently offers bachelor's degrees through its eight departments/majors to high school graduates as well as in-service, short-term training courses, or programs to police officers. Assisted by an instructor from the college, one of the researchers collected survey data during the winter of 2014, when a few hundred police supervisors from various units in the city police force attended an on-the-job training course at the college. The survey instrument, which contained 61 items, was developed based mainly on past research on police occupational attitudes in both the USA and China (see Paoline *et al.*, 2000; Sun *et al.*, 2009). It was designed to obtain information on officers' background characteristics and their attitudes toward community policing, police-community relations, police roles and priorities, and job satisfaction.

Police supervisors (i.e. those who carry a rank of sergeant or above) attending the mandatory training course were informed by the instructor several days in advance about the opportunity to participate in a research project. Before distributing the survey to officers, the instructor explained the purpose of the study and emphasized the voluntary and confidential nature of their participation. Approximately 230 surveys were distributed and 219 surveys were returned. Seven surveys were dropped from the analysis because of missing responses, resulting in a final sample of 212 police supervisors.

As shown in Table I, the majority of sample officers was male (76 percent), Han (ethnic majority) people (92 percent), and had at least a bachelor's degree (84 percent). They were an average 35 years old with approximately 11 years of police experience. About 12 percent of the supervisors had served in the military, a quarter (24 percent) were assigned to field stations, and one-third (31 percent) worked in detective units (violent and property, economic, and drug offenses). Because of the lack of official demographic data on officers and supervisors in the city, the representation of sample officers could not be assured. However, the researchers' own knowledge about the police force indicated that there was a reasonable congruence between the study sample and the agency population of supervisors.

Measures

Dependent variables used in this study included five composite scales. Two scales, crime fighting and order maintenance, indicated officers' role orientations. The crime fighting scale was constructed based on three items asking respondents to rate the importance of the police to achieve the goal of: fighting against crime, countering terrorism, and seizing drugs, guns, and contrabands. Possible responses ranged from least important (1) to most important (5). The scale had a Cronbach's α of 0.75, suggesting acceptable reliability. A higher score on the scale indicates a stronger orientation toward crime fighting. Similarly, the order maintenance scale was constructed by summing the responses to three items where respondents were asked whether police should handle: first, public nuisances

Variables	<i>M</i>	SD	Range	α
<i>Occupational attitudes</i>				
Crime fighting	13.95	1.90	6-15	0.75
Order maintenance	6.70	2.52	3-12	0.75
Problem solving	8.77	2.31	3-12	0.74
Quality of life	12.04	2.09	7-15	0.75
Job satisfaction	9.86	2.67	5-18	0.77
<i>Background characteristics</i>				
Male	0.76	0.43	0-1	–
Age	34.47	2.21	29-42	–
Ethnic majority/Han	0.92	0.28	0-1	–
Educational attainment	3.94	0.90	1-6	–
Years of police experience	11.52	2.87	1-24	–
Military experience	0.12	0.33	0-1	–
Field station	0.24	0.43	0-1	–
Detective	0.31	0.46	0-1	–

Notes: $n = 212$. *M*, mean; SD, standard deviation; α , Cronbach's α

Table I.
Descriptive statistics for variables in regression analysis

(e.g. loud noise from construction sites); second, neighbor disputes; and third, family disputes. The response categories included: never, sometimes, much of the time, and always. A Cronbach's α of 0.75 signals acceptable internal reliability. A higher score on the scale reflects a stronger orientation toward order maintenance. The crime fighting and order maintenance measures were used as dependent variables with demographics and also as independent variables to predict officers' attitudes toward community policing and job satisfaction.

Officers' attitudes toward community policing were analyzed through two additive scales. The scale of problem solving included three items: first, police should do their best to solve crime and non-crime problems in the community; second, police should work with local residents to solve their problems; and third, helping community residents to solve their problems is as equally important as aggressively enforcing the law. Response categories ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). The Cronbach's α associated with the scale (0.74) suggests acceptable internal consistency. A higher value on the scale indicates greater support for problem solving activities. The quality of life scale was measured through three items asking respondents to rate the importance of the police to achieve the goal of: first, improving quality of life in the community; second, reducing people's fear of crime; and third, enhancing public awareness of crime prevention. Possible responses varied from least important (1) to most important (5). A Cronbach's α of 0.75 indicates acceptable reliability for this scale. A higher score reflects more favorable attitudes toward the quality of life goal.

The last dependent variable, job satisfaction, was constructed by adding the responses to five items asking respondents about their satisfaction with: work assignments, salary, benefits, future career development, and overall work environment. Response categories ranged from highly dissatisfied (1) to highly satisfied (4). The Cronbach's α (0.77) reveals acceptable reliability. A greater score suggests a higher degree of job satisfaction.

The independent variables included eight variables representing officers' background characteristics and assignments[1]. Officers' sex, ethnicity, and military experience were coded as dummy variables with 1 representing male, ethnic majority[2]

(i.e. the Han Chinese), and previous military experience. Officers' age and year of police experience were measured in years and educational attainment was a six-category variable (1 = high school; 6 = master's degree or above). Two more dummy variables indicated whether the supervisor worked at a field station (1) or detective/criminal investigation unit (1).

Table I displays the descriptive statistics for all variables used in regression analysis. The matrix of two-variable correlations among all independent variables was checked (results not shown) to detect possible multicollinearity problems. The highest correlation between two explanatory variables (age and military experience) was 0.42, which is acceptable. The variance inflation factors were also examined. All of them were much lower than the generally accepted limit of ten (Neter *et al.*, 1996), suggesting that multicollinearity was not a concern in this study.

Results

Eight regression models (see Table II) were estimated to answer the two research questions of this study. Models 1 and 2 assessed the effects of background characteristics and assignments on officers' role orientations toward crime fighting and order maintenance. Models 3-5 examined the influences of background characteristics and assignments on officers' attitudes toward problem solving, quality of life, and job satisfaction. Models 6-8, which were the full models, tested the impact of background characteristics, assignments, and role orientations (i.e. crime fighting, order maintenance) on attitudes toward problem solving, quality of life, and job satisfaction. Table II summarizes the results from regression analysis.

In Model 1, only one predictor, ethnicity, exerted a significant effect on officers' attitudes toward crime fighting. Ethnic majority (Han) supervisors were more likely to display a stronger orientation toward crime fighting than their minority counterparts. In Model 2, ethnicity continued to be a significant predictor in the model of order maintenance, with minority supervisors exhibiting a greater orientation toward order maintenance than their majority counterparts. In addition to ethnicity, less experienced police supervisors also showed a stronger tendency toward the order maintenance role of the police.

None of the demographic and assignment variables exerted a significant direct effect on officers' attitudes toward problem solving (Model 3). Only one variable, age, was a significant variable in Model 4, with older officers showing greater support for the idea of quality of life. In Model 5, officers' levels of job satisfaction were also influenced by one variable, military experience. Officers with prior military experience were more likely to express higher levels of job satisfaction.

When officer role orientation variables were added into the analysis in Model 6, officers' demographics and assignments remained weakly related to their attitudes toward problem solving and the order maintenance orientation was the only significant predictor. Police supervisors with a stronger order maintenance orientation were more likely to favor problem solving activities. Considering the results in Model 2, 3, and 6 together, it appears that while ethnicity and years of police experience have a weak direct effect on problem solving, they have a significantly indirect impact on problem solving, chiefly through order maintenance.

In Model 7, three variables, age, ethnicity, and crime fighting, reached statistical significance in predicting officers' attitudes toward quality of life. Older and ethnic minority supervisors were more inclined to endorse quality of life activities than their younger and ethnic majority counterparts. Police supervisors with a stronger

Variable	Model 1 Crime fighting	Model 2 Order maintenance	Model 3 Problem solving	Model 4 Quality of life	Model 5 Job satisfaction	Model 6 Problem solving	Model 7 Quality of life	Model 8 Job satisfaction
<i>Demographics and assignments</i>								
Male	0.30 (0.33)	0.48 (0.30)	0.03 (0.30)	0.12 (0.30)	-0.32 (0.30)	-0.11 (0.30)	-0.02 (0.30)	-0.53 (0.30)
Age	-0.04 (0.07)	0.03 (0.07)	0.02 (0.07)	0.14 (0.07)*	-0.01 (0.07)	0.03 (0.07)	17 (0.07)**	-0.01 (0.07)
Ethnic majority/Han	0.99 (0.49)*	-1.21 (0.47)**	-0.07 (0.47)	-0.74 (0.47)	-0.31 (0.47)	0.19 (0.48)	-1.02 (0.49)*	0.05 (0.48)
Educational attainment	0.19 (0.16)	0.18 (0.14)	0.18 (0.14)	0.27 (0.14)	0.23 (0.14)	0.07 (0.18)	0.23 (0.14)	0.22 (0.14)
Years of police experience	-0.06 (0.05)	-0.10 (0.05)*	0.02 (0.05)	-0.06 (0.05)	-0.07 (0.05)	0.13 (0.14)	-0.06 (0.05)	-0.05 (0.05)
Military experience	-0.07 (0.47)	0.49 (0.42)	0.60 (0.42)	-0.40 (0.42)	1.31 (0.43)*	0.05 (0.05)	-0.43 (0.43)	1.23 (0.43)**
Field station	-0.56 (0.31)	0.21 (0.29)	0.12 (0.29)	-0.25 (0.29)	0.36 (0.29)	0.17 (0.29)	-0.11 (0.29)	0.34 (0.29)
Detective	-0.02 (0.30)	0.17 (0.27)	0.01 (0.27)	0.36 (0.27)	-0.21 (0.27)	-0.13 (0.27)	0.41 (0.27)	-0.29 (0.27)
<i>Role orientations</i>								
Crime fighting	-	-				0.12 (0.09)	0.34 (0.09)***	-0.04 (0.09)
Order maintenance	-	-				0.21 (0.05)***	0.04 (0.05)	0.19 (0.05)***
Model Chi-square	15.76*	17.17*	5.22	13.21	24.43**	22.57**	29.87***	39.45***
Cox and Snell R^2	0.07	0.08	0.02	0.06	0.11	0.10	0.13	0.17

Notes: $n = 212$. ^aEntries are results from ordered logistic regression, with standard errors in parentheses. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

Table II.
Multivariate
regression summary^a

orientation toward crime fighting were more likely to favor the police handling quality of life issues. Taking the results in Model 1 and 4 into consideration, age has only a significant direct effect on quality of life, whereas ethnicity has both a significant direct and indirect impact through crime fighting on quality of life.

In Model 8, police supervisors' levels of job satisfaction were influenced by their military experience and their order maintenance orientation. Supervisors who served in the military were more likely to have a higher degree of job satisfaction than those without such experience. Officers with a stronger order maintenance orientation also expressed a higher level of job satisfaction. Compared to the findings in Model 2 and 5, the impact of ethnicity and years of police experience on job satisfaction is principally indirectly mediated by order maintenance, while the influence of military experience is primarily direct.

Discussion

While US studies have accumulated some evidence regarding police attitudes and behaviors, research on Chinese police is still in its infancy, with almost no attention to the occupational attitudes of contemporary police officers. This study represented one of the first attempts to investigate the connections between Chinese police demographics and their attitudes toward proper role, community policing, and job satisfaction. Findings of this study are discussed along the two research questions. First, officers' demographics and assignments collectively were only weakly related to their attitudes toward police roles, community policing, and job satisfaction. A notable exception is ethnicity, which exerted a significant direct effect on both crime fighting and order maintenance and a significant indirect effect on problem solving and job satisfaction through order maintenance. Ethnic minority officers were more likely than the Han officers to support the order maintenance role and quality of life activities but less likely to favor the crime fighting role. One might speculate that minority officers could be more aware of or sensitive to the detrimental effects of aggressive enforcement strategies and tactics on police-community relations and thus are less likely to support the notion of crime fighting. Our findings also echo the results from a few US studies showing greater supportive attitudes toward order maintenance and community policing among minority or non-white officers (Paoline *et al.*, 2000, 2015; Skogan and Hartnett, 1997; Sun, 2003). Although ethnicity has rarely been considered in Chinese criminology, our findings clearly suggest that future research has to take this under-studied factor into account in analyzing police occupational attitudes.

Second, among officers' demographics, military experience is the only predictor that has a significant direct effect on job satisfaction. While US studies found that years of police experience lowered officers' job satisfaction (Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Johnson, 2012; Miller *et al.*, 2009; Paoline *et al.*, 2015; Zhao *et al.*, 1999), Chinese supervisors' past military experience enhanced their job satisfaction. A possible explanation is that military training and task requirements made supervisors better prepared and qualified for the policing profession, which is likely to improve their job satisfaction. More studies, perhaps utilizing in-depth interviews with officers, should be conducted to further uncover the true association between military experience and job satisfaction.

Finally, supervisors' role orientation toward order maintenance influenced their preferences for the problem solving goal and job satisfaction, whereas their crime fighting orientation affected their inclination to the quality of life goal. These findings indicate that police occupational outlooks are not stand-alone propensities but highly intertwined with one another. The results also confirm the potential linkage between supervisors' role

orientation and various policing goals (Phillips, 2014). Police role orientations thus can be viewed as the basic occupational attitudes and should be included in future research to not only assess their influences on other outlooks but also analyze their potential mediating effects on the associations between demographics and other attitudes.

Although this study has made a genuine contribution to the existing literature, three limitations should be noted. First, this study was based on data collected from police supervisors in a large metropolitan area in China. Findings of this study may not be generalized to supervisors in smaller or rural police departments, where task requirements and work environments could be quite different. Future studies should collect data from officers in departments with different sizes and in various regions. Second, this study only examined Chinese police supervisors' occupational attitudes. As previous research has revealed a weak link between supervisor attitudes and officer attitudes (Engel and Worden, 2003; Ingram, 2013), our findings should be interpreted with caution. More research should include data from both officers and their supervisors to assess the congruence (or incongruence) in attitudes between the two groups. Finally, although the explanatory power of our model is largely in line with that of previous studies, it also suggests the inadequacy of officers' demographics in accounting for occupational attitudes. Future studies should consider incorporating other levels of predictors, such as workgroup, organizational, and neighborhood characteristics (see Ingram and Terrill, 2014; Johnson, 2012) to advance the explanation of officer job-related outlooks.

Our findings have implications for the Chinese police. First, if certain attitudinal propensities reflect the key elements of the Chinese style of community policing and have the potential of enhancing job satisfaction, then police departments should screen all applicants on such attitudes during the initial selection process. Desirable attitudes can be further molded into officers during their academic training, field officer training and in-service training. Second, police supervisors with military experience expressed a greater level of job satisfaction than their co-workers without such experience. As previous research has identified positive correlates of high job satisfaction (Buzawa, 1984; Dantzker and Surette, 1996; Hoath *et al.*, 1998), police administrators should continue their recruiting efforts targeting former military personnel. With adequate training in fulfilling civilian tasks and displaying proper outlooks, these individuals could become effective members of the forces.

Notes

1. The majority of our sample supervisors (77.3 percent) held the rank of sergeants and the rest were lieutenants/inspectors. Preliminary analysis showed that the two groups did not differ in their occupational attitudes. The variable rank thus was not included in the final analysis.
2. The Han Chinese constitute roughly 91.5 percent of the total population in mainland China. There are 55 officially recognized ethnic minorities in China, making up another 8.5 percent (114 million) of the total population. Most of the minority people live in the south, west, and north of China, particularly in remote and mountainous areas where living conditions are harsh. In the sample site, ethnic minorities represented approximately 6.5 percent of the city population in 2010.

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About the authors

Ivan Y. Sun is a Professor in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice at the University of Delaware. His research interests include police attitudes and behavior, public opinion on legal authorities, and crime and justice in Asian societies. His most recent publications on police have appeared in *Justice Quarterly*, *Crime and Delinquency*, and *British Journal of Criminology*. Professor Ivan Y. Sun is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: isun@udel.edu

Jianhong Liu is a Professor of Criminology at the University of Macau. He received his PhD from the State University of New York at Albany in 1993. He is the Author, an Editor, or a Co-editor of 19 books, and has published more than 70 articles and book chapters.

Ashley K. Farmer is a Doctoral Candidate in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice at the University of Delaware. Her main research interests include policing, disasters and crime, and environmental justice. Her articles are forthcoming at *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* and *Race and Justice*.