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LGBTQ+ Perspectives on the Police

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To my community, to my friends, and family, thank you for your support.

Abstract

The main goal of this study was to discover how LGBTQ+ in Rotterdam perceive the police and how those perceptions influence trust in the police. It is vital to understand and focus on the specific perspectives that LGBTQ+ people have, as it helps us explore how marginalized sub-groups view and relate to the institutions around them. This study utilized queer theory concepts like heteronormativity and homonationalism to achieve a more complex and accurate understanding of the research question. Semi-structured interviews were conducted, and police trust was examined through a procedural justice perspective, namely as it relates to perceptions of understanding, dialog, respect, and neutrality. The results indicate that LGBTQ+ people in Rotterdam perceive the police as masculine, performative, and traditional. While opinions differed around the police, visible queerness seemed to be the defining pillar in shaping LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police, with visibly queer individuals often holding more negative perceptions of the police. Future research should thus expand on how the various sub-groups within the LGBTQ+ spectrum perceive the police. Given the unawareness but vastly positive outlook on the PinkinBlue liaison unit, this study suggests the promotion and increased visibility of the PinkinBlue unit.

      Keywords: Heteronormativity, Homonationalism, LGBTQ+, Police, Queer Theory

Introduction

The Netherlands, especially in comparison to other countries, has a long and present history of supporting LGBTQ+ rights, also as it connects to police support. Therefore, the Netherlands is often presented as one of the most advanced and progressive countries regarding LGBTQ+ rights. By decriminalizing homosexuality in 1971, recognizing same-sex marriage in 1998, and introducing anti-discrimination legislation in 1994 (Government of the Netherlands, 2018), the Netherlands has historically taken the lead as a champion of LGBTQ+ rights. In addition, the Netherlands possesses various measures and legal protections for LGBTQ+ people, including anti-discrimination laws and close cooperation between police and LGBTQ+ groups. The creation of a dedicated LGBTQ+ police unit, the PinkInBlue unit, demonstrates the general supportive attitudes the police hold towards LGBTQ+ people in the Netherlands.

This, in turn, differentiates the Netherlands from other countries, like the United States, which during the 20th century, oversaw massive instances of discrimination, violence, and marginalization enacted by the police towards LGBTQ+ people (Daum, 2019). The police played an essential role in enforcing sodomy laws that both punished same-sex activity and gender deviance. (Daum, 2019). Consequently, past relations between the police and LGBTQ+ people have led to pronounced feelings of distrust.

In this context, police and LGBTQ+ relations can differ widely by country, and consequently, LGBTQ+ people will possess specific views and opinions about the police. One way to understand such opinions is to examine how LGBTQ+ people view and perceive the police, especially as it relates to trust. Trusting the police can increase civic participation, accountability for authorities, and compliance and cooperation with the police (Jackson & Bradford, 2010). Furthermore, the police are detrimental in reinforcing and maintaining feelings of group inclusion and local community (Bradford, 2014). In a

nutshell, perceptions of the police remain a vital and complex topic to explore, as its implications are wide-reaching and impactful.

While a variety of research has examined perceptions and trust in the police, especially as it relates to ethnic minorities trusting the police, there is a lack of research that seeks to understand and explore the factors that influence LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police, especially in a European context. Some studies conducted in other countries have demonstrated that LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police remain negative (Dario et al., 2020; Dwyer, 2011; Miles-Johnson, 2013), highlighting the importance of exploring this phenomenon. Queer Criminology, in this sense, remains an urgent necessity, with many areas still to be explored (Shields, 2021; Buist & Stone, 2014). Nonetheless, as societal attitudes change and academia becomes increasingly focused on examining LGBTQ+ identities, more literature is starting to consider LGBTQ+ people within the field of criminology. Furthermore, while a more intersectional lens is beginning to emerge in understanding LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police (Shields, 2021), this has not been applied to a Dutch context. In the Netherlands, only one study was conducted on LGBTQ+ trust in the police (Jonas & Feddes, 2020), yet the lack of intersectional or queer theory awareness excludes a variety of LGBTQ+ experiences, namely evidenced by the lack of non-binary and queer participants. In this sense, current literature, especially within the Dutch context, tends to focus on highly educated and majority white LGBTQ+ people disregarding how the complex interactions between gender, sexuality, and race influence perspectives around the police. By examining LGBTQ+ identities as they relate to existing power structures and dynamics, a more complex and in-depth understanding of LGBTQ+ perspectives is gained (Parent et al., 2013).

This research aims to explore, through a procedural justice perspective, how LGBTQ+ people perceive the police in terms of trust in Rotterdam. Thus, aiming to explore four essential pillars of procedural justice: citizen participation in dialogs,

neutrality in decision-making, dignity/respect, and trustworthy motives. In this context, the research question of this study is:

How do LGBTQ+ people in Rotterdam perceive the police, and how does it influence trust in the police?

Using Queer Criminology and a Queer Theory lens, this research applies concepts such as heteronormativity (Warner, 1991) and homonationalism (Puar, 2007) to the debate around police trust. This thesis uses queer-specific concepts towards queer-specific situations, thus providing a clearer picture of LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police. Furthermore, by applying a queer theory lens on issues of police perceptions, queer identities are put on the focus of research. Queer theory also highlights the difficulty of understanding police perceptions through simplistic and monolithic explanations as it considers and highlights the fluid and ever-changing nature of gender and sexuality.

The societal relevance of this research lies in better understanding LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police as it relates to trust in the police. As a historically marginalized sub-group, this research provides vital insight into the actions and thoughts of LGBTQ+ people, giving a platform and calling attention to LGBTQ+ issues. Thus, this research aims to promote the fight towards larger social issues such as social justice, equality, and human rights. Furthermore, the police in Rotterdam might thus use practical insights from this study to enhance the overall relationship with LGBTQ+ groups, for example, by improving sensitivity training and developing more inclusive policies, thus making the findings impactful and relevant toward positive societal change.

Theoretical Framework

Definition of LGBTQ+

In short, LGBTQ+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer individuals, with the "+" incorporating other identities such as intersex and asexual people. While most of the terms denote clear-cut identity markers around sexual orientation and gender identity, recent narratives argue for a more fluid and encompassing definition of sexual

and gender identity (Sedgwick, 2008), leading many people and theorists to use the encompassing term "Queer" instead of LGBTQ+. From a more theoretical perspective, by rejecting binary modes of classification, Queer identities fall outside the normative binary and remain fluid and ever-changing in the face of characterization (Sedgwick, 2008). In this sense, queerness is understood as a range of identities that both intersect and reflect a variety of experiences. In this regard, it encompasses a fluidity of experiences and thus incorporates a broader number of individuals who may experience marginalization due to their gender or sexual identity.

Procedural-Justice

Procedural justice, in essence, refers to the overall levels of fairness and transparency used by the police (Hough et al., 2011). This considers the various ways the police interact with the public, whether with victims, criminals, or the general public. Procedural justice remains thus an approach from which police can increase their perceived legitimacy (Tyler, 2017), and a procedural justice approach also remains the most helpful method of changing police perceptions (Mazerolle et al., 2013). Furthermore, procedural justice has four essential components: citizen participation in dialogs, neutrality in decision-making, dignity/respect, and trustworthy motives (Mazerolle et al., 2013). Procedural justice also remains the most appropriate concept when examining trust in the police. Concerning marginalized sub-groups, a procedural justice perspective remains vital as it relates not only to the way the police handle and punish crime but also to how the police interact with the public.

Trust

According to Tyler (2005), issues of trust in the police are not only influenced by the effectiveness of crime control and prevention but also by the process-based model of policing that highlights interactions between the police and the public. Furthermore, to

understand how LGBTQ+ perspectives impact trust in the police, it is vital to understand how trust in the police can be recognized. In this context, a procedural-justice perspective of the police provides a complex understanding of how trust in the police is influenced by the perceived fairness and respect of the police, especially in how the police interact and treat citizens (Tyler, 2005). The four pillars of procedural justice, namely: citizen participation in dialogs, neutrality in decision-making, dignity/respect, and trustworthy motives (Mazerolle et al., 2013), all have a strong impact on trust in the police (Tyler, 2005). Thus, the four pillars of procedural justice represent the essential building blocks of trust in the police as defined in this study. By examining how LGBTQ+ perceive the police in terms of citizen participation in dialogs, neutrality in decision-making, dignity/respect, and trustworthy motives (Mazerolle et al., 2013), the impact of LGBTQ+ perspectives on trust in the police can be understood.

Heteronormative Police Image

Heteronormativity is a concept developed by queer theorists to examine social and institutional structures and how they relate to sexuality and gender. Heteronormativity refers, in this sense, to the assumption that heterosexual identities are the norm in society and that any identities which deviate from the heterosexual norms are marginalized and discriminated against (Herz & Johansson, 2015). A more intersectional approach to heteronormativity would also argue that basic social, cultural, legal, and institutional dynamics, like marriage, resource distributions, and property, are also defined by heteronormative norms (Luibhéid & Chávez, 2020). Heteronormativity refers thus not to individual identities but rather to institutions and the norms they enforce. In essence, heteronormativity can best be understood as "[..]the institutions, structures of understanding, and practical orientations that make heterosexuality seem not only coherent-that is, organized as a sexuality but also privileged" (Berlant & Warner, 1998, p.548).

By observing heteronormativity as an institutional norm, it becomes apparent that the police as an institution can also reinforce and sustain heteronormative norms. For example, a study conducted in the United States on how Gay and Lesbian police officers deal with homophobia has proven that the police are an institution that actively reinforces conformity by encouraging heterosexual and masculine norms (Myers et al., 2004). Thus, gay and lesbian police officers were more likely to conform to "Hegemonic Masculinity" standards than their heterosexual counterparts.

Hegemonic masculinity is defined as a form of masculinity that portrays attributes such as "authority, aggressiveness, technical competence, and heterosexist desire for and domination over women" (Myers et al., 2004, p.18). In this context, hegemonic masculinity is one-way LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police can be understood (Dario et al., 2020, Myers et al., 2004), as it refers to and interrelates with heteronormative norms. In the many ways that heteronormativity encourages marginalization, hegemonic masculinity represents one way of understanding such a phenomenon (Marchia & Sommer, 2019). In addition, it is important to note that by exploring heteronormativity as an institutional norm, this study plans to understand the perception of the police by LGBTQ+ citizens rather than perceptions among the police.

While the previous research was conducted in the United States, an extensive study on the relationship between hate crimes and LGBTQ+ perception of the Police in Amsterdam has highlighted some similar themes. For example, some Dutch LGBTQ+ people perceived the police to portray a "machismo" culture (Jonas & Feddes, 2020), and by associating hegemonic masculinity with police institutions, it becomes apparent that the police, even in the Netherlands, can portray and assume heteronormative norms.

Apart from portraying heteronormative norms, the police can also reinforce such norms unto LGBTQ+ populations. Namely, by portraying characteristics that conform to hegemonic masculinity, LGBTQ+ distrust of police is legitimized (Dario et al., 2020). Increased distrust from LGBTQ+ populations towards the police can also lead to the

underreporting of crimes (Dario et al., 2020), highlighting how heteronormative and masculine perceptions of police can lead to increased distrust and marginalization. Furthermore, the police can also enforce heteronormative standards, especially concerning queer bodies. A study conducted in Australia has demonstrated that the police often had negative interactions with bodies that were visibly Queer (Dwyer, 2021). These negative interactions, in turn, lead LGBTQ+ people to conform towards heteronormative standards to escape police scrutiny (Dwyer, 2021). In this sense, the following sub-question is formulated: *How do LGBTQ+ perceive the police in terms of heteronormativity, and how does it impact LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police?*

Homonationalism

In recent times the term homonationalism has gained widespread attraction within the LGBTQ+ movement. Coined by Puar in her work "Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times," homonationalism looks critically at how LGBTQ+ identities are used and utilized by states, specifically as it relates to the promotion and marginalization of LGBTQ+ identities (Puar, 2007; Schotten, 2016). In this context, the state promotes LGBTQ+ identities that conform towards normalizing patterns of citizenship, such as patriotism and marriage, while marginalizing LGBTQ+ identities that deviate from this pattern. (Schotten, 2016). Homonationalism points towards the intersectionality of identities while underlining diverse power dynamics within the LGBTQ+ spectrum. For example, homonationalism has distanced issues of class, race, and gender from sexual identity. Instead, it assumes the gay white-middle-class identity as the accepted and sanctioned norm (Puar, 2007). In essence, Puar highlights the importance of intersectional LGBTQ+ identities. Current research argues that homonationalism thus favors privileged LGBTQ+ individuals, such as white gay middle-class people while marginalizing other identities, especially ethnic minorities.

In this context, the Netherlands is engaged in homonationalistic narratives, portraying itself as an advanced country for LGBTQ+ rights while conducting discriminatory practices towards other marginalized communities (Aydemir, 2012; Puar, 2007; Spierings, 2021), including various subgroups within the LGBTQ+ community. Puar discusses, for example, how recent narratives in the Netherlands try to establish Islam and ethnic minorities as a threat to LGBTQ+ identities (Puar, 2007), especially towards white gay identities. Puar thus highlights "whiteness as the queer norm" (Puar, 2007, p.32), essentially underlining narratives that envision the acceptance of certain queer bodies while maintaining discriminatory attitudes towards other LGBTQ+ identities. Furthermore, in their analysis of Dutch homonationalistic media discourse, Akachar states that "The process of normalization in the Dutch case does not necessarily imply that heterosexual normativity has been surpassed as these forms of normalisation include, for example, the positioning of white gay men and lesbians as "normal" in opposition to deviant queers or transgender individuals" (Akachar, 2015, p.173). Thus, Puar and Akachar highlight how the acceptance of LGBTQ+ identities within a Dutch context has to be looked at critically. By supporting only privileged LGBTQ+ people while continuing the marginalization of other sub-groups, including LGBTQ+ sub-groups, being critical of homonationalism calls attention to the disparities within the spectrum of marginalized communities. For example, homonationalistic narratives erase the intersection of identities, like ethnicity and sexuality, which therefore ignores the particular concerns and vulnerabilities of some LGBTQ+ people.

It is through the previously mentioned points that LGBTQ+ perspectives of the police can be understood through homonationalistic narratives. In recent years, the police have grown ever more supportive of LGBTQ+ identities, leading to a more critical examination of the police in connection to LGBTQ+ identities. Through a homonationalistic lens, the police have been defined as a producer of homonationalistic practices (Russell, 2018), namely by pushing some queer bodies into protected spaces

while excluding others, especially regarding race and gender. Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender women reported lower levels of trust in the police than other LGBTQ+ subgroups (Dario et al., 2020), demonstrating that police perceptions and trust differentiate across the LGBTQ+ spectrum. Furthermore, in the United States, for example, police treatment differs highly among different LGBTQ+ subgroups, with transgender women of color reporting higher levels of discriminatory police interactions than white transgender women (Buist & Stone, 2014). It, therefore, becomes essential to understand how police perception might differ according to various LGBTQ+ identities. A non-binary person of color, for example, might have a different perception of the police than a white gay cis-gendered male. A non-binary person of color might then have a different perception of the police as a homonationalistic institution which would likely also impact their trust in the police. Thus, some LGBTQ+ identities might have different perceptions of the police, especially in their role as citizens. The following sub-question forms: *How do LGBTQ+ perceive the police in terms of homonationalism, and how does it impact LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police?*

Perception of Support and Inclusion

It is critical to examine perceptions of support and inclusion relating to the police. The Netherlands has several initiatives and support groups targeting LGBTQ+ people that differentiate it from other European countries. The PinkinBlue initiative, for example, envisions the creation of a dedicated police unit that is highly informed on LGBTQ+ issues and where most of the police officers working are LGBTQ+ themselves. In addition, LGBTQ+ people in the Netherlands indicate higher levels of trust in the PinkinBlue police unit in comparison to the traditional police (Jonas & Feddes, 2020). Namely, the PinkinBlue initiative goes against the machismo culture of the police, effectively influencing outside representation and increasing LGBTQ+ trust in the police (Jonas & Feddes, 2020). Thus, if LGBTQ+ people feel that the police support their identity and

share many common characteristics with this social group, it will influence LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police. LGBTQ+ people might fear getting misgendered, harassed, or not being taken seriously by the police (Shields, 2021), yet policies that mediate these fears will undoubtedly impact police perception. Police that are thus knowledgeable about LGBTQ+ issues and that take them seriously will increase cooperation, trust, and communication with the LGBTQ+ community (Kirkup, 2013).

Additionally, LGBTQ+ liaison police units will increase the visibility and inclusion of LGBTQ+ people within the police (Kirkup, 2013; Dwyer et al., 2017). If LGBTQ+ people feel that they are represented within police institutions in Rotterdam, it is likely to impact perceptions of the police. The following sub-question is formulated: *How do LGBTQ+ people perceive the police in terms of support and inclusion, specifically in relation to LGBTQ+ inclusive initiatives, and how does it impact LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police?*

Methodology

In qualitative research, the researcher is heavily involved in a sustained experience with the study participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Consequently, it becomes vital to examine my own biases and perceptions on the topic of: LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police in Rotterdam and its impact on trust in the police.

My own perceptions of the LGBTQ+ community are influenced by the many years of contact I have had with queer community organizations. I have assumed numerous roles in the presidency, as a volunteer, or even as a researcher in queer organizations. In this context, I see my prolonged contact and knowledge of the LGBTQ+ community as a positive characteristic that might let me approach this group respectfully and easily. On the other hand, my contact with LGBTQ+ groups has often been focused on socially active and young LGBTQ+ people, thus creating a bias towards these groups. Furthermore, these groups tend to be more vocal and perceptive around LGBTQ+ rights, which has

undoubtedly influenced my perceptions and narrowed my perceived diversity of this group.

Data

In this research, 11 semi-structured interviews were conducted with self-identified LGBTQ+ people in Rotterdam. The participants ranged from 21 to 38 years old. A specific focus was placed on interviewing as many diverse identities within the LGBTQ+ community as possible. Therefore, this study included most identities within the LGBTQ+ spectrum, such as non-binary people and transgender people. The interviews were conducted in English, so only English-speaking people could be recruited for the research. The face-to-face interviews were conducted in person in April and May. Only "out" individuals were used in this study, highlighting the intrinsic bias connected to research around LGBTQ+ people, as it is challenging to include the opinions of people who are not yet "out" or aware of their identity (Gillespie, 2008). The interviews were conducted in a private office to maintain a high level of privacy and comfort for the interviewers.

Data was collected from within the city of Rotterdam. Most of the participants were recruited at queer community events. Using specific community meeting places has been proven helpful in collecting LGBTQ+-specific data, as it attracts a diversified yet common community into the same place (Gillespie, 2008).

Data collection

Semi-structured open-ended interviews were used to gather data from the participants. Using a grounded theory approach and analyzing the data as it emerges while being sensitive to previously mentioned theoretical concepts, the process of creating questions and topics was developed throughout the research, with an analytical focus present during the data collection itself (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021).

The initial interviews began with open-ended questions on the police and the self-identity of the participants. It was vital to give the participants room to self-explain their identity and ensure they felt safe and respected during the interview. Probing was also

used to guide and focus the participants into more detailed explanations. Semi-structured interviews allow me to control the line of questioning and guide the research more effectively (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Additionally, using semi-structured interviews allows the research to be more flexible while also giving space for the participant's opinions and experiences. On the other hand, the researcher's presence may elicit biases in the answers, and participants might also not always be perceptive and articulate in their opinions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). A full list of the interview questions can be found in the appendix.

Targeted sampling was used, meaning that I would search for specific target populations of LGBTQ+ people in Rotterdam, namely by attending queer-specific events and asking the people there if they want to be interviewed. These queer-specific events include support groups, community events, and student organizations. Targeted sampling was then mixed with snowball sampling, asking participants if they knew someone who would like to be interviewed. Given the importance of vicarious community experiences in defining the perceptions of the police (Rosenbaum et al., 2005), snowball sampling provides a great way of assessing community perceptions. Nonetheless, snowball sampling will also increase sampling bias, as participants are more likely to suggest similar people in terms of demographic and opinions (Parker et al., 2019). To minimize the previous sampling bias, participants were asked to suggest someone who might hold very different opinions than themselves.

All interviews were audio recorded and accompanied by handwritten notes. The data was stored on a secure digital drive for five months and then deleted. A redacted and password-protected form of the transcripts was used for analysis.

Data Analysis

An inductive method of data analysis is used where the themes of the research emerge as they are analyzed. This inductive method was coupled with sensitizing concepts. Additionally, Atlas.ti was used to code information efficiently. A grounded theory

approach was utilized to analyze the given data, letting thus themes and concepts emerge and influence the research itself. Grounded theory thus allows us to take individual cases and construct overarching theories from the given data (Lapan et al., 2012). Initial coding and line-by-line coding were first used to label and compare the data while remaining focused on the meaning this data provided (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). Initial coding was followed by focused coding in which the emerging themes were used to analyze the data.

In this context, theoretical saturation was achieved when gathering new data no longer provided new insights (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Thus, theoretical saturation provides rich and thick data that acknowledges the density of the research. Regarding validity, credibility was ensured by providing detailed descriptions of the data and clear explanations of how the data was analyzed and collected (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). Reliability was ensured by including the topic list and the step-by-step guides taken during the research.

Anonymity and Ethics

Given the sensitive and personal nature of sexual/gender identity, all study participants were kept anonymous. All names were redacted, and the study did not include any details that could identify the participants, such as specific locations. Participants were made aware of the goal and purpose of the study. Participants were informed of data storage and duration, and their explicit consent was requested. Furthermore, participants were told they could withdraw from the study at any point, even after the interviews were conducted, and without having to specify a reason. If participants felt uncomfortable during the interviewing process, they could ask for the interview to stop and resume at another time or end it altogether.

Data Participants:

Participant	Pronouns	Age	Gender Identity	Sexual Orientation	Highest level of Education
1	She/Her	23	Cis woman	Bisexual	Bachelors
2	He/Him/All	21	Prefers to Self-Describe	Gay	Bachelors
3	She/Her	24	Trans	Asexual, Pansexual, Bisexual	High School
4	She/Her	24	Cis Woman	Bisexual/Pansexual	Bachelors
5	They/Them	24	Non-Binary	Queer	Masters
6	She/Her	21	Cis Woman	Femme Lesbian	High School
7	He/Him	21	Cis Man	Gay	Bachelors
8	He/They	23	Queer	Queer	High School
9	She/Her	28	Cis Woman	Lesbian	Masters
10	He/Him	37	Cis Man	Gay	Allocation for Employment
11	He/Him	38	Cis Man	Gay	Bachelors

Results

Sub-question 1

How do LGBTQ+ perceive the police in terms of heteronormativity, and how does it impact LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police?

Masculinity

A common perception of the police shared by most participants was that the police seemed to portray masculine attributes and characteristics. When asked about the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about the values the police portray, participant 5 states:

"I have to think of masculinity, like a very toxic sense of the word" (Participant 5).

Additionally, participant 9 described the police as a masculine institution by stating:

"Maybe due to their rights to use violence" (Participant 9).

When asked to elaborate on some other characteristics that make her perceive the police as a masculine institution, she further states:

"[...]I think its total bullshit that you have to be brave, you have to fight and you have to be the hero as the police are. These words are way too often only connected to men and masculinity." (Participant 9).

In addition to the more critical outlook on masculinity shared by the previous participants, participant 7 also attributed the dominance the police hold over people as a masculine attribute of the police stating:

"the police always have to translate this dominance thing, so you have to be masculine" (Participant 7).

In summary, the previously mentioned participants looked critically at the role of masculinity depicted by the police. By perceiving the police to portray masculine characteristics such as violence, toxicity, and dominance, these participants reflect a more negative outlook on traditional gender norms associated with masculinity.

Furthermore, by perceiving the police as a masculine institution, participants also highlighted the impact these perceptions had on their perceptions of the police in general. Participant number 2, for example, interprets these masculine traits as reinforcing traditional norms. He states:

"Because my perception of the police as an institution is very straight, very hetero. The environment and the atmosphere of the police as an institution is just very based on traditional gender roles and sexuality. So, I think it's not very inclusive, I don't feel like the police do anything to integrate queer people or to make queer people feel welcome" (Participant 2).

Participant 2 feels that the traditional gender roles of the police, such as masculinity, make him feel distanced and excluded from the police as a citizen, he does not feel welcomed a queer person who is critical of masculine attributes. Other participants shared this sentiment, Participant 8, who identifies as queer, states how they feel distanced by the police given the masculine atmosphere they portray. When referring back to their own queer identity and its relation to the police, participant 8 states that

the masculine environment of the police makes them avoid the police altogether, especially as it relates to them reaching out to the police as a citizen.

"I mean, again, from the whole masculine kind of thing. As a queer person, I've never felt fully included in that environment. So, I tend to avoid the police altogether. Because I wouldn't say that the values in those kind of like, very masculine environments, appealed to me or anything. So I just, wouldn't feel welcomed altogether." (Participant 8).

By perceiving the police as a masculine institution, LGBTQ+ participants who are critical of masculine attributes felt excluded and unwelcomed by the police, especially as they related it to their own identities. By establishing that the police portray attributes such as dominance, violence, and bravery and that masculinity within the police makes LGBTQ+ participants feel excluded, it becomes apparent how vital masculine perceptions of the police are in shaping LGBTQ+ perspectives.

However, it is essential to note that Participant 10, a gay cisgender man, viewed the role of masculinity within the police as a positive attribute, stating that he finds it necessary for the proper functioning of the police. Therefore, not all LGBTQ+ participants viewed the role of masculinity within the police negatively, demonstrating diversity in how LGBTQ+ perceive the role of masculinity within the police. Nonetheless, it is essential to underline that within the scope of this study, this viewpoint was an exception rather than the norm.

Gender Norms

Most participants perceived the police to reinforce existing and traditional gender norms, specifically gender binaries. Participant 1, for example, stated:

"It goes back to the fact that the police in general as an institution, I feel it's more like based on these binaries of gender. So, like male/female and really heteronormative in a sense" (Participant 1).

In this sense, the police were perceived as an institution that assumed a particular approach and lens on gender. Participants felt that the police not only portrayed these qualities but also that there was a lack of dialog concerning the role of gender norms within the police. *"I think that for police, traditional gender roles and gender norms are not very talked about. I feel like they should be more talked about, I think it's just something that is redundant in their field of work or as an institution, no one talks about sexuality and gender when you think about police. The police don't talk about it" (Participant 2).*

This perception of the police as an institution that views gender through normative lenses was demonstrated most prominently when gender-diverse participants referred to their own identity concerning police perceptions, as was the case with participants 2, 3, and 5. They expressed feeling left out of dialog, feeling unrepresented, feeling like they are respected differently, and treated with less dignity. These perceptions were also mentioned when participants reflected on their identity concerning the police as a perceived heteronormative institution, as was the case with participants 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.

In this sense, the police were perceived as an environment that was not inclusive and which does not integrate LGBTQ+ people and perspectives. The mentioned participants consequently perceived a decrease in the respect and dignity of queer people.

Participant 3, a transgender woman, recounts an experience at a nightclub in Rotterdam where the police were distrustful of the gender on her identity card. She was currently transitioning, and the police questioned her gender expression, assuming her ID to be fake. She recounts that the police questioned her gender quite aggressively while not including her in any meaningful dialog, leading thus to the participant feeling that the police see gender norms through very traditional and restrictive lenses. This interaction impacted how the participant perceived the police, as she felt that her identity was disrespected and treated without dignity.

Lack of Understanding of LGBTQ+ culture

Many participants across the research highlighted that the police fail to accommodate LGBTQ+ viewpoints by not engaging in dialog. The police were perceived to foster little conversation or dialogue with LGBTQ+ communities, leading to a lack of understanding of LGBTQ+ culture. This lack of understanding, in turn, impacted how LGBTQ+ perceive the police. This lack of understanding was exemplified by the fact that the police seemed to have an easier time understanding straight and cisgender people than LGBTQ+ people, participant 7 for example, explains that:

"It's easier for them to understand straight relationships or like straight culture because most of the policemen in this society are straight" (Participant 7).

In this sense, participants felt that the police did not really understand LGBTQ+ culture compared to straight culture. For Participant 3, this had serious implications, as they mentioned how lack of understanding from the police leads to feelings of perceived bias by stating:

"The police should go there with an understating of queer culture and, from that point of view, investigate what is happening. Instead of going there with the mindset that that person is a pervert or a rapist" (Participant 3).

In this context, the perception of the police as lacking understanding towards LGBTQ+ culture led to perceptions of the police as insensitive towards the unique challenges that LGBTQ+ in Rotterdam face. Various participants, for example, perceived the police as lacking an understanding of trans identities and preferred pronouns, with participants 3 and 5 mentioning a lack of understanding from the police towards genderqueer identities.

This lack of understanding also impacted LGBTQ+ perspectives on the police, as most participants felt it decreased their feelings of inclusion in the police. Participant 3, when reflecting on the lack of knowledge of queer culture from the police states:

"So you can't really be more inclusive if you don't understand what you are trying to include" (Participant 3)

This lack of understanding was again highlighted, especially by participants with diverse gender expressions, namely by stating that there is a lack of knowledge on non-binary and genderqueer individuals, which made them perceive the police more negatively, especially in terms of respect.

One non-binary participant, when referring to their own non-binary identity, stated:

"I do think that non-binary gender identity is not fairly respected in general, so it's difficult to be respected, like in most spaces, and when it comes to police there is no exception for that (..) I would assume that they have more disrespect for non-binary gender identity, or maybe us in general, like trans identity especially because they're so bound to laws and regulations. And when it comes to that, they would probably just look at my ID card or something and be like, this is your gender" (Participant 5).

Sub-questions 2

How do LGBTQ+ perceive the police in terms of homonationalism, and how does it impact LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police?

Performative Inclusion

The Netherlands differs in relation to other countries due to the visibility of LGBTQ+ identities in mainstream dialogs, including police dialogs. Nonetheless, most participants described the police and its efforts to be inclusive as a facade, highlighting that current police efforts feel fake and performative. One participant, when referring to the police in the Netherlands, stated:

"I'm aware of the fact that the Netherlands might be perceived as being super inclusive and super diverse. but at the same time, it's not. So I think it's more almost like a facade. So, claiming to be really diverse but actually not being so diverse" (Participant 1).

Evaluating current efforts by the police in Rotterdam to be more inclusive of LGBTQ+ identities, most participants felt that these actions were performative and used to increase the image of the police as a diverse and inclusive space while failing to address actual problems. Participant number 3 described these initiatives as "virtue signaling." Specifically, most criticism of the police as being performative comes in relation to the role of the police at pride marches.

Many participants primarily associated the police and LGBTQ+ issues through the active presence and involvement of the police in the pride march. Police initiatives regarding LGBTQ+ people were perceived as only being acknowledged during pride month, which made participants 1,2,3,4,5, and 6 describe the police as "performative". One participant further explained what they meant by performative by stating:

"like that they are performative in the sense that they do something that is not mirrored by their values or something. Like they say, Yeah, we celebrate gay love. Love all of them queer identities, but do they also behave accordingly? Do they follow the words? Yeah. And I haven't seen much of that" (Participant 5).

Some participants referred to current police efforts during pride month as pinkwashing by jumping on the "trend" of LGBTQ+ inclusivity to increase their social image.

Perceiving these current police efforts of LGBTQ+ as performative also impacted LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police. By seeing these police initiatives as superficial and fake, participants felt that the police were not trustworthy concerning LGBTQ+ initiatives. Many of the LGBTQ+ participants, therefore, perceived the police to be not trustworthy, creating a more perceived distance between LGBTQ+ identities and the police. One participant described current police efforts to be inclusive as

"Yeah, and I think that is how the police, especially regarding queer issues, have a façade. They are portraying themselves to be open: and I'm like are you really open because I doesn't feel like they are always open, especially in the way they talk, or initiatives they put out or advertisement they put out. It does not feel genuine" (Participant 2).

Participant number 2 stated that because of this perceived untrustworthiness, he felt that the police did not include him in dialog and that he did not want to speak out to the police, stating:

"I makes me wanna speak out less to the police because it makes me feel like I wouldn't be heard. Or like I don't feel like the police genuinely from themselves want to foster this kind of community and integration into society. I feel like it has to be us to put out foot down before we can be heard" (Participant 2).

In summary, current efforts of the police to be an inclusive space have been viewed by most participants as not trustworthy. This perception of performativity has made many participants feel disconnected from the police.

However, it is essential to underline that Participant 11, a gay cisgender man, held a contrasting opinion to the majority of participants, stating that he perceived the police to be trustworthy and non-performative. Specifically, the participant related his opinions to various positive interactions he had with the police in connection to his work in the social sector in Rotterdam. This viewpoint challenges the notion of a unified and

monolithic perspective on the police, demonstrating the multifaceted nature that LGBTQ+ perspectives on the police can assume.

Visible Queerness and Genderqueer Individual

LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police were also shaped by the perceived treatment of different subgroups within the LGBTQ+ spectrum, specifically the perceived treatment of genderqueer and visibly queer individuals. Participants 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, and 9 perceived the police to treat "visibly queer" people differently regarding respect and dignity. Participant number 7, when asked why he perceives the police to respect some LGBTQ+ subgroups differently, mentioned visible queerness as a fundamental reason.

"Explicit. Yeah, I mean, I'm not wearing any makeup or, if a policeman sees me, he's not going to doubt my sexual orientation. But if you see a guy with earrings, an eyeliner or like a wig, a oh (worried look) something may happen there" (Participant 7).

The police were mainly perceived to have more respect for LGBTQ+ people who do not visibly demonstrate their sexuality and gender expression in contrast to visibly queer individuals that are treated with less respect and dignity.

"I think they are more just the lack of respect when it comes to talking to people that are gender queer, or at least not easily able to be identified in terms of like, Are you this or that. I don't think they have the same respect. And I don't think they treat gender fluid or genderqueer people with the same dignity they would if they were binary" (Participant 4).

One participant who identifies with the non-binary label described, for example, one specific police interaction in which they stated:

"When I think of the police I have to think of one incident when I was just like walking around enjoying myself, and they stopped me and they were like, Oh, you look confused. Can we have your ID please? I was like, Really? I was just walking around, that doesn't make me a confused person. But also, I do you think I was quite outstanding in the crowd because I did have an unusual outfit maybe compared to everybody else? Okay. So I think

it's, I don't draw attention to me, like on purpose, but I do think that it makes them more alert, of me or something. Yeah" (Participant 5).

This specific participant felt that their "visible" gender expression was not understood and respected by the police, leading to them having a more negative perception of the police in how they interact with non-binary individuals. Even LGBTQ+ people who do not identify with a genderqueer label have stated that they perceive the police to treat gender-diverse people with less respect, namely by informing themselves through vicarious community experiences (Rosenbaum et al., 2005).

LGBTQ+ people of color

Most participants perceived that the police in Rotterdam target LGBTQ+ people of color more than white LGBTQ+ individuals, highlighting a perceived differential treatment between these different subgroups. The participants perceived the police respect for white cisgender LGBTQ+ people to be much higher than compared to LGBTQ+ people of color.

"You can be, let's say, a black trans woman, and police will treat you differently, especially if you don't pass. Maybe the police will be more, aggressive towards you than if you were, let's say, a white woman, a white queer woman, you know it's different" (Participant 4).

In this sense, perceptions of the police were influenced by the discriminatory nature in which the police were perceived to treat LGBTQ+ people of color. Participant number 10 exemplifies how the treatment of a different LGBTQ+ subgroup impacts his perceptions of the police by stating.

"I think that's very, very important. Because if they, for instance, you talk about ethnic minorities, if they treat Dutch people better than ethnic minorities, there's a small step on treating LGBTQ plus less than straight people, for instance" (Participant 10).

In this sense, many participants referred to the differential treatment of one marginalized group and referred it back to their own marginalized identity, recognizing that if the police

treat one group in a differential matter, there are not many more steps to discriminate against another group.

Sub-question 3

How do LGBTQ+ people perceive the police in terms of support and inclusion, specifically in relation to LGBTQ+ inclusive initiatives, and how does it impact LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police?

Support and Inclusion: the Role of the PinkinBlue

While many participants held critical or negative views of the police, it is important to underline how LGBTQ+ liaison units within the police, like the PinkinBlue, influenced LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police in Rotterdam. All participants held somewhat positive perspectives on the PinkinBlue initiative, yet most people within this study were unaware of the PinkInBlue unit. Only Participants 9,10, and 11 had extensive knowledge of the PinkInBlue Unit. In this sense, Participants 9,10, and 11 stated that they felt positively represented by the PinkinBlue Unit. Participant 11, for example, stated that he feels a certain easiness to reaching out to the PinkinBlue unit in connection to his sexual identity:

"I also know that the pink police force, for example, they handle sensitive cases. So you do feel represented by them" (Participant 11).

Nonetheless, some participants were unaware or only partially aware of the PinkinBlue, meaning it only had a limited impact on their original perspectives of the police. However, after being informed about the PinkinBlue, most participants felt that the presence of the PinkinBlue unit increased LGBTQ+ representation within the police force, positively impacting how LGBTQ+ perceive the police.

"I think it would be a great idea because, if they have a department specifically run by LGBTQ people, they will be more aware of the topics that actually affect the community. So I will be way more approachable to seek help" (Participant 8).

Furthermore, participants 3,4,6 and 7 stated that the presence of the PinkinBlue actively reinforced their perception of the police as a safer space. A safer space is a space where the participants feel more comfortable contacting the police.

The role of the PinkinBlue also impacted perceptions around participation in dialog. Participants 2,3, 5,7, and 8 explicitly stated that the presence of the PinkinBlue unit would actively increase their perceived participation in dialog, thus making them hold more positive perspectives around the police. Both participants, 3 and 5, stated that concerning their negative interaction with the police, the presence of the PinkinBlue division would increase inclusion in dialog and subsequent neutrality in decision-making. Participant number 3 stated, for example, that they would have preferred the PinkinBlue unit to be present during their interaction with the police:

"Well they are part of the queer community and more educated on the queer community, so I'm going to assume that they first thought in seeing a trans person that isn't fully passing or presentable as the other gender yet, they will be more understating of it and understand that a transition takes years, you don't just flip a switch. It would become a dialog from an understanding standpoint. Instead of trying to incriminate myself, I would probably be calmer myself and have a more normal dialog with the police to try to resolve the situation" (Participant 3).

The PinkinBlue, therefore, makes most participants feel more included in police dialog, which is described more positively by the LGBTQ+ participants. When informed about the PinkinBlue, participants perceive the police to be more trustworthy.

Many participants felt that the role of the PinkinBlue would also lead to more neutral-decision making within the police. Participant 5, when referring back to the incident with the police, stated that the presence of the PinkinBlue would have changed the interaction, as they perceived their decision-making to be more neutral.

The PinkinBlue also impacted how participants perceived the police in terms of inclusion. LGBTQ+ participants felt that the PinkinBlue actively increased the

understanding of the police regarding LGBTQ+ issues. This increased understanding made participants feel more comfortable and included within the police institution.

"It's is nice, right? Because they might represent a little bit of us. You know, like, they're also to make us feel comfortable" (Participant 7).

This perception of the PinkinBlue as a more inclusive space also increased the perception of inclusion and respect that the police have towards LGBTQ+ people. However, it is essential to state that most participants were unaware of the PinkinBlue unit, which therefore had a lesser impact on their overall perception of the police than the previously mentioned points.

"I don't see the police force promoting the PinkInBlue. I don't see them on the streets, they are not visible to me" (Participant 3).

The Police as Progressive

While many of the participants held critical or negative perspectives about the police, a sizeable number of participants also regarded the police as a progressive institution. LGBTQ+ participants often referred to the police in Rotterdam to be diverse and progressive.

"Okay, because I know police officers that are trans. I know about police officers that are male or female, and they treat each other as equals." (Participant 11).

It is important to note that many participants once again highlighted the representation of the police as a progressive institution to be performative. Nonetheless, it also impacted perceptions of the police more positively. Participant 9, for example, mentioned that the police in Rotterdam seemed to be more diverse and progressive than the army. Furthermore, participants 1, 4, 6, and 7, who all had a migration background, referred to the police in Rotterdam as a more progressive and diverse institution compared to the police in their home countries:

"The police, it's maybe a little bit more open towards the queer community in the Netherlands compared to [Home Country]" (Participant 1).

While current initiatives by the police in Rotterdam to be inclusive are still classified as not wholly trustworthy, they are perceived more positively from an international perspective. Furthermore, one participant described the police in Rotterdam as more progressive than in more rural places in the Netherlands. He stated:

I think there are many gay communities here, not as big as in Amsterdam, but quite big here as well. So they (the police) get used to it, they know where the gay bar is, they know there's a parade, and they are good with it, no problem" (Participant 11).

The perception of the police as progressive and inclusive also demonstrates the complexity that LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police can assume. While performativity seemed to be a more pronounced perspective on the current efforts of the police to be inclusive, more positive perspectives around the police were also to be found. This was especially the case when participants referred to the police in Rotterdam compared to smaller villages and when examining the police from a more international perspective.

Discussion and Conclusion

The guiding research question was "*How do LGBTQ+ people in Rotterdam perceive the police, and how does it influence trust in the police?*" In this sense, it is important to underline how the previous findings lead to a complex yet in-depth overview of the principal research question.

Perceptions of the police as a heteronormative institution were mainly evidenced through the perception of the police as a masculine space, portraying characteristics such as bravery, violence, and dominance. LGBTQ+ people in this study felt that the role of masculinity in the police led to them feeling distanced and excluded, as they did not identify with such ideals. These findings also position themselves within the broader literature on the topic, as the portrayal of traditional masculine attitudes by the police has been shown to legitimize negative LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police (Dario et al., 2020).

By being perceived as upholding traditional gender norms, including a gender binary outlook, LGBTQ+ people regarded the police as an institution that disregarded and

erased non-conforming identities. Specifically, the police were perceived as an institution that actively controls conformity towards heteronormative gendered standards, making especially trans and non-binary people in this study critical of the police.

Another underlining pattern through this study was the perceived lack of cultural knowledge the police had concerning queer culture, mainly expressed by the perception that the police do not fully understand LGBTQ+-specific issues such as discrimination, cultural needs, and identity markers. Looking at this lack of cultural knowledge through a heteronormative lens, it becomes apparent that a heteronormative bias can also encapsulate a lack of knowledge of LGBTQ+ culture and LGBTQ+ identities. The participants perceived the police to have an easier time understanding straight and cis-gendered people, perpetuating for many participants the perception of the police as exclusionary, namely by overlooking and making invisible LGBTQ+ specific worries.

In addition, the police and its inclusion efforts have been mostly described as performative and untrustworthy, highlighting the importance of a homonationalistic lens in this study, as it looks more critically at efforts of inclusion. The police seem to many participants to only support LGBTQ+-related issues during specific events like the pride parade, yet many participants interpret these superficial actions as not trustworthy. By not addressing the more fundamental and systemic issues concerning LGBTQ+ people, the participants often felt a lack of trustworthiness from the police, interpreting these actions to increase the public image of the police rather than promote actual inclusive actions.

LGBTQ+ participants in this study highlighted how they perceived the police in Rotterdam to treat ethnic minorities with a lack of respect and dignity compared to white LGBTQ+ individuals. This differential treatment reinforces intersectional perspectives on the police that recognize how multiple identities can intersect to form unique problems for queer people of color. One interpretation of this phenomenon might lie in the widespread ethnic profiling conducted by the police in the Netherlands (Open Justice Society Initiative, 2013). It could be argued that this phenomenon, coupled with the

widespread awareness of racial injustice brought about by the Black Lives Matter movement, has made people more aware and critical of racial injustice in the Netherlands. This differential situation of ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system reinforces the perception of the police as a biased institution, as instances of discrimination become more pronounced within police institutions.

Furthermore, by viewing this pattern through a homonationalistic lens, one could also argue that the police promote LGBTQ+ rights for some sub-groups, such as white LGBTQ+ people, while continuing the marginalization of other sub-groups, namely LGBTQ+ people of color. The importance of vicarious community experiences in defining perceptions of the police (Rosenbaum et al., 2005) can also influence broader community perspectives on the police. By perceiving the police as treating LGBTQ+ people of color differently than white LGBTQ+ people, participants held overall more negative views of the police.

Furthermore, concerning LGBTQ+ liaison units, LGBTQ+ participants seem to perceive the PinkinBlue unit as a positive initiative by the police, shaping thus more general perceptions of the police. Looking at the role of the PinkinBlue in terms of heteronormativity, one could argue that heteronormative perceptions of the police were diminished if LGBTQ+ knew that LGBTQ+ officers themselves try to provide a safe space within the police. The representation of LGBTQ+ police officers within the police contributes, therefore, to more positive perceptions of the police as an inclusive and progressive space. Nonetheless, a sizeable number of participants were unaware of this initiative, diminishing the overall impact the PinkinBlue had in shaping LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police.

Returning to the original research questions, it becomes apparent how the interaction of identities, especially concerning sexuality, gender, and race, shapes LGBTQ+ perspectives of the police and, consequently, trust in the police. By understanding how LGBTQ+ participants perceive the police in terms of the four essential

pillars of procedural justice, namely: citizen participation in dialogs, neutrality in decision-making, dignity/respect, and trustworthy motives (Mazerolle et al., 2013), this study outlines the consequent impact of LGBTQ+ perspectives on trust in the police. For example, the perceived lack of trustworthy motives of the police concerning LGBTQ+ issues seemed to be the most important perception influencing trust in the police. By perceiving the police as lacking trustworthy motives, general negative perceptions of the police were upheld, even when the police tried to show a willingness to support the LGBTQ+ community. For example, the participation of the police in the pride marches was certainly intended to increase LGBTQ+ trust in the police, yet by being perceived as lacking trustworthy motives, participants in this study viewed the role of the police at pride marches through more negative lenses.

In this sense, while the participants mentioned overarching and complex themes, one common theory emerged: the vital importance of visible queerness in defining LGBTQ+ perspectives on the police and its impact on trust in the police. Participants who were visibly queer or had increased contact with visibly queer individuals held the most negative perceptions and interactions with the police, which also decreased their trust in the police. The participants who held entirely positive perspectives around the police did not identify as visibly queer and belonged to the most accepted sub-groups within the LGBTQ+ community, namely, gay and lesbian cisgender people.

One could argue that LGBTQ+ people who are more similar to the police and face less adversity due to their gender/sexual expression tend to perceive the police more positively. Highlighting thus how LGBTQ+ people who fall into normative and easily recognizable identity markers tend to perceive the police more positively as they find the police to be more trustworthy, neutral, inclusive, and unbiased, all signs of increased trust in the police. Returning to the concept of homonationalism, one could argue that normative identities within the LGBTQ+ spectrum, such as white gay and lesbian people, tend to feel more represented and integrated within the police institution, especially in

their role as citizens. Puar's argumentation around homonationalism would support such an assumption, as it highlights how institutions have come to accept normative LGBTQ+ identities while continuing the marginalization of other sub-groups within the queer community.

On the other hand, visually Queer individuals and people in contact with visibly queer individuals tend to perceive the police as less trustworthy, neutral, inclusive, and unbiased, which hints towards a decrease in trust towards the police. According to the outlined concepts in the theoretical framework, visibly queer individuals in this study tended to distrust heteronormative norms and homonationalistic narratives. In line with contemporary queer thinking and highlighting the importance of intersectional research, the deviant/normal binary classification, which has come to inspire queer theory, has also shown its presence in this research. Participants felt that visible queerness led to more police suspicion, as visibly queer individuals faced more adversity from the police and perceived the police more negatively. Regarding heteronormativity, the classification of visibly queer individuals as deviant and abnormal reinforces the perception of the police as a heteronormative institution. As a heteronormative institution, the police can be seen as reinforcing and privileging heterosexual and cisgender identities as the norm while continuing to marginalize visibly queer individuals who do not fit into these simplistic and traditional categories.

By paying specific attention to homonationalistic narratives and heteronormative assumptions, this study also highlighted the importance of queer theory in formulating a more complex understanding of LGBTQ+ perspectives, namely by filling a gap in current literature that ignores the intersecting formation of identities within a Dutch context (Jonas & Feddes, 2020).

Furthermore, by discovering the importance of visible queerness regarding police institutions, this study continues and builds upon more international debate around police institutions and concepts of heteronormativity (Dwyer, 2021). This study also expands on

the application of queer theory in qualitative research, highlighting the importance of intersectional perspectives in current LGBTQ+ research.

Limitations

Regarding the limitations of this study, it is important to underline how the majority of participants belong to a specific generational group, with a particular majority of participants being around 24 years old and the oldest participant being only 38. This lack of diversity in terms of age ignores a vital generational group of LGBTQ+ people, namely LGBTQ+ people who witnessed the aids crisis and who most valiantly fought for LGBTQ+ acceptance during these times. Their perspectives on how the police might have changed over the years might have represented a more nuanced and complex perspective on the police, yet these subgroups were especially hard to reach through snowball sampling as most participants who attended queer community events were younger and knew less old LGBTQ+ people.

Furthermore, a sample size of 11 people, while expansive in the identities it represented, remains too limited to generalize the overall population.

Recommendations

The overall lack of intersectional and queer theory inspired criminological research makes this study a valuable basis for further in-depth research on the police. While this study examined the importance of intersectional identities relating to police perceptions, more research is needed on visibly queer individuals and their perspectives around the police, especially within a Dutch context. Especially the perspectives of transgender, non-binary, and queer individuals need to be explored, as it might provide more insight into the field of queer theory and its connection to the police.

The results of this study can be used by the police in Rotterdam to recognize and evaluate how to approach LGBTQ+ people and how the LGBTQ+ population perceives them. Beneficial would be an increase in the visibility of the PinkinBlue unit in Rotterdam. Given that the vast majority of participants held positive views on the PinkinBlue, yet

most were also unaware of this initiative, there seems to be great potential for promoting this initiative. Especially when compared to other initiatives the PinkinBlue was also seen to be more trustworthy and non-performative, demonstrating that it remains a handy tool in increasing trust and positive perceptions of the police.   Other practical recommendations would be more cultural and sensitivity training for police officers here in Rotterdam concerning the spectrum of LGBTQ+ identities and a complex and critical discussion on the role the police have in promoting and utilizing LGBTQ+ identities. Furthermore, by sharing the findings with LGBTQ+ organizations and advocacy groups like ILGA Europe this study might be used to define the overall situation of LGBTQ+ rights in the Netherlands.

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Appendix

Topic List

- What are your preferred pronouns?
- How do you identify as, if you identify as anything?
- What is your age?
- Occupation?
- The highest educational achievement?

General Introduction Questions
- What are some of your first thoughts in relation the police in Rotterdam?
- From 1-10, one being not at all and 10 being completely how much do you trust the police?
-     Why not 1 / Why not 10?
- Is there anything in specific that comes to mind when you think of the police?
- How are the police perceived in your social circles?
  o Specifically in your LGBTQ+ social circle if you have that.

Heteronormativity
- How do you think the police treat LGBTQ+ people in terms of respect and dignity?
- Do you feel like your own identity is respected and treated fairly by the police?
- Can you think of an instance in which the police were involved in decision-making that had an impact on the LGBTQ+ community?
  o What is your perception of the police relating to that involvement?
- How do you view your own active involvement in police dialog, do you feel your voice and perspective is included and respected?
- Have you ever felt that the police respect straight and cisgender people differently from LGBTQ+ people?
- What do you think is the role of traditional gender/sexual norms in the police?
- What do you think is the role of masculinity within the police?
  o How is it portrayed for you?
- Are there any specific things that come to your mind when you think of the police as an institution, what kind of values does the police portray?
- Have you ever felt that the police respect straight and cisgender people differently from LGBTQ+ people?

Homonationalism
- Is there a specific instance that comes to mind that connects the police and LGBTQ+ people here in Rotterdam?
- How do you think the police in Rotterdam incorporate LGBTQ identities into their organization? Do you view it as trustworthy?
- Do you view current more accepting attitudes of the police as an LGBTQ+ inclusive space as trustworthy?
- Have you ever felt that the police in Rotterdam respect all LGBTQ+ identities? Including those of different ethnic backgrounds?
- How do you think the police treat LGBTQ+ from different ethnic minorities in terms of respect and dignity?
- How do you think the police treat gender-diverse or genderqueer people in terms of respect and dignity?

Inclusion and Policies
- How do you view the police in terms of LGBTQ+ inclusivity?
- Can you think of an instance of LGBTQ+ representation within the police?
    o How do you feel about this representation?
- How do you think the police in Rotterdam tries to include LGBTQ+ in dialogs?
    o How do you view these efforts?
- How would you evaluate current efforts by the police to include LGBTQ+ people and to increase respect LGBTQ+?
- Do any specific initiatives come to mind when you think about police initiatives related to LGBTQ+ people?
    o if so, how do you view these initiatives?
- How do you view the role of the PinkinBlue unit in regards to the respect and dignity of LGBTQ+ people?
- What do you think is the role of the PinkinBlue unit in regards to the neutrality of decision-making in the police?
- Can you think of a specific moment that shaped your perceptions of the police?

Ethics and Informed Conset
CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: LGBTQ+ perceptions of the police in Rotterdam and its impact on police trust and legitimacy

Name, email of student: Miguel Avides, 657261mk@eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor: Willemijn Bezemer, bezemer@essb.eur.nl

Start date and duration: 15/03/2023, 5 Months

Is the research study conducted within DPAS   (YES)- NO

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted? (e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants.   (YES)- NO

    If 'NO': skip to part V.

    If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research?   YES -

    (NO)

    Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act (WMO) must first be submitted to an accredited medical research ethics committee or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (CCMO).

2. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations
    that will not involve identification of participants.   YES -
    (NO)

    If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary
    data that has been anonymized by someone else).   YES -(NO)

    If 'YES': skip to part IV.

( )

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what
   participants can expect during the study be withheld from them?   YES -
   (NO)

2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written
   'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study?   YES -
   (NO)

3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation
   at any time be withheld from participants?   YES -
   (NO)

4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants?   YES -
   (NO)
   *Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to
   think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study
   is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they
   harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).*

5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or
   negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by
   participants?   YES -
   (NO)

6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as
   defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions,
   religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic
   data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person,
   data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's
   sex life or sexual orientation)?   (YES) - NO

7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or
   other groups that cannot give consent?   YES (NO)

8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study?   YES -
   (NO)

9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the
   confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured?   YES -
   (NO)

10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study?   YES -
    (NO)

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why
this issue is unavoidable in this study.

I'm studying LGBTQ+ perceptions of the Police. Data regarding gender/sexual identity has to be included. In terms of intersectionality race and ethnicity will also be recorded as it might be an important factor in police distrust. While I will not enquire about race it might be mentioned by the participants and recorded.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

Informed consent, being able to withdraw from the study, extra safety and anonymity.

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

Participants could & talk about situations and opinons that are emotionally challenging

Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

(Queer community events)
Interviews in Person

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

15

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

/

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

Digital drive right after the interviews

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

He (Miguel Avides)

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

Continously

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

Redact names and exclude any data that might identifie the porticpents, such as spaces.

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Miguel Avidad

Date: 14/03/2023

Name (EUR) supervisor: Willemijn Bezemer

Date: 22-03-2023

W. Bezemer

Miguel Avides

Informed Consent Form

Given that all interviews will be conducted through in person interviews consent and the consent form were discussed verbally.

Consent Form:

1) Researcher: Miguel Avides (657261mk@eur.nl)
   Data controller: Willemijn Bezemer (bezemer@essb.eur.nl)

2) Data protection officer: (privacy@eur.nl)
3) Purpose of the Study: The aim of the study is as follows: How do LGBTQ+ people in Rotterdam perceive the police, and how does it influence trust in the police?" The study will therefore examine how LGBTQ+ opinion of the police in Rotterdam influence issues of trust in the police. The study plans on collecting personal perspectives and opinions of the participants relating to this topic. The goal is to achieve a clearer and a more detailed explanation of LGBTQ+ police perceptions.
4) The legal basis for processing data depends on whether I have the full unambiguous consent from the participants.
5) Who will have access to the data: Researcher/Student and Data Controller (both contacts mentioned above)
6) Data will be kept for 5 months.
   The rights of the participants and their data include: access to their data; rectify, erase or restrict the processing of their personal data; withdraw consent at any time; lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority.

7) Special consent: I will be collecting special and sensitive data from the participants therefore, clear consent will be asked for to collect information regarding their: sexualorientation, gender identity, and ethnic background. All personal information or details that might identifysomeone will be redacted from the official version of the research.