

Example by StudyDriver

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Cases of Police Brutality Example

Police Brutality

What is police brutality? According to the World Health Organization, police brutality is considered an act of violence. Police brutality is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation (Cooper, 2015).

Police brutality is the use of excessive force against an individual usually resulting in injury or death. Police brutality is an ongoing issue not only occurring in the United States, but also around the world, and it needs to be stopped. Due to police brutality, civilians are becoming more and more fearful and losing the trust of the police. Citizens should be able to go to the police for help and safety, rather than fearing for their lives every time they encounter an officer. Part of this fear stems from the media. The media is a good place to get your daily news, weather, and opinions, but they can be rather liberal and opinionated over certain views. Every time a negative incident occurs with the police, it gets national attention with the media. The media tends to focus more on the negative aspects of the officers compared to the positive aspects. Due to this people are only seeing or hearing

negative stories of police officers. This is causing more and more fear for people in the United States. If the media were to focus more on the positive aspects of policing, then people would start to gain the trust and respect back for police officers.

While it's true that most police officers are good and are here to protect and serve, there are certainly many officers that are bad and use their place and power toward illegal reasons. These officers, unfortunately, give the rest of the police a bad image due to the abuse of their power. These officers tend to use excessive force on individuals due to racial or personal reasons. There have been many cases of police brutality like the Eric Garner case which occurred in New York. There have been many other cases of police brutality that have occurred throughout the United States. Unfortunately, it seems like these issues are only getting worse over time, and it is time to finally do something about it. Police need to be better trained and receive adequate training. Police departments also need to start forming a better strategy for recruiting officers to get people who will protect and serve the citizens of the United States rather than abuse their power as an officer. If departments were to start providing a more adequate training for their officers, then there would be less police brutality cases and more trust towards the police over time.

The media plays a key role in the public's perspective on police around the United States. Typically, the media is first to pick up stories about police brutality and expose it to the public. The media plays a key role in the public's perception of the police. Historically, the media has been viewed as a reliable source of information where one can get local and international news, weather, and sports updates. With the availability of social media and the growth and spread of the world wide web, stories can now be delivered to the audience almost as quickly as the news is occurring. Unfortunately, in the race to be the first news source to deliver the information, the media may not be providing all the due diligence or objective research of details that a solid story requires with the result being the delivery of potentially rushed and/or incorrect/fake news. In addition, individual newscasters may often insert their own opinions, ending up providing biased information. This biased information can unintentionally instill fear or a general mistrust in the public.

Recently in the last few years, the media has shown more and more stories of police brutality. Most of these stories end up being videos or stories of police brutality incidents occurring throughout the United States. These videos can include police officers choking someone, beating them up, tasing them, or shooting someone who is unarmed. These stories and videos can end up angering many people. The media tends to only show one side of the story rather than showing the footage of what happened from the officer's point of view. The media tends to show more of the negative aspects of policing compared to the positive aspects of policing. By only showing the negative aspects of policing like cases of police brutality, the media is fueling an already angry public which is causing even more mistrust of the police.

Due to the previous incidents of police brutality, there is already a general mistrust of the police in the community. Each time there is another story of police brutality in the news, the situation only gets worse. Citizens used to respect and trust the police, but now a part of the population does not trust them and now even fears them. Police are here to protect and serve us by keeping the criminals off the streets, but how can they protect us from criminals if some of them are the real criminals? Most police officers are good at their job and protect and serve their community, but the small number of officers that don't are giving the rest of the police a bad image. Rather than only showing negative stories of police officers, the media should also include positive stories like stories of police officers taking criminals off the streets or officers rescuing a kidnap victim. These stories need to be shown more to help bring back a better image of the police. According to a study done by Justin Nix and Scott Wolfe, police officers are becoming less and less willing to engage in community partnership due to the constant negative coverage of the police (Campbell, Nix, & Wolfe, 2017).

There have been many cases of police brutality occurring around the United States. Some of the most notable cases of police brutality involve Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and Philando Castile. All three of these individuals were African Americans who were killed by a police officer due to police brutality. Eric Garner was an African American who was killed by the NYPD on July 17, 2014. During that day Garner was stopped by two officers named Justin Damico and Daniel Pantaleo, for selling individual cigarettes on the streets (Jackson, 2016). Garner was expressing frustration the entire time due to constantly being harassed by police. Afterward, the officer

started choking him to get him to the ground. The officer used a chokehold that is currently illegal and banned by the NYPD. Garner screamed 11 times that he was unable to breathe, but the officers did not let go. Eric Garner ended up dying. Even though this chokehold that was used by the officer was banned by the NYPD, the officer ended up not being indicted for the murder of Eric Garner (Jackson, 2016). This caused many reports of rioting and protests by members of Black Lives Matter around the United States.

About a month after the murder of Eric Garner, Michael Brown became another victim of police brutality. At the time of his death, Michael Brown was unarmed and only 18 years old (Diversi, 2016). The officer stated he stopped two African Americans for walking down the middle of the road. According to the officer, the two men became aggravated and assaulted the officer. Brown then tried reaching for Officer Darren Wilson's gun. Due to this the officer reportedly fired off a shot. The two men ran away from the officer, but the officer pursued the suspects. After the pursuit, Brown began walking toward the officer aggressively. After many warnings, the officer fired off many bullets killing Michael Brown. There was another side to this story that stated something else completely different happened. Instead of Michael Brown walking aggressively towards the officer, it was the officer that was walking aggressively towards Brown. Either way, Michael Brown was unarmed and was unfortunately killed by Officer Darren Wilson (Pohl & Potterf, 2018). In the end, Officer Darren Wilson wasn't charged, but more riots took place again just like the ones that occurred because of the death of Eric Garner. These riots were known as the Ferguson Riots.

Another police brutality case took place recently in Minnesota in 2016. On July 7, 2016, Philando Castile was killed by police in front of his girlfriend and four-year-old daughter (Hardeman, Kozhimannil, & Medina, 2016). The officers responsible for the death of Philando Castile were put on administrative leave rather than getting charged with murder. The death of Philando Castile sparked riots around the United States like previous police brutality incidents. All three of these people might not have been entirely innocent, but they still didn't deserve having their life taken away from them, especially in front of their family. Due to the negative stories from the media and the constant cases of police brutality, a group of African Americans started a group known as Black Lives Matter.

The main case that started Black Lives Matter was the killing of Trayvon Martin. Trayvon Martin was unarmed and was fatally shot and killed by a Hispanic neighborhood watch person named George Zimmerman in February 2012 (Kurtz, 2013). At the time of Trayvon Martin's death, he was only 17 years old. After the shooting of Trayvon Martin, the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter became a popular phrase (Aird, Grills, Rowe, 2016). Shortly after, the group Black Lives Matter was created. Black lives matter started off as a good group that would bring together the community to protest police brutality and racism. Over time the group started to grow larger and began to protest more. The group transitioned into starting mass riots and started blocking highways for their protests. Our system is screwed up and, it needs to be fixed. There have been too many killings by police, which has caused groups to start rebelling against authority in the form of a riot. Riots can be dangerous, and it is time to make a change before anyone else loses their life. Officers need to be better trained by their departments to stop the police brutality and corruption.

Corruption within law enforcement agencies has been and continues to be a major problem occurring within departments throughout the country. It has produced distrust between the police and the community and often between the police and their own management within a department. Attempts have been made to combat corruption in the police force, but success has been limited overall. For a civilized society to work best, the police and the community need to work together and be able to trust one another. Corruption occurs when a police officer abuses their authority or power to gain an advantage over another with less authority. Cases of corruption have ranged from a single officer being involved to multiple officers within an entire department. It's unfortunate and dangerous when corruption occurs because as stated earlier, it erodes the public's trust that they have in the police. The police are supposed to protect and serve, but due to the mistrust, the public is hesitating to report crimes or come forward with clues to solving them. Besides corruption having a negative effect on the citizens, it also impacts the media, government, and the rest of the police force. It can be hard to tell the difference between a good cop and a bad cop, or a corrupt officer or corrupt department. A single corrupt officer or corrupt department can spread distrust and fear of all the police officers around the United States.

Many people have lost faith and trust in our police force due to the number of corrupt officers, and many are now

even afraid of the police. This needs to change. Police officers are supposed to protect the public from criminals instead of being the criminals. The public should feel safe and shouldn't have to worry about protecting themselves against corrupt officers. More work needs to be done to prevent and halt corruption and to do that, the causes of corruption need to be better understood. Corrupt officers tend to use excessive force and commit acts of police brutality. Corrupt officers/departments are also more likely to racially profile. Racial profiling is when race is used as the sole (or primary) factor influencing officers' discretionary activities (Novak, 2004). Racial profiling is a very controversial issue currently occurring in the United States (Legewie, 2016).

Police brutality is an ongoing issue that needs to be dealt with before anyone else loses their life by the hands of the police. Officers need better training, so they can better decide what they need to do during any situation they are dealing with. By doing so, there would be fewer accidents by the police due to a better training. A better training would lead to fewer deaths and injuries towards civilians and would also lead to more peaceful protests by the Black Lives Matter movement. Members of the Black Lives Matter movement would no longer have any reason to riot due to a better police force. The trust has been broken for so long, but it is not entirely impossible to fix. There is still time to regain the public's trust and respect in our police force. More trust would lead to less crime and a safer country to live in.