

## Looking into the History of Recent Police Reforms in the USA: Critical Insights, Learning and Implications

### Melihat Sejarah Reformasi Polisi Terbaru di USA: Wawasan Kritis, Pembelajaran dan Implikasi

Shaharia Afrin<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Criminology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Dhaka, Nilkhet Road, Dhaka-1000, Bangladesh

Corresponding author: [shaharia.criminology@du.ac.bd](mailto:shaharia.criminology@du.ac.bd)

#### *Abstract*

*The police force in the United States of America (USA) has been controversial for their execution of force and actions. This paper reviews the historical account of police reforms in the USA. The review illustrates various issues and dynamics of five significant eras of police reforms – the political era, the reform era, the community policing era, the homeland security era, and the current context. The review generates several vital insights. The concurrent socio-political factors highly influenced the police reforms initiatives. The paradigm shifts of policing towards militarization transformed the psychology of policing towards the use of excessive force. Police brutality has become part of the policing norm, and racial biases continues to shape the reform ideas. Emerging evidence shows that community policing has failed to deliver its intended outcomes, and the homeland security efforts are complicated by various local and global political factors. The evaluation of the current context informs that racial discrimination, lack of community engagement, austerity in funding, inadequate data, and excessive militarization of the police force will shape the future course of the reforms. Future interventions must be informed by adequate research and coherent ideas. This review provides policymakers and practitioners with insights into the complexity of police reforms.*

**Keywords:** *police reform, USA, police culture, militarization, racial discrimination, brutalit.*

#### **Abstrak**

Kepolisian di Amerika Serikat (AS) telah menjadi kontroversial untuk pelaksanaan kekuatan dan tindakan mereka. Makalah ini mengulas catatan sejarah reformasi kepolisian di Amerika Serikat. Tinjauan tersebut menggambarkan berbagai isu dan dinamika lima era reformasi kepolisian yang signifikan – era politik, era reformasi, era pemolisian masyarakat, era keamanan dalam negeri, dan konteks saat ini. Tinjauan ini menghasilkan beberapa wawasan penting. Faktor sosial politik yang bersamaan sangat mempengaruhi inisiatif reformasi kepolisian. Pergeseran paradigma kepolisian ke arah militerisasi mengubah psikologi kepolisian ke arah penggunaan kekuatan yang

berlebihan. Kebrutalan polisi telah menjadi bagian dari norma kepolisian, dan bias rasial terus membentuk gagasan reformasi. Bukti yang muncul menunjukkan bahwa perpolisian masyarakat telah gagal memberikan hasil yang diharapkan, dan upaya keamanan dalam negeri diperumit oleh berbagai faktor politik lokal dan global. Evaluasi konteks saat ini menginformasikan bahwa diskriminasi rasial, kurangnya keterlibatan masyarakat, penghematan dana, data yang tidak memadai, dan militerisasi kepolisian yang berlebihan akan membentuk arah reformasi di masa depan. Intervensi masa depan harus diinformasikan oleh penelitian yang memadai dan ide-ide yang koheren. Tinjauan ini memberikan para pembuat kebijakan dan praktisi wawasan tentang kompleksitas reformasi kepolisian.

**Kata kunci:** reformasi polisi, Amerika Serikat, budaya kepolisian, militerisasi, diskriminasi ras, kebrutalan.

### **Introduction**

The history of police reforms in the USA is not very old. It started only 100 years ago through a series of movements and events resulting in some significant reforms in police management, administration and service delivery (Walker, 2012). The main trends of these reforms were focused on the institutionalization of accountability and citizen engagement – from authoritative to community-oriented policing. Several research pieces have identified that making any public sector reforms is challenging and time-consuming (Bel & Costas, 2006; Cordella & Bonina, 2012; Pedersen & Löfgren, 2012). For instance, Bel and Costas (2006) argue that such reforms are ambiguous, and put forward two valuable hypotheses – (i) privatization of public sector reforms may have stimulated the managers to look for alternatives, including inter-governmental collaboration and transformation of administrative bodies and cooperation with private corporations; and (ii) broadminded concentration and reduced competition in such private sector collaboration may overlook its challenges. Similarly, while talking about the new public management in the case of Denmark, Pedersen and Löfgren (2012) note that despite the fact that most reforms are generally rooted in neoliberal ideologies, they also reflect the old style of public management very much. Therefore, they emphasize being pragmatic in such efforts to bring reforms to the public sector. In some countries where war has been a regular involvement, such reforms can even be harder. Neild (2001), while talking about democratic reforms in war-torn contexts, argues that such reforms necessitate a multi-sectoral strategy involving actors from all-important sectors, including the military and civilian and investments from social, economic, military, and

political perspectives. Hence, police reforms, like in other contexts in the USA, have been a great challenge.

In the case of the USA, the historical developments of police reforms can be viewed through a few conceptual lenses. The question is why we need to study these reforms and from which perspectives we should carry out the analyses. The answer, of course, can be multidimensional, but in the pursuit of knowledge, we must undertake a worthwhile but time approach. If we look at the current debates and controversies that world policing is going through in recent times, the theoretical understanding has been somehow associated with the American System of policing (Diphorn et al., 2021). The recent multidisciplinary discussion of global police reforms has always drawn from cases of police brutality in the USA (Parsons et al., 2021). Several recent publications and research cited the case of George Floyd's death in May 2020 in the USA as a reference to make a case for police reform. In 2020, in an article published in *Foreign Affairs* magazine, referring to the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement that originated from George Floyd's death in the USA, Ralph (2021) asked the straightforward yet hard-to-answer question – to protect or to serve? Although the answer lies in the very fabric of the society we live in and can be addressed with various context-specific and socio-economic perspectives. However, several contemporary scholars and thinkers have also taken the discussion further at the international system level where the USA still dominates on several fronts – (i) the country is still the largest superpower almost in all aspects and measures, (ii) global governance system relating to the international peace-keeping mission and global pieces of training are still led and funded by the US-backed global governance institutions including the related body in the United Nations, (iii) the USA leads the democratic modelling of policing all over the world and preaches for its ideal role in balancing "to serve and to place under trial" role in society, and (iv) the country is vibrant not only in considering the national movement regarding public service but also cognizant of human rights voices and violations occurring any places in the world (Engel et al., 2020; Lundgren et al., 2022; Neily, 2021). Considering these emerging evidence and discussions, this article attempts to examine the evolution of police reforms in the USA to extract key learning and insights.

### **Theoretical Conversations**

Many theoretical and conceptual perspectives have developed regarding the force of the state since modern states emerged – very much from the French Revolution (Coles, 1957). Many of the theories regarding the role of the Police have evolved mainly around the idea of “crime control” (Manning, 2014), maintaining order in a city or demography (McGregor, 2021), and a wider role in providing safety and peace at various level of governance systems (Caparini, 2017). However, in a national, state, and local level policing context, the theoretical understandings of the very role of the Police as a state-run and financed force have originated from two fundamental theoretical underpinnings.

Terpstra's (2011) detailed deliberation on the two theoretical foundations regarding the role of the police system is very relatable to the current and contemporary context of the USA. The first theory is Max Weber's theory of Police, viewing it as “the coercive arm of the state,” which assumes that the policy system is nothing but a bureaucratic system and machinery to enforce force on behalf of the state. Bittner's (1970) book entitled “*The functions of the police in modern society: A review of background factors, current practices, and possible role models*” has laid the modern foundation of this academic aspiration. According to Bittner, the coercive force imposed by the Police has a few basic purposes – (a) keeping peace and stability for the wider interests of the society, and (b) creating solutions for the emergent problems through legitimate force created by the state and citizenry agreement. However, there are many critics of this approach to policing. For instance, Frank Klahm IV et al. (2014) carried out a systematic review of literature based on this theoretical approach to illustrate that 72 per cent of the studies could not informedly construct the idea of coercive force and there is the inconsistency in using the force across many contexts and situations. Therefore, this approach to policing reflected more an authoritarian nature of the state, even in the most democratic country (Cao et al., 2016).

The second strand of theoretical underpinning, as described by Terpstra (2011), is the Émile Durkheim's perspective of viewing Police from the perspective of the morality of the state and society. Émile Durkheim was a French Sociologist whose work on sociology, seeing as the collective consciousness and culture, have been applied to many modern days state and society relationships in shaping Police and administrative

reforms. This theoretical foundation of state policing places social morality at the centre of such discussions. It assumes that it is not the force, but rather the social institutions, that can regulate and bind society together. As Varga (2006) reflects, the state as an actor and entity must ensure its continuous participation to shape the moral position of its own activities and the creation of those social institutions. The implications of these views in the reforms of Police in western societies have been quite widespread and deep. This perspective has led to the foundation belief that crime can be seen as normal in any society and part of the very social pathology fabric. As long as crime stays at a certain low level, society can be seen as healthy, just like the human body, which has natural dysfunctionalities and minor disorders and differences to each other (Terpstra, 2011). Loader et al. (2003) also emphasize the moral aspects of policing, even in modern states. However, the relationship between the citizenry and the Police is often determined by their expectations of each other (Carr et al., 2007). The critics of this theoretical approach have always cited the societies and factions of the societies where crime rates are very – especially in the poor and emerging economies (Leishman et al., 1995; Sollund, 2008). More recently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, police forces across developed and developing parts of the world had to enforce social distancing and other rules onto human beings with much force and many have seen it as "justified and moral" for the greater good of the Society (De Camargo, 2022).

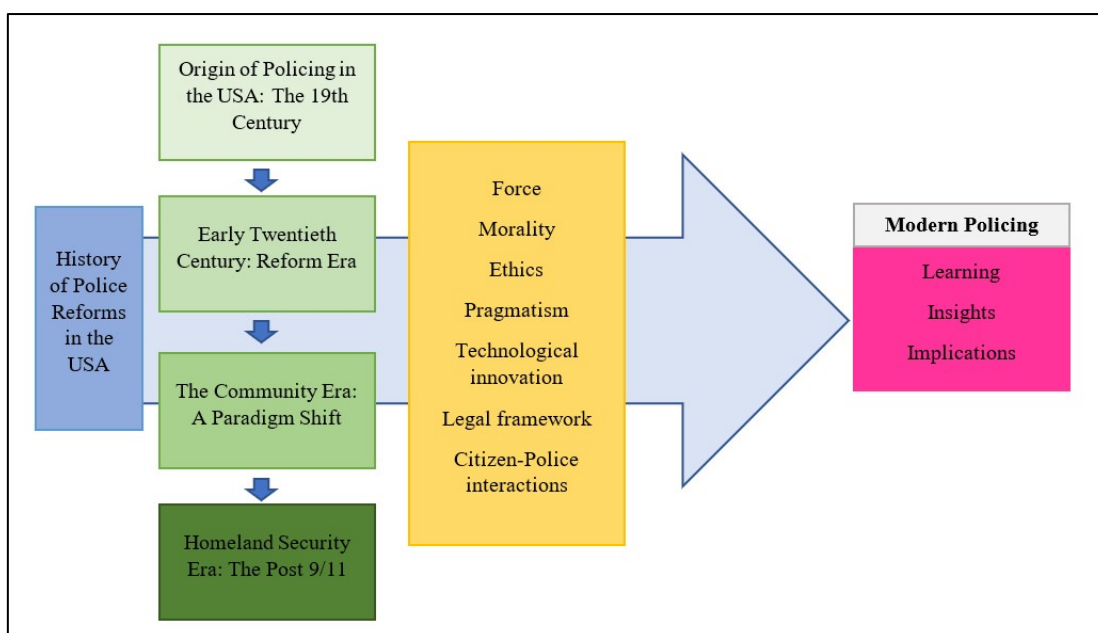


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of this Review

However, the currently popular and applied theories of policing and its reforms are mixed of these two philosophical views. International development interventions have shaped these reforms towards more of pragmatism and best practices. Engel et al. (2020) point out how emerging soft technologies (e.g., body-worn cameras) and artificial intelligence (e.g., AI-based cyber anti-terrorism and crime activities) are shaping the exercise and activities of policing in the USA. They argue that modern-day reforms in the American Police must be informed and backed up by evidence and realities. Taking a more legal perspective, Bell (2017) critiques the over-dependence of police administrators on very simplified legitimacy and procedural justice theoretical methods. The author argues in favour of legal entanglement to examine how Police interact with citizens and crimes and how citizens see the role of Police in Society. Therefore, police reforms in the USA are complicated if we look at it carefully. Nonetheless, in this article, as shown in Figure 1, I want to examine the progress and occurrence of police reforms from very conceptual lenses – force, morality, ethics, pragmatism, safety, technological innovation and the legal framework within the citizenry and Police interactions in the USA

## **History of Recent Police Reforms in the USA**

### **Origin of Policing in the USA: The 19th Century**

The 19th-century policing in America was dominated and complicated by the issue of migration and immigration. According to the Britannica Dictionary <sup>1</sup>, during this period, a major decentralization process took place for which policing was brought much closer to the public. It mainly helped various neighbourhoods to feel safer under the localized policy system in the USA. Gary Potter has written a five-part historical account of US policing in blog posts under a series published by the ECU online college. In the first part, Potter (2013), while illustrating the history of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, mentioned that major characteristics of US policing in the modern era was injected in the force during the post-American revolution period. These characteristics later vividly discussed by Lundman (1980). These characteristics are – bureaucratic form supported by people, formalization of police personnel and their jobs, security of jobs, and

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<sup>1</sup> For more details, please visit: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/police/English-and-American-policing-in-the-late-19th-century>

accountability of the force towards the central authority. Potter (2013) also explained why the service was a mixture of a centralized and decentralized system. The very reason was the rapid urbanization of US cities and the rise of localized crimes. Walker and Katz (2013) added that mob violence against immigrants and black Americans was being reported frequently not only from small towns but also from rural areas. The elites and rich factions of the society advocated a policy system that could bring order, stability, and security to be public and private resources. Thus, a regulatory framework through the Police was driven by a capitalist thought of the common good (Quinney, 1973; Spitzer, 1979). Hence, the origin of policing in the USA has been closely tied to racism, capitalism and America's growth as a global capitalist power (Brown, 2019).

### **Early Twentieth Century: Reform Era**

Prominent Sociologist from Boston University Professor Julian Go published a seminal work illustrating the history of police reforms in the USA in the early twentieth century. Go (2020) investigated the issue from the theoretical lens of militarized Police. The author noted that during the 19<sup>th</sup> century, policing in the USA was kept in the hands of civilians and was seen as a very non-militaristic approach. However, during the end of the century and the beginning of the twentieth century, the US became the most militarized state in the world, with the largest amount of capital and industrialization. It reflected the strict demarcation between the Police and the army (McCulloch, 2020). Although there is no commonly-agreed definition of the notion titled "militarization", several contemporary scholars have generally identified some common features of militarized Police in the USA (Hill & Beger, 2009; Wood, 2015).

In the part of the blog-post series, Potter (2013b) notes that during the very beginning of the twentieth century, Police in the USA were actually serving the political, business and criminal elites. Many organized crimes and election frauds were associated with police personnel at various levels, and Police provided communities with multiple services other than policing, Potter added. This situation was almost prevalent until the first world war began in 1913. During the first world war, in 1917, when Germany declared war against the USA, the government started to think about how to increase the capacity of military and paramilitary forces for the war. Tagg (2017) argued that Police were being used as additional intelligence forces to the military,

which clearly indicated that the militarization of the police force was first officially started in 2017. Go (2011) referred to this regime as the imperial-military regime and noted that this powerful regime originated as an institution in American society that shaped police reforms in the years to come. During this period (1980-1917), the US occupied a number of foreign territories in its neighbourhood and fought a guerilla war in the Philippines, which took away five thousand American soldiers' lives (Go, 2020; Linn, 2000). The learning was critical for police reforms and merging police forces into the militarization process as backup forces. These militarization processes were drawn upon organizational, cultural, tactical and operational levels (Go, 2020). Many have called this phase of police reform the Political Era. Police reforms led to a more impartial application of laws in society and towards the citizenry. That is why; this era gave birth to a new era known as the Reforms Era (Gultekin, 2014; Oliver, 2006). It is often argued that professionalism was introduced as a common feature of police force in the US during this very period.

Kelling and Moore (1988) divided all US police reforms into four major eras, and the reform era sustained from the 1920s to 1970s. During the 1930s Great Depression, with the rising rate of unemployment and poverty, the active role of police forces was cited as mixed and ineffective by several research studies. Oliver (2020) conducted a historiographical study on public opinion about the role of the Police during this tremendous economic depression and found that people's views and opinions were based on corruption, misuse of authority, Brutality, and the third-degree punishment used by the police force. During this period, public welfare spending was high to assist people in surviving this difficult period. Ironically, Fishback et al. (2010) revealed that the relationship between police spending and crime rates per capita was positive. Therefore, some studies point out that although professional attitudes were believed to be developed in the reform era, evidence do not really support that crimes can be tamed by such police reform programs. This indicates two things – (i) increasing police spending does not guarantee the reduction of crime rates, and (ii) the occurrence of crimes and increase of crime rates depend on many social and economic factors.

### **The Community Era: A Paradigm Shift**

The Second World War (1939-1945) significantly impacted the US police



reforms. Schrader (2021) analyzed how mass admission of police forces in the militarization process during the second war shaped US policies on policing. The author argues that this militarization took place both in quantifying and qualifying. Statistically, the number of police personnel in the US in the 1940s almost doubled. A case file (*New Alliance Party v. FBI*) illustrates that the number of civilian police officers and detectives rose by one-third in those ten years (*New Alliance Party v. FBI*, 1994). Several private organizations (e.g., GI Bill) started to offer policing services to the local communities and collaborated with public organizations in multiple ways. Schrader (2021) also illustrated the rise of post-war crimes in the US and pointed out how the reassertion of police powers across many cities and rural areas in America.

Meanwhile, the emergence of modernization, rule-based global world order shaped by several key international institutions, including the UN, International Monetary Fund, and World Bank, brought policing into the globalization process. The US government, during this period, further reformed police forces and walked toward working closely with the community. The policing outcome was solely associated with crime control and the safety of the communities. The introduction of public administration theories, including the new public management, fermented the idea of community policing during the 1980s (Aberbach & Rockman, 1990; Ashby et al., 2007). It marked the democratization of the police force.

During this era, apart from strict lawfulness and professionalism, police reforms targeted to serve the American communities closely. Bayley and Nixon (2010) pointed out two reasons why community policing became a government agenda across the USA, and those reasons are the rising crime rates since the 1960s and growing evidence showing the ineffectiveness of traditional policing. The Watts Riot happened in 1965 to mark police brutality and injustice against the African American community. Prompted by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice in 1967 commissioned several studies and research work to propose a new model of police reforms. Following that, multiple studies were presented in sessions of the Commission and the first session, as noted by Bayley and Nixon (2010) comprised of key presentations, concluded that fundamental changes were required. Eventually, the term community policing was used, and the framework was proposed by Kelling and Moore (1988). The basic characteristics of community policing were – responding to

citizens' demands, returning to the foot patrols in the neighbourhood, geographical information system, 24-hours telephonic assistance and information, and solving underlying impediments rather than dealing with surface-level symptoms (Oliver, 2006). The focus was more on the quality of service delivered and the satisfaction of the citizens. Critics of community policing highlight that although this new model was helpful in some senses, promises were kept unfulfilled. It was a paradigm shift in the continuous reform process. A blog post<sup>2</sup> written by the movement of "A World Without Police" identified community policing as a problem, not a solution because of, because it – (a) bolsters the legitimacy of Police but undermines the essence of protests, (b) only removes the crimes temporarily, (c) is frequently used as a justification of enhancing funding and hiring; and (d) extends the presence of police personnel too close to the community and into the social life of the citizens.

### **Homeland Security Era: The Post 9/11**

Clairmont (1991) examined the implementation of community-based policing in the US and noted, that it was considered "official morality" that did not translate into the field. Despite all the criticism, the experiments with community policing continued through the 1990s and with the dawn of the twenty-first century, reality and discourses of security both at domestic and international levels changed with the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. The 9/11 attack not only scripted a new era for homeland security for the USA, but it also pointed out that terrorists – whether lone actors or a group – can be stationed anywhere, which changed the definition of a crime involving terrorism. The homeland security era literally focused on human homeland security, information processing and intelligence gathering (Oliver, 2006). The approach contended that more interaction and collaboration between communities and Police, local and central policy organizations, and inter-agency intelligence systems could enhance the security of the people and public property and reduce the possibility of any terrorist attacks in the USA (Friedmann & Cannon, 2007). The role of the Police in the domestic sphere widened remarkably. The security of essential installations, including Airports, Museums, Theatres, and Business Centers, came down to the hands of the Police at local and

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<sup>2</sup> To read the blog, visit <http://aworldwithoutpolice.org/2017/10/08/the-problem-with-community-policing/>

national levels. Counterterrorism and security checks became a regular duty for the Police on and off the roads (Waxman, 2008). This was a new era of public safety which sidestepped community policing (Friedmann & Cannon, 2007).

Yet, new challenges for the local police force were emerging very fast. Thacher (2005) analyzed a local-level case of homeland security and identified a set of limitations that local Police faced. The author revealed that the new task of counterterrorism had damaged Police's reputation and legitimacy in the communities. Communities lacked trust in police equipment. In the meantime, the emergence of social media threatened the sustainability of the homeland security system since virtual social space provided lone terrorists with an opportunity to organize covertly (Borelli, 2021). Foley (2016) argued that segmented national and local intelligence institutions in the US made joint intelligence operations highly problematic. It critiques the traditional bureaucratic and organizational culture within these formal and informal institutions of policing and intelligence.

In addition, the 2008 economic depression forced the US government to hold onto the domestic expenditure on policing and increased its financing capacity to fight wars and terrorism worldwide (Millie, 2014). The concept of Austerity Policing was introduced in the early 2010s to consolidate various policing institutions to reduce costs and enhance the accountability of resources (den Heyer, 2013). This budgetary approach to police reforms also received intensive criticism. Buchholz (2021) argues that cutting budgets for the Police intensifies their work instead of reducing it. The emerging labour-saving technologies around Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning can be harmful to policing too.

The critics of the Homeland Security model of US policing frequently cite the killing of black Americans by the Police. Several recent incidents have raised more concerns. According to Statista<sup>3</sup>, among 1,055 US police shootings in 2021, about 1,020 were fatal. These fatal incidents are strongly biased as the rate among black Americans was much higher than for other ethnicities. Peebles (2020), while illustrating the case of George Floyd (who died after experiencing excessive deadly police force), highlights racial discrimination both in American Society and US Policing. Alang et al. (2017)

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<sup>3</sup> For more details about police shooting statistics in the USA, see <https://www.statista.com/statistics/585152/people-shot-to-death-by-us-police-by-race/>

investigated the health outcomes of police brutality among Black Americans and recommended that public health scholars must better understand the relationship between police brutality and health and then explain how that may have worked historically against certain ethnicities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the police force was somewhat justified in ensuring pandemic-related social distancing and quarantine rules in the US. This gave the US police additional justification to enforce brutal force against non-white people (Njoku et al., 2021).

Since the 2020 George Floyd brutal incident, a series of police reforms have been proposed (Navarre, 2022). For instance, a bill titled “Justice in Policing Act of 2020” was proposed to combat police misconduct, excessive force, and racial bias in US policing system (Parkinson, 2020). After failing to pass a few police reforms laws through the Senate, the US President Joe Biden signed an Executive Order on Safe Policing for Safe Communities on June 16 2020. The order established an independent credentialing body that certifies on behalf of the United States attorney general and incentivizes safe policing programs. The current debates and views are therefore placed around police brutality, racial balance, and the effective engagement of the community.

### **Relevance for Contemporary Police Culture in the USA and Beyond**

From an administrative and Police reforms perspective, the historical development of the US's policing has some implications and relevance not only in the US but also for the rest of the world. According to Cordner (2017), some of the fundamental components of police culture in the USA are – (i) citizens, (ii) toughness, (iii) solidarity, (iv) misconduct, (v) community policing, (vi) supervision and (vii) administration. As discussed in the previous section, the recent police reforms involve these components differently. The emergence of community policing has involved citizens, community, and solidarity, while it undermines Police's toughness towards criminals. While the militarization of Police has brought the balance, Police's recent incidents with many black American criminals and individuals have been controversial. As a result, the administration is more concerned with the accountability of misconduct. Technological advances, including body cameras, are part of this supervisory culture. Hence, Koslicki (2021) raised the question of whether Police should recruit warriors or guardians in the force, and Cordner (2020) criticizes the current education and training

programs for the US police, which significantly lack criminal justice modules. Rhodes and Tyler (2021) also criticized recruitment as the recent events have complicated the job, and it may not seem to be cool to be a police officer in the USA anymore.

Many police force members across the world have received training and concepts from the US police. For instance, the idea of community policing originated mainly in the USA, but it has been adopted by many global peacekeeping nations. For instance, Méndez Beck and Jaffe (2019) showed how the idea of community policing spread across the global south, and the best practices could not be replicated in many contexts, including in Jamaica. Many of these community policing aspects have gone virtual, and with the advance of new technological means, police support has been taking place virtually in many societies worldwide (Headleand et al., 2020). These new means have replaced many physical activities of Police and brought police culture within the domain of new emerging police reforms agenda.

### **Learning and Insights**

The historical account of the police reforms in the USA communicates several critical learning and insights for the readers. First, the evolution of police reforms reflects the parallel social and political changes society goes through. As we have seen in the case of the US, the 19<sup>th</sup>-century reforms conveyed those socio-political ideas around the formation of the society and laid down the traditional brutal attitudes of police forces towards African and non-white ethnicities. That foundation of police behaviour has held its traditional strains even today as emerging evidence clearly indicates the Police's biased Brutality against a faction of the society. It projects America's deeply rooted racial bias (Stelter et al., 2022). Second, the word "brutality" has been commonly used in the literature, suggesting its common presence in police operations at local and community levels. The very idea of the "legitimate state force" reflects the authoritative behaviour within a democratic society (Bottoms & Tankebe, 2017). Arguments can be placed on both sides while answering the very question – Why is US police so brutal? On the one hand, it shows the cruelty of the state, but on the other hand, it also projects state's intolerance towards crime, anomalies, and anarchies. Overall, many would argue that liberal democracies must hold the rule of law, and there are hardly any alternatives to such brutal behaviour.

Third, the paradigm shift of police reforms towards militarization has been another remarkable and continuous trend in the US. This trend has created a paramilitary force within the country that combines both military toughness and soft policing. However, such overly militarized Police, by nature, may want to fight and use force even it seems unnecessary. Such a complicated system may eventually affect the mental health of police officers and cause severe physical damage to petty criminals. Morgan (2022) argues that the lack of mental health response training in paramilitary training at the relevant police academy undermines the development of community policing. Therefore, whatever the polity maybe – democracy and otherwise – Police must be kept as a force balanced with less militarization and more civilization. Finally, the homeland security model is not unique to the US as most police forces across the world are primarily responsible for providing safety and security to in-land public and public properties. Its multicultural environment and opportunities for global citizens remain unique and sensitive to the US context. The USA still leads the world order and plays a significant role in shaping global politics and security. Therefore, the country's racial discrimination and gun violence convey a negative perception of the country worldwide. However, as McLean et al. (2022) point out that there are many funded programs and research on the use of the police force in the USA, but such a proliferation of programs diverts the sector from a coherent policy model.

### **Future Expectations and Conclusion**

This review conveys that several aspects and factors drive police reforms in the USA. The reflections, learning and insights layout that the USA must learn to be coherent and stick to a comprehensive program to effectively reduce police brutality and address various issues around racial discrimination. Being the most advanced economy and technological power, the USA must innovate a model that fits its sociocultural and political contexts. One of the key things that this review points out is that reforming police forces towards a better direction needs – (i) a social transformation of the current system and (ii) evidence and data-supported plan and strategies. We also need to acknowledge that, with the emergence of new technological innovations, next-generation sophisticated machinery and artificial intelligence are going to shape the use of legitimate state force at all levels – local, community, regional, national, and

international.

Further militarization of police forces may trigger further violence and Brutality at the community level. Since the USA is a country of 50 states, a one-size-fits-all solution in policing (i.e., a centralized system led by the federal government) may not work across the context. Hence, the future of police reforms must address the local contexts and culture concerning national needs. Funding new research relating to various issues – social, political, legal, environmental, psychological, technological, cultural, and material – should be the priority in creating data and evidence-based policy and program recommendations. Engaging private and community organizations may be useful to foster effective collaboration. Nonetheless, emerging evidence indicates that technological innovations are going to shape the next generation of police reforms in the USA and the rest of the world.

To conclude, the aim of this review paper was two-fold – (a) to reexamine the development of US police reform programs from several conceptual viewpoints; and (b) to underscore the learning and insights that may show use the direction of potential solutions of police brutality, violence, and racial discrimination. The review's outcome underlines that police reform programs are nonetheless part of the broader socio-political transformation of any society, including America. The current debates around racial discrimination, lack of community engagement, austerity in funding, inadequate data, and excessive militarization of US police forces will shape the future course of the reforms. However, many global factors influence the domestic politics and policymaking environment of the USA, and vice versa. Many scholars pointed out that American Society is deeply divided on numerous fronts. Getting consensus on a comprehensive and coherent policy reform program and shifting the paradigm towards a positive future seems challenging. The COVID-19 pandemic has to an extent, justified the Brutality of Police, and the country is still suffering from the pandemic. Considering all these situations, the country must think long term solutions with short-term deliverables in police reforms in relation to emerging technological innovations.

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