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Intelligence-led policing: a comparative analysis of community context influencing innovation uptake

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Intelligence-led policing: a comparative analysis of community context influencing innovation uptake

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The capacity of police organisations to adopt innovative practices is poorly understood. This paper examines the relative uptake of one particular innovation: intelligence-led policing (ILP), across four police areas in New Zealand. We used a survey of 286 officers and 32 depth interviews to explore police attitudes and perceptions of community context influencing the adoption of ILP. We found strong uptake of ILP was associated with a healthy relationship with local government and officer perceptions of more manageable demand for police services and perceptions of less complex and more stable operational environments. Strong uptake of ILP also mitigated the influence of neighbourhood factors on officer behaviour. Media relations, police unions and community relations did not influence or impair the uptake of ILP. In police areas where ILP uptake was patchy, officers tended to view their operational environment as more unstable and complex and were more influenced by neighbourhood factors. The uptake of ILP equipped officers with greater self-belief about their ability to influence the local criminal environment.

Keywords: strategic innovation; continuous innovation; intelligence-led policing; community context

Introduction

Innovation includes a wide variety of changes in practice – from embracing new technology to social networking – and is defined as adopting something new with the intention of benefit or improvement (Rogers 2003, Damanpour and Schneider 2006). An important component of innovation is the factors that inhibit or facilitate the uptake of innovation within a social or organisational context. Organisational innovations include a new product, service, technology, process, structure, administrative system, plan or programme implemented by an organisation to improve performance (Damanpour 1991). They are conveyed through take-overs and mergers, planned developments, reforms or evolutionary development (Rogers 2003). The way innovation diffuses within social systems has an important influence on the adoption of innovations by organisations (Kimberly and Evanisko 1981, Damanpour 1991, Young et al. 2001, Rogers 2003).

Studies of diffusion concentrate on the characteristics of a new practice or product that determine the tempo of adoption, and the features that influence organisations, social groups or individuals to adopt innovations (Wolfe 1994).

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Innovation studies also consider the processes and factors that influence adoption of innovation in organisations (Kimberly and Evanisko 1981, Damanpour 1991, Wolfe 1994, Slappendel 1996, Rogers 2003). These studies focus on how a broad array of organisational, individual and community factors such as the role of external relationships, administrative arrangements, leaders and environmental pressures shape the development of innovation within organisations (Kimberly and Evanisko 1981, Howell and Higgins 1990, Damanpour 1991, Wolfe 1994).

The role of community context in shaping police-specific innovation is complex. As Maguire (2003, p. 26) notes, organisational environments are ‘immense in scope’, and can include everything from the influence of the media, politicians and unions to the impact of economic and social factors. A broad range of factors, including community size (Maguire 1997, Maguire et al. 2003, Wells et al. 2003), ethnic influences (Crank 1990), environmental complexity (Maguire 2003) and environmental stability (Maguire 2003, Wells et al. 2003), can affect the way police organise and behave. This complexity makes developing parsimonious explanations of innovation phenomena tricky (Slappendel 1996, Maguire 2003, Rogers 2003).

Whilst community context impacts on police organisations, the foundation of operational policing is maintaining key relationships with core constituencies. Police relationships are often driven by conflicting demands and high public expectations (Goldstein 2003). The constant threat hangs over police that a failing relationship may lead to a crisis in legitimacy (Reiss and Bordua 1967, Crank and Langworthy 1996, Scott 2003). Police must remain credible to diverse community and interest groups; contradictory demands from stakeholders can pull police in different directions. Police need to clearly define critical relationships and be alert to changing demands. Key relationships for police include those with communities, the media and the police union, as well as political relationships (Reiss and Bordua 1967, Wilson 1968, Mastrofski et al. 1987, Saltzstein 1989, Crank and Langworthy 1996, Finnane 1999, Moore et al. 1999, Falcone et al. 2002, Chan Kim and Mauborgne 2003, Goldstein 2003, Hassell et al. 2003, Kadlec 2003). These relationships represent the core of the complex web of constituencies that police must serve in order to maintain legitimacy (Crank and Langworthy 1996, Scott 2003).

In this paper we consider how community context influences the uptake of innovation in the New Zealand Police (NZP). We explore the relationship between community context and the uptake and resistance to intelligence-led policing (ILP) innovation in New Zealand. We hypothesise that the relationship between innovation uptake and community context is complex and two-way. Neighbourhood factors, for example, may make officers less likely to report crime in high-crime locations. This may undermine the effectiveness of ILP. On the other hand, the uptake of ILP can influence the capacity of police to deal with environmental issues. Strong ILP uptake may weaken the influence of neighbourhood factors as officers follow intelligence directives in high-crime neighbourhoods. We consider these interactions when interpreting our findings. We merge the results from an officer survey with depth interviews with key stakeholders in order to investigate the role community context plays in the capacity of the NZP to adopt ILP. Our research explores how community context stimulated, supported or hindered local police innovation.

While community context shapes the adoption of police innovations (Wilson 1968, Mastrofski 1998, Bayley 2003, National Research Council 2004), police, like the wider public sector, often struggle to innovate successfully. Braga and Weisburd
observe that ‘police most easily adopt innovations that require the least radical departure from their hierarchical paramilitary organizational structures, continue incident-driven and reactive strategies, and maintain police sovereignty over crime issues’. Administrative, programmatic and technical innovations that maintain, or do not threaten, these characteristics fare better than strategic innovations. The National Research Council (2004, p. 9) reports that there is ‘little research about the innovation processes or how it can be facilitated’. Our review confirms this: There have been less than 10 empirical studies evaluating the determinants of organisational innovation in police organisations in the last 15 years.

We respond to these deficits in the literature and endeavour to fill an important gap in police innovation research. We use the uptake of ILP in New Zealand to evaluate how different police areas within a national police agency respond to a strategic innovation (see also National Research Council 2004), comparing the uptake of ILP within four police sites across New Zealand. Drawing from a survey of 286 officers and depth interviews with 32 respondents we investigate how community context facilitated or constrained the capacity of police to adopt the key principles of ILP. We examine eight organisational-level variables to assess their importance to the uptake of innovation: media relationships, local government, police unions, community relations, demand, environmental complexity, environmental stability and neighbourhood factors (see Darroch 2009).

In this paper, we review the emergence of ILP and the recent police innovations. We then describe the NZP and introduce our research approach and data. In the third section we present our results and conclude with a discussion of the implications of our findings for police innovation more broadly.

Background literature

In an earlier paper (Darroch and Mazerolle 2013), we introduced the concept of the innovation life cycle, which explores how innovations develop within organisations from first knowledge to institutionalisation (Rogers 2003). We also described how the innovation literature tackles the diffusion of innovations (Rogers 2003) and the processes and factors associated with the adoption and implementation of innovation (Kimberly and Evanisko 1981, Waarts et al. 2002, Rogers 2003, Damanpour and Schneider 2006). The innovation research presents insights into the innovation life cycle, including the role of managers and the impact of organisational size on development of innovation (Rogers 2003, Damanpour and Schneider 2006). However, the study of organisational innovation is difficult, with conflicting findings often confounding the research (Wolfe 1994, Slappendel 1996). It is important to specify carefully the conditions of particular innovation research

Realising innovation in the public sector is especially difficult (Lipsky 1980, Altshuler 1997, Borins 2001). Confusion about goals, or loosely coupling goals with required behaviours, can undermine innovation efforts (Lipsky 1980). Frequently, a complex political environment, a predatory media and the dearth of market-driven incentives paralyse public sector innovation (Altshuler 1997). The simplifications and shortcuts used to realise frontline service delivery can generate unexpected problems (Lipsky 1980). A specific challenge for the public sector is to move successful local or small-scale innovations to large-scale organisation-wide innovations. Public sector innovation regularly fails to make the transition from small to large (Borins 2001).


Recent innovations in policing, such as community-oriented policing (COP), problem-oriented policing (POP), ILP and performance management programmes such as CompStat,\(^1\) are probably the best examples of contemporary innovative reforms in policing. ILP is a strategic innovation which emerged in the 1990s in response to calls for more business-like policing models (John and Maguire 2003, 2004, Maguire and John 2006). ILP uses modern management techniques and information management tools to deliver focused evidence-based policing (Tilley 2003). Ratcliffe (2003, p. 3) defines ILP as:

> the application of criminal intelligence analysis as an objective decision-making tool in order to facilitate crime reduction and prevention through effective policing strategies and external partnership projects drawn from an evidential base.

ILP is not a static administrative, programmatic or technical innovation (National Research Council 2004), but rather a strategic process incorporating crime reduction goals and challenging effectiveness and evidence-based standards for policing strategies and tactics (Ratcliffe 2003). The strategic challenges ILP presents stimulate questions about the police role as well as programmatic and managerial changes necessary to properly realise ILP (Ratcliffe 2003, Ratcliffe and Guidetti 2008).

ILP has emerged in many locations, but, as was the case with COP, its implementation has been challenging (Cope 2004, Ratcliffe 2005, 2008, Ratcliffe and Guidetti 2008). Ratcliffe (2008, p. 213) notes that ‘it is easily possible for intelligence-led policing to fall by the wayside and become lost in the history of failed attempts of law enforcement to move away from the traditional focus on reactive, investigative policing’.
New Zealand Police

In this section we describe the NZP, then outline our research methodology and describe our data in the following section. The NZP is New Zealand’s national and only public police organisation. At the time the research was conducted, it employed 10,300 staff, of whom 8000 were sworn officers working from 360 police stations and offices across the country (New Zealand Police 2008). New Zealand has a population of just over 4 million people, distributed over a land mass of 266,200 square kilometres, about the size of Japan and slightly larger than the United Kingdom (Statistics New Zealand 2008). The NZP is a national police agency, so all officers and police interview participants involved in this study are recruited to national standards, receive standardised training and are subject to the same policy regime. More than 99% of officers are members of the same union, the New Zealand Police Association (NZPA) (Berry et al. 2008). All research participants in our study were members of the NZP.

Data and research methodology

The site selection process was designed to identify four NZP areas that represented two strong and two weak examples of ILP innovation uptake within the NZP. The four areas needed to be broadly similar in terms of socio-demographics; as such we carefully matched police areas on a number of variables such as demographic, population and economic characteristics and general officer characteristics. These sites could then be compared and contrasted on a range of factors using qualitative and quantitative research approaches to explore the uptake of ILP innovation. The selection process was based on the work of Moore et al. (1992). They describe a methodology for identifying police innovations, setting out an approach to understanding what constitutes innovation within a substantive field. We adapted this approach and used it to identify innovative police areas within a national police organisation. We considered a wide range of factors when assessing police areas, from a variety of information sources. In particular, we considered the presence of innovative ILP practice and asked whether other innovations were evident within the area. By using this approach to site selection, we identified two strong and two weak ILP innovation uptake sites within the NZP (for a full description of the process see Darroch 2009).

The focus of our study was on understanding the factors associated with the uptake of ILP innovation and how these factors interact and influence the adoption of innovation (see Darroch 2009). Table 1 sets out the comparative site data for the four selected sites including population data, numbers of sworn officers and crime data.

The research sites were all NZP areas based around provincial cities in the North Island of New Zealand. All selected areas were organised and structured in the same way. The areas were all led by an area commander. In New Zealand senior sergeants are the next management level reporting to area commanders and are responsible for a diverse range of management tasks. Sergeants manage constables and are responsible for some administrative functions. The areas provide police services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To enhance the confidentiality of research participants, the police areas are referred to using pseudonyms. The pseudonyms used for the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total population</th>
<th>Population aged 10–25 years (% of total population)</th>
<th>Population diversity</th>
<th>Number of sworn staffa (male, female)</th>
<th>Number of non-sworn staff (male, female)</th>
<th>Total Crime 2005 (and % change) February 2001–June 2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Innovation Site A – Mātātā</td>
<td>11,100 (20.5%)</td>
<td>Europeanb 43,662 (77%); Māori 11,016 (20.3%)</td>
<td>90 (78, 12)</td>
<td>20 (3, 17)</td>
<td>5,089 (0.82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54,162</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site B – Takahē</td>
<td>11,334 (26.3%)</td>
<td>European 39,111 (65.94%); Māori 15,624 (26.3%)</td>
<td>83 (72, 11)</td>
<td>14 (2, 12)</td>
<td>6,822 (0.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>43,128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Innovation Site C – Hihi</td>
<td>10,926 (18.4%)</td>
<td>European 49,278 (79.4%); Māori 10,122 (16.3%)</td>
<td>95 (85, 10)</td>
<td>25 (4, 21)</td>
<td>8,723 (1.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59,211</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site D – Kea</td>
<td>16,917 (20.18%)</td>
<td>European 65,850 (75%); Māori 18,735 (21.36%)</td>
<td>133 (110, 23)</td>
<td>41 (10, 31)</td>
<td>9,752 (0.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83,817</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>60,079.5</td>
<td>12,569</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>100.2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: New Zealand Police, on 20 December 2005.

aSworn staff are constables and sergeants.
bBoth European and Māori categorisations are determined through self-selection as part of the New Zealand census.
strong innovation uptake sites are Māta (pronounced phonetically Ma-ta-ta) and Takahē (pronounced phonetically Ta-ka-hei) and for the weak innovation uptake sites Kea (pronounced phonetically Key-a) and Hihi (pronounced phonetically He-he).²

All officers at the ranks of Constable and Sergeant level were surveyed at the four research sites. Following introduction by letter, we visited each major station at each research site. Pre-deployment roll calls and meetings at each station were attended and surveys were administered and returned. Table 2 shows return rates for each site.

Considerable effort was put into obtaining a good return rate from the officer population. Follow up was completed with key contacts at each site in an effort to ensure the highest possible return. Overall a 75% return rate was achieved across our research sites.

In addition to the self-administered survey, 32 depth interviews were completed with key informants across the four research sites. Interviews were conducted with officers in management roles, officers supervising intelligence units, as well as community representatives, to provide context and understanding to the survey results. Interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed verbatim then content analysed.

Results

Media relationships

The news media can be a major influence on police behaviour. Negative media coverage can stimulate police directly or through third parties such as politicians (Ankony and Kelley 1999). Media coverage can encourage, change or promote innovation (Moore et al. 1999) or compel presentational behaviours and superficial changes (Crank and Langworthy 1996). Negative media reports can cause officers to feel alienated from their communities and stimulate defensive outlooks and behaviours (Ankony and Kelley 1999). New Zealand has a population of just over 4 million and a correspondingly small media, which are fairly homogenous, and news is widely reported nationally (Goode and Zuberi 2004). When we conducted our officer survey there was significant negative media coverage about the NZP in New Zealand, relating to the sexual conduct of a senior police officer.³

Table 2 presents the results from our survey after multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests, which examined the relationship between officers’ self-reported view of media coverage and whether they worked in a strong or weak innovation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sites</th>
<th>Eligible officer population</th>
<th>Number of officer survey returns</th>
<th>Return rate (of adjusted n) (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Innovative sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Māta</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>78.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takahē</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>82.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak innovative sites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hihi</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>73.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kea</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>70.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>75.86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
uptake area. No statistically significant differences were reported between any of our research sites. Officers held similar views about the media across strong and weak ILP uptake sites, indicating that media relations were not a factor influencing the uptake of ILP innovation in the NZP.

Our depth interviews with key respondents from local media pointed to a positive relationship with the police at three of our four sites, with the one exception, Kea, reporting a problematic relationship. We concluded that media coverage was not an important factor influencing the adoption or lack of adoption of ILP innovation in the NZP.

**Local government**

The extent to which police have a positive relationship and work collaboratively with local government is likely to be important in supporting the uptake of innovation. This is particularly true of ILP innovation that focuses on crime reduction and promotes external partnerships as important in achieving crime reduction goals (Ratcliffe 2003). The relationship between police and local government is an important one for police areas in New Zealand. While police have no direct or financial accountability to local government, they are expected to work closely with local authorities (New Zealand Police 2002).

Table 4 presents the results of our survey after MANOVA tests, which examined the relationship between officer perception of the quality of the police and local government relationship and whether the officers worked in a strong or weak uptake police area. As Table 4 shows, officers at strong uptake sites Mātātā ($M=9.03$, $p=0.000$) and Takahē ($M=8.96$, $p=0.000$) and weak uptake site Hihi ($M=8.49$, $p=0.037$) all reported a stronger relationship with local government than did officers at weak uptake site Kea ($M=7.87$).

We hypothesised that officers at strong uptake sites would view their local police area as having a stronger relationship with local government than would officers at weak uptake sites.
weak uptake areas. This hypothesis is partially supported. However, the finding that officers at weak uptake site Hihi also viewed their relationship with local government as strong confounded our hypothesis. Drawing from our interviews with key respondents, we examined the relationship with local government in more depth. We addressed the following questions: What features of strong uptake sites supported a strong relationship with local government? Were there differences in the relationship with local government at weak uptake sites? How did the quality of the relationship between police and local government impact on the uptake of innovation in the NZP? Did the uptake of innovation influence the relationship between police and local government?

Our interviews with key respondents at strong uptake sites pointed to high-quality relationships between local police and local government. Local government partners reported model or exemplary relations with police. The community worker at Mata - a described how the relationship between local government and police at Mata - a was considered ‘desirable’ by other police areas.

Local government community worker Mata - a:

Um, we’ve always prided ourselves here on the relationship between the police and the council here. We’ve always um, skited around the country and ah, that the police and the district council get on so well and work so cooperatively and in fact I understand you know, it’s looked upon as um, quite, quite a, a desirable um, relationship by even police around the country . . .

The relationship between local government and police also focused on a partnership that supported the goals of ILP. At strong uptake areas police and local officials worked in a variety of ways to support local crime reduction. This paid dividends at the political level with crime reduction results reinforcing the relationship between police and local government. Our interviews showed that strong ILP uptake encouraged the development of a strong relationship with local government. Success in achieving crime reduction goals encouraged political support for police and ILP.

Our officer survey findings reported that officers at weak uptake site Hihi had a significantly stronger relationship with local government than did officers at weak uptake site Kea. This finding was explored in more depth through further analysis of survey data and depth interviews (Darroch 2009). Our findings showed that Hihi-based non-supervisory officers (constables and detectives) viewed the relationship with local government less favourably than did supervisory officers (sergeants) and officers engaged in community-focused policing. These differences were not evident at other sites. We concluded that good relations with local government were emerging or existed at Hihi, particularly among supervisors and youth- and community-focused officers. Depth interviews indicated that the relationship with local government was less well developed than at strong innovation sites. The relationship at Hihi was more enforcement focused and police-centric. Our results show that local government is a key partner in crime prevention and problem-solving in local communities and a vital partner in ILP innovation. ILP uptake promoted a strong relationship with local government. Crime reduction goals focused the relationship, and crime reduction results reinforced the relationship, enabling local politicians to make political capital from the relationship with police. Findings across our four research sites show that the police–local government relationship can range from
weak and somewhat antagonistic, to emerging but unfocused, to exemplary. Strong ILP uptake was associated with positive and focused local government relations.

**Police unions**


The NZPA is the police union in New Zealand. It has a strong following and is prominent in national politics, particularly in pursuit of better pay and conditions for its members (McGill 1992). The history of the NZPA demonstrates that it is progressive by police union standards. McGill (1992) reports that the NZPA was responsive to community policing in the 1980s, while more recent evidence suggests that the NZPA is interested in participating in any NZP reform process (Berry et al. 2008). This position is consistent with recent research findings demonstrating that unions have both an interest in and the capacity to support the development and reform of policing (Marks 2007).

Table 5 shows the results from our survey exploring officer perceptions about the influence of police unions, and whether or not they were important in supporting or hindering the uptake of ILP, using the multi-variate analysis of variance test. No statistically significant differences were reported between any of our research sites. Officers reported similar experiences concerning cooperation between local management and local union representatives.

Consistent with our survey findings, our interviews with key respondents did not reveal any issues regarding challenges from the NZPA to ILP, or any organised union activity against ILP. While police unions overseas are portrayed as obstructive to police innovation and change (Magenau and Hunt 1996, Finnane 1999, Goldstein 2003, Kadleck 2003, Walker 2008b), this is not the case in New Zealand. At the local area level the NZPA did not facilitate or hinder the uptake of ILP innovation. Our research findings demonstrate that police unions were neutral with regard to innovation uptake. This absence of opposition is likely to improve the chances of innovation taking hold overall in New Zealand. The role of police unions in the fostering of innovation may be idiosyncratic and requires more research to determine if there are any patterns of support or hindrance.

Table 5. Police unions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Mātātā</th>
<th>Takahē</th>
<th>Hihi</th>
<th>Kea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.94</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Takahē</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hihi</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kea</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F = 0.856; df = 3; p < 0.464; Partial Eta Squared = 0.009; ns, not significant.
**Community relations**

The quality of the relationship between police and their local community is critical to maintaining police legitimacy and delivering effective policing. A crisis in this foundational relationship will, almost certainly, create major problems for police (Crank and Langworthy 1996, Moore et al. 1999). Concerns over political or fiscal problems, the effectiveness of crime control, and the general quality of police–community relations can all lead to a crisis between police and their local community (Moore et al. 1999). Given the centrality of this relationship, the quality of local community relations is likely to be an important influence on the innovation process. Good relations may give police space to innovate and change. Poor relations are likely to undermine the ability and willingness of police to change.

Our survey tested officer views on relations with minority groups, support for police among the community, and officer views on the willingness of the public to assist with solving crimes.

Table 6 shows the results of our survey testing officer views on the quality of local police–community relations at our research sites. No statistically significant differences were reported between officer views of community relations at any of our research sites. Our interviews with key respondents supported our officer survey findings. Respondents from community groups reported positive relations with police across our operational police research sites. Positive community relations seemed to be a typical background feature for police areas in New Zealand. We could not distil any evidence of differences in general community relations across our research sites, so we concluded that community relations did not impact on uptake ILP of innovation in the New Zealand context.

**Demand**

Demand for police services is an important factor impacting on police behaviour. High demands on police can lead to defensive police behaviour, with police developing more complex and more formalised structures (Maguire 2003, Wells et al. 2003). Environmental pressures such as high demand can not only stimulate innovation but can also lead to avoidance and efforts to shore up organisational boundaries to cope with demand (Rogers 2003). Like others at the front line of public service, the demand for police services can lead officers to feel they are overloaded with work. This sense of overload can result in self-protective officer behaviour and shape the kind of simplifications and shortcuts officers use (Lipsky 1980, Sparrow 2000, Wells et al. 2003). Perceptions of an overly large workload could

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Mātātā</th>
<th>Takahē</th>
<th>Hihi</th>
<th>Kea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.88</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.97</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Takahē</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.92</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Hihi</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.77</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kea</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F = 0.394; \text{df} = 3; p < 0.758; \text{Partial Eta Squared} = 0.004; \text{ns, not significant.} \]
lead officers to reject innovation simply because it seems too much work on top of existing duties.

Table 7 presents the results from our survey after MANOVA testing, which examined the relationship between officer self-reports of local demand for police services and whether or not they worked in a strong or weak uptake area. Officers at weak uptake sites Kea (M = 8.88, p = 0.000) and Hihi (M = 8.47, p = 0.017) reported significantly higher demand than those at strong uptake site Takahē (M = 7.74). Officers at strong uptake site Mātātā (M = 8.78, p = 0.000) also reported higher input demand than those at strong uptake site Takahē (M = 7.74).

We hypothesised that strong uptake sites would report lower input demand than weak uptake sites due to the uptake of ILP. We proposed that the strong uptake of ILP would rationalise the criminal environment and leave officers with the view that local crime problems were manageable, reducing the sense of feeling overwhelmed by crime problems, and the perceived need to use shortcuts to cope with work. Our hypothesis was partially confirmed with strong uptake site Takahē reporting significantly less demand than officers at weak uptake sites. However, the result was confounded by the finding that officers at strong uptake site Mātātā also believed that they were subject to significantly more input demand than officers at Takahē.

To explore these findings further, Table 8 summarises the changes in reported crime between 1995 and 2006 at our research sites. Table 8 shows that reported crime per officer at our research sites was similar in 1995. Mātātā reported the most crime per officer in 1995 (10.46 offences per month per officer), but this had decreased sharply in 2006 (4.99 offences per month per officer). By 2006 reported crime per officer had bifurcated, with strong uptake sites reporting much lower levels of...

Table 7. Demand.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Mātātā</th>
<th>Takahē</th>
<th>Hihi</th>
<th>Kea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.78 2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.74 4</td>
<td>Takahē</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>0.017*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.47 3</td>
<td>Hihi</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>0.017*</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.88 1</td>
<td>Kea</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>0.000*</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( F = 10.521; \) df = 3; \( p < 0.000; \) Partial Eta Squared = 0.101; *\( p < 0.05; \) ns, not significant.

Table 8. Number and average of offences per month 1995–2006.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>N officers</th>
<th>Mean per officer 12 months to June 1995</th>
<th>Mean per officer per month 12 months to June 2006</th>
<th>N per eligible officer 12 months to June 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mātātā</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>597.20</td>
<td>10.46</td>
<td>424.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Takahē</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>688.87</td>
<td>8.30</td>
<td>516.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hihi</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>714.16</td>
<td>10.08</td>
<td>726.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kea</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>852.90</td>
<td>7.71</td>
<td>812.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

reported crime per officer and weak uptake sites reporting much higher levels. Of note is the fact that officers at Matatā who reported high input demand were subject to the lowest crime-driven demand for police services in 2006.

Our research suggests that the strong uptake of ILP innovation was associated with much steeper decreases in reported crime than at weak uptake sites. ILP appears to accelerate crime reduction trends. This finding is consistent with evidence pointing to the effectiveness of more focused policing strategies (National Research Council 2004, Weisburd and Eck 2004, Mazerolle et al. 2006). Our research leads us to infer that one impact of strong ILP uptake on the environment is a reduction in crime-driven demand, a consequence of more focused policing.

Figure 1 provides a simplified presentation of our findings for demand. The figure plots officer perception of input demand against crime-driven demands. Figure 1 shows graphically that officers at weak uptake sites reported high input demand and experienced more crime-driven demand than officers at strong uptake sites. Officers at strong uptake site Matatā, however, reported high overall input demand while crime-driven demand was low. Officers at strong uptake site Takahē reported low input demand and experienced low crime demand.

The first important point to consider is that when we conducted our research (in 2006) our research sites were at different stages in the uptake of innovation. They were at different stages of the innovation life cycle. The innovation literature describes how successful innovations diffuse within a social system, following an S-shaped curve. So ‘when an organisation’s adoption of an innovation is plotted over time, the cumulative distribution of adopters usually forms an S-shaped curve’ (Rogers 2003, p. 275). Initially a few organisations adopt, with numbers building slowly over time. This is followed by a middle period of rapid adoption, and concludes with late adopters filling the tail of the S. The organisations adopting at different stages typically have different qualities. Early adopters are more venturesome, middle-stage adopters more deliberate or sceptical, laggards more traditional (Rogers 2003). As with much innovation research, care must be taken when looking at real-world examples. Adopter categories are ideal types and patterns of diffusion

![Figure 1](policingandsociety.com/content/13/1/11.e58.f1.jpg)  
**Figure 1.** Officer-perceived input demand compared with actual crime demand, 2006.
depend on characteristics of leaders, the social system, the innovation and the organisation itself (Rogers 2003).

Mātātā was an innovator or early adopter of ILP innovation (Rogers 2003), moving to adopt before other sites in New Zealand (Darroch 2009). Our other research sites, Takahē, Kea and Hihi, were middle-stage adopters (Rogers 2003), moving or endeavouring to adopt ILP when most other NZP sites moved (Darroch 2009). Key respondents reported that community context, including crime-driven demand for police services, was important in the uptake of innovation at Mātātā (Darroch 2009).

Importantly, our strong uptake sites were at different stages of ILP development: Mātātā was more mature, Takahē was developing. However, both sites reported that a consequence of ILP uptake was an increase in demands on officers to complete proactive tasks. There was an expectation that officers at strong uptake sites would perform ILP-related proactive tasks. When asked how busy his staff were, the area commander at Takahē recalled a conversation with one of his officers. The officer attributed some reduction in his crime-related workload to ILP, but went on to describe being busier overall due to proactive ILP tasks.

Area commander Takahē:

Um, the, the, I don’t think they’re, well we’ve incrementally reduced crime so that we’re, we’ve actually ah, we’re actually reducing the amount of work. But, ah, I, I spoke to a cop in ah, Massey⁴ and we’ve, we’ve had some really good results over there and, and reduction in crime and he’s saying he’s feeling busier now with the proactive work than what he was when he was just going around taking ORs.⁵ So ah, it’s sort of ah, debatable about how, how busier you are and how, how, how, how you aren’t busy.

This quotation illustrates an important consequence of ILP for officer workload; properly implemented, ILP increases work-related demands on officers. This is a substitution effect, where decreases in crime reduction workload were replaced by increases in demands for proactive ILP tasks. A similar effect was evident at Mātātā. The area commander there described increases in proactive workload over time for officers as ILP developed. The commander noted that officers were required to do ‘lots of work that they weren’t doing before’.

A plausible explanation for the observed differences in input demand between Takahē and Mātātā is the impact of ILP innovation over time. At Mātātā ILP had been developing for nearly a decade. As ILP matured at Mātātā, expectations of officer performance of ILP proactive tasks rose. Conversely, our results indicate that officers at Takahē were still experiencing the early benefits of crime reduction due to the uptake of ILP, which reduced their overall workload. While both sites reported low crime rates, other factors impacted on officer perceptions of input demand. Our results suggest that officers at Mātātā were experiencing a more mature version of ILP with greater demands on officers to complete proactive tasks. These higher demands were a consequence of the development of ILP. As ILP matures at Takahē, we would expect to see officer perceptions of low input demand move into the high category, as increasing demands are placed on them to perform ILP-related tasks.

The innovation literature suggests that high demand can result in shortcuts, simplifications and avoidance behaviour from officers (Lipsky 1980, Sparrow 2000, Wells et al. 2003). Officers who feel overwhelmed are unlikely to be enthusiastic
adopters of ILP. As Table 8 illustrates, officers at both weak uptake sites reported high input demand and were experiencing higher levels of reported crime than their colleagues at high uptake sites. This suggests that high crime-driven input demand is a barrier that police organisations wishing to adopt ILP need to overcome. The move from input demand being heavily crime focused to a greater mix of crime and proactive tasks needs to be negotiated.

The differences in officer perception of input demand at strong uptake sites can be explained by the differences in ILP maturity at the two sites. At mature sites officers had moved from a reactive to a proactive approach to their work. Officers at Mātātā were subject to higher input demand due to the process of continuous innovation increasing the quantum of proactive tasks expected from and performed by them. Demand from the environment both stimulated and impeded innovation. ILP innovation reduced demand from the environment but ensured officers remained fully employed performing proactive tasks. Getting officers to transition from a reactive to a proactive mindset was important to the uptake of innovation in New Zealand.

**Environmental complexity, environmental stability and neighbourhood factors**

We now turn to the influence of more general community context on the uptake of ILP innovation in New Zealand and evaluate whether community context impeded or enhanced the uptake of innovation. We also assess whether the uptake of innovation changed the way officers thought about the impact of community context. We first assess the impact of general perceptions of the environment, then the influence of local neighbourhood factors.

Environmental stability describes the overall stability of the police operational environment. Maguire (2003) defines environmental stability as the level of stability in resources, population, political arrangements, racial configurations and community relations. Environmental stability is close in definition to environmental complexity. Complexity is concerned with the breadth of factors police are expected to address while stability is concerned with the pace of change. Maguire (2003) proposes that environmental instability causes police to react to limit the influence of unstable factors by creating structural complexity, vertically and functionally, and developing more physical and administrative centralisation.

Community context can interact with innovation unpredictably. On the one hand, more heterogeneous environments can stimulate innovation (Baldridge and Burnham 1975), with large organisations being more responsive to environmental pressures and changes (Rogers 2003). On the other hand, complex environments can hamper the ability of organisations to focus on innovation, hinder communication between organisations and constrain the adoption of innovation (Slappendel 1996).

Neighbourhood context is an important factor impacting on officer behaviour. Neighbourhood stability and racial heterogeneity have been shown to influence detection behaviours (Kania and Mackey 1977, Smith 1986, Worden 1989, Riksheim and Chermak 1993, Klinger 2004). Smith (1986) found racial characteristics and neighbourhood crime rates influenced officer behaviour with officers employing higher thresholds when making arrest decisions in neighbourhoods with high crime rates. Klinger (1997, 2004) concluded that officers categorised crime according to neighbourhood context, with higher crime rate neighbourhoods requiring more
deserving victims than were required in low crime rate neighbourhoods before the police decided to arrest. Neighbourhood context may make officers reluctant to undertake innovation-related behaviours in some neighbourhoods and cause officers to perform those behaviours unevenly or inappropriately. If differing norms operate in local police areas, innovation could be undermined or resistance could come into play.

We tested officer views on environmental complexity, environmental stability and the influence of neighbourhood factors across our four NZP research sites. Table 9 presents the results from our survey after MANOVA testing, which examined the relationship between officer self-reports of local environmental complexity and whether or not they worked in a strong or weak uptake police area. Table 9 shows officers at strong uptake research site Takahë ($M = 10.32$) reported significantly lower environmental complexity than those at weak uptake site Kea ($M = 11.15$, $p = 0.001$). No other statistically significant differences were reported.

Table 10 presents the results from our survey after MANOVA testing, which examined the relationship between officer self-reports of local environmental stability and whether or not they worked in a strong or weak uptake police area. Table 10 shows that officers at strong uptake research site Takahë ($M = 10.46$, $p = 0.026$) reported significantly higher environmental stability than officers at weak uptake site Kea ($M = 9.78$). No other statistically significant differences were reported.

Our survey findings showed a consistent pattern that officers at strong uptake site Takahë viewed their environment as more stable and less complex than officers at weak uptake site Kea. We hypothesised that officers stationed at strong uptake sites would view their environment as more stable and less complex than colleagues at weak uptake sites. We predicted that ILP might provide a lens through which officers could view the environment, particularly the criminal environment, as more understandable. ILP would give officers confidence about their ability to influence

Table 9. Environmental complexity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Mātātā</th>
<th>Takahë</th>
<th>Hihi</th>
<th>Kea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.70</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.32</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Takahë</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.65</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hihi</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kea</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$F = 4.939; \text{df} = 3; p < 0.002; \text{Partial Eta Squared} = 0.050; *p < 0.05; \text{ns, not significant.}$

Table 10. Environmental stability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Mātātā</th>
<th>Takahë</th>
<th>Hihi</th>
<th>Kea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.42</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.46</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Takahë</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.28</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Hihi</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.78</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kea</td>
<td>ns</td>
<td>0.026*</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$F = 3.509; \text{df} = 3; p < 0.016; \text{Partial Eta Squared} = 0.036; *p < 0.05; \text{ns, not significant.}$
the environment and encourage officers to believe their actions could influence their local criminal environment (Ratcliffe 2003, 2008). In this way officers might hold more positive views about the environment overall and give them confidence about their ability to influence the environment. Our survey findings provide partial support for this hypothesis.

Table 11 presents the results from our survey after MANOVA testing, which examined the relationship between officer views on the effect of neighbourhood characteristics and whether or not they worked in a strong or weak uptake site. Table 11 shows officers at strong uptake sites Takahe (M=9.55, p=0.000) and Mātātā (M=10.09, p=0.029) reported significantly lower neighbourhood effects than weak uptake site Kea (M=10.92). No other statistically significant differences were reported.

We hypothesised that officers at strong uptake sites would report being less influenced by neighbourhood factors than officers at weak uptake sites. We proposed two possible reasons for this. As with our hypothesis for environmental complexity and stability we reasoned that ILP might provide officers with a more positive view of local neighbourhoods and their ability to influence them. Therefore, officers might behave more consistently across all environments rather than feel overwhelmed by the difficulties or perceived norms of some communities or neighbourhoods. The second reason was the direct influence of ILP. Neighbourhood effects might be reduced through officers being provided with recommendations or instructions about actions they should perform in prescribed circumstances, or what tasks they should perform at particular locations or in relation to particular individuals. For example, the use of problem or offender profiles with recommended actions might guide officers directly, mitigating or eliminating the influence of neighbourhood factors.

Our interviews with key respondents explored these issues further. It was difficult to get clear useful commentary from key respondents about environmental complexity and stability. When asked about their local environment, most respondents described the variety of issues faced by the local police area. These comments were fairly consistent and covered issues such as gang problems, alcohol and drug problems, and domestic violence. Several respondents touched on how issues such as tourism, special events, economic growth and local population changes influenced their work. All could point to deprived local communities and neighbourhoods where policing was particularly challenging and often unrewarding.

Overall, there was evidence supporting our survey findings that officers at strong uptake sites held more positive views about their local environment than officers at weak uptake sites, but the evidence was not strong. Key respondents at weak uptake sites reported more pessimistic views about the local environment generally and the
ability of officers to influence the local environment. Officers saw barriers and problems impeding their ability to influence the local environment. For example, when asked about the local environment the sergeant in charge of the Intelligence Unit at Kea stated that officers felt pulled in all directions and were pressured to be ‘everything to everybody’ and felt they needed ‘more staff’. Officers were reluctant to embrace ILP because they felt they were already working as hard as they could.

Views on local neighbourhoods were much stronger. Respondents at all research sites pointed to the challenges they faced in dealing with particular local communities and neighbourhoods. At strong uptake sites key respondents reported much more positive views amongst officers concerning their ability to work positively in deprived local neighbourhoods. Interviews with key respondents at weak uptake sites suggested officers were more pessimistic about their work in low socio-economic, ethnically diverse communities. The community worker at Kea described the relationship between local police and a challenging local neighbourhood, pointing to a ‘them and us mentality’ and suggested the police just wanted ‘to put a bomb under the place’ and ‘see the place disappear’.

This attitude contrasts with the approach seen at strong uptake sites. The area commander at Mātātā described how Mātātā tried ‘different approaches’ to working in those ‘tough areas’. One of the different approaches Mātātā undertook was using volunteers to complete neighbourhood surveys in deprived neighbourhoods in order to understand crime problems and provide an evidence base for police actions. The contrast in attitudes towards difficult neighbourhoods was stark. Officers at weak uptake sites were pessimistic about working in difficult neighbourhoods, while managers at strong uptake sites were looking to understand problems and develop solutions.

The combination of officer survey findings and interviews with key respondents demonstrates that the uptake of ILP does positively influence officer attitudes towards the environment in which they operate. Furthermore, the influence of ILP uptake becomes stronger as the environmental factor becomes more specific and localised. This can be seen in our officer survey findings. Modest contrasts are evident for broad community context (officers at Takahe viewed their environment as less complex and more stable than did officers at Kea); clearer findings are evident for neighbourhood effects (officers at Takahe and Mātātā reported being less influenced by neighbourhood factors than officers at Kea). The influence of ILP on officer attitudes towards broad community context was modest, while its effect on officer attitudes towards neighbourhood factors was more pronounced.

In summary, negative views among officers about community context were associated with weak uptake of innovation. Officers held more negative views about the general socio-economic environment at weak uptake sites. In particular, negative views were expressed about challenging neighbourhoods. Pessimistic views about the ability of police to achieve positive outcomes in high-crime, low socio-economic neighbourhoods were a limiting factor, constraining the uptake of ILP innovation. In contrast, the strong uptake of ILP innovation interacted positively with officer attitudes towards the general environment and challenging neighbourhoods. Officers at strong uptake sites were more confident in their ability to influence the local environment. This more positive mindset supported the uptake and development of ILP.
Conclusion

Our research demonstrates the interactions between community context and innovation uptake, the direct effects of community context and the important null effects for some of the community context measures. Several community context measures, including media coverage, police unions and general community relations, showed no influence on the uptake of innovation. Officers at both strong and weak uptake sites reported no differences in their attitudes towards these factors, while our interviews with key respondents could not establish any evidence of these factors influencing the uptake of innovation, or of innovation uptake impacting on these factors. Specific features of the New Zealand policing environment may account for these null findings. Our research shows that police unions, general community relations and reactions to media coverage are consistent background features of the NZP environment and the neutrality of these factors in relation to innovation may be idiosyncratic to New Zealand.

Other factors did emerge as associated with innovation uptake. Strong uptake sites reported healthy relationships with local government. These relationships were purposeful and focused on achieving crime reduction outcomes. Ratcliffe’s (2003) model was important in providing a framework and clear objectives for this relationship. A key district commander described the relationship as ‘partnering for purpose’. There were important differences in the quality and focus of local government relationships at weak uptake sites. At one weak uptake site a strong relationship was emerging with local government, but there was evidence that the relationship was enforcement-focused and not open to innovative partnership approaches to local crime problems.

Demand not only stimulated ILP uptake but also acted as a barrier to innovation. At weak uptake sites officer views about work overload undermined innovation uptake. At strong uptake sites innovation uptake saw officers holding differing views about input demand, depending on the stage of their area in the innovation process. At the more mature site officers reported high input demand with significant proactive workloads. The less mature strong uptake site reported less demand due to recent crime reductions associated with ILP uptake. Demand can also stimulate innovation. Evidence emerged that environmental pressures had stimulated innovation at one strong uptake site, but the other three research sites moved to implement ILP when the majority of other NZP sites did so, as ILP became a normal practice.

Overall, ILP uptake influenced both the environmental demands placed on officers and the attitude of officers towards those demands. The focused nature of ILP strategies reduces crime-related input demand, but increases the demands on officers to perform ILP-related proactive tasks. The attitude of officers towards community context at strong uptake sites was more positive. Once ILP was successfully implemented officers reported having less crime to deal with but overall being just as busy with a combination of both reactive and proactive ILP tasks. At weak uptake sites officers were unconvinced about the value of ILP-related tasks and were reluctant to perform these tasks because they believed they were already too busy. Officer perception of high input demand was a barrier to innovation.

The impact of community context became more evident as our research moved from general questions about the police operational environment to more focused questions. There was evidence that officers at weak uptake sites view their
operational environment as more unstable and complex than colleagues at strong uptake sites. However, neighbourhood factors were clearly influential. Officers at weak uptake sites were more influenced by neighbourhood factors than were officers at strong uptake sites. Officers at weak uptake sites were quite pessimistic about their ability to effectively police in high-crime, low socio-economic neighbourhoods. Overall, officers at weak uptake sites tended to be more despondent about their operational environment. The uptake of ILP equipped officers with greater self-belief about their ability to influence the local criminal environment. This greater self-belief, coupled with clear ILP-related tasking, reduced the influence of neighbourhood factors.

The influence of Ratcliffe’s (2003) 3I ILP model was important. The model provided a structured approach, defining roles and clarifying what police needed to do to implement ILP. The model provided police areas with a methodology or formula for addressing both crime and wider environmental and community problems. There is evidence that ILP framed local environmental and neighbourhood problems as manageable rather than overwhelming, encouraging confidence amongst officers and managers.

Overall, community context impacted on and interacted with ILP innovation. Where ILP was taken up strongly it reduced crime and mitigated the negative influence of community factors on officer behaviour and attitudes. ILP uptake also encouraged the development of key relationships and positive evidence-based approaches to environmental problems. Community context stimulated innovation at an early adopter site but constrained innovation at weak uptake sites by leaving officers pessimistic about their ability to influence the criminal environment.

Notes
2. The sites are named for native New Zealand birds: mātātā (fern bird), takahē (flightless gallinule), kea (mountain parrot) and hihi (stitchbird).
3. This coverage included the Commission of Inquiry into Police Conduct (http://www.cipc.govt.nz) and the related trials of a police assistant commissioner and former officers for sexual offending.
4. Pseudonym.
5. ORs – offence reports.

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