

The Importance of Managerial Quality for Police Organizations

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MOTIVATION

- 1 Citizen security is one of the most important tasks facing governments. The police are the first and often the only point of contact between citizens and their government.
- 2 Scholars across fields are seeking to better understand the complex task of policing.
- 3 Most research focuses on police officer behavior as determined by social and contextual conditions, individual officer characteristics, and deployment strategies.
- 4 Little emphasis on the organizational configuration of police forces.
(Klinger 2004)

PROPOSAL

Police forces are, first and foremost, **organizations** that face particularly acute versions of the universal problems of organizing

HYPOTHESIS

The organizational configuration and managerial practices that a police force uses to solve problems of organizing is likely to determine, to a great extent, the behavior and performance of its officers.

CONTRIBUTIONS

- 1 Design a novel instrument based on Bloom and Van Reenen's (2007) World Management Survey to gather information on the organizational design and managerial practices of police forces.
- 2 Gather data on the organizational design and managerial practices of police forces across Mexico.
- 3 Assess the importance of managerial practices on police performance.

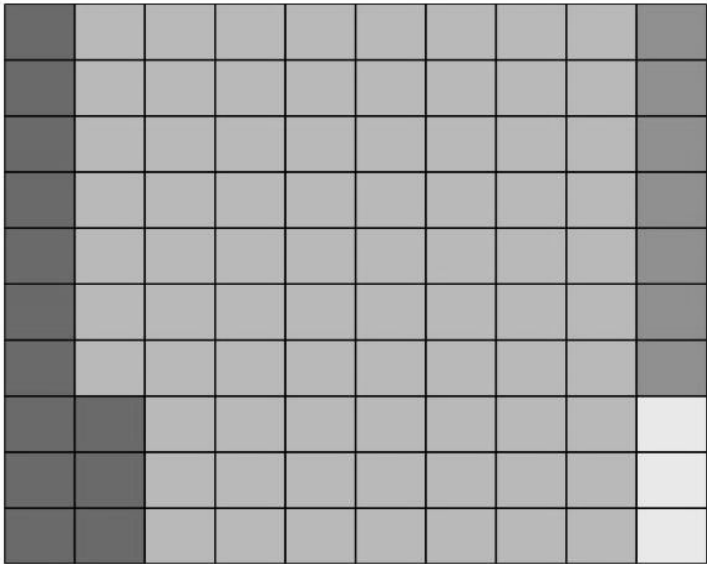


- 1 Initial adaptation of five WMS instruments: questions and scoring guide.
- 2 Feedback from SSP CDMX, Morelia, Ciudad Nezahualcóyotl, Morelos and General Escobedo.
- 3 Pilot surveys
(2 weeks, 8 police departments)
- 4 Additional feedback
(Jim Burch, The Police Foundation)
- 5 Adjustments and final instrument

- 1 Introducing modern techniques
- 2 Performance monitoring
- 3 Setting Targets
- 4 Talent Management
- 5 Organizational Resilience

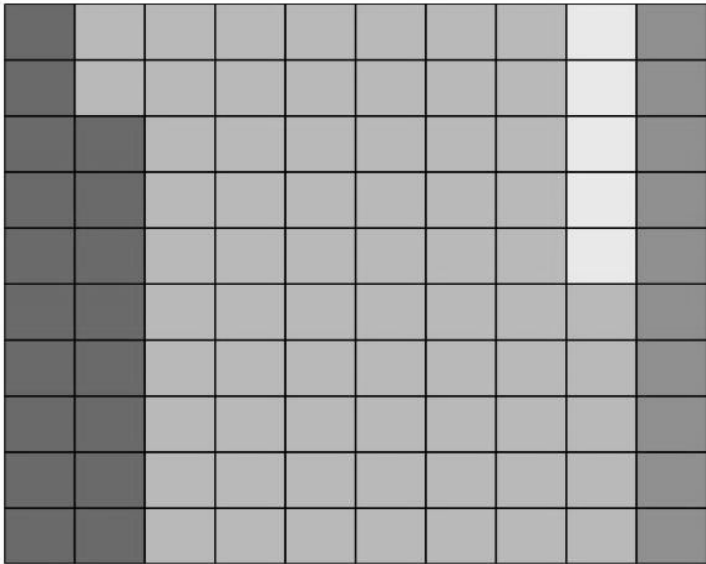
We estimate **management quality** for the police departments in our sample as the average score across the twenty-one managerial practices.

431 INTERVIEWS COMPLETED



■ Rural ■ Semi-urban ■ State ■ Urban

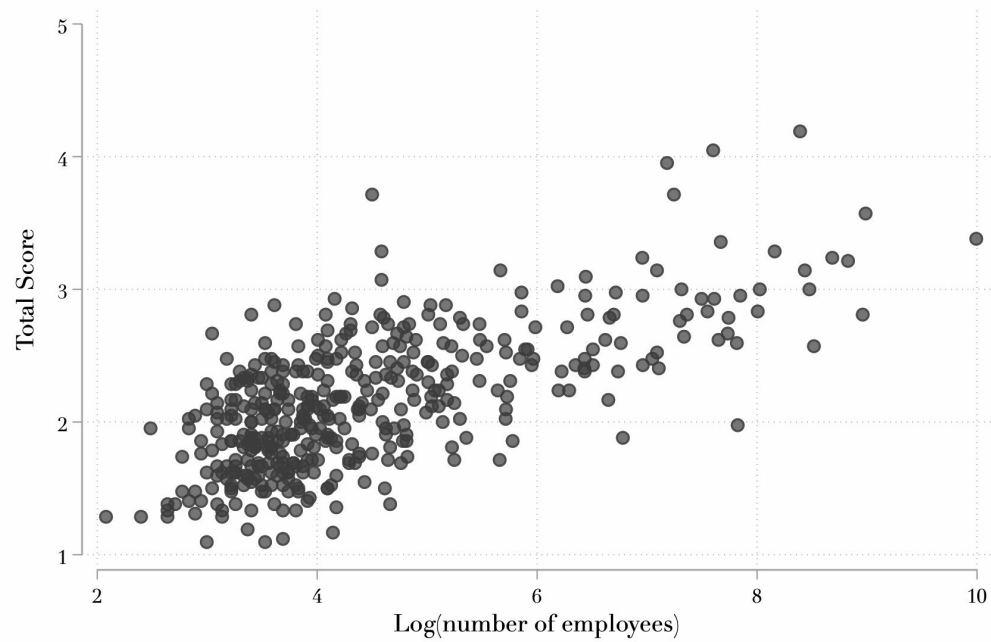
Population



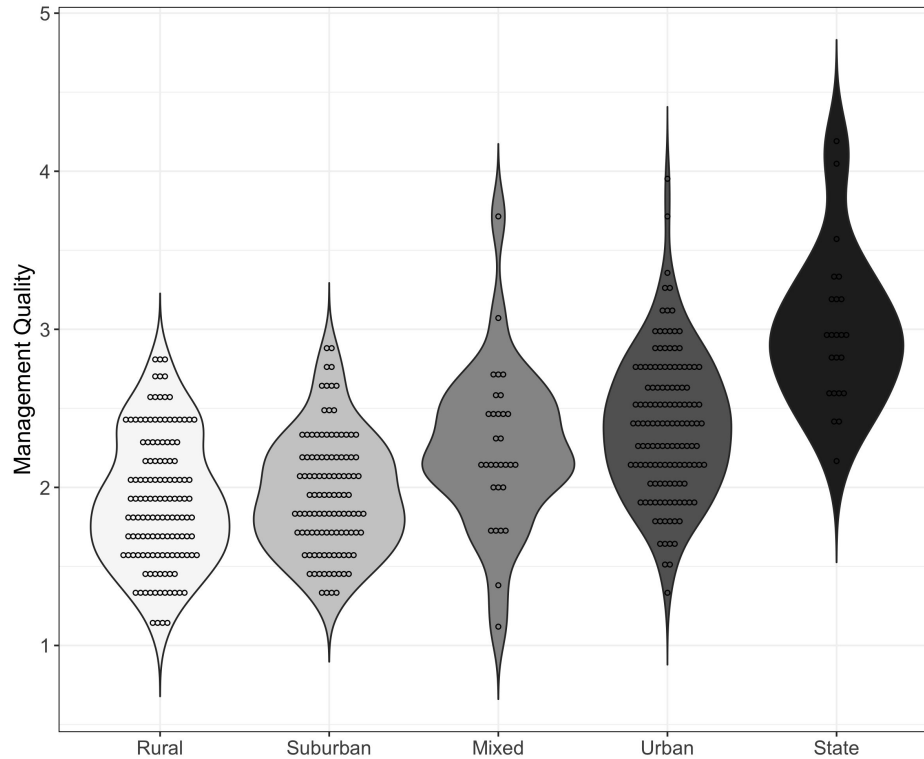
■ Rural ■ Semi-urban ■ State ■ Urban

Sample

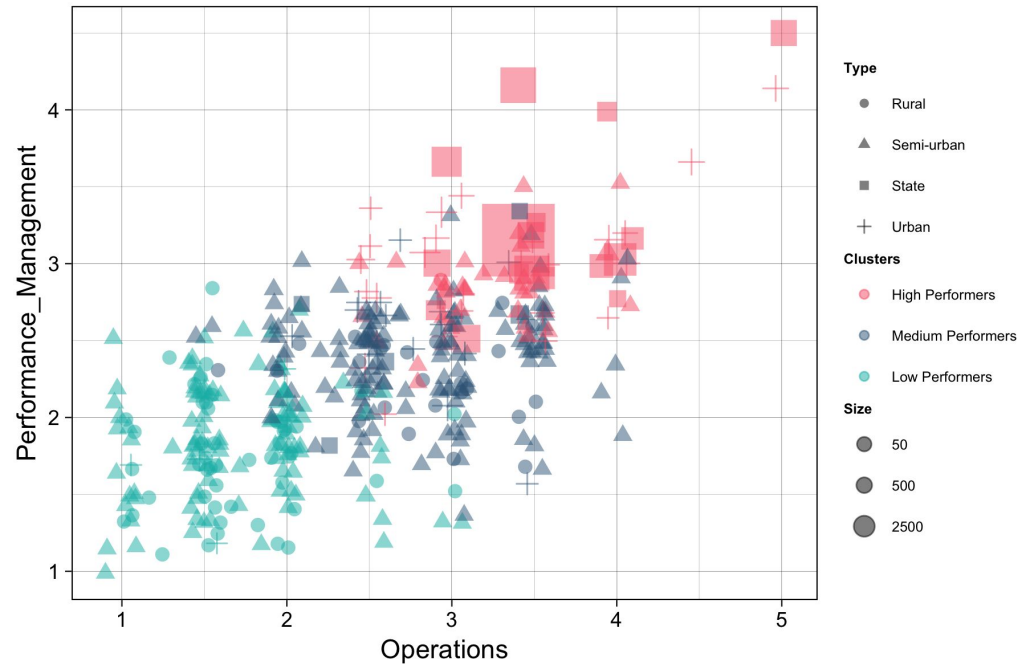
SIZE MATTERS



HOWEVER, SIGNIFICANT VARIATION WITHIN SIZE



ON AVERAGE, GOOD PRACTICES TRAVEL TOGETHER



Police departments that score high in one management component tend to score high in others.

CLUSTERING AND QUALITY TIERS

1. Explore how practices cluster together (K-means clustering).
2. Ask our field team to rate each practice according to how easy or difficult it would be to achieve a high-score.

Based on these two approaches we find three tiers of police organizational development—basic, intermediate, and advanced.

BASIC

Median number of employees = 38

- Smallest = 8
- Largest = 2,500

Description:

Will have some operational planning, isolated changes (from the outside), use some federal statistics and these are seen only by upper-level managers. Do not have clear goals and objectives. Promotions based on years-in-service (not tied to performance). Cannot identify something that distinguishes them from other police forces. Weak sanction system. Few incentives to work there. Some (precarious) initial training and no on-duty training.

Management quality score: 1-2.07

INTERMEDIATE

Median number of employees = 78

- Smallest = 17
- Largest = 5,000

Description: Data analysis and some planning, though changes are still informal. Reacting to situations more than planning ahead. Use performance measurements which are discussed by mid- and upper-level managers. Managers have meetings, discuss operational strategies, though no clear consequences for failures. Mention generic goals, mostly yearly objectives, both at the force and individual level. More sophisticated promotion and sanction systems though limited and flawed. Consistent initial training, and some (idiosyncratic) on-duty training.

Management quality score: 2.08-2.84

ADVANCED

Median number of employees = 1,051

- Smallest = 30
- Largest = 21,883

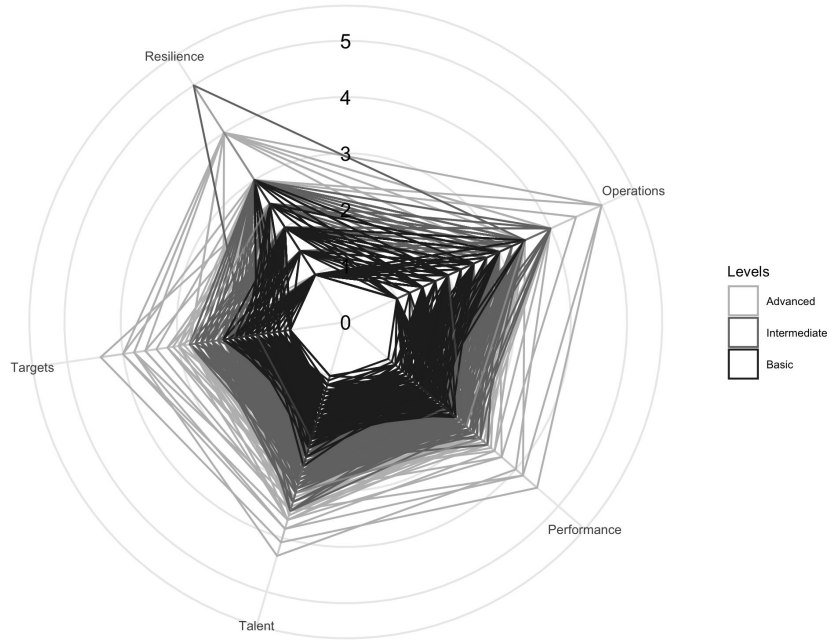
Description: Clear and flexible planning, aligned with objectives. Constant monitoring and revision, use internal statistics from several sources. Changes are reactive and proactive. Manager meetings are formal, good diagnostics, clear operational strategies. The department has short and long term objectives, these are then divided by area and by individuals. Individuals know goals and can compare their performance, same as the department. Good system to evaluate behavior and clear rules for promotions. Good behavior tied to objectives. Can quickly detect bad behavior as well have a system to protect officers from external threats.

Management quality score: 2.85+

QUALITY TIERS BY COMPONENT

Differences between managerial levels are only stark for Setting Targets, Talent Management, and Performance Monitoring.

Scores for Management of Operations and Organizational Resilience, are more widespread across departments and levels.



ASYMMETRIC COMPLEMENTARITIES

Under certain conditions, organizational choices might in fact constrain police departments to sub-optimal organizational equilibria

We think sub-optimal equilibria as resulting from the practices prioritized by chiefs-of-police, the sequence in which they are adopted, and the marginal returns of adopting each.

Positive spillovers are more likely when **Performance Monitoring, Setting Targets, and Talent Management** are prioritized, while inertia is more likely when prioritizing **Management of Operations**.

MANAGEMENT AND PERFORMANCE

A standard deviation increase in management quality is associated with a **26-percent decrease** in the turnover rate among line officers and 24-percent decrease in the turnover rate among managers.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Management z-score	-0.664** (0.165)	-0.396* (0.163)	-0.327 [†] (0.186)	-0.314 [†] (0.191)	-0.303 (0.212)	-0.321* (0.147)	-0.298* (0.149)
Controls:							
Crime	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Job market	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Police force	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Noise	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
State FE	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Department Type	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Offset variable: log of number of employees							
Observations	393	392	388	381	381	381	381

Notes: all columns are estimated using Poisson Regression Models with the log of employees as an offset variable. Robust standard errors are in parentheses. Crime controls include the 2017 firearm death rate and the 2016 total crimes rate (includes robbery, rape, homicide, kidnapping, among others); job market controls include the municipality's unoccupied population as a percentage of the Economically Active Population and the mean level of education; police force controls include the percentage of employees in the police department that earn above 500USD per month, the percentage of female employees, and the percentage of employees with a college degree or above. Noise controls include knowledge, patience, openness, position, and time in position of the PWMS interviewee, as well as the day and month of the interview. We also included state dummies and dummies for police department type (rural, suburban, urban, and mixed).

[†] $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

FINAL REMARKS

To our knowledge, this is the first time a management survey is used to understand police departments.

Contributions to organizational theory and to our understanding of police organizations.