Studying the Correlates of Adolescents' Trust in the Police: A Conflict Theory Approach

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Abstract

This study examined high school students' trust in police in from a conflict theory point of view by using Ungdata Vestland County package (N=7,796). Four models were tested by employing binary logistic regression analysis. Seven out of eight variables of conflict theory were significant to predict students' trust in the police, but conflict theory alone accounted for a low level of variation in predicting trust in the police (5%). In Model 2, variables related to victimization, safety feelings, and antisocial behavior alone were significant in predicting students' trust in police. This variable group happened to be two times more powerful to predict students' trust in the police compared to conflict theory variables. The third model assessed the capacity of social capital variables to predict students' trust in the police. Among social capital variables, school well-being, family relations, and quality of life were also significant predictors of students' trust in the police. In the final model, when controlled with other related factors, the effect of conflict theory somewhat weakened but five out of eight variables were still strongly related to trust in the police and the final model accounted for a 15% variation in the trust in police. The significance of the study, theoretical and policy implications and future direction was discussed in advance.

Keywords: *Trust in Police; High School Students; Conflict Theory; Ungdata, Norway*

1. Introduction

Trust in police has long been high among Norwegian citizens (Schaap, 2018, p. 121; Kaariainen & Sirén, 2011; Kaariainen, 2007, p. 419; *Politiets innbyggerundersøkelse*, 2020). Nevertheless, there has been little focus on the trust perceptions of adolescents about the police even though they are accounted for considerable levels of victimization[i] and antisocial behavior[ii] that were reported to law enforcement. A review of the related literature in open sources (both in Norwegian and English) revealed if not any, that no empirical research has examined adolescent trust in the police concerning conflict theory in Norway. The current study employed a criminological theory (conflict theory) to understand the relationship between variables derived from conflict theory (i.e., minority, low socioeconomic background, and political involvement) as well as control variables (i.e., social capital and environmental variables).

Policing is difficult, and safety suffers when police lack public trust. At the macro level, it is safe to claim that the trust in police issue comes out of the problem of trust in governance. Therefore, public trust in the police suffers in developing or post-authoritarian countries (Goldsmith, 2005). There is a bulk of policies and directives on the improvement of trust within the police agencies. For instance, European Union (EU) policymakers name the trust as a key element in police training to advance policing. However, none of the EU policy documents explain what we understand as "trust" and how and why this is a key element in law enforcement cooperation (Block, 2016). Trust and confidence can be understood similarly among average English language users, practically synonymous. It seems that there is not an agreement about the nature of the assumed difference in meaning and about their appropriate use (Schaap, 2018). Therefore, the current study used 'trust 'and 'confidence' interchangeably. Trust is the capacity of the state to provide basic safety security services to the public (Goldsmith, 2002). Six (2003) states that trust empowers police legitimacy, where the perception that regular residents make about the rightfulness of police behavior and the leadership that employs and supervises them.

2. Literature

The trust in police is a source of security and safety for the population. It is safe to claim that very often police can be perpetrators of distrust and unjust situations against citizens. It is known that the influence of community policing, a set of applications designed to build confidence between residents and police, reduce crime, and improve the co-production of public safety. In other words, the police foot patrols, community meetings, and engagement increase the level of trust between the community and police. However, Blair et al. (2021) in their research revealed that an increase in locally suitable community policing applications led to no progresses in citizen-police confidence, no decrease in crime, and no greater public cooperation with the police. Besides, Barton & Beynon (2015) claim that the resources required for public order and crime prevention depend on the level of citizen trust in police service. Some states deal with the decline in public trust by increasing the demand for policing services and some do the opposite by decreasing policing activities. Several police departments face the dual challenge of decreasing costs while maintaining high levels of citizen confidence and confidence in the services, they deliver (Barton & Beynon, 2015).

Additionally, Jackson & Bradford (2010) claim that confidence can reassure active public contribution in priority setting and the assurance of local services, enabling public actors more locally active and accountable, and secure citizen collaboration with the law-enforcement and compliance with the law. In their research, the authors found that total citizen trust reduces a range of complex and inter-related decisions concerning the trustworthiness of the police. They argue that confidence is a motive-based trust that is based on a social alignment between the public and law-enforcement. The social alignment is based on public evaluation of the capability of the law-enforcement to be a civic guardian who enables citizen respect and represents community values. The police usually reinforce their social links with residents and thus embolden more active civic engagement in domains of security and policing by illustrating their trustworthiness to the citizens (Jackson & Bradford, 2010).

Trust, with its assumption of benevolence, devotion, and mutual ethical framework empowers police legitimacy and the perception that residents take about the fairness of police conduct (Six, 2003). When the image of the police in the eye of people is legitimate or trustworthy, they collaborate with the police in several ways that in return enables the effectiveness of police performance. In deeply separated, post-conflict and post-authoritarian communities, a deficit of confidence in the police is common (Mishler & Rose, 1998; Weitzer, 1995). Confidence reduces complexity for citizens and provides them with a sense of safety (Warren, 1999).

In his research, Bakiev (2013) mentions the dissimilarity of interpersonal confidence where the reciprocity of confidence is essential. The author claims that trust or interpersonal trust within the police organization increases commitment, performance, and effectiveness. Consequently, trust is the source of organizational performance and commitment, which leads to perceptual motivation of conscientiousness

and integrity. The author emphasizes the role of organizational social capital, which is a source of trust within public organizations.

2.1 Trust in Police among Adolescents

It is a well-known fact that a significant part of the residents facing police arrests are juveniles (Hurst & Frank, 2000). The common problem in the relationship between youth and police is a lack of trust. This distrust situation worsened open communications and leads to an escalation in the number of arrests and interactions of police with juveniles. These scholars believe that the police are the first, and only, criminal justice officers with whom juveniles get in touch, therefore these contacts early in life may form future relations between adolescents and the police. Public order becomes vulnerable by a negative association between police and adolescents. For instance, police gives normal directions to the adolescents to disperse, without a good association between police and the adolescents, it can in return easily lead to property damage, violence, detentions, court hearings, and more (Borgquist et al., 1995).

Moreover, Flexon et al. (2009) state that civic engagement within the trust-building process between the police and youth is the foundation of the community policing process. They state that younger individuals of the community seem less likely to trust and cooperate with the police than older members of the society. These authors emphasize the role of racial prejudice and state that in urban areas with large minority population's police-youth relationship is violent. Consequently, juveniles' negative attitude toward police leads to increased tensions and confrontation among them.

Similarly, Novich & Hunt (2018) in their piece studied 253 in-depth interviews among African American and Latino female and male drug-involved gang members. The authors examined the interactions of youth gang members with the police and the situations where they have confidence in the police or distrust them. They found that the context in which the adolescents were stopped functions as a chief differentiating component that forms their perceptions of confidence in the motivations behind policy commitment. If they were stopped by the police for justifiable motives, the participants stated trust in the motivations that necessitated the encounter. Nevertheless, if they were stopped causes, which they thought as unreasonable, the interviewees emphasized a strong sense of distrust in the motivations of the law-enforcement. Therefore, the authors recommend considering the role of the context or type of the encounter with the police in influencing feelings of trust among juveniles (Novich & Hunt, 2018).

Marie Rennison et al. (2011)studied the elements that effect reporting violence against juveniles to the police. Despite there is a considerable body of research, it is obvious that a emphasis on adolescents has been neglected except for a increasing interest in school violence. It is vital to gain a good understanding of the extent of violence against adolescents that are reported to the police. The authors focus on non-fatal violent victimizations that include attempted and completed rape, robbery, aggravated assault, sexual assault, and simple assault to examine police reporting of violence against juveniles. These authors found that reporting violence against adolescents is universally low. For instance, only 29% of violence against adolescents aged 12 to 17 was reported to the police. Moreover, the older the victim, the more likely the law-enforcement were to be notified and their findings showed that among blacks and Asians, age was not a significant forecaster of law-enforcement reporting (Marie Rennison et al., 2011). Likewise, younger individuals mostly illustrate a less positive attitude toward the law-enforcement than older citizens and they are more likely to have antagonistic interaction with the police. In their study, Hurst & Frank (2000) examined the elements of juveniles' attitudes toward the police. They found that the overall attitudes of adolescents were not quite as encouraging as those reported previously for adults. By utilizing data collected via a survey administered to a sample of urban and suburban adolescents, the authors revealed that the overall level of support expressed by adolescents varied depending on the focus of the attitude question, and that many adolescents selected the "neutral" response category rather than expressing positive or negative sentiment. Nevertheless, several the variables excepted theoretically relevant in the literature on adult attitudes toward the police (e.g., contact with police, respondents' races

and genders, the extent of victimization) were also substantial predictors of the attitudes of adolescents (Hurst & Frank, 2000, p. 189).

2.2 Trust in Police in the Norwegian Setting

Norwegian society is based on trust, and confidence in the police has long been high among Norwegians both at the national level and among European countries (*Politiets innbyggerundersøkelse*, 2020; Schaap, 2018, p. 121; Morris, 2015; Kaariainen & Sirén, 2011; Kaariainen, 2007, p. 419; Stack & Cao, 1998). In this perspective, Thomassen, Gunnar & Kaariainen (2016) utilized data from the fifth wave of the European Social Survey and studied the relationship between system satisfaction (country's political system and economy) and trust in police and found that system satisfaction was highly significant in predicting confidence in the police whilst just the level of education was significant among demographic variables. Thomassen et al. (2014) employed data collected through four series of cross-sectional questionnaires in the year after the terror attacks and studied citizens' perception of the law-enforcement 1 year after the terror attacks on 22 July 2011 in Norway and found that confidence in police increased significantly in the instant aftermath of the attacks, but then came down to pre-terror heights within a year. Nilsen et al. (2019) collected data by interviewing 325 survivors and 463 parents face-to-face at wave one (4–5 months post-terror) and 285 survivors and 435 parents at wave two (14–15 months) and studied institutional confidence among young terror survivors and their parents after the 22nd of July terrorist attack on Utøya Island, Norway. These scholars found that confidence in the police among survivors and parents was higher than or comparable to confidence levels in the general population at wave one but reduced for survivors and parents at wave two. These results were complying with that of Thomassen et al. (2014). Besides, Egge et al. (2012) collected data through telephone interviews with a representative sample of the population at three different times after the terrorist attacks (August 2011, November 2011, and March 2012) to understand residents' perception of confidence in police right after 22 July 2011 terror attacks in Oslo and Utøya. These scholars found that right after the terrorist attacks, support for the police was rising. This applied to both the general trust, and the view of the police's efforts and judgment related to the events of 22 July. However, this effect was temporary, and the public's view of the police in the survey in March 2012 is more similar to previous years, although it was still somewhat more positive than before the attack. Another important finding of the study was that the majority of the respondents had a positive impression of the police's handling of the incidents on July 22, but compared to other groups and institutions, it was the police who scored lowest in their survey (Egge et al., 2012, p. 5).

When it comes to correlates of trust in police, Thomassen (2017) utilized data from the research project "Police and the public", which aimed to investigate the effects of the terrorist incidents on 22 July 2011 on citizens' perceptions of the law-enforcement (Egge et al., 2012) and studied the effects of interactions with the police as well as demographic variables (i.e. income, education, age, gender). This author found, in terms of police-initiated contacts, that people who were dissatisfied and neutral had less trust in police compared to very satisfied ones, whereas being just satisfied was not a significant predictor of trust in police. That is, being unsatisfied and neutral were negatively associated, and being very satisfied was a positive predictor of trust in police. In terms of self-initiated contact with the police, being unsatisfied, neutral, and satisfied were negatively associated with trust in the police, whereas being very satisfied was not a significant predictor of trust in the police. Among control variables, the social trust had no impact, but satisfaction with democracy positively and significantly predicted confidence in the police, whereas none of the demographic variables happened to be associated with the dependent variable (Thomassen, 2017, p. 38). Out of this study, one can argue, that both the type of initiation and the degree of satisfaction with the police contact must be taken into account to understand public trust in police. Singh (2020) studied the extent of minority youth trust in the police, and how the trust changed in contact with the police by deriving data from an electronic survey has been conducted by high schools in Oslo (period April-May 2019) and found that minority youth report lower trust, and that trust weakened to a greater extent after contact with the police compared to the majority youth.

2.3 Common Predictors of Trust in Police

2.3.1. Demographic Variables

Previous literature was mostly interested in public evaluation of police performance compared to confidence in the police. The approach to study trust in the police varied as trust or confidence in the police, or public attitude towards police (Kaariainen, 2008, p. 142). On the other hand, this author claims that the bulk of empirical studies mainly seeks to find explanations for any variation in trust in the quality of police work. He indicates that efficient law-enforcement services play important roles in shaping a positive public attitude. Nevertheless, this explanation of the theme is not adequate alone. Public trust may also be influenced not only by personal experiences of police work but by media images and stories about the police too (p. 142). This illustrates the society's structural struggles, differences, and the role that the police have come to play as mediators in these conflicts. Hurst & Frank (2000) claims that studies about juveniles' attitudes toward the police are dated and limited in the number. Leiber et al. (1998) provided a rigorous test of the relationship between subculture theory and the approaches of juveniles toward the police and included in their model many variables found to be theoretically related to research on adult attitudes toward the police.

(i). Gender

A handful of studies employed gender as a predictor of trust in police. Hurst & Frank (2000) examined their analysis only included males that were "either accused of delinquency or adjudicated as delinquent" (p. 158). Their sample consisted of juveniles who had previous contact with the criminal justice system including the police. They examined how juveniles' social environments, antisocial attitudes, contact with the police effected their trust in the police. They also claim that most adolescent were not charged with some form of delinquency and not arrested that could shape their confidence in the police differently. Novich & Hunt (2018) state that women have greater levels of confidence in the police because they could have rare negative face-to-face interactions with the police. A handful of studies found mixed results as male was a negative predictor of trust in the police (Cakar, 2015; MacDonald & Stokes, 2006; Miles-Johnson, 2013; Stack & Cao, 1998), while the female was negatively associated (Hurst & Frank, 2000), and female was positively associated with public trust in the police (Kaariainen, 2007; Morris, 2015). Several studies did not find a significant assoaciation between gender and trust in the police (Boateng, 2012; Boda & Medve-Bálint, 2017; Flexon et al., 2009; Kearns et al., 2020; Mullinix & Norris, 2019; Myhill & Bradford, 2012; Solakoglu, 2016; I. Y. Sun et al., 2013; M. Thompson & Kahn, 2016; Torres, 2017; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015; Wu & Sun, 2009).

(ii). Age

Another demographic measure widely employed to examine the nature of trust in police is the age of respondents. One can argue that those younger adolescents tended to have lower levels of trust in the police than older ones. For example, some research found age a negative predictor of trust in the police (Wu & Sun, 2009) and among LGBTQ people (Miles-Johnson, 2013). Boateng (2012) found that the age group 50-59 years was positively associated with trust, but the rest was not associated with it. Several studies have found age to be positively associated with public trust (Cao et al., 1996; Hurst & Frank, 2000; Kaariainen, 2007; MacDonald & Stokes, 2006; Morris, 2015; Mullinix & Norris, 2019; Myhill & Bradford, 2012; Schaap, 2018; I. Y. Sun et al., 2013; M. Thompson & Kahn, 2016) whereas some other resulted in that age was not associated with trust in the police (Boda & Medve-Bálint, 2017; Cakar, 2015; Kearns et al., 2020; Murphy et al., 2014; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015).

(iii). Education Level

Education was also employed largely to study public trust in police. The people who had higher education could have high self-esteem and the ability to make a change. Therefore, it was assumed that

education could be a significant indicator of trust in police. It must be considered that the characteristics and the culture of the community and respondents can play a role in their trust in the police. Several studies found education was not associated with trust in the police (Boateng, 2012; Cao et al., 1996; Kaariainen, 2008; Mullinix & Norris, 2019; Murphy et al., 2014; M. Thompson & Kahn, 2016; Torres, 2017; Van Craen, 2012; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015; Wu & Sun, 2009), while some others proposed a significant positive predictor (Kaariainen, 2007; Schaap, 2018; Solakoglu, 2016), whereas some found it was a negative predictor (Cakar, 2015; Hurst & Frank, 2000; MacDonald & Stokes, 2006).

(iv). Income Level

Individuals with high socioeconomic backgrounds were supposed to have more trust in the police as it related to conflict theory. The level of income as a predictor of trust in police gave mixed results. Kaariainen (2007) found that coping with present income, having difficulty with present income, and having very difficulty with present income were strong and negative predictors of trust in police. Some studies did not find a significant relationship (Boateng, 2012; Kaariainen, 2008; I. Sun et al., 2012; M. Thompson & Kahn, 2016; Wu & Sun, 2009), some others found income level was positively related to confidence in the police (Cao et al., 1996; Kaariainen, 2007; Kearns et al., 2020; Morris, 2015; Schaap, 2018; Solakoglu, 2016), and it was a negative predictor for trust in police among African -Americans but he addition of public social capital into the model reduces the effects of income (MacDonald & Stokes, 2006). Besides, (M. Thompson & Kahn, 2016) concluded that owning a home was positively associated with trust in police. This might be partly because homeownership reduces residential mobility and economic insecurity and gives people a sense of self-confidence.

(v). Unemployment

Unemployed people can be considered disadvantaged in society as it relates to the conflict approach, and therefore it was supposed to have negative associations with trust in police. A handful of studies used unemployment to predict trust in police and found unemployment was a strong and negative predictor (Schaap, 2018), and it was not associated with trust in the police (MacDonald & Stokes, 2006; Sun et al., 2012; Torres, 2017; Wu & Sun, 2009).

(vi). Minority Group (Immigrant Background, Race, Religion)

Looking at the previous research, one can suggest that minorities were more likely to view police with suspicion and distrust, and they frequently report that the police use force or use unjust acts against them because of their race or ethnicity. Immigrant, ethnic minority, and racial perceptions about the lack of lawfulness and legitimacy, usually based on their interactions with the police, lead to distrust of the police. The distrust with the police and procedural injustice undermines the legitimacy of law enforcement, and without this legitimacy, the police endanger to lose its authority to function effectively.

Tensions between minorities and law enforcement institutions have long existed yet perceived excessive use of force incidents have recently taken this issue to the forefront of public discourse (Kearns et al., 2020). This illustrates that race and immigrant background could influence interactions with and perceptions of the police. These authors in their research studied between-race differences in how citizens define legitimacy and trust and whether these terms were viewed synonymously or not. Their study revealed numerous between-race and within-race differences in citizen-driven conceptualizations of legitimacy and trust. Kearns et al. (2020) suggest that confidence and legitimacy can mean different things to different groups of people. Besides, the failure to report crime among minority juveniles establishes limits on how effectively police officers operate and may impact the process of establishing trust between citizens and law enforcement (Marie Rennison et al., 2011).

Likewise, there is enough research to claim that non-whites (principally African Americans) were less satisfied with police services than Whites. This situation results in minority groups   hold less

favorable attitudes toward the police (Albrecht & Green, 1977; Cao et al., 1996; Decker, 1981; Hurst & Frank, 2000; Leiber et al., 1998; MacDonald & Stokes, 2006). The attitudes of minority groups are often thought to result from two factors: minority individuals are more likely to have negative interaction with the police and/or hold more negative attitudes toward governmental instituions (Skogan, 1991). Participants' background seems to be a steady determinant of attitudes in the adult literature, though nearly half (42.9 percent) of the studies of juveniles' attitudes failed to examine race as a possible determinant (Skogan, 1991).

Besides, some studies found a strong relationship between ethnic minority groups rather than race and trust in police. For example, Miles-Johnson (2013) found in an Australian sample among LGBTI people that Indigenous persons have more negative perceptions of trust and legitimacy in the police than non-Indigenous individuals. Some studies found also that ethnicity was a negative predictor of adolescent trust in the police (Mullinix & Norris, 2019; Schaap, 2018), but some others found that being an ethnic minority member was not associated with confidence in police (Boateng, 2012; Morris, 2015; Murphy et al., 2014; Myhill & Bradford, 2012).

2.3.2. Social Capital

(i) Social Capital

Previous research revealed that there was no universally agreed-upon method of measuring social capital (MacDonald & Stokes, 2006). Some studies employed quality of life as a predictor measure and found that it was positively associated (Wu & Sun, 2009), but average life satisfaction was not associated with trust in the police (Morris, 2015). Besides, Sun et al. (2012) used social activity, trust in the neighborhood, and trust in neighbors as variables of social capital and found that trust in neighbors and neighborhood was positively associated with confidence in the police. Sun et al. (2013) found that except trust in neighbors, trust in neighborhood RCs and law and order were positively associated with trust in police. Boda & Medve-Bálint (2017) stated that people who were generally more trustful with others also tend to give more trust in the police (social trust). Likewise, Cakar, (2015) claimed that trust in the political system was also associated with trust in the police. (Morris, 2015) found political trust positively and corruption was negatively associated with trust in police, but stability and level of democracy were irrelevant. Kaariainen (2007) employed 'how often subjects socially met friends, relatives, etc.' and 'anyone to discuss intimate and personal matters with' and found that subjects who spoke several times a week with an acquaintance had significant positive trust in police. Additionally, religious attendance was a significant positive predictor of public trust in the police (Schaap, 2018).

(ii) Family Relations

The current study did not have a variable to measure the marital status of the parents, instead, it was measured by asking students if they lived with both parents. One can argue that students who live with their both parents can receive a fostering environment that can make them confident in return. It was useful to see the possible effects of family unity on students' trust in the police. Some studies found that being married was not associated with trust in the police (Boateng, 2012; Cakar, 2015; Leiber et al., 1998; Torres, 2017), whereas being divorced was found to be a strong and negative predictor of trust in the police (Schaap, 2018).

(iii) Social Competence

Adolescents who have high social competence probably tend to have more confidence in themselves as well as in the police. Finkelhor & Asdigian (1996) used school grades to capture social competence. Additionally, Smart & Sanson (2003) analyzed data from the Australian Temperament Project and concluded that socially competent respondents held slightly more positive attitudes towards

society, such as confidence in the justice system (trust in the courts and trust in police) and social institutions than less competent individuals.

2.3.3. Fear, Victimization, and Offending

(i) Victimization

In determining the citizens' attitude toward the police, trust the role of public opinion and perception is vital. Cakar (2015) his research on the citizens' perceptions toward law enforcement found a significant association of the demographic variables, including age, gender, marital status, and education with the confidence in the police. He claimed that perceived victimization did not have an effect on the confidence. However, important predictors included trust in the political system and perceived fear of crime and, which had significant impacts on public trust in the police (Cakar, 2015). It is safe to claim that there is a perceived belief among citizens that a successful fight against crime lowers personal fear of crime and thus increases satisfaction with law enforcement. Victimization has been found a significant and negative predictor of trust in the police (Cao et al., 1996; Kaariainen, 2007; Sun et al., 2013; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015)

(ii) Fear of victimization and Safety

Adolescents who do not feel themselves safe and bear the fear of victimization could have less trust in the police. Previous research has for the most part confirmed that fear of victimization and safety were negatively associated with trust in the police (Boateng, 2012; Cao et al., 1996; Myhill & Bradford, 2012; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015; Wu & Sun, 2009). Besides, feelings of insecurity in the neighborhood and local authority area were significant and negative predictors (Van Craen, 2012), sense of safety was positively related (Sun et al., 2012), but concern about safety and crime were not associated with trust in the police (Sun et al., 2013).

(iii) Police Contact

The context of police interaction among adolescents plays a crucial role to define their attitudes towards the police. Boda & Medve-Bálint (2017) state that in established democracies perceptions about police effectiveness and procedural fairness are the main individual-level determinants of trust in police. Their piece on the analysis of trust in police in Hungary found that the same micro-level factors have a similar relationship with confidence in the police there as in established democracies. The effect of the interaction with the police on trust was negative, but distinguishing those who reported negative personal experiences from those who were satisfied with how the police treated them shows that only negative experiences had a detrimental effect on trust (Boda & Medve-Bálint, 2017).

Similarly, Hurst & Frank(2000) in their study investigated the attitudes of juveniles toward the police which focused attention on the association between contact with the police and the attitudes of juveniles. They found that juvenile contact with the police is generally associated with more negative attitudes towards them. It is safe to claim that the nature of police contact is important. For instance, Leiber et al. (1998) in their research questioned juveniles' socialization in their communities' social environment, their deviant subcultural preferences, and the previous effect of these socio-cultural elements on juveniles' interaction with the police. Leiber et al. (1998) found that social background factors and subcultural preferences affected juveniles' attitudes toward the police, both directly and indirectly via police-juvenile interactions (Griffiths & Winfree, 1982; Rusinko et al., 1978; Winfree & Griffiths, 1977). Besides, Flexon et al.(2009) found that seeing others stopped and disrespected by the police was a strong and negative predictor of trust in police among African-Americans, Latinos, and overall subjects of their study. People who were victims of crime, experienced police stops and were dissatisfied with these interactions (Myhill & Bradford, 2012; Schaap, 2018), and who had Portland Police contact (M. Thompson & Kahn, 2016), perception of unequal treatment (Van Craen & Skogan,

2015) had considerably less trust in police, whereas people who were satisfied with the police contact tend to have more confidence in the police (Schaap, 2018)

The current research did not have a variable that measured the extent and content of student interaction with the police. Instead, the current study used antisocial behavior because these might have contacted the police.

2.3.4. Other related Measures

(i) Satisfaction with Police Work

Perceived satisfaction with police work can be through both personal experiences and the image of the police in media. Boateng (2012) found that public satisfaction with the police work was positively associated with trust in police. Likewise, Boda & Medve-Bálint (2017) also claimed that police performance was a positive and significant predictor of trust in police.

(ii) Political Activity-Influence

Individuals who are active in politics could think that they can make a change at the community or intuitional level. Therefore, respondents who were active in political matters could have higher trust in the police than others. Previous research gave mixed results for the role of political involvement in predicting trust in police. From this perspective, Wu & Sun (2009) found that political power and influence was significant and positive predictor of confidence in the police. However, Sun et al. (2012) claimed political activity was negatively associated with trust in police. Whereas some studies did not find a significant relationship between political activity and trust in the police (Boateng, 2012)

(iii) Environmental Measures

Several studies focused on neighborhood and regional level measures to predict public trust in police. For example, Myhill & Bradford (2012) found that perceived disorder in the local area was significantly and negatively associated with public trust in police. Leiber et al. (1998) claimed that adolescents from poor neighborhoods had less respect for law enforcement because of delinquent norms and delinquent activities leading to police contact. Another environmental measure was the region as it related to urban or rural and population density. For example, Boda & Medve-Bálint (2017) investigated if living in a capital city made a difference in residents' trust in the police but they did not find a significant relationship in Hungary. Likewise, Holmes (2000) did not find a significant relationship between population density and trust in police. Schaap (2018), out of his cross-national study in Europe, could not find urbanization was a significant predictor of public trust in police. However, Sun et al. (2012) stated that trust in the police varied in eight Chinese cities.

3. Theoretical Framework

A review of past research in open sources (both in Norwegian and English) revealed no empirical research has examined adolescent trust in the police regarding conflict theory in Norway. The current study employed the conflict theory to study the roles of independent variables among high school students. Conflict theory and perceptions of police conflict theory represent a theory of the behavior of criminal law. It argues that the institutions of the criminal justice system are to enable those who are in power can continue their status quo and interests and minimize the potential threat from other social classes. Conflict theorists argue that in any society there is no agreed social contract between citizens and the state. For this reason, they believe that even democratic societies are divided along political lines (Chambliss & Seidman, 1982; Quinney, 1970; Turk, 1969; Vold, 1958). Conflict theory has emphasized the struggle between social classes when examining the determinants of public trust in the police (Aung & May 2019). Conflict theory posits that adolescents who were arrested and charged with crimes were mostly from a lower socio-economic stratum, in contrast, rich people tended to be protected by law

enforcement (Boateng, 2015). Besides, people from higher socioeconomic classes have been more satisfied with the police, while people from lower socio-economic classes and minority groups have had negative views of the police (Wu & Sun, 2009).

From a conflict theory point of view, the interests of the dominant class were protected by the police, and on the other hand, hose belonging to lower class were more likely to become victims of the police use of force (Chambliss & Seidman, 1982; Das, 1983). By utilizing the Conflict Theory and based on data from a national sample, Thompson & Lee (2004) studied public perceptions of police use of force. They found that race and gender continued to be significant predictors in determining public disapproval of police violence, with blacks and women more likely to disapprove of police use of force than whites and men did (Thompson & Lee, 2004). Conflict theory has also been used to estimate citizen complaints against police. Holmes (2000) found that after controlling for crime rates, people living in areas with higher percentages of the minority population witnessed more police brutality and civil rights criminal complaints, which he suggested reflected more police coercive control in those areas. Likewise, it was found that complaints against Philadelphia police tended to be higher in areas with higher male unemployment and female-headed households' rates (Lawton et al., 2001).

A handful of studies employed conflict theory to examine public trust in police. For example, Wu & Sun (2009) used the data from AsiaBarometer 2003 and found that measures extracted directly from conflict theory had a modest explanatory strength of Chinese trust in police. Boateng (2012) employed data from the Greater Accra region of Ghana and found among conflict theory variables just age was significant in predicting trust in police. Aung & May (2019) utilized conflict theory and found that respondents from rural areas had higher levels of trust in police whereas there was no significant difference among ethnic minorities in Myanmar. Kochel (2019) found a significantly different effect on African American versus non-Black residents as it relates to trust in police in St. Louis County, Missouri. Morris (2015) used conflict theory and analyzed data from the World Values Survey (WVS), which was conducted from 2005 to 2007 in a total of 57 countries. This study revealed that variables derived from conflict theory (i.e.., income, political trust, gender, age) significantly predicted trust in police.

Besides, Wu & Sun (2009) assessed the level of citizens' trust in the police and explored variables that account for variation in public confidence in police. The authors utilized conflict theory as a theoretical framework and tested the role of conflict variables, including, income, employment, perceived political influence, gender, age, education, and relevant control variables on public trust in police. They found that conflict theory variables only have a modest explanatory power on public attitudes towards the police. Youth and people with a lower level of perceived political power tend to have lower levels of trust in the police. The public perception of the police is inclined by satisfaction with public safety, quality of life, the state's capability of dealing with crime, and corruption among government officials (Wu & Sun, 2009).

On the other hand, Norway has had a relatively good economy during the last decades and it is nominated for fourth place in the Quality-of-Life Rankings by US News[iii] in 2021. In terms of the Human Development Index[iv] (i.e., life expectancy at birth, expected years of schooling, gross national income per capita, and gender development index) of the United Nations Development Program, Norway was the world's best country to live in 2022; and it was placed 6th in the Ranking of Happiness 2022 Scale according to United Nations World Happiness Report[v].

Even though Norwegians seem to be privileged compared to other nations, the financial gap between the poor and the rich has constantly been increasing in recent years. The proportion of children in poor families is growing rapidly. In 2018, as many as 11.3 percent of children under the age of 18 lived in families with persistent low income, compared with 10.7 percent the year before. Yet, the increase from 2017 to 2018 cannot be seen as an single event (EAPN Norway, 2020, p. 3).

In addition, in 2019, 29 % of those with an immigrant background, including Norwegian-born with immigrant parents, had persistent low income. This marks an increase of only one percentage point from 2017, and before that, the proportion has been stable since 2014. At the same time, the trend in recent years has been that people with an immigrant background have about three times as high a persistent low income as the entire Norwegian population has (Hagerup, 2021, p. 10). In this perspective, conflict theory is expected to explain the correlates of confidence in the police among high school students in the Norwegian setting.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. It was hypothesized that members of socially disadvantaged or powerless groups, including (i.e., female, young, perceived low family income, low social competence, unemployment concerns, no political activity) adolescents, would be more likely than their counterparts to display low levels of trust in police.

Hypothesis 2. Adolescents with higher antisocial behavior, fear of safety (victimization), and polyvictimization would be more likely than their counterparts to display low levels of trust in police.

Hypothesis 3. Adolescents with higher social capital (i.e., quality of life, family relations, school well-being, and having a close friend) would have more trust in the police compared to their counterparts.

Hypothesis 4. There would be significant differences in adolescents' confidence in police in terms of environmental measures (i.e., neighborhood attractiveness and urban-metropolitan areas compared to rural municipalities).

4. Data and Methods

4.1 The Survey Instrument

The data came from UNGDATA, in other words, Young in Norway, which was obtained via a cross-sectional survey in Norway in 2021. The survey includes a compulsory basic module used in all surveys and a set of optional, pre-defined questions, from which municipalities can choose. Ungdata questionnaire asks students such questions about their family and friends, health and quality of life, school and the future, leisure, risk behavior, drugs, society, and use of services. [vi] The client (municipalities) can also supplement with self-composed questions. Both parents and students were informed about the survey and parental consent was granted before the students took the survey. Volunteered participants were given excess one-time code to log in survey link on the web during school times. The surveys take place during school hours and were carried out electronically among students in middle schools and high schools in Norway (Frøyland, 2017). The implementation of the Ungdata survey among high school students was approved by the Norwegian Data Protection Authority (Heradstveit et al., 2021). In Vestland County, the survey was carried out between February and April 2021 (Ungdata Vestland VG, 2021) [vii viii]. Ungdata results from a collaboration between the research institute NOVA at Oslo and Akershus University College, seven regional competence centers (KoRus Vest Bergen, KoRus Vest Stavanger, KoRus Midt-Norge, KoRus Øst, KoRus Sør, KoRus Nord, and KoRus Oslo) and the Municipal Sector organization (KS). The project is financed by the State Budget through grants from the Norwegian Directorate of Health. This study, however, focuses on just Vestland County in Norway and uses self-reported values in Ungdata 2021.[ix]

4.2 Sample Characteristics

Ungdata targeted the whole population of students (all possible participants) in Vestland County, and therefore, a random sampling strategy was not employed. Additionally, municipalities and schools, and students were not obliged to take the Ungdata survey. The municipality variable showed that two out of 43 local municipalities did not participate in the survey. According to the Department of Education,

there were 22388[x] high school students in Vestland County in 2021. The current study had 13326 cases, which corresponded to 59.5% of the whole population. High school students from first to third classes took the survey and the response rate was 69% (n=13326) out of 19,281 participants (Ungdata Vestland VG, 2021, p. 3)

Confidence in the police question was placed in the voluntary section of the Ungdata survey. Therefore, the response rate for this question was low, and the data had 7,796 (38.72%) missing cases. Confidence in the police variable had five categories, the "I don't know" option was treated as a missing category (Denman et al., 2018; Sun et al., 2012, p. 93). After this process, the final sample size decreased to 5,182 cases among high schools.

4.3 Procedures

This study crated necessary index variables based on the question groups in the Ungdata package. For example, the quality of life measure had seven questions, and these were indexed among themselves. Thus, each index was created by using its question groups in the dataset. To do so, reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) (Taber, 2018) and factorial analysis were carried out to create index variables "…and have designed your study based on underlying constructs that are expected to produce scores on your observed variables, FA is your choice" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2018, p. 498). The variables which did not give a factor under the circumstances (eigen value=1) were eliminated (Hayton et al., 2004; Kaiser, 1960). The variables with very low Cronbach's alpha levels were also eliminated from the analysis.

Even though the dependent measure, trust in the police was an ordered categorical variable, it was dichotomized for binary regression analysis since the parallel lines assumption required for ordinal regression was violated (Sun et al., 2012, p.93). In binary logistic regression "…the predictors do not have to be normally distributed, linearly related, or have equal variances within each group" (Mertler & Vannatta, 2016, p. 308). In addition, the sample size was large enough to run binary logistic regression (Mertler & Vannatta, 2016).

5.Measures

5.1 Dependent variable

The dependent variable, *confidence in police (trust in police)* was an ordinal level measure and a single-item question asked students about their trust in police "How strong is your confidence in the following institutions in society? "The police" response alternatives included "Very high confidence, Great confidence, A little confidence, no confidence at all, and Do not know." For binary logistic regression analysis, the "I don't know" (DK) option was excluded as missing data. The dependent variable was dichotomized (1= high or very high confidence, 0=little or no confidence) (Sun et al., 2012, p. 93).

5.2 Independent Measures

5.2.1 Demographic and Conflict Theory Variables

This study used individual characteristics of the respondents as *gender* (male=0, female=1). The *class levels* of respondents used, corresponded to the age of students because the *age* variable did not exist in the dataset. High schools have three class levels (VG1, VG2, and VG3). Students begin high school when they are 16 years old and continue until they turn 19 years old. However, they can be in a different age group if they take classes over again or go back to school at an older age. The Ungdata Vestland package in the reach of the author did not have a measure capturing the marital status of the parents. Ungdata Vestland package did not either include a variable measuring parental unemployment. Instead, the current study used students' perceptions about their possible future unemployment. The students were asked "What do you think your future will be like? Do you think that you...? Will be

unemployed at some point in your life? Response alternatives were "Yes, No, and I don't know". This *perceived unemployment* was dichotomized (1=yes, 0=other). Regarding the *perceived economic status of the family*, a single-item question measured the perceived economic status of adolescents in the current study. Respondents were asked: "Has your family had good or poor economy/finances in the last two years?" Response alternatives included: "We have been well off the whole time; We have generally been well off; We have neither been well off nor badly off; We have generally been badly off; We have been badly off the whole time" (Frøyland, 2017). This measure was recoded.

The current study used one question to measure the level of *parental education*: Do your parents/guardians have an education from a university or college? The response options were (1) Yes, both of them; (2) Yes, just one of them; and (3) No, none of them. This measure was coded as a dichotomous variable where 1 = both parents have university degrees, and 2 = all other responses. *Immigrant (minority) status* was captured with a single item question "Where were your parents born?" Response alternatives included "Both were born in Norway; One was born in Norway, the other one was born outside Norway, and both were born outside Norway." This variable was dichotomized (1= at least one or two parents were immigrants, and 0=both parents were Norwegians).

Political Involvement (Influence). Ungdata captured political involvement with four questions. "Have you done, or taken part in, any of the activities mentioned below" "Been involved in the youth wing of a political party; Been involved in another political organization; Attended a political event (public meeting, demonstration, etc.); Taken part in illegal political actions." Response alternatives were "Yes=1; No=0", and a composite measure of political involvement was created by adding up these four questions, and this variable was dichotomized (1= involved in any political activity, 0=none). From a conflict theory viewpoint, adolescents who involve in political activities might think that they could have opportunities to make a change in the political system. Therefore, they could have more trust in the police.

Social Competence. Another conflict theory variable was social competence to predict confidence in the police. Ungdata included grades for three courses (mathematics, Norwegian and English). The current study averaged these three-course grades. One can argue that students with low social competence could be in the disadvantaged group. Therefore, social competence could have a say in their trust in the police.

5.2.2. Victimization and Antisocial Behavior

It was proposed that "members of socially disadvantaged or powerless groups… are more likely than their counterparts to display low levels of trust in police"(Wu & Sun, 2009, p. 177). In addition to gender, income, age, employment, educational background, and political influence (Wu & Sun, 2009), the following variables were added to the equation as control variables. Because these measures could be the indicators for disadvantaged groups among adolescents.

(i) Antisocial Behavior

Conflict theory posits that antisocial behavior is a result of social and economic inequality and class conflict (Morin, 2014). From a conflict theory perspective, adolescents with high levels of antisocial behavior are expected to bear low confidence in the police. Students were asked: How many times during the past 12 months have you "Drunk so much that you've felt intoxicated", "Intentionally vandalized or broken windowpanes, bus seats, mailboxes", "Sprayed or tagged illegally on walls, trains, buses", "Not paid for a movie theater, sporting events, bus and train tickets, etc. when you should have", "Been gone a whole night without your parents knowing where you were", "Deliberately cheated on a test or submission you should get a grade on", "Had with your knife or other weapons in places where it is not allowed", "Taken goods from the store without paying", "Been in a fistfight", "Sold hashish or other illicit substances", "Used hashish/marijuana/cannabis", "Other drugs used", "Hacked, defrauded

someone, or engaged in other online crime." These thirteen questions had a five-point frequency scale that included "never", "once", "2-5 times", "6-10 times", and "11 times or more" with an alpha level (α= .76). These variables were averaged to create an index of "antisocial behavior" (Frøyland, 2017; Pedersen et al., 2018).

(ii) Polyvictimization

Victimized adolescents can be seen under disadvantaged groups. The current study investigated the effects of different types of victimization in predicting adolescent trust in police. Ungdata (2021) captured victimization under four categories: bullying (2 items), sexual harassment (4 items), hate speech (7 items), and violent victimization (4 items). The current study selected the cases on the criteria above the mean of each victimization category as stated: "we defined poly-victimization originally as the experiencing of four or more different types of victimization in different incidents in a given year (i.e., all children with victimization levels above the mean)" (Finkelhor et al., 2005, p. 1302), and "the one-above-the-mean number of different types of victimization experienced in the victim group as a whole" (Segura et al., 2018, p. 293). The purpose of this approach was to identify the subjects who were in a higher risk group in each victimization category. Further, the current study selected cases above the mean of three and four types of victimization category as polyvictims (de Oliveira & Jeong, 2021).

(iii) Safety Feeling (Fear of Victimization)

The actual fear of victimization variable had a very low response rate in the Ungdata Vestland package. Therefore, this study employed a perception of safety in different areas of daily life. These questions included "How safe do you feel? At home by yourself, On the way to and from school, at school, when you are out in the area where you live." Response alternatives included "Very safe, fairly safe, not so safe, not safe at all" (α=.81).

5.2.3 Social Capital Measures

(i) Quality of Life

The quality-of-life variable was captured with "Think about how you've been doing the last week, how often have you... Been happy, been engaged, had a lot of energy, be optimistic about the future, felt useful, felt like you're mastering things, felt loved by your parents or guardians" Response alternatives included "Always, Often, Part of the time, Rarely, not at all." This variable had a high consistency level (α=.88).

(ii) Family Relations

Family relations were measured by "My parents usually know where I am, and who I'm with, in my free time; My parents know most of the friends I hang out with in my free time; They are very interested in my life, and I try to keep most of my free time hidden from them." The first three questions were reverse coded. Response alternatives were "very true, quite true, not very true, not true at all," and this variable was indexed and averaged (α= .67).

(iii) School Well-Being

Adolescents' relations to school were captured "Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about how you feel at school?" Response alternatives included: "I enjoy being in my school; my teachers care about me; I feel like I fit in with the students at the school; I'm bored at school, and I often dread going to school." These three first questions were reverse coded. A four-point extent scale measured the questions: "completely agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, and completely disagree." Those six questions gave an alpha score of (α=.73) (Frøyland, 2017).

(iv) Close Friend

Having a close friend was measured with a single item asking students "Do you have at least one friend whom you trust completely and whom you can tell absolutely anything, and response options included "Yes, definitely, Yes, I think so, I don´t think so, there´s nobody I would call a friend at the moment" (Frøyland, 2017). This variable was dichotomized (having at least one close friend=1 and no friends=0).

5.2.4 Environmental Measures

(i) Neighborhood Attractiveness

Neighborhood effectiveness was measured with a single question "Can you imagine living in your local municipality when you grow up?" Response alternatives included "Yes, No, I don't know." This variable was dichotomized as (thinks to live forward=1, and other=0).

(ii) Urban (Metropolitan Area)

The current study used a dichotomous urban variable and coded (1= if the subjects lived in the Bergen city area, 0= rural). Because Bergen city differed from other small cities in several parameters (i.e., population size and population density[xi]).

6. Analysis

Descriptive statistics of the study variables were displayed in Table 1 and Table 2. Pearson's correlation analysis was carried out to see the relationship among study variables (Table 3). Binary logistic regression analysis was carried out in four models. First, the dependent variable was regressed on conflict theory variables to see the separate effects of these variables. In the second phase, the effects of the variables of antisocial behavior and victimization on confidence in the police were evaluated. The third model consisted of social capital variables. In the final model, in addition to conflict theory variables, all control variables were introduced for analysis to see how conflict theory variables were influenced by control variables to predict confidence in the police. This approach aimed to investigate the capacity of each variable group to predict confidence in the police (Wu & Sun, 2009) (see Table 4).

7.Results

7.1 Demographic and Descriptive Results of Study Variables

When we recall that confidence in the police was an ordinal variable, 1 representing *no trust at all* and 4 representing *a great deal of trust.* The average for the variable confidence in police was 2.93. When we accept 2.50 as the cut-off point for positive and negative assessments, it was obvious that more students expressed favorable assessments of police. Besides, students reported that they had a lot of (47.11%) or a great deal of confidence (25.6%) in the police, making up to 72.7 percent of respondents that has high trust in the police (Table 1 & Table 2).

Among high school students, there were more girls (53.8%) than boys (46.2) in the sample. For years in school or class-level, there was a steady decrease in the number of responses (40.3%, 34.8%, and 24.8%) as the years of schooling increased. This might be because of two reasons: First, younger students could be more curious and excited about the survey compared to older ones. Second, the students who go to high schools in Norway have two options: vocational high school or study preparation. The students who take vocational education should have practice with companies when they go to third grade. Therefore, they come rarely to the school and have a lower opportunity to fill out the survey (Table 1).

Most of the students replied that they have had a good or very good economy in the last two years (82.2%). In terms of parental education, a little higher than half of the high school respondents stated that both of their parents have university education (54.4%). However, parental education among survey respondents was well above both national and Vestland county levels, 34. 9%, and 35.3%,[xii] respectively. Most students did not think that they would become unemployed when they become adults (85.3%). Almost one-third of respondents reported that they were involved in at least one type of political activity (28.6%). Few students had parents who had an immigrant background (9.02%). The combined average grades for mathematics, Norwegian and English courses was 4.25 out of possible 6 points (Table 1).

The average value of antisocial behavior was low (M=1.33), whereas that of safety feeling was considerably high (M=3.68). Few students reported being exposed to polyvictimization (9.38%). In terms of social capital variables, students reported to have a good life (M=3.52), had good family relations (M=3.35), had it well at the school (M=3.03), and most students had a very close friend to speak about all in the life (90.9%) (Table 1).

In terms of environmental variables, out of 41 municipalities, most respondents were living in Bergen city (83.9 %), and little more than half of the respondents said they would not live in their municipalities in their future lives (51.4%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of study variables (N= 5,182)					
Variable	Min-max	N	%	Mean	SD
Trust in police	1-4	5,182		2.93	0.83
Gender	Female	2,754	53.80		
	Male	2,365	46.20		
Years in schooling	VG1*	2,084	40.33		
	VG2	1,802	34.87		
	VG3	1,282	24.81		
Family economy	Good	4,227	82.22		
	Poor	914	17.78		
Unemployment	Yes	750	14.67		
	No	4,364	85.33		
Political involvement	Yes	1,419	28.57		
	No	3,548	71.43		
Parental Education	Both	2,748	54.42		
	One or none	2,302	45.58		
Minority status	Yes	466	9.02		
	No	4,698	90.98		
Social competence	1-6	4,897		4.25	0.77
Antisocial behavior	1-5	4,927		1.33	0.38
Safety feeling	1-4	5,073		3.68	0.44
Polyvictimization	Yes	405	9.38		
	No	3,913	90.62		
Quality of life	1-5	4,944		3.52	0.72
Family relations	1-4	5,063		3.35	0.53
School well-being	1-4	5,071		3.03	0.58
Close friend	Yes	4,697	90.94		
	No	468	9.06		
Urban area (Bergen city)	Yes	4,348	83.91		
	Other	834	16.09		
Neighborhood attractiveness	Yes	2,498	48.60		
	No	2,642	51.40		

Note. Due to missing values, all numbers may not sum to the total sample size.
*VG= High school

Out of demographic variables, the sample was evenly distributed between female and male students, most students said to have a good family economy, a considerably high percentage of students' both parents had bachelor's degrees, most students lived in an urban area, most students expressed favorable evaluations of police.

Table.2 Distribution of cases for trust in police among high school students		
	N	(%)
Not trust at all	287	5.54
Little trust	1,128	21.77
A lot of trust	2,441	47.11
A great deal of trust	1,326	25.59
Total	5,182	100.00

In terms of correlation analysis, only gender (female) was not associated with trust in the police (r=.01). Yeas in schooling (age) (r=.04), perceived family economy (r=20), parental education (r=13), minority status (r= -.11), and social competence (r=16) were significantly correlated to dependent variable among conflict theory variables. When it came to the variable of delinquency and victimization, both antisocial behavior (r=-.30), safety feeling (r=.27), and polyvictimization (r=.18) were significantly connected to trust in the police. All social capital variables were significantly associated with the dependent variable, and correlations coefficients were mostly higher compared to other study variable groups (except for antisocial behavior). Having a close friend (r=.07) had the lowest coefficient and the results for the other variables were as follows: quality of life (r=.26), family relations (r=.27) school well-being (r=.28). In terms of environmental variables, living in an urban area (r=.01) was not significant, but neighborhood attractiveness (r=.13) was significantly associated with the trust in police. On the other hand, minority status was negatively associated with the family economy (r=-.20), parental education (r=-.12), family relations (r=-.10), school well-being (r=-.04), having a close friend (r=.-04), but positively associated polyvictimization (r=.05) and concerns for unemployment (r=.05), and was not related to antisocial behavior (r=.00) in this sample (Table 3).

	Table3. Intercorrelations among study variables.																	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1	Trust in police																	
2	Gender (female)	.01																
3	Years in schooling	.04*	.05*															
4	Family economy	.20*	-.06*	.00														
5	Unemployment	-.08*	-.08*	.01	-.11*													
6	Political activity	-.08*	.16*	.01	-.04*	.03												
7	Parental education	.13*	-.02	.02	.29*	-.01	.04*											
8	Minority status	-.11*	.00	-.02	-.20*	.05*	.00	-.12*										
9	Social competence	.16*	.08*	.11*	.18*	-.04*	.12*	.18*	-.07*									
10	Antisocial behavior	-.30*	-.11*	.09*	-.08*	.06*	.10*	-.02	.00	-.16*								
11	Safety feeling	.27*	-.23*	.06*	.29*	-.09*	-.07*	.12*	-.08*	.16*	-.08*							
12	Polyvictimization	-.18*	.04*	-.08*	-.13*	.07*	.13*	-.05*	.05*	-.11*	.26*	-.29*						
13	Quality of life	.26*	-.24*	-.03*	.31*	-.12*	-.07*	.10*	-.04*	.13*	-.14*	.45*	-.19*					
14	Family relations	.27*	.13*	.02	.26*	-.12*	-.06*	.08*	-.10*	.13*	-.29*	.26*	-.18*	.36*				
15	School well-being	.28*	-.12*	-.04*	.23*	-.11*	-.05*	.07*	-.04*	.18*	-.20*	.41*	-.22*	.56*	.28*			
16	Close friend	.07*	.03	-.01	.08*	-.07*	.01	.04*	-.04*	.04*	-.02	.14*	-.06*	.18*	.13*	.18*		
17	Urban	.01	.06*	.08*	.02	.01	.05*	.15*	.03*	.13*	-.01	.01	.00	-.01	-.02	.01	.01	
18	Neighborhood attr.	.13*	-.08*	.05*	.10*	-.03*	-.09*	.01	-.06*	.03*	-.05*	.15*	-.08*	.16*	.16*	.17*	.05*	.06*
	*Correlation is significant at the .05 level.																	

7.2 Results of Binary Logistic Regression Analysis

Model 1 tested the capacity of conflict theory variables to predict trust in the police. Seven out of eight conflict theory variables were significant in predicting trust in the police. However, gender was not significantly related to the dependent variable. Complying with hypotheses, years in schooling (b= 0.09, p=.001), perceived family economy (b= 0.25, p=.001), parental education (b= 0.26, p=.001), and social competence (b= 0.41, p=.001) were positively associated with confidence in the police. Whereas unemployment (b= -0.34, p=.001), political activity (b= -0.43, p=.001), and minority status (b= -0.48, p=.001), negatively and significantly predicted the dependent variable. The students with minority backgrounds were 48% less likely to have confidence in the police compared to those had ethnic

Norwegian parents. The first model accounted for 5% of the variation in students' trust in police, and its χ^2 is statistically significant (Table 4).

Table 4. Binary Logistic Regression Models Predicting Confidence in the Police

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4		
	B	SE	OR	B	SE	OR	B	SE	OR	B	SE	OR
Conflict theory variables												
Constant	-2.28*	0.34	0.10	-0.44	0.34	0.65	-4.11***	0.26	0.02	-3.70**	0.61	0.02
Gender (female)	0.15	0.07	1.17							0.23*	0.10	1.25
Years in schooling	0.09***	0.04	1.09							0.13*	0.06	1.13
Family economy	0.25***	0.04	1.28							0.03	0.06	1.03
Unemployment	-0.34***	0.09	0.71							-0.12	0.12	0.89
Political activity	-0.43***	0.08	0.65							-0.16	0.10	0.86
Parental education	0.26***	0.07	1.30							0.32***	0.09	1.37
Minority status	-0.48***	0.12	0.62							-0.70***	0.15	0.49
Social competence	0.41***	0.05	1.50							0.28***	0.06	1.33
Victimization and antisocial beh.												
Antisocial behavior				-1.70***	0.11	0.18				-1.52***	0.13	0.22
Safety feeling				1.05***	0.09	2.85				0.54***	0.12	1.72
Polyvictimization				-0.42***	0.12	0.65				-0.20	0.14	0.82
Social capital variables												
Quality of life							0.18***	0.06	1.20	0.17*	0.08	1.19
Family relations							0.72***	0.07	2.06	0.26**	0.09	1.30
School well-being							0.70***	0.07	2.02	0.34***	0.09	1.41
Close friend							0.03	0.12	1.03	0.11	0.15	1.11
Environmental variables												
Urban area (Bergen)										-0.19	0.12	0.83
Neighborhood attractiveness										0.33***	0.09	1.40
Model summary	N= 4,533 $\chi^2(8) = 268.24$*** Pseudo R^2=0.05			N= 4,109 $\chi^2(3) = 496.99$*** Pseudo R^2= 0.11			N= 4,774 $\chi^2(4) = 458.69$*** Pseudo R^2= 0.08			N= 3,507 $\chi^2(17) = 589.74$*** Pseudo R^2= 0.15		

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.; OR=odds ratios

In terms of variables of antisocial behavior and victimization, antisocial behavior (b= -1.70, p=.001) and polyvictimization (b= -0.42, p=.001) were negatively associated with the dependent variable, whereas safety feeling (b= 1.05, p=.001) positively predicted confidence in the police. Put in other words, one unit decrease in the safety feelings (fear of victimization) decreased the odds of confidence in the police by a factor of 2.85. One unit increase in antisocial behavior decreased the odds of confidence in the police by 170%. The first model accounted for 11% of the variation in students' trust in police, and its χ^2 is statistically significant. The first model accounted for 5% of the variation in students' trust in police, and its χ^2 is statistically significant (Table 4).

This study included four variables of social capital, the model's overall predictive strength (Pseudo R^2) was 0.08, and its χ^2 was statistically significant in predicting confidence in the police. Having a very close friend was not related to the dependent variable. However, one unit increase in the quality of life increased the odds of confidence in the police by a factor of 1.20, and family relations (OR=2.06) and school well-being (OR=2.02) were also significant and positive predictors of confidence in the police (Table 4).

The final model (Model 4) included all independent variables to assess their strength to predict confidence in the police. Compared to Model 1, three out of eight conflict theory variables became unrelated to students' confidence in the police after controlling for victimization and antisocial behavior, social capital, and environmental variables. Family economy, unemployment concerns, and political activity became unrelated to the confidence in the police. Female students tended to have 1.25 times more

confidence compared to male ones. One year increase in the age increased the odds of confidence in the police by a factor of 1.13. Students with both parents having bachelor's degrees were 1.37 times more likely to have confidence in the police compared to those with parents having no university education. One unit increase in social competence increased the odds of confidence in the police by a factor of 1.33. Minority status was also significantly related to confidence in the police that minority students had 70% less confidence in the police compared to ethnic Norwegian students (Table 4).

Compared to Model 2, polyvictimization became unrelated to confidence in the police. However, one unit increase in antisocial behavior decreased confidence in the police by 152%, and one unit increase in safety feelings (less fear of victimization) increased confidence in the police by a factor of 1.27 (Table 4).

The relationship between social capital variables and confidence in the police did not significantly change in Model 4 compared to Model 3. Having a very close friend continued to be unrelated to the dependent variable. One unit increase in quality-of-life increased odds of confidence in the police by a factor of 1.19 and having good family relations was also related to having high confidence in police (OR=1.30). Among social capital variables, school well-being was the strongest predictor of confidence in the police that one unit increase in school well-being increased the odds of trust in police by a factor of 1.41. In terms of environmental variables, even though living in an urban area was negatively associated with confidence in the police, it was not significant. Students who found their neighborhood attractive tended to have 1.40 times more confidence than their counterparts. The overall model's (Model 4) predictive strength (Pseudo R^2) was 0.15 and its χ^2 was statistically significant in predicting confidence in the police ($\chi^2(17) = 589.74$, $p=.001$).

8. Discussions

The purpose of the current study was to empirically examine the level of trust that high school students had in police and assess the effects of conflict theory variables on trust in police controlling for other relevant factors. Complied with previous research, high school students in the sample had also relatively high trust in the police (72.7%)

Previous research found that variables derived from conflict theory such as gender, age, ethnicity, education, political activity, and family income have in varying degrees been found to influence trust in the police (Brown & Benedict, 2002; Thomassen, 2010). The current study revealed that variables extracted directly from conflict theory had a relatively good explanatory power of the students' trust in police. Five out of eight variables were significantly related to student trust in the police. Out of conflict theory variables, being a female student was positively associated with trust in the police. This result was aligned with some previous research (Kaariainen, 2007; Morris, 2015). As Novich & Hunt (2018) stated, that could be because they might have fewer negative face-to-face encounters with law enforcement. As hypothesized, years of schooling or age were positively associated with trust in the police complying with some previous research (Cao et al., 1996; Hurst & Frank, 2000; Kaariainen, 2007; MacDonald & Stokes, 2006; Morris, 2015; Mullinix & Norris, 2019; Myhill & Bradford, 2012; Schaap, 2018; Sun et al., 2013; Thompson & Kahn, 2016). This could be because the adolescents get more self-determination resulting in higher self-confidence as they get older. Self-confidence could help them build the idea that they could protect themselves against possible misuse of power by police officers. Even though the family economy was a significant predictor in the first model it lost its strength when controlled with other related factors complying with some other research (Boateng, 2012; Kaariainen, 2008; Sun et al., 2012; Thompson & Kahn, 2016; Wu & Sun, 2009). One can argue that the family economy did not play a vital role to predict trust in the police because the economic distance between lower and higher levels of the society was not so large compared to most other countries in Europe[xiii]. Students' take about possible unemployment was a strong negative predictor of trust in the police complying with previous research (Schaap, 2018). When controlled with other variables, unemployment became unrelated to the dependent variable (MacDonald

& Stokes, 2006; Sun et al., 2012; Torres, 2017; Wu & Sun, 2009). This result could stem from the fact that the unemployment variable was not directly measuring the employment status, but students' perceptions of possible unemployment in the future. In addition, perceptions about unemployment could not be as important as other control variables (i.e., minority status, antisocial behavior, school well-being, and neighborhood attractiveness) to predict trust in the police.   Students' involvement in political activities was negatively associated with trust in the police complying with some previous research (Sun et al., 2012). This result might stem from cynicism about policing practices. Students participating in legal or illegal political activities could have an idea to change a lot with policing strategies. Though, some research found that political activity (power and influence) was positively associated with trust in the police (Wu & Sun, 2009). The current study did not ask students how powerful they saw themselves in political spectrum. Involving in political activities lost its strength when controlled for other factors to predict confidence in police, confirming the results of some previous research (Boateng, 2012). Previous research gave mixed results about how education level effected individuals trust in the police. As variable of conflict theory, parental higher education was a strong and positive predictor of students trust in the police, and this was valid after controlling for other independent variables. Even though there was not a large body of literature elaborating on parental education and students trust in the police, one could argue that parents with higher education could enable their children have a better fostering environment that their children could have better self-esteem and see themselves safer against any misuse of power by police. Nevertheless, it was out of the capacity of the current research to bring more plausible explanations to this result. In addition, social competence among high school students was a strong and positive predictor of their confidence in the police. This result complied with some previous research that socially competent respondents held slightly more positive attitudes towards society, such as confidence in the justice system (trust in the courts, and trust in police) and social institutions (Smart & Sanson, 2003), and individuals with lower levels of education had lower odds of trust in the police (Berthelot et al., 2018).

Minority individuals tended traditionally to have lower confidence in the police compared to ethnic nationals (Albrecht & Green, 1977; Cao et al., 1996; Decker, 1981; Hurst & Frank, 2000; Leiber et al., 1998; MacDonald & Stokes, 2006). The current study also revealed that students with minority backgrounds tended to hold less confidence in the police compared to their ethnic Norwegian counterparts. This could have several reasons that minority groups could see themselves as disadvantaged in the society (Hagerup, 2021; Kaariainen & Niemi, 2014), therefore they could build a negative and cynical sentiment against public institutions including law enforcement.

In terms of the second study hypothesis, among variables of vulnerability and antisocial behavior, both polyvictimization, antisocial behaviors, and safety feelings were significantly related to confidence in the police. Polyvictimization, however, lost its strength when controlled with other variables. Students who felt safer (less concerned about victimization) had considerably more trust (OR=1.72) in the police compared to those who felt less safe on the school way, at the school, in their neighborhood and at their home complying to some previous research (Boateng, 2012; Cao et al., 1996; Myhill & Bradford, 2012; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015; Wu & Sun, 2009). Besides, feelings of insecurity in the neighborhood and local authority areas were significant and negative predictors of trust in the police (Cakar, 2015; Van Craen, 2012). When it comes to polyvictimization, it would have given more specific results if the effects of each victimization group on trust in the police were separately examined. For example, Singer et al., (2019) found any type of the previous victimization was either directly or indirectly (controlled for safety feelings) related to trust in public institutions (including the police) in Mexico, Brazil, the USA, and Argentina. Additionally, individuals who were victims of crime, experienced police stops, and were dissatisfied with these interactions (Myhill & Bradford, 2012; Schaap, 2018) had low trust in the police. Several other studies found that victimization was a significant and negative predictor of trust in the police (Berthelot et al., 2018; Cao et al., 1996; Kaariainen, 2007; Sun et al., 2013; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015). Antisocial behavior was an important variable in this study because adolescents with antisocial behavior could have probably contacted the police even though this study did not have a variable

measuring contact with the police. Some previous research revealed that juvenile contact with the police is generally associated with more negative attitudes towards the police (Hurst & Frank, 2000).

It was also hypnotized that measures of social capital would positively predict trust in the police. In this perspective, quality of life was a significant indicator of the trust in the police complying with some previous research (Sun et al., 2012; Sun et al., 2013; Wu & Sun, 2009). Individuals having a high quality of life tended to have more trust in public institutions including the police (Cakar, 2015; Kaariainen, 2007; Morris, 2015). Having at least a very close friend to speak all as a social capital variable was not significantly related to trust in the police, and this was valid in two models of regression analysis. However, (Kaariainen, 2007) found that subjects who spoke several times a week with an acquaintance had significant positive trust in police. Family care as a social capital variable was not often employed to study trust in the police. The current study revealed that having a good family atmosphere was also a significant and positive indicator of the trust in the police. Students who had good relations with the school seemed to feel safer ($r=.41$), had a good family economy, family relations, high quality of life, and fewer unemployment concerns (Table 3). This study confirmed that school well-being was a strong predictor of trust in the police among high school students.

It was proposed that environmental measures would have a significant role to predict students' trust in the police. Living in an urban area could affect students' perception of police (I. Sun et al., 2012) Students who lived in urban areas could face different types of victimization and have the possibility to engage in different types of antisocial behaviors compared to those who lived in rural areas. However, urban as an environmental measure was significantly correlated neither with victimization, safety feeling nor antisocial behavior (Table 3). The current study found no significant relationship between living in an urban area and students' trust in the police confirming some other past research (Boda & Medve-Bálint, 2017; Holmes, 2000; Schaap, 2018). On the other hand, neighborhood attractiveness was a significant and positive predictor of trust in the police. Students who said they would continue to live in their neighborhoods when they became adults had 1.40 times more trust in the police compared to those who would leave their cities. It would be safe to claim that the neighborhood, with its industrial, educational, and sociocultural opportunities could play a role in students having positive images of the police.

9. Conclusions

9.1 Policy Implications

Unlike other societies in developing countries, family economy and unemployment concerns were not strong predictors. Instead, antisocial behavior, family relations, school well-being, safety feeling, neighborhood attractiveness, and minority status should be focused to develop policies to address students' trust in the police. Increasing and maintaining students' trust in the police should be seen as a long-term process to understand and address the expectations of different groups (i.e., minority and antisocial behavior). Community (neighborhood) policing, restorative justice face-to-face meetings, community engagement in effective problem-solving, and using local-level communication means were some proven policies to increase individuals' trust in the police (Rix et al., 2009). Complying with the findings of the current study, aiming trust-building activities to localized areas 8for example, minority groups) where they were most needed was of particularly promising strategy to address confidence in the police (Rix et al., 2009)

9.2 Theoretical Implications and Future Directions

Most conflict theory variables were significantly associated with confidence in the police. However, conflict theory variables alone were able to predict the very little variation of confidence in the police (5%) (see table 4). When controlled with other variables, only three out of eight conflict theory variables lost their relationship with the dependent variable. Compared to some previous research (Boateng, 2015; Wu & Sun, 2009), out of current findings, one could argue that conflict theory did little

better than a moderate job to predict confidence in the police. It would be safe to argue that conflict theory could be a useful approach to employ when studying confidence in the police even in economically developed societies. Moreover, variables derived from criminology (polyvictimization, antisocial behavior, and safety feeling or fear of victimization) happened to have more explanatory power than conflict theory variables displayed in Model 1 and Model 2 (Table 4).

On the other hand, the current study employed data from just one county in Norway. Therefore, it would be useful to employ data from other counties and study in advance to see how the results of this study could have varied among other counties. Additionally, even though polyvictimization was a significant negative predictor of confidence in the police, it lost its strength when controlled with other related variables. It would be useful to see the effects of specific victimization types (i.e., violent victimization, hate speech, bullying, and sexual harassment) on trust in the police to build necessity-based policy interventions.

9.3 Significance and Limitations

One significance of this study was that confidence in the police among adolescents has rarely been addressed by using Ungdata in related literature in Norway. Secondly, previous research suggests that conflict theory arguably best fits in underdeveloped or developing countries (Goldsmith, 2002). This study tested the ability and applicability of conflict theory to predict confidence in police in a highly economically developed country.

The cross-sectional aspect of the data limits us to make concrete causal relationships between dependent and independent variables (i.e., the temporal order of events could be a matter to remember). For example, confidence in the police can improve quality of life, and quality of life among adolescents can lead to more trust in the police in return. Second, Ungdata did not employ a random sampling, but the questionnaire was sent to all schools possible. Third, this study could not address the context of police interactions, nor control for satisfaction with police work as it related to services and crime clearance and prevention efforts, policing methods (i.e.., community policing), and the image of police in the media. It was not able to compare confidence in police to trust in other organizations and institutions. Thus, the results of this study should be considered under these limitations.

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[i] Adolescents between 10 and 19 years old (ages ranging from 0 to ≥80) were accountable for 20.9% of all types of victimization per 10000 residents in 2020 (Source: Statistics Norway, Table: 08634: Victims (persons) of offenses reported, by age, contents, year, and type of offense).

ⁱⁱ Adolescents and children (5 to 20 ages) accounted for 18,7% of all types of charges against persons investigated by law enforcement per 10000 residents in 2020 (Source: Statistics Norway, Table: 09410: Charges against persons, by age, contents, and year).

ⁱⁱⁱ https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/rankings/quality-of-life (retrieved on 05.26.2022)

ⁱᵛ https://hdr.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/NOR,(retrieved on 04.06.2022)

ᵛ https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/happiest-countries-in-the-world ,(retrieved on 04.06.2022)

ᵛⁱ https://www.ungdata.no/english/

ᵛⁱⁱ https://www.vestlandfylke.no/globalassets/statistikk-kart-og-analyse/rapportar-og-analysar/samlerapport_vestland_2021_videregaande.pdf , (accessed on 20 February 2022)
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ˣ Statistics for upper secondary - analysis board (2021)https://www.udir.no/tall-og-forskning/statistikk/statistikk-videregaende-skole/analysebrett/?FylkeFilter=Vestland&Eierform=Alle%20eierformer&UtdanningsprogramFilter=&UtdanningstypeFilterC1=&%C3%85r=2021&Skole= , (reached on 22 March 2022).

ˣⁱ Bergen city is one of the five urban areas in Norway according to the Norwegian Central Statistics Bureau (https://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/folketall/statistikk/tettsteders-befolkning-og-areal), (retrieved on 04.06.2022)

ˣⁱⁱ Table (08921-Vestland county in 2020): Persons 16 years and over, by region, age, level of education, statistical variable, year, and sex (Statistics Norway.)

ˣⁱⁱⁱ https://data.oecd.org/inequality/income-inequality.htm#indicator-chart, (reached on 22 March 2022).

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