



SUMMER OF THE GUN - PART 2

THE CITY OF TORONTO'S APPROACH TO ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE

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ABSTRACT

Research Questions - Why does gun violence in the City of Toronto continue to increase? How are gun violence intervention policies being designed, implemented, and evaluated in the City of Toronto? How are funding decisions being influenced and made in the City of Toronto in response to gun violence?

Design/Methodology/Approach – This research paper utilizes qualitative interview and data triangulation strategies to respond to the research questions. Eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with civil servants, politicians, and researchers who have experience in gun violence intervention policy. The Policy Analytical Capacity and Punctuated Equilibrium theories were used as the primary frameworks in interpreting and analyzing the qualitative interview data. The Policy Window theory was also considered but its ultimate use was limited. Interview data was analyzed, coded, and then explained through identification of common themes. Upon identification of common themes, research data was juxtaposed with other data sources (quantitative statistics, briefing notes, reports, academic journals, literature reviews, jurisdictional evaluations, etc.).

Results – The rise of income and social inequality in the City of Toronto is a major contributor to the rise in gun violence. Youth living in marginalized communities do not feel safe and are obtaining and using guns as a form of protection and for a sense of safety. Poor community-police relations and the frequency and severity of violence in marginalized communities are contributing to the reduced feelings of safety. Funding allocations and political decision-making is being heavily influenced by the Toronto Police Service and Toronto Police Service Association. Research findings revealed characteristics of an 'Iron Triangle' relationship between the Mayor, the Toronto Police Service, and Toronto Police Service Association. The organization, resources, and inside access of the Toronto Police Service relative to community actors maintains the enforcement-centric policy-approach. The City of Toronto has a strong capacity for evidence-based decision making in the area of gun violence intervention policy. The Toronto Public Service has demonstrated application of best-practice contemporary policy-design approaches in formulating the Toronto Youth Equity Strategies. The short-term nature of funding cycles presents challenges in the implementation stage. Limited resources allocated to program evaluation, the trade-offs involved, high-cost of external evaluations, limited internal capacity for research, and under-utilization of reports prevent the institutionalization of the policy evaluation stage.

Recommendations – Opportunities for further research include examining the role of social media in gun violence and the impact for policy-making, the applicability of effective public-health approaches (Ceasefire) for local adoption, longitudinal empirical studies using the policy-windows theory, and social return on investment studies of effective gun violence intervention initiatives. Establishment of new cooperative research partnerships with graduate programs with a focus on program evaluation to build internal capacity for evaluation. Development of an organization to unify the voice of community actors is recommended to balance the power imbalance policy-influence with respect to gun violence intervention policy-making.

Research Limitations: The major research paper is a qualitative-focused research study on individual interviewee participants perceptions augmented by data triangulation strategies. This study was conducted at a specific point of time. A larger sample would increase confidence of the study's findings. As the sample is not a probability-based sample, it is not intended to be used as representative of what is happening in other jurisdictions.

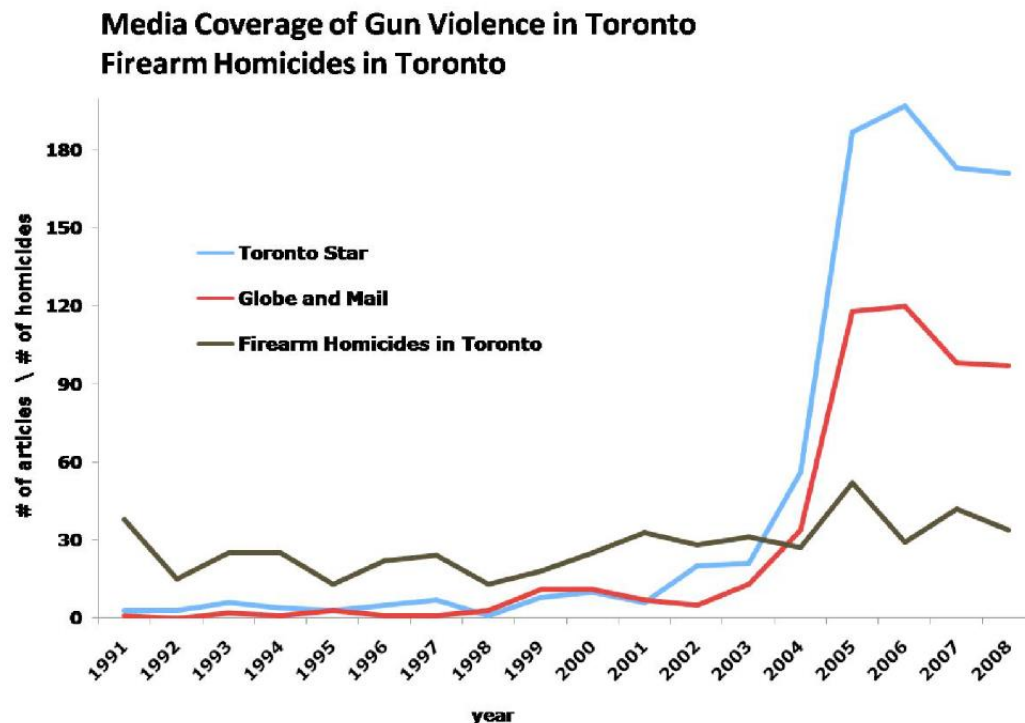
Originality/Value: This paper presents insights into the perceptions of policy actors within the field of gun violence intervention policy in the City of Toronto. This local-perspective provides a unique examination of how policies are being formulated, implemented, and evaluated during a time of record-breaking levels of gun violence.

Keywords: Gun Violence, Toronto, Policy Analytical Capacity, Punctuated Equilibrium, Poverty, Income Inequality, Enforcement, Program Evaluation, Policy Design, Qualitative Research, Politics, Municipalities.

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Summer of the Gun Part I

The City of Toronto has historically had a stable rate of gun-related homicides, and a low rate of gun-related homicides relative to comparable sized American cities (Levingson-King, 2018). In 2005, the “*Summer of the Gun*” saw an uptick and a crisis for gun-related homicides in Toronto and a significant spike in mainstream media coverage of the issue. More specifically, gun-related murders increased by 92% (Siciliano, 2011, p. 2). The intensified media coverage and analysis of the issue resulted in heightened information about how gun violence was related to race, class, gender, and geography in the City of Toronto; the data demonstrated that gun violence predominantly impacted young black men living in areas of concentrated poverty. In contrast, Toronto’s white middle and upper-class citizens experienced much less incidence of gun violence.



Source: Siciliano, A. (2011). Policing Poverty: Race, Space and the Fear of Crime after the Year of the Gun (2005) in Suburban Toronto.

While the majority of shootings in 2005 occurred in the inner suburbs of Toronto, where working class, racialized residents lived, one event created significant media attention. This event was the shooting death of Jane Creba, who was killed by a stray bullet on Boxing Day in the busy shopping district of Yonge-Dundas square (Lorinc, 2015). The shooting occurred in a high-income neighbourhood (Hulchanski, 2007). The significant spike in gun violence and shooting death of Jane Creba in 2005 demanded a political response from left and right-wing politicians. Political ideology shaped the interpretations of the root causes of the problem. The shooting death of Jane Creba resulted in a media frenzy around the gun violence problem in the city which sparked political responses within days following the Creba shooting.

Discourse analysis of academic, media, and political conversations revealed three conversations (Siciliano, 2011). The mainstream media highlighted gun deaths alongside income levels and suggested that crime is a result of racialized poverty. Social conservative groups made claims that the city's poor had developed a culture of poor decision-making and that gun crime could be mitigated through law enforcement measures including increased policing, heightened surveillance of "high risk areas", stricter sentencing for gun and gang-related convictions. Liberals and left-leaning politicians associated the issue of poverty with increased crime and that the gun violence crisis is a result of decades of social and economic exclusion that resulted in deep concentrations of segregated poverty, suggesting that crime was a survival method. Further, they advocated that crime could be prevented through social investment in marginalized communities.

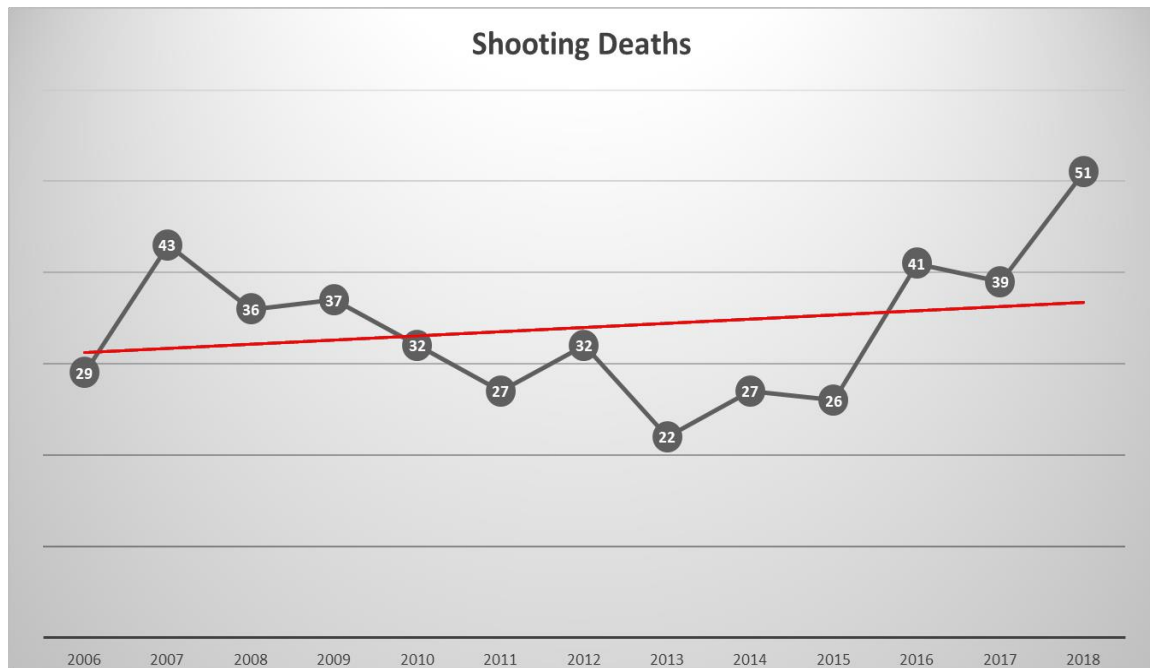
The federal Conservatives were elected in spring 2006 and made significant changes to Canada's criminal justice system with a 'getting tough on crime' agenda. Harper enacted punitive legislative and policy measures such as enhanced law enforcement, mandatory minimum sentences, and changes to the criminal code for gun-related offences (Comack, Fabre, & Burgher, 2015). The Ontario Government committed an initial \$51M into fighting guns and gangs, with a large portion dedicated to funding the development of a new aggressive policing initiative, the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS). The

public policy approach has been said to have “taken the country on the most punitive public policy turn in its history”. Furthermore, the punitive policy approach was supported across the political spectrum. (Siciliano, 2011, p. 119).

The three layers of government together implemented policy and legislative responses ranging from prevention place-based measures through social investment, aggressive policing strategies, to new mandatory minimum sentences for gang-related crimes. Dalton McGuinty, then Ontario’s Premier, commissioned a seminal research report, *The Review of the Roots of Youth Violence*, with an aim to understand the cause of youth violence. The report highlighted that the roots of the violence were social inequality issues; poverty, racism, community design, family and education issues, health inequalities, limited economic opportunities for youth, and issues in the justice system (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). Despite this new understanding of the issue, there was limited political action in response. However, the research report did form the basis of the *Toronto Youth Equity Strategy* (TYES) that was approved by City Council in 2014 which contained over 100 action items aimed at ensuring the most vulnerable youth had the tools to escape a cycle of violence (Pagliaro, Toronto is falling behind on its own plans to help at-risk youth, 2018).

Summer of the Gun Part II - 2018

Despite the design and implementation of TAVIS and the TYES, Toronto yet again witnessed a record-high number of homicides in 2018. 91 homicides occurred in 2018, which is a 48% increase year-over-year (Toronto Police Service, n.d.). 51 of the homicides were shooting-related and 20 were related to stabbings, which follows the general upward trend.



Data Source: Toronto Police Service – Public Safety Data Portal

At a panel conversation about gun violence held at the University of Toronto on October 4th, 2018, the panelists (scholars, former gang-members, Toronto’s Guns & Gang Officers) and attendees engaged in debates around why youth participate in violence. The question and answer portion of the panel conversation had attendees asking why are we experiencing another year of record-high violence? (The Rose(s) that Grew From Concrete: Conversations with Former Gang Members about Violence, Trauma, and Policy Options, 2018). This panel conversation inspired the focus of this major research paper which seeks to better understand why violence continues to increase, how the City of Toronto is making policy and funding decisions to address the issue.

To accomplish this goal, the Major Research Paper focused on interviewing people with inside access and experience with gun violence policy-making in the City of Toronto. The municipal governance focus was selected in part due to recent media coverage suggesting that policy failure at the City of Toronto is at the heart of the problem of rising gun violence (Pagliaro, Toronto is falling behind on its own plans to help at-risk youth, 2018). Additionally, municipal governments are closer to the community, relative to provincial and federal governments, which provides deeper insights in understanding the issue from a local-community perspective. Additionally, a municipal governance lens provides insights into the

challenges faced by municipalities in addressing social issues as creatures of the Province. The research interviews revealed that rising income inequality is at the core of the gun violence issue in Toronto and that youth are obtaining guns out of the need for personal safety. In response to the surge in gun violence, the policy direction and funding decisions have been heavily influenced by the Toronto Police Force. Research interviews revealed that the Police Service and the Police Service Union hold a policy monopoly over gun violence policy in the City of Toronto. Despite the short supply of funding committed to community youth initiatives, the City of Toronto's public service has demonstrated significant capacity for designing gun violence intervention strategies that are grounded in evidence and embody contemporary best practices in the field of policy development. As we will see, the policy evaluation stage of the policy making cycle, however, remains filled with challenges, due to the high cost of program evaluations and the resulting trade-offs required in funding them. The next chapter provides an overview of the principal policy-responses to the Summer of the Gun in 2005. It examines the implementation of the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS), Ontario's commissioning of a seminal research report (*Review of the Roots of Youth Violence*) to better understand the root causes of youth violence, and how the City of Toronto adopted recommendations through the formulation of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy (TYES). Important to understanding the remainder of the research paper, this chapter summarizes key findings of the *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* which provides evidence about the effectiveness (or lack thereof) of mainstream policy approaches to addressing gun violence. Chapter Three details the three major research questions. It also reviews the research methodology adopted to collect relevant data to answer the research questions. Chapter Four reviews the theoretical frameworks that were utilized in the research process to interpret the data. It also examines the utility of these policy theories and their applicability to municipal governance and gun violence policy-making. Chapter Five sets provides the context of municipal policy-making within the parameters of Constitutional Law to illustrate the limits of power conferred from the province to municipalities. This chapter also discusses the limited fiscal capacity of municipal

governments, recent reforms mandated by the Province of Ontario, and the impact on social policy. Chapter Six examines how high-risk American Cities are addressing the issue of gun violence through review of relevant program evaluation literature. The review undercovers a strong focus on a public-health approach to addressing gun violence and a culture of program evaluation to assess program fidelity and efficacy. Lastly, Chapter Seven details the main findings of the research and offers recommendations for changes in policy-making and opportunities for further research. The results uncover issues of increasing income inequality as a primary cause of increasing violence, challenges facing the City of Toronto in the evaluation stage of the policy-cycle, and the levels of control the Police Service and Police Union have over funding decisions.

CHAPTER TWO – OVERVIEW OF THE POLICY RESPONSE

The Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy (TAVIS)

One of the core policy responses to the Summer of the Gun by the City of Toronto was a ‘temporary’ investment of five million per year for the creation of TAVIS in 2006. This policing strategy was subsequently made permanent with a cumulative investment exceeding \$40 million. The underlying theory behind the creation of TAVIS was the idea that intelligence-led policing initiatives in neighbourhoods with high-crime rates would reduce overall crime and violence (Public Safety Canada, 2013). TAVIS targeted priority neighbourhoods and operated on a place-based approach to policing but also included community policing components which involved collecting intelligence on gangs in the City of Toronto. This intelligence was developed through dedicating police officers for a minimum of two years to learn about the community and to identify specific criminals.

The central focus of TAVIS was increasing police presence in poor communities to enhance the level of support from the communities in law enforcement. A core component of this focus was proliferation of the controversial practice of “carding”. Carding enabled police

officers to fill out “contact cards” to gather intelligence on individuals that they stopped to question in the community. The contact cards were entered into a police database regardless of whether the individual was charged with a crime. The controversy of this practice increased when the Toronto Star conducted investigative journalism that demonstrated that blacks were three times more likely than whites to be stopped by police (Rankin & Winsa, 2012).

As we can see, the initial response to the rising gun violence in the City of Toronto has been one of enforcement. Significant funding was committed to the aggressive policing strategies in reaction to this highly publicized issue. Despite the tremendous amount of funding committed to this policy approach, very limited evidence about the effectiveness of the approach was published, despite significant concerns raised by the community of the negative impact on marginalized and racialized communities. While no formal program evaluation or performance measurement data of TAVIS was publicly released, the Public Safety Canada website does provide a summary assessment of the outcomes:

The Neighbourhood TAVIS Initiative has had a positive impact on the community’s perception of crime and disorder, and participating neighbourhoods have seen a notable reduction in crime—particularly in the number of shootings and homicides”. In 2011, the Rapid Response Team was responsible for over 1,300 arrests, the seizure of 12 illegal handguns and the seizure of over \$23,000 in cash obtained as proceeds of crime (Public Safety Canada, 2013).

The next significant policy response to the rise in gun violence was not initiated by the City but by the Government of Ontario. Published in 2008, the *Review of Roots of Youth Violence* report, though extremely comprehensive, is yet to be followed up by significant policy initiatives.

The Review of the Roots of Youth Violence

In 2007, a 15-year old grade 9 student, Jordan Manners, was shot in the chest in his high-school, C.W. Jeffreys Collegiate Institute. This tragic incident marked the first time a student was shot and killed in a Toronto school. In the aftermath of this highly publicized death, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty commissioned a research report to identify the roots of the youth violence instead of simply looking to deploy more law enforcement resources (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). McGuinty tasked the Honourable Alvin Curling, the first black member of Cabinet in Ontario, and the Honourable Roy McMurtry, a lawyer, politician and a former judge, with the challenging assignment of reviewing the roots of youth violence and identifying long-term solutions to make the province a safer place.

The research was conducted over a year and resulted in the publication of a five-volume report. The five-volume report included extensive literature reviews, examinations of program evaluations to identify the most effective approaches to addressing gun violence, comprehensive community perspectives report, and long-term recommendations for each level of government to address.

The *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* found that while Ontario is a relatively safe place, there are disturbing trends emerging that if not addressed, will result in more violent deaths, deeper social inequalities, and a vicious cycle (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). It also noted that we are in an era where politicians seek political gain by implementing aggressive policing while top police brass are acknowledging that they cannot address the situation through simply arresting their way out of the problem (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). The evidence revealed 10 primary roots of youth violence: poverty, racism, impact of community design, education system, family and health issues, lack of economic opportunities, denial of the youth voice, immigration settlement issues and the justice system. Poverty was noted as a systemic challenge throughout the report (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). The findings demonstrated that programs containing skill-based components that increase educational attainment and improve employment prospects are particularly

effective. Programs that address multiple risks are effective, and that programs need to be monitored and evaluated to assess effectiveness and that Ontario lacks high-quality program evaluations. There is also a suggestion that collaboration with municipal governments is paramount given their proximity and knowledge of the issues.

One of the key components of the report was the culmination of evidence on violence intervention program theories. This report sought to provide clear evidence on what interventions have been best supported through credible research and to enhance evidence-based policy-making:

Aggressive Policing “tough on crime” strategies are often mired in controversy as they raise concerns about police abuse of power and a lack of due process. There are mixed research findings associated with these interventions, while some are clearly ineffective (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). Government often ascertains that they are addressing crime by increasing the hiring of police officers. However, the effectiveness of this approach in some research studies has demonstrated the opposite result. Bayley’s research on aggressive policing suggests that cities with higher numbers of police officers per capita have higher crime rates and increasing police officers without addressing the root social causes will have a statistically insignificant impact on crime. Bayley also asserts that it is “unlikely that crime will be reduced if we try to spend our way to safety by adding police officers. Changes in the number of police within any practicable range will have no effect on crime” (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). The review of extensive literature suggests that aggressive policing strategies are in some cases clearly ineffective or evidence regarding effectiveness is inconclusive in others. A promising strategy and alternative cited in the report is the Operation Ceasefire program which responds to the social processes involved in gangs and crime (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). The Operation Ceasefire is explored later in this paper, as it was discovered to be a primary tool being utilized in American cities with high per capita incidents of gun violence and has been extensively piloted and evaluated.

Community Policing is a change from traditional reactive policing approaches to a more local and proactive policing model whereby police work closely with the communities they serve (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). Findings on the effectiveness on community-policing are mixed. The *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* found that the only intervention that demonstrated reduced levels of crime was door-to-door visits by police officers (McMurtry & Curling, 2008).

Employment initiatives focus on enhancing employment opportunities to reduce the criminal cycle that occurs with unemployed adults. Research suggests that job attainment for underprivileged youth builds self-confidence, communication, and personal responsibility skills (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). However, the literature reviewed in the *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* suggests the effectiveness between youth employment and violence reduction often fail to establish clear causality. Bushway and Reuter have asserted that summer work placement programs and short-term training programs have not been effective, but long-term programs with extensive training and education is effective in reducing crime. An example of a long-term program is Job Corps, the largest training and education program for disadvantaged youth in the United States. A randomized control trial program evaluation was conducted on Job Corps, using survey data over a four-year period. The evaluation reported that Job Corps demonstrated statistically significant reductions in arrest and conviction rates and time spent incarcerated (Schochet, Burghardt, & McConnell, 2008).

The *Review of Roots of Youth Violence* also details several interventions that were found to be highly effective. One of these strategies is individual case management for at-risk youth. McMurtry and Curling also found that youth programs that address multiple risk factors are highly effective. Evaluation research on youth programs recommends implementation a suite of effective programs to prevent youth violence and suggests the following principles when considering youth violence prevention programs:

- inclusion of skills-based components that increase educational and employment attainment
- build social competencies and ensure programs are culturally responsive and sufficient in length
- ensuring programs are extensively monitored and evaluated.

McMurtry and Curling reviewed government records, community reports, and academic literature to examine thousands of programs that claim to prevent youth violence. One of the major findings was that a variety of programs proved to be either marginally effective or ineffective including: gun buyback programs, short-term programs, arrests of juveniles for minor offences, harsh sentences for youth, aggressive policing tactics that are not supplemented by community development initiatives, zero tolerance programs within school systems, and heightened security within schools (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). Despite the evidence on gun buyback programs described above, the City of Toronto launched a gun buyback program in April 2019 in response to the uptick in gun violence in 2018 (The Canadian Press, 2019). While the Province of Ontario commissioned the report, there was limited adoption of the recommendations. The City of Toronto however formulated a Toronto Youth Equity Strategy, which was largely based on the findings and recommendations in the *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* (Toronto City Council, 2013).

The Toronto Youth Equity Strategy

Next in terms of policy responses is the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy (TYES), approved by City Council in 2014. It was designed to tackle the fact that the youth who are most vulnerable to serious violence and crime in the City of Toronto lack equitable access to the supports need to change their life trajectories (City of Toronto, 2014). The goal of this strategy, which included 110 action plans and 28 recommendations, was to reduce youth violence in the City of Toronto (Pagliaro, Toronto is falling behind on its own plans to help at-risk youth, 2018). TYES was formulated using the empirical evidence gathered in *The*

Review of the Roots of Youth Violence. TYES' target age group is 13-29. The Toronto Star reported in October 2018, that 144 youth within this age range have died since the approval of TYES. In that same article, the Star reported that the strategy has been chronically underfunded, funding has been unstable, and several recommendations have not been implemented. (Pagliaro, Toronto is falling behind on its own plans to help at-risk youth, 2018). Conversely, the City of Toronto released a backgrounder in 2018, which stated that 84 of the 110 actions have either been implemented or are in the implementation stage and that \$13.5M of direct investment has been made of the \$15M that was initially estimated to implement the program (City of Toronto, 2018).

Development of a youth equity strategy began in 2013 when Toronto City Council requested that city staff recommend initiatives to council that the City of Toronto can implement to support the most vulnerable youth involved in serious violence. Government officials were interested in developing a comprehensive action plan given the voluminous research and evidence that had been produced in addressing the root causes of violence (Toronto City Council, 2013). To develop TYES, the City assembled a panel of 20 community volunteers who represented a variety of neighbourhoods across the City. The panel members included a mix of men and women from youth advocacy organizations along with some members who had lived experiences with youth violence (City of Toronto, 2014).

As discussed above, the primary policy response to the increase in serious violence and crime initially commenced with the introduction of aggressive policing strategies. *The Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* followed, which detailed in a comprehensive manner, what is causing this increase in violence and what can be done to address it. The report demonstrated that to reduce violence, the government needs to address social inequalities. Furthermore, the report outlined the fact that tough on crime, aggressive policing strategies are not effective in curbing youth violence. Rather the report suggests programs that address the various elements of social inequality have been proven as superior to the

police enforcement approach. The effectiveness of these programs was determined through an extensive literature review, including a significant volume of program evaluation reports.

CHAPTER THREE – CENTRAL QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Given that Toronto experienced another summer of the gun in 2018, it is somewhat surprising that innovative programs like the TYES have been reported as chronically underfunded and that despite claims to the contrary, related policy recommendations are either not implemented, or that progress seem to have stalled. What is it about gun violence that makes it such a difficult problem to tackle? There are three research questions being asked in this major research paper.

1. Why does gun violence in the City of Toronto continue to increase?
2. How are gun violence intervention policies being designed, implemented, and evaluated in the City of Toronto?
3. How are funding decisions being influenced and made in the City of Toronto in response to gun violence?

While there is an abundance of literature and research on the causes of youth violence and empirical studies on the effectiveness of a variety of gun violence intervention strategies, relatively little is known about the issue from a local perspective. The local level is particularly important at a time when the residents of Toronto are grappling with the issue and the media is reporting the issue as a local public policy and program delivery failure (Pagliaro, Toronto is falling behind on its own plans to help at-risk youth, 2018). Obtaining perceptions of subject matter experts, politicians, civil servants, and other actors in the policy arena provides an opportunity to enhance thought leadership on what is driving the increase and severity of violence, how funding decisions are being influenced, and opportunities for enhancing policy solution effectiveness. Again, the roots of youth violence are well-known;

however, this study will investigate what is occurring in the policy process by interviewing those in the policy field who are closest to the decision-making and policy implementation to ascertain how these policy decisions are being made and implemented.

Research Design and Data Collection

The main research method used to address the research question are semi-structured, qualitative interviews. Data and document analysis were also conducted to augment understanding of the interview data and relevant literature. Qualitative research methods were chosen as they allow for an in-depth examination of the issue from the perceptions of subject matter experts. The richness of this data cannot be observed from a distance or simply through the statistics (Bryman & Bell, 2016), although the paper will also draw from descriptive statistics where available. Semi-structured interviews were conducted January to March 2019. Research ethics approval for interviewing human participants was obtained through York University's Research Ethics Board. A purposive criterion sampling strategy was used to recruit participants for the study (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). Criteria were established to interview those with those intimately involved with policy-making and delivery, local political experience, and those with subject matter expertise. The criteria for selecting interview participants was as follows:

- Researchers and academics who have been involved in developing the underlying research used for the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy
- Civil Servants who were involved in the development, implementation, or evaluation of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy
- Civil Servants who have served in an office that has a unique perspective on how gun violence intervention policy-decisions are made and designed (e.g. enforcement or public health perspective, chief policy advisors to top-level civil servants)
- Current or former City Councillors who were involved in decisions related to the development, implementation, or funding allocation to the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy,

- Current or former Cabinet Ministers who have been involved in gun violence intervention policy-making.

A sample of eight participants were recruited and consented to be interviewed. A combination of cold-calling based on job title and snowball sampling were used. The sample population covered the five criteria described above to obtain multiple perspectives from varying viewpoints and some of the participants met multiple criteria. Five of the participants are civil servants, two are researchers, two are politicians. Interviews ranged from 45 minutes to an hour and a half. Most of the interviews were conducted in-person, with two of the interviews conducted by phone. Transcripts were produced for all interviews. Only the transcripts of interviews done with public servants and politicians were used for determining how the gun violence intervention policy-decisions in the City of Toronto were designed, implemented, and evaluated.

One of the most significant findings of the interviews was the fact that it proved difficult to find out about challenges surrounding the implementation of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy; as a result, the data surrounding the policy design and evaluation was explored more extensively. Moreover, the interview questions were not initially focused on the role of the Toronto Police Service and Toronto Police Service Association. However, the role of these parties in influencing policy-direction and funding surfaced frequently during the interviews, resulting in a greater focus of discussion as interviews progressed. As data was collected, additional literature and data was collected and reviewed to enhance the researcher's understanding and interpretation of the interview data. Collection of further data to enhance the researcher's understanding of the data is a fundamental component of the qualitative research process. (Bryman & Bell, 2016).

Upon collection of the interview data, the transcripts were reviewed and coded. The first layer of coding was done by reading the transcripts and coding them based on which theoretical (policy-making) framework (to be introduced in more detail shortly) was most applicable. The coded data was then copy and pasted into key categories within the theoretical frameworks. The interview data was then analyzed to identify central themes,

patterns, and differing viewpoints. The data analysis was conducted using a grounded theory approach. The grounded theory approach involves a process where new theories are developed from data that is collected and analyzed throughout the research process. It involves development of theory out of data analysis and is an iterative approach as the data collection and analysis occur simultaneously and are repeatedly referred back to each other. (Bryman & Bell, 2016)

Before moving onto the findings, it is important to acknowledge that the interview data was collected at time when the City of Toronto was experiencing record-breaking homicides. The interview data provide an indication of the types of discourses present about the issues causing gun violence and the policy solutions being deployed to address them. The interview data is therefore a snapshot in time. However, the data remains relevant as it provides a unique opportunity to “listen in” on internal discussion on how to address the rising instances of gun violence in the City of Toronto. The insights gathered through the interviews are valuable as they provide an opportunity to learn from the experts in the field, civil servants responsible for advising solutions, and the political judgment and expertise involved in passing measures to address the safety concerns of their constituents.

CHAPTER FOUR - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

This MRP seeks to gain new insights into how policy and funding decisions are being made within the City of Toronto with respect to addressing gun violence. In advance of conducting research interviews, literature on policy-making theories were reviewed. Subsequently, the theories were analyzed to determine which theories are best suited to be utilized in interpreting the research interview data.

First, the Punctuated Equilibrium theory suggests that policy-direction remains stable for a long duration (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993). However, when problems emerge that generate significant media attention and public discourse, this period of stability can be

interrupted, breaking the equilibrium. During the public discourse, policy influencers (subject matter experts, specialists, policy-makers, politicians) influence the policy image which may result in the destabilizing of a policy monopoly (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993). A policy monopoly occurs when a small number of interest groups, politicians, and policy-makers preside over a policy-direction for a prolonged period of time. This theory was particularly useful in interpreting interview data as the contesting of policy images formed a large part of discussions, as did the concept of policy monopolies and organized interests.

Second, the Policy Analytical Capacity theory considers the capacity of governments and non-governmental actors in utilizing evidence to make informed policy decisions (Howlett, Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada, June 2009). The theory breaks down the stages of the policy cycle where policy failure may occur. Howlett posits that failures occur at the design stage when governments attempt to achieve unattainable goals, at the implementation stage due to poor monitoring and at the evaluation stage when there are inappropriate feedback processes or structures. (Howlett, Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada, June 2009).

Finally, Kingdon's Policy Window theory offers insights into how a policy arrives on the government's agenda (Kingdon, 1984). These opportunities are known as 'policy windows'. The differing types of policy windows dictate the frequency of opportunities of arriving on the government's agenda. Kingdon's theory suggests two main types of policy windows: 1) political windows – a window opens because a change in the political streams, and 2) problem windows – a new problem captures the attention of government officials and those close to them. While Kingdon's theory clarifies the political agenda setting process, interview participants provided limited data in this regard. This may have occurred due to the nature of the open-ended semi-structured interview questions. As a result, the use of Policy Windows theory in interpreting data was limited throughout this MRP. These three theories are discussed in more detail below and are explored in their applicability to this research

study. They are also examined in their applicability to the context of municipal policy-making in Canada.

While the first three theories discussed are focused on policy-making, the “wicked” problems theory ascertains the types of problems that policy-makers must consider in formulating policy strategies (Churchman, Wicked problems, 1967). Wicked problems are characterized as complex, diverse, and ambiguous problems where problem definition and solutions are difficult to identify (Head & Alford, 2015). In contrast, non-wicked or ‘tame’ problems have relatively simple problems and definitions, while other problems with difficult solutions contain some characteristics of wicked problems. The theory of wicked problems was incorporated to determine if gun violence is a wicked problem and if public administrators at the City of Toronto are adopting policy strategies that are conducive to addressing these challenging issues.

Punctuated Equilibriums

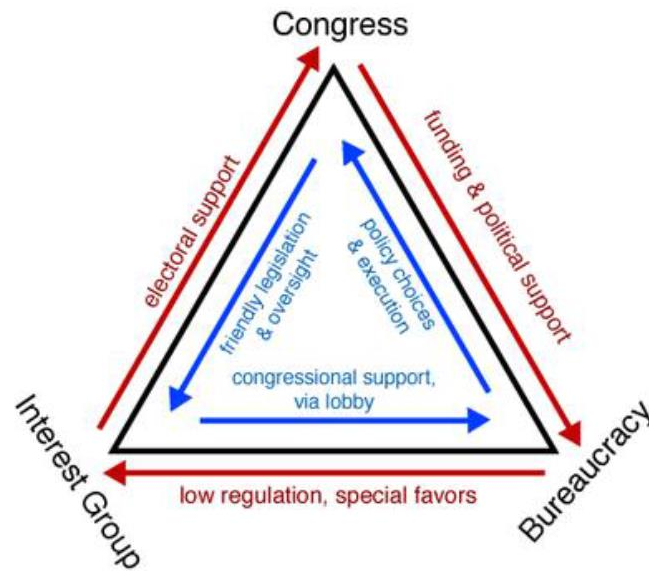
Baumgartner and Jones released a highly influential book in 1993 titled *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*. This book introduced a new framework to describe how public policies are changed, maintained, and interrupted, and how various actors influence the public policy process (John, 2013). This book is used extensively in the field of public policy studies, with over 3,700 citations on google scholar. (John, 2013).

Baumgartner and Jones claim that policy-making generally experiences a long duration of stability which are then ultimately ‘punctuated’ by short surges of instability and change. Baumgartner and Jones coined this as a policy monopoly, which is when a few key policy actors (politicians, interest groups, and bureaucrats) exclusively preside over a policy field in an unopposed manner for a long period of time. When there is limited attention to the policy field, decision-making over this policy field can remain entrenched (and unopposed) for many decades. This stable period of equilibrium can be punctured when new ideas about policy problems emerge in the media from influential policy-actors, specialists, and experts. These ideas develop through a process labelled ‘Positive Feedback’, where attention to the

policy problem grows throughout various policy-making venues. The attention multiplies as it travels across networks resulting in a surge in attention, opening the policy topic to debate and discourse across the political system in public view. The attention and interest in policy change results in a force that becomes strong enough to create significant policy change with policy-decisions changing from an old to a new form of consensus. Following significant policy change, limited attention capacity contributes to a new state of policy stability.

A core feature of the punctuated equilibrium framework is the concept of policy image. Policy image is the notion that policy can be perceived differently depending on how it is portrayed and interpreted. Policy actors contest the perception of the policy image throughout the policy process. While politicians and interest groups play a role in developing the policy image, the media plays a significant role in shaping the image and the perceptions of other policy participants. A policy image can affect policy change; a positive policy image leads to the creation of a policy monopoly; a negative policy image can accelerate its dissolution.

Policy monopolies can be held by an alliance of government agencies, political bodies/committees and interest groups with the goal of controlling government policy for their mutual benefit. These alliances are known as 'Iron Triangles'. In an 'Iron Triangle', an interest group provides electoral support to a political party or politician. The politician responds with favorable laws helping the interest group. An agency provides favorable action for what a politician or political party wants for their constituents; in return, the politician provides legislative support for the agency. The agency implements the laws to assist the interest groups; in return, the interest groups support the agency in political venues.



Research on agenda-setting and policy dynamics has been predominantly focused on the United States (Baumgartner, Green-Pedersen, & Jones, 2006). Baumgartner, Green-Pedersen and Jones assert that the US-based research does not have a predominant focus on the role of political parties. This may have implications on the generalizability of these theories as the American political system has a less centralized role than parliamentary democracy. Because of the less central role of political parties, there is a tendency to focus on the roles of interest groups, think-tanks, and policy entrepreneurs as opposed to a greater focus on political parties. While this critical approach to the policy dynamics and agenda-setting theories is important, political parties are also not present in the City of Toronto municipal governance structure. As a result, the theories developed by Baumgartner and Jones may have more applicability to Canadian municipal political settings than the provincial legislatures and parliamentary settings.

This MRP posits that the Punctuated Equilibrium theory is relevant to determining how policy-decisions are being made with respect to gun violence in the City of Toronto. Discussed further in the research results section of the paper, this theory sheds light on the characteristics of policy monopolies, iron triangles, policy images, all of which appear to have an impact on levels of funding with respect to gun violence intervention policy-making.

Policy Analytical Capacity

Policy Analytical Capacity is a theory that broadly considers a government's capacity to design, implement and evaluate policies within its responsibility. The Political Analytical Capacity theory considers the nature and quality of resources an institution has to conduct evidence-based policy-making (Fellegi, 1996). Evidence-based decision making is a modern approach to improving policy capacity and policy outcomes by ensuring that decision-makers are equipped with the best information.

Howlett has conducted research that suggests that policy analytical capacity found in Canadian government and nongovernmental actors is low, which contributes to policy failures and the abilities of government in managing complex contemporary problems.. Howlett suggests that aside from some major Canadian business associations and private corporations, capacity for policy in the non-government sector is limited, which places a greater demand and burden onto policy-capacity within Canadian governments. The federal government leads in Canada's policy-analytical capacity. Evidence at the provincial, territorial, and local levels of government suggest a much weaker capacity for policy-making leading to a shorter-term focus in many policies (Howlett, Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada, June 2009).

Howlett describes the different type of policy failures at various stages of the policy-making process (see Table 1 and 2 below). The stages of policy-making failures are all attributed to a lack of information (or evidence) which in turn lowers an institution's policy analytical capacity enhancing the probability of overall policy failure.

Table 1. *Stages of the Policy Process and Associated Policy Failures*

Agenda-setting	Overreaching governments establishing or agreeing to establish overburdened or unattainable policy agendas
Policy formulation	Attempting to deal with wicked problems without appropriately investigating or researching problem causes or the probable effects of policy alternatives
Decision-making	Failing to anticipate adverse and other policy consequences or risk of system failures
Policy implementation	Failing to deal with implementation problems including lack of funding, legitimacy issues, principle-agent problems, oversight failures and others
Policy evaluation	Lack of learning due to lack of, ineffective or inappropriate policy monitoring and/or feedback processes and structures

Table 2. *Policy Failures and Management Strategies by Stage of the Policy Cycle*

<i>Stage of policy cycle</i>	<i>Problem</i>	<i>Solution</i>
Agenda-setting	Overreaching governments	Better clarification and precise articulation of government goals and resource capabilities
Policy formulation	Attempting to deal with wicked problems	Provision of better data and research on policy problem causation and alternative solutions
Decision-making	Failing to anticipate policy consequences or risk of system structure failure	Better risk analysis and assessment and its integration into decision-making processes
Policy implementation	Principle-agent problems, oversight failures, etc.	More careful matching of administrative resources to policy goals and better design of monitoring and inspection systems
Policy evaluation	Lack of learning	Development of improved benchmarking and performance measurement systems and integration of this information into future policy deliberations

Source: (Howlett, Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada, June 2009)

In this research paper, the policy analytical capacity theory was used to assess how policy-decisions are being designed, implemented and evaluated in the context of the City of Toronto's gun violence intervention policies.

Policy Windows

Policy Window theory describes the pattern in which policy issues arrive on the policy-making agenda and drive government action. This theory is an important concept for interest groups, political parties, think tanks and other policy-advisors who want to influence the government's agenda to advance their policy interests. John Kingdon introduced this concept of agenda-setting in 1984 through examination of the federal legislative system in the United States and it has since received widespread adoption amongst many scholars and analysts (Howlett, 1998).

The Policy Windows model examines the roles played by policy entrepreneurs inside and outside of government and how they take advantage of opportunities (Policy Windows), to move their issues onto the agenda of government. The theory asserts that issues (the problem stream) is combined with political institutions and circumstances (the politics stream) and the crafting of solutions (the policy stream), which results in the opening and closing of Policy Windows to the government's agenda. These Policy Windows can be exploited by policy entrepreneurs when they are able to identify these openings and act upon them (Howlett, 1998).

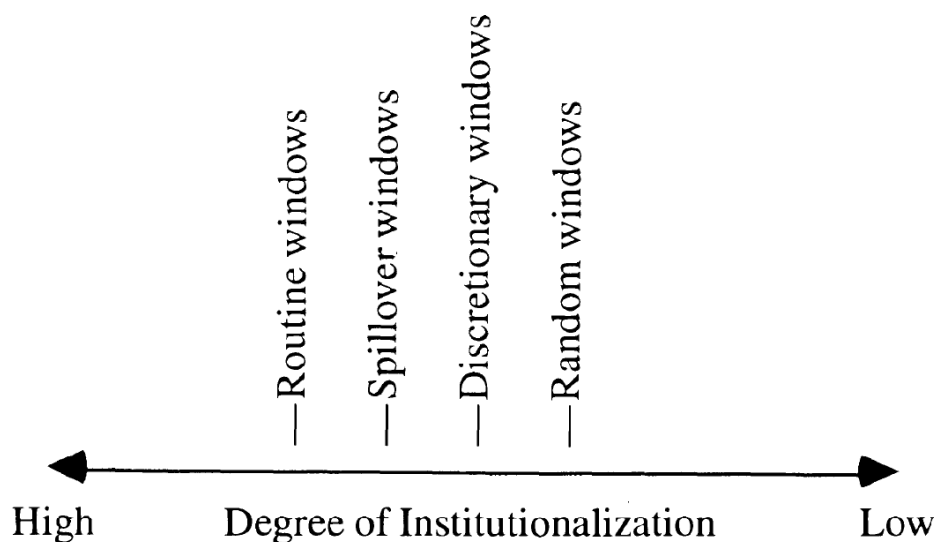
Kingdon's theory suggests two key types of windows: 1) political windows – a window opens because a change in the political streams, and 2) problem windows – a new problem captures the attention of government officials and those close to them. The Policy Windows model asserts four distinct window types, which links the origin of the window (political or problem) to the degree of institutionalization (Kingdon, 1984).

- Routine political windows: institutional procedural events dictate routine and predictable window openings

- Discretionary political windows: individual political personalities result in unpredictable window openings
- Spillover problem windows: related issues are pulled into an already open window
- Random problem windows: random events, problems, and crises open unpredictable windows

The level of institutionalization of a window type determines its frequency and predictability, as displayed in the diagram below.

A MODEL OF POLICY WINDOW TYPES



Source: (Howlett, Predictable and Unpredictable Policy Windows: Institutional and Exogenous Correlates of Canadian Federal Setting, 1998)

Howlett tested Kingdon's Policy Windows theory for its applicability to the Canadian federal legislative setting. Howlett's research involved time series data collected on a number of issue mentions. It compares the record of issues mentions in Parliament to other time series developed from media mentions, crime rates, unemployment rates, budget speeches, speeches from the throne, etc. Howlett's research found existence of three of the four types of policy windows in Canada for the time-period examined; no evidence was found of random windows. Howlett's interpretation of the lack of evidence around random windows was that it confirmed the fact that the frequency of random windows opening is rare rather than interpreting that they do not exist in the Canadian legislative setting. His research

findings also confirmed the Policy Window theory's connection between the degree of institutionalization and frequency of occurrence.

Wicked Problems

The issue of gun violence has been described as a “wicked problem” in academic literature (Huff, Barnhart, McAlexander, & McAlexander, 2017). While government organizations have demonstrated abilities in performing standardized, routine, and high-volume tasks, they face significant challenges in responding to “wicked problems”, which are complex, intractable, and unpredictable (Head & Alford, 2015) (Kettl, 2009). Originally coined by Churchman, “wicked problems” appear incomprehensible and solution-resistant (Churchman, *Free for all*, 1967).

To differentiate “wicked problems” from non-wicked problems, Head and Alford break down policy problems into three types. Type I problems are those where the problem definition and solution are clear. Type II problems are those where the problem definition is clear, but the solution is not. Type III problems are those where the problem definition and solution are unclear, and more extensive learning and discussion are required for all concerned (Head & Alford, 2015). Head and Alford posit that Type III problems are “wicked”, and Type II problems contain some features of “wicked” problems. In short, the more complex and diverse the problem, the more wicked the problem is. The more wicked the problem, the greater levels of uncertainty and ambiguity for policy-makers.

The issue of gun violence in the City of Toronto possess characteristics of “wicked” problems, given the high degree of variability of problem definitions and suggested solutions. However, the research findings of this MRP demonstrate that the predominant problem is clear, gun violence is a symptom of growing social inequality. Addressing social inequality, as is discussed later, requires changing the existing power dynamics present at City Hall and effective collaboration with provincial and federal governments.

Naturally, policy areas that contain features of wicked problems pose challenges to public administrators. However, the hierarchal traditions of public administration are not

helpful in tackling wicked problems (Head & Alford, 2015). Government bureaucracies are well-known for siloed functional areas (Wilson J. , 1989). Furthermore, contemporary New Public Management¹ approaches to policy design such as the narrow pursuit of narrow outcome focused logic models lack the appropriate incentives to address complex widespread problems. For example, while reducing subsidies and low-interest loans to students may achieve the desired outcome of restoring fiscal balance of governments, it puts education out of reach for lower-income communities, which is likely to result in higher incidence of crime, incarceration, and lower economic productivity, all which drain public finances in the long-run.

Head and Alford provide suggestions on tackling “wicked” problems including collaborative approaches (networked government) that should be augmented with broader ways of thinking about options and linkages. Collaboration across government departments, and meaningful consultation with other layers of governments and sector partners enhances the prospects of “wicked” problems being addressable because wider networks offer more insights and a better collective understanding of how to respond to these complex issues (Head & Alford, 2015).

This Major Research Paper found that modern approaches to policy-making such as networked government, collaboration, and community consultation are built into policy formulation at the City of Toronto. The “wicked problem” theory was utilized throughout the interview process to assess if the issue of gun violence in the City of Toronto is indeed a wicked problem, and if the City of Toronto is adopting effective strategies in addressing it as such.

¹ New Public Management: is characterized as managerialism in the public sector. Osborne and Gaebler described this as mission-driven, outcomes-focused, competitive, and custom-driven government (Osborne & Gaebler, 1993).

CHAPTER FIVE - THE CONSTITUTION

As the focus of this major research paper is on the City of Toronto and its gun violence intervention policy-making, it is important to understand the powers available to each level of jurisdiction and the powers reserved for other levels of government. The legal regime that governs the distribution of powers is the *Constitution Act of 1867*. As the role of municipalities in formulating and delivering social policy have undergone changes in the past few decades, it is also important to understand the limits of municipal policy-levers. Research interviews revealed that municipal government officials feel that the constitutional status of municipalities limit their ability to effectively address the issue of gun violence and that provincial social policy levers are required to effectively address the root causes of gun violence.

Constitutional Status of Municipalities

Municipal governments in Canada are constitutionally 'creatures of the province', which has a significant impact on their policy options. The origins of the creation of municipal government was for the primary purpose of public service delivery rather than serving as a policy-making democratic institution (Lazar & Seal, 2005, p. 27). The *Constitution Act of 1867* provides jurisdictional powers between the Federal and Provincial Legislatures in section 91 and 92 respectively. Section 92(8) of the *Act* provides that municipal governments are within the purview of provincial government in section 92(8). Section 92(9) provides the provinces with the power to dictate which municipal sources of revenue are available to municipal governments. Municipal governments are then 'creatures of the province'. Provinces have utilized this power to fulfill provincial objectives and have altered the structures and roles of municipalities. Provinces have exercised this authority even when it is in clear opposition to the desires of the relevant citizenry (Lazar & Seal, 2005, p. 28).

As municipalities are elected governments, they have a democratic responsibility to advance the issues of their local constituents. The fact that municipalities are under control of the provinces constitutionally yet are elected democratic institutions with their distinct policy interests, creates a fundamental tension between the two levels of government. There has been some progress in the province providing municipalities more autonomy; however, provinces have exercised control of municipalities at will. A local example is the creation of the City of Toronto Act of 1997, which was the enactment of a law to amalgamate the Metro Toronto government and the six municipalities within the Metro Toronto boundaries into a consolidated City of Toronto. It was challenged in the courts and subsequently upheld, even though a referendum on the issue demonstrated that local constituents opposed the merger by more than 3:1. A more recent example is Ontario's legislative enactment of the *Better Local Government Act, 2018*, which reduced the number of municipal Toronto wards from 47 to 25, without consultation and despite a recent public consultation which called for the enlargement of wards.

Municipalities have two core functions, a political body to advance community objectives and as a service delivery provider. Municipal governments in Ontario play a more significant role in delivering social services relative to municipal governments in other provinces (Lazar & Seal, 2005). In 1997, the Ontario government, looking to avoid public service delivery overlap between levels of government, assumed full responsibility of education in exchange for an increase in municipal social service delivery (Lazar & Seal, 2005, p. 34). These transfers have led to greater costs on municipalities despite their limited fiscal capacity. As Municipalities do not have the constitutional power to create their own revenue sources to finance their operations, new revenue sources must be enacted through provincial legislation. The largest source of revenue for the City of Toronto is property taxes (33%), followed by provincial subsidies and user fees respectively (City of Toronto, 2016). Furthermore, the Ontario Government has restricted municipalities from running budget deficits in the *Municipal Act, 2001*, unlike provincial and federal governments, (Slack & Cote, 2014). This restriction was implemented to ensure that municipal governments do not

run deficits and put municipalities in a state of financial distress, requiring further provincial subsidy (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2016). The downloading of social services to the City of Toronto without the provision of additional fiscal tools serves to limit its resources in addressing gun violence. The root causes of gun violence, such as poverty, housing, and systemic racism, require significant fiscal and long-term funding. Research interviews revealed that municipal government officials feel that their ability to address gun violence are limited by the constitutional status of municipal governments.

Municipalities and Social Policy

Municipal governments in Ontario have undergone significant reforms. These reforms were particularly significant during the 'Common-Sense Revolution' under Mike Harris' Premiership (1995-2002), which resulted in a significant reduction in the number of Ontario municipalities through amalgamation and the downloading of social assistance and social housing (Siegel, 2009). Empirical studies on the matter found that these reforms reduced the policy-making capacity of municipalities (Hasso, 2010, p. 32) (Fowler & Siegel, 2002) (Garcea & Lesage, 2005). Hasso's research sought to determine if these reforms provided greater levels of autonomy and flexibility to municipalities in making social policy decisions. This was examined through three primary factors: 1) proximity of local government to social issues, 2) fiscal capacity and autonomy as a constraint, and 3) susceptibility of local government to external control.

The findings of the research suggest that there is inherent value of municipalities' proximity to social issues and their ability to engage communities and obtain lived experiences to better inform the development of social policy programs (Hasso, 2010, p. 7). While the downloading of social services to municipalities has leveraged this place-based value, municipalities have also inherited the fiscal responsibility for these policies and programs but have not been provided with enhanced fiscal capacity to govern effectively in these policy areas. This creates challenges for municipalities in effectively designing and implementing social policies.

The evidence accumulated on the fiscal imbalance and provincial control of municipalities provides valuable insights into the policy-making capacity of the City of Toronto. For example, interview participants' intimate knowledge of community concerns and issues became evident during research interviews. Civil servants noted concerns with diverting funding away from community initiatives to the development of policy-reports, recognizing the trade-offs. Three of the civil servants interviewed also noted their lived experience in dealing with social issues in the City of Toronto. A civil servant also noted the importance of having staff from the City of Toronto who understand the local perspectives, cultures, and concerns as imperative in social development work. As discussed later in the paper, this community-focus played a significant role in revealing the social issues present in the City of Toronto, but also in the community-focused policy-design of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy. While the place-based social policy has its merits and strengths, the limited policy levers serve as a concern in addressing social issues. Next, this paper examines how American Cities have undertaken gun violence interventions and the capacity these cities have demonstrated in conducting program evaluations.

CHAPTER SIX - POLICY EVALUATION OF HIGH-RISK AMERICAN CITIES

The Policy Analytical Capacity theory posits that policy evaluation is a fundamental component of the policy-making process. Interviews with civil servants and politicians from the City of Toronto revealed capacity issues in conducting formal program evaluations due to the high costs, lack of additional funding, limited capacity within the not-for-profit sector, and concerns about redirecting resources away from community initiatives to fund these reports. Further, civil servants expressed concern with the under-utilization of these reports. To gain insights into how policy evaluations are being conducted in other jurisdictions this paper examined American cities. American cities were chosen as a point of focus to examine how other cities that have high rates of gun violence are addressing the issue and to see if they

are evaluating the impact and effectiveness of these initiatives. While cities experiencing gun violence crises are not to be considered ‘benchmarks’, they do have the potential to offer valuable insights in terms of how they are gathering evidence to enhance their strategies in curbing gun violence trends. Examining how other cities are incorporating evaluations into public policies also provides the opportunity to determine the usefulness of these evaluations in a local setting.

Following the 2005 ‘Summer of the Gun’ and the lead up to the approval of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy, a number of cities confronting gun violence were experimenting with new intervention programs. During the jurisdictional scan and review of evaluations, it became clear that several American cities have been experimenting with public health approaches to gun violence through piloting the adoption of the ‘Ceasefire’ model. It is focused on identifying those at highest risk to gun violence, and deploying resources and intervention activities directly at those high-risk youth with the hope of significantly reducing gun violence. This model is based on the idea that a small number of individuals and groups account for a large percentage of shooters and shooting victims. As discussed further below, the City of Oakland has been experimenting with the Ceasefire model and other social innovations, such as the development of social enterprises² to create employment opportunities for youth at risk of gun violence. As mentioned in the Review of the Roots of Youth Violence, programs that are focused on skills development and enhancing educational and career opportunities have been demonstrated to be most effective. As a result, review of the program evaluations of both of Oakland’s program was conducted. This section examines the program evaluation literature measuring the effectiveness and impact these policy innovations.

² Social Enterprises: are organizations that use business strategies to achieve a social or environmental impact. While generating revenues from the sale of goods and services, social enterprises also expressly intend to create positive outcomes, and they measure their results.

American Ceasefire Programs & Policy Trends

Boston Ceasefire (BC) (2001) was the first of many comprehensive community approaches to preventing gun violence in United State (US) cities. BC initiated direct engagement between law enforcement and individuals identified as high-risk of becoming perpetrators of gun violence. Individuals identified as gang members were “called-in” by law enforcement to be warned about the zero-tolerance approach and crackdown on gun violence. It uniquely included fliers warning gangs of increasing sanctions that would occur (see example below).

Exhibit 1-7 Flier Created by the Gun Project Working Group

GOAL: STOP THE VIOLENCE

INTERVALE POSSE

- THEY WERE WARNED; THEY DIDN'T LISTEN
- INTERAGENCY DRUG OPERATION
 - BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT
 - DEA
 - ATF
 - STATE POLICE
 - US ATTORNEY
 - SUFFOLK COUNTY DA
 - PROBATION
 - PAROLE
 - SAFE NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVE
- AUGUST 29, 1996
 - 15 FEDERAL ARRESTS: DRUGS AND CONSPIRACY
 - 8 STATE ARRESTS
- EACH FEDERAL CHARGE CARRIES AT LEAST A 10 YEAR MANDATORY MINIMUM. SEVERAL POSSE MEMBERS MAY FACE LIFE IN FEDERAL PRISON
 - CONFINED UNTIL TRIAL
 - NO POSSIBILITY OF PAROLE
- THE INVESTIGATION PROCEEDS: THESE CHARGES MAY BE JUST THE BEGINNING
- THE LESSON: GANG VIOLENCE WILL BE STOPPED

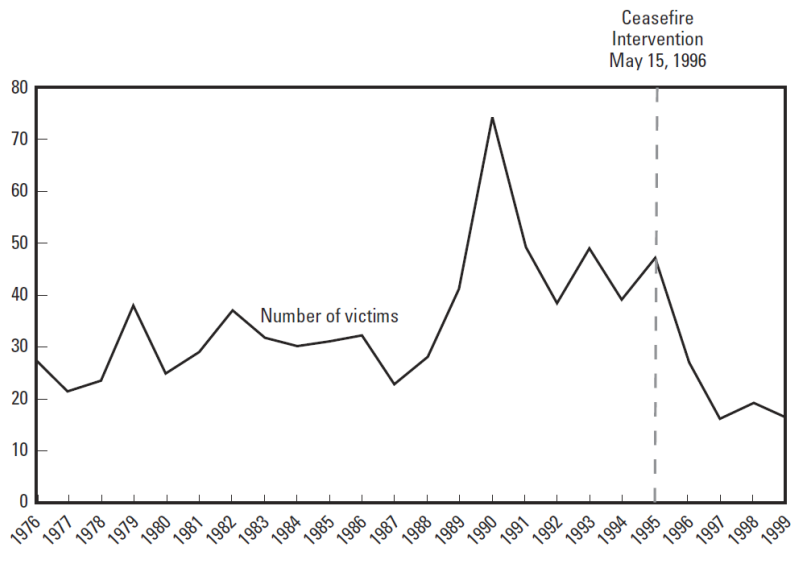
Source: Kennedy, D. M., Braga, A. A., Piehl, A. M., & Waring, E. J. (2001). Reducing Gun Violence: The Boston Gun Project's Operation Ceasefire . Boston: National Institute of Justice.

The public communication warnings were augmented by an enhanced focus on prosecution of gun traffickers to reduce the supply of illegal firearms. Relative to the Chicago Ceasefire model (discussed next), the Boston program focused more on enforcement than public-health strategies. In 1999, the Chicago School of Public Health at University of Illinois launched the Chicago Ceasefire program. The program strategies were adapted from the public health field which have had demonstrable success in changing dangerous behaviours, for example, smoking cessation programs (Ritter, 2009) . The Chicago Ceasefire model

uses tools to target escalating violence where one shooting leads to another, such as, community mobilization, public education campaigns, and social services (GED programs, anger-management counselling, addiction treatment, job placements for at-risk youth, etc.). A core feature of the program is the hiring of violence interrupters who establish rapport with gang leaders and at-risk youth, in a similar fashion to the way outreach workers contact target communities in a public health campaign. The violence interrupters mediate community conflicts. Following the occurrence of shootings, the interrupters immediately offer non-violent alternatives to shooting victim's friends and relatives (Ritter, 2009). The majority of the violence interrupters are persons that have served time in prison or gang membership.

The Boston Ceasefire program was evaluated as part of the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) Reducing Gun Violence publication series. The National Institute of Justice is the research and evaluation agency of the U.S Department of Justice (National Institute of Justice, 2018). The reports within the publication series aim to describe and implement the effects of NIJ-funded, local-level programs designed to reduce firearm-related violence. The design of the BC program evaluation sought to determine the impact of the Boston Ceasefire model in reducing youth homicides in the city. The evaluation was conducted via a single-group time series evaluation (non-randomized quasi-experimental). Boston's youth homicide rates were compared to 39 major US cities and 29 New England cities during the same time period to identify if there were statistically significant reductions in Boston. The evaluation found a statistically significant decrease of gun homicides among young people with an overall reduction of 63%, which the evaluators attributed to the success of BC.

Exhibit 1-8 Youth Homicide Victims Ages 24 and Under in Boston, 1976–1999



Source: Kennedy, D. M., Braga, A. A., Piehl, A. M., & Waring, E. J. (2001). *Reducing Gun Violence: The Boston Gun Project's Operation Ceasefire*. Boston: National Institute of Justice.

The program evaluation specifically stated that a major contribution to the success of the program was the increased use of frontline workers, academics, and practitioners, rather relying entirely on policing and enforcement strategies (Kennedy, Braga, Piehl, & Waring, 2001). The *Boston Ceasefire* program was an experiment in proactively addressing violence rather than the conventional reactive approach of sending out another patrol car to respond to an incidence of gun violence.

The program evaluation methodology was not without its limitations. The evaluators noted the limitations on the internal validity of the evaluation, as there were a number of other concurrent gun violence initiatives occurring in the City of Boston around the same time as the *Boston Ceasefire* program. Nationally gun violence was declining, which raised questions as to whether the 63% reduction following the implementation of Boston Ceasefire was attributable to these national trends. Despite some of the methodology limitations noted, a number of other American cities adopted the Ceasefire model; however, the models that followed adopted the more public-health focused program, which is based on the Chicago Ceasefire design.

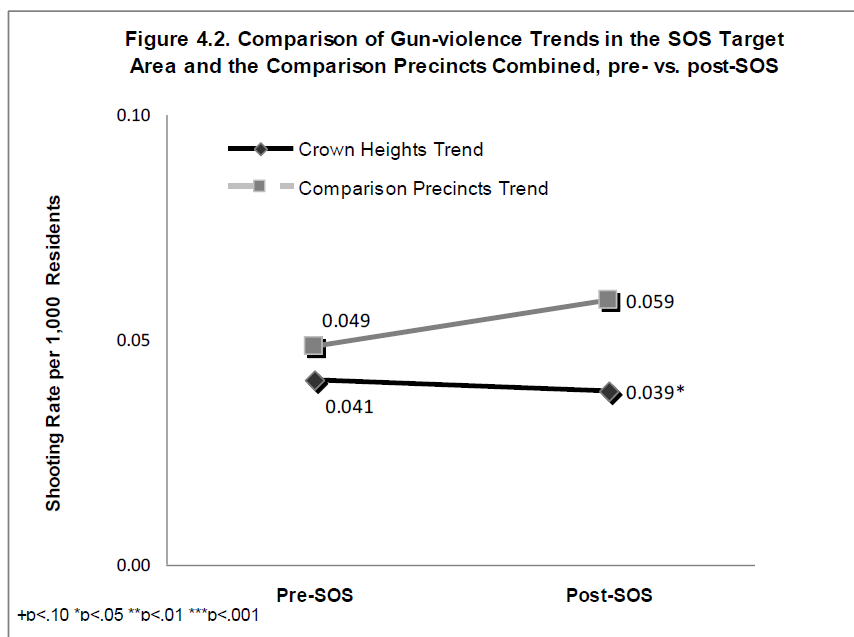
For instance, *Pittsburgh – One Vision, One Life (OVOL) (2010)* incorporates components of the Boston and Chicago Ceasefire program and includes a six-point program to address gun violence: 1) mediation and intervention in conflicts, 2) provisions of alternatives for persons at highest risk of gun violence, 3) strong community coalitions, 4) a unified message of no shooting, 5) a rapid response to all shootings, and 6) programs for at-risk youth.

The OVOL program was evaluated and was also supported by the NIJ. The evaluation was a joint collaboration between the RAND corporation (a not-for-profit that provides objective analysis and solutions for challenges facing the public and private sector) and Michigan State University (Wilson, Chermak, & McGarrell, 2010). The evaluation was funded through an research grant received from NIJ. The program evaluation sought to determine if and to what extent OVOL had an impact on violence in the targeted and surrounding communities. The impact assessment was conducted using a quasi-experimental design, comparing trends pre and post implementation using a propensity score analysis to ensure relative comparability with the surrounding neighbourhoods. The evaluation also included an implementation evaluation, encompassing content analysis, observation of program activities, structured interviews and focus groups with program stakeholders.

The evaluation demonstrated mixed results. In some of the program's target neighbourhoods, gun violence increased. The evaluation noted that there were significant deviations between the program design and its implementation. The evaluators noted an unsystematic approach to documentation. The program also included a broader community focus, rather than the intended focus on high-risk individuals only. The evaluation suggested that the deviations between the program design and implementation may have contributed to the mixed results (Wilson, Chermak, & McGarrell, 2010).

Next, *Crown Heights - Save Our Streets (SOS) (Brooklyn, NY) 2012* is described as a public health approach version of the Ceasefire programs. The evaluation of this particular program model sought to test the effectiveness of using a public health approach to gun

violence and to determine if the SOS model could be effectively exported to other communities in New York. The evaluation was conducted by The Center for Court Innovation (a not-for-profit that seeks to create safer and healthier neighbourhoods). The evaluation was funded by a grant received from the Bureau of Justice of the U.S. Department of Justice. The evaluation included a process evaluation and an impact assessment, using both a non-equivalent control design (time series evaluation using comparative neighbourhoods) and a pre & post-intervention survey. The evaluation found that the treatment neighbourhood experienced a 6% decrease in gun violence, while comparison (control) neighbourhoods experienced increases of 18-28% (Picard-Fritsche & Cerniglia, 2012).



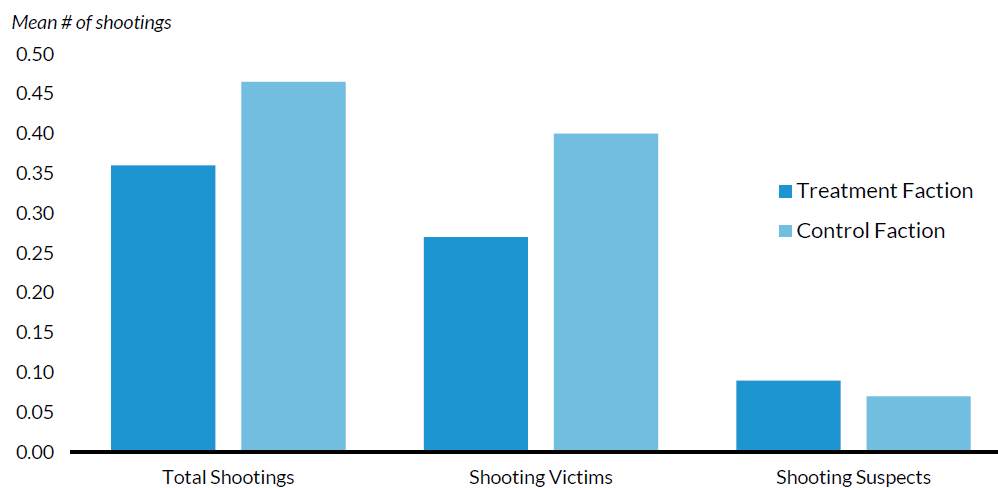
Source: Picard-Fritsche, S., & Cerniglia, L. (2012). Testing a Public Health Approach to Gun Violence. New York: Center for Court Innovation.

A core strength of this evaluation was the research done in advance to ensure that no other concurrent policing initiatives were being implemented. The evaluation noted that a weakness of this study is that the comparator (control) groups were directly adjacent to the treatment neighbourhoods placing a higher potential for displacement threats to internal validity of the evaluation.

Third, the *Chicago Violence Reduction Strategy (VRS) (2017)* is based on the initial Chicago Ceasefire model. The evaluation was conducted by the non-profit Urban Institute, which is dedicated to elevating the debate on social and economic policy. The evaluation was funded by a private foundation and sought to determine if VRS reduced group (gang) violence and if there was changes in perceptions in the treatment districts. This program, while it had similarities to the Boston Ceasefire model, instead utilized formerly incarcerated persons, family members of violence victims, influential community actors, and social service providers for their gun violence interruptions (call-ins). Similar to other studies previously discussed, the evaluation utilized quasi-experimental designs and propensity scoring; however, the evaluation differed as it examined the impact of the intervention on groups (gangs), rather than individuals or communities and also explored self-reported perceptions and behaviors of people central to the VRS. The evaluation found that treatment groups were 22% less likely to be involved in shootings within a 12-month period of the “call-ins”.

FIGURE 7

Predicted Number of Fatal and Nonfatal Shootings in the Year after Chicago Violence Reduction Strategy Call-In Attendance, Propensity-Matched Groups



Source: Andrew V. Papachristos and David S. Kirk, “Changing the Street Dynamic: Evaluating Chicago’s Group Violence Reduction Strategy,” *Criminology and Public Policy* 14 (August 2015): 525–58.

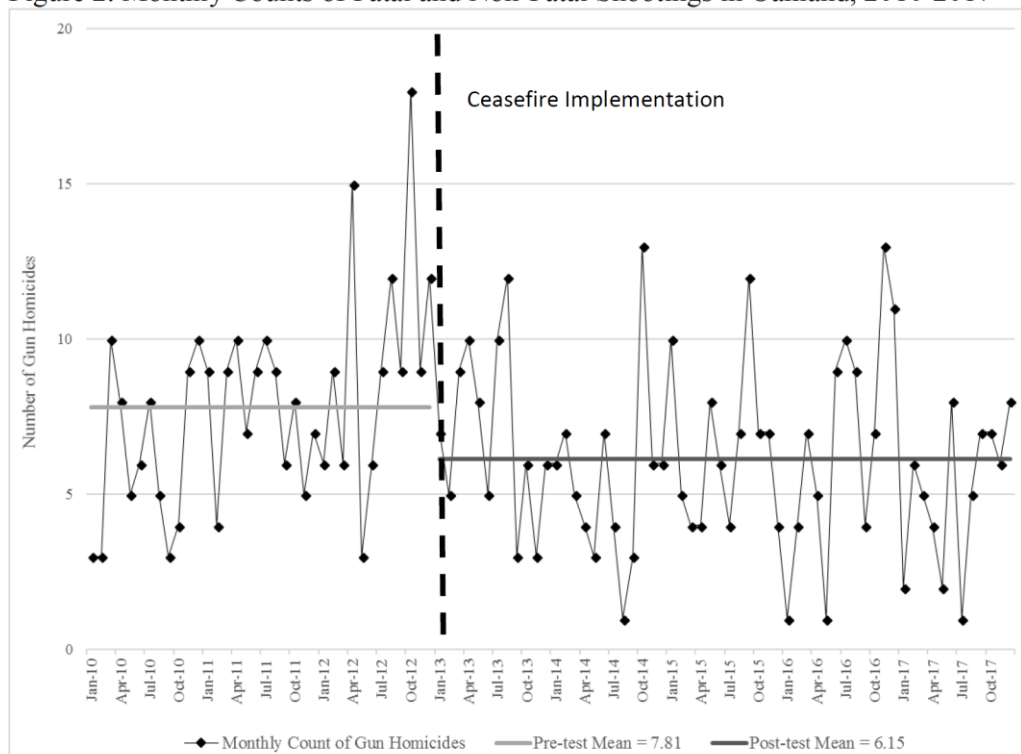
The evaluation results demonstrated significant differences pre and post VRS implementation in the treatment groups perceived sense of safety, victimization, and legal acceptance when compared to control groups. The key strength of the evaluation was the

large number of control groups to compare with the treatment group. Each treatment group was compared with 3 of the 211 control groups. One of the limitations noted in the evaluation was that the VRS was implemented prior to the evaluators' ability to implement the pre-intervention survey in assessing perceptions. (Fontaine, Jannetta, Papachristos, Leitson, & Dwivedi, 2017)

Finally, *Oakland's Ceasefire (2018)* program replicated the Chicago VRS Strategy. The Oakland Ceasefire program was implemented in 2013 with minor alterations. The Oakland Ceasefire program focuses on high-risk individuals; those individuals are provided a range of support opportunities, including coach-mentors, social services, support groups, job opportunities, and sometimes cash. Interestingly, the provision of social services, mentorship, and provision of job opportunities were all ranked as effective relative to other interventions in the Review of the Roots of Youth Violence. The evaluation of the program was conducted by a Northeastern University research team and was overseen and funded through Oakland community's policing oversight board, which oversees a unique voter initiative, Measure Z (discussed further below) (BondGraham, 2018). The evaluation of the program noted a 52% decrease in shootings from 2011 to 2017. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine whether the Ceasefire intervention was associated with this steep decline and how Ceasefire partners perceived the implementation of the strategy. The evaluation conducted two quasi-experimental impact evaluations: 1) a comparison of gun homicide trends in Oakland to 12 comparison cities using a time-series analysis; and 2) comparison of shooting trends in census block gangs that received the intervention against control groups which included use of propensity scoring. It also included a qualitative assessment, using in-depth interviews with individuals having considerable knowledge, varied perspectives, and insights on the effectiveness of the program, the nature and extent of gun violence in Oakland, and police-community relations. The evaluation observed a 32% decrease in Oakland gun violence attributable to the Ceasefire program when controlling for trends. Only 2 of the 12 comparison cities experienced significant reductions, suggesting a distinct city-wide reduction compared to other similar California cities. The census block

comparison estimated a 20% reduction in shootings due to the implementation of the Oakland Ceasefire program (Braga, Zimmerman, Brunson, & Papachristos, 2018).

Figure 2. Monthly Counts of Fatal and Non-Fatal Shootings in Oakland, 2010-2017



Source: Braga, A. A., Zimmerman, G., Brunson, R. K., & Papachristos, A. V. (2018). Oakland Ceasefire Impact Evaluation: Key Findings. Oakland: Yale and Northeastern University.

The qualitative assessment suggested that Ceasefire greatly enhanced the City’s capacity to systematically and thoughtfully reduce shootings and homicides. The key strength of this evaluation was the use of comparisons of communities and then to other similar cities, which serves to increase the credibility of the findings. The key weakness is that Oakland had a significant violence prevention program that was also changing at the time of the study that the evaluation failed to incorporate into the study and consider or control for its impact.

In reviewing the evaluation, two other observations emerged; the funding model for Oakland’s gun violence initiatives and the innovative strategies adopted through Oakland Unite. In 2004, through a voter initiative known as Measure Y, Oakland residents approved a parcel tax and a parking surcharge in commercial lots to support violence prevention programs. This funding resulted in the creation of an agency known as Oakland Unite, which delivers programs that target highest-risk community members and neighbourhoods with the

primary goal of interrupting violence. The funding measure contained a requirement that 3% of total funds are set aside for annual audits and evaluation. Subsequently in 2014, Measure Z, was passed by Oakland voters in 2014, which provides \$24M every 10 years to fund violence prevention and intervention programs (Oakland Unite, 2019). There are a number of notable strengths of this funding model. As detailed through the research interviews, adequate funding for evaluations pose capacity challenges to the City of Toronto. The research interviews also note the challenges in short-term funding tied to election cycles. The Measures Y and Z model implements a long-term funding model, as a taxpayer funded initiative, that specifically requires funding be allocated to evaluation. This model serves to alleviate a number of concerns noted by interview participants in this study. Next, we will examine one of the evaluations conducted on Oakland Unite's Violence Prevention Programs.

Oakland had previously conducted and published an assessment of its earlier efforts, *the Oakland Unite: Violence Prevention Programs: Retrospective Evaluation (2005-2013)*. The Oakland Unite program received \$6M annually from the City of Oakland for Violence Prevention Programs (VPP), with an emphasis on youth and children. The main components of the program include employment of youth outreach counsellors, after and in-school programs for youth and children, domestic violence counsellors, and offender/parolee employment training. The evaluation sought to determine whether the VPP has been effective in reducing violent crime from 2005-2013. A mixed methods approach was utilized. Individuals were assigned to cohorts and the evaluation calculated the percentage of individuals arrested during 5-years before the program and 2-years following the program. The evaluation found that Oakland Unite participants had reduced criminal justice involvement after participating in Oakland Unite programs with a particularly significant decrease in the percentage of clients arrested or convicted for violent offenses. More specifically, 78% of Oakland Unite participants were arrested at least once pre-measurement period with 36% having been arrested for a violent offense. Comparatively, 37% of

participants were arrested in the post-measurement period following their enrollment in Oakland Unite, with only 13% having been arrested for a violent offense.

To sum up, there have been a variety of ceasefire programs implemented and evaluated across a number of US cities that are grappling with the issue of gun violence. Despite program variations and alterations, the core design of the public health focused strategies target individuals that are at the highest risk of gun violence. The program designs acknowledge that scarce resources must be allocated in a risk-based, evidence-based manner. Further, these programs are focused on proactive interventions to curtail escalating violence. The way these programs have been measured are primarily focused on shooting incidents. The Ceasefire programs have been assessed as effective (with minor exceptions) in terms of reduction in shooting incidents and have been measured using a variety of impact assessment methodologies. Further, the City of Oakland has adopted unique taxpayer initiatives which provide longer-term funding and resource allocations to fund program evaluations, which addresses some of the concerns discussed by interview participants in this major research paper. The systematic evaluations conducted in the U.S provide rigorous impact studies which provides an essential feedback loop in the policy cycle. The majority of the evaluations were funded by the federal department of justice. As opportunity for policy change occurs, program evaluations can play a fundamental role in shaping the policy direction. This can be particularly important when a policy field is controlled for a long period of time by a small group of policy-actors, as new evidence revealed by experts, media, policy-makers and politicians can disrupt the period of stability through changing the perception of what solutions are required. These themes are discussed in more detail in the next section, which illustrate further challenges with evaluations, characteristics of a policy monopoly in the City of Toronto, and the potential for a disruption in policy field.

CHAPTER SEVEN - RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The interview findings in this Major Research Paper provide insights into how the issue of gun violence in is being perceived by policy-actors, experts, and politicians in Toronto and how the Municipal Government is responding to the issue. Interview participants shared their perspectives on why funding continues to be focused foremost on police enforcement and the interests of the Toronto Police Service and Politicians in maintaining this policy-direction. Following these new insights, additional literature and data were reviewed to identify any discrepancies and/or establish connections in the datasets. This section of the paper a description of the findings and how it relates to independent data and literature concludes with recommendations to address some of the challenges present in the findings.

Gun Violence: A not-so-wicked problem

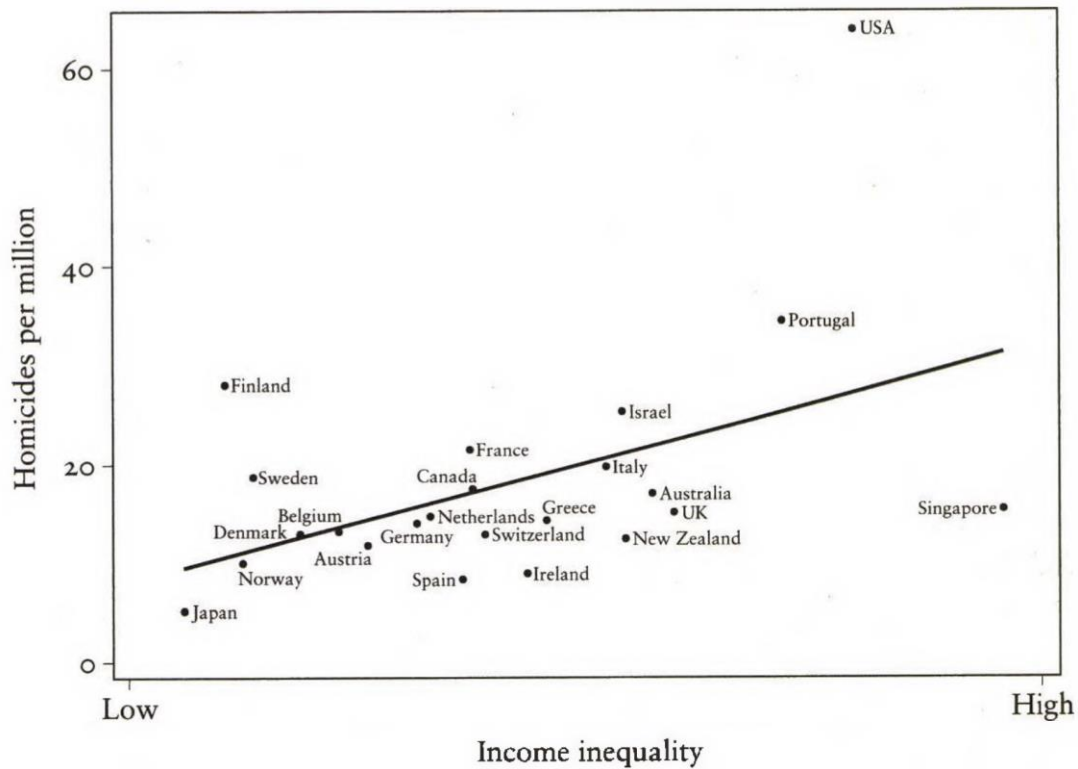
As discussed earlier, the concept of a 'wicked' problem is a term that is widely used throughout policy communities to describe issues that are complex, hard to control, and ambiguous. Wicked policy problems result in competing perspectives on how to address them. A common characteristic of wicked policy problems is the interaction with other broader issues, such as poverty, housing, education and health (Head B. , 2019) . Head and Alford describe three types of problems: tame or routine, standard problems (Type I), problems that contain characteristics of wicked problems (Type II) and wicked problems (Type III). Type II problems present challenges in defining solutions whereas Type III problems present challenges in defining the problem and solutions. Interviewees noted that addressing gun violence requires addressing a number of underlying issues such as poverty and racism, suggesting that it may be a wicked problem. However, the research findings suggest that while not an easy issue to address, the issue of rising gun violence in the City of Toronto could be reduced through a reduction in the level of income inequality. This however requires significant political commitment.

Income Inequality as the Primary Issue

The predominant response as to why the City of Toronto's violence continues to escalate is the issue of the worsening of income inequality in the City of Toronto. Several interviewees articulated that the more inequities we observe in Toronto communities, the more violence we are going to experience. A Toronto Public Service executive stated, "As long as we have systemic poverty and racism, we're going to have (gun violence) challenges". The interviewee further asserted that you can have any strategy to curb gun violence but as long as you have social inequality, you will have issues of youth violence. As demonstrated further below, the City of Toronto and Province of Ontario have been experiencing a significant erosion of the middle-class, deepening poverty, and greater concentrations of wealth. This issue has been exacerbated by less social mobility in the Province of Ontario as it is getting increasingly more difficult for marginalized persons to change their socioeconomic status.

Furthermore, Wilkinson and Pickett's studies on the correlation between income inequality and violence demonstrates a clear relationship. Wilkinson and Pickett examined inequality and homicide rates both within the United States, but also internationally. As displayed in the graph below, Wilkinson and Pickett found that in countries with greater income inequality, measured using Gini coefficients, there was higher homicide rates (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2010). Gini Coefficient is another measure of income inequality; it summarizes the degree of inequality across the entire income distribution in a single number ranging from zero to one. The higher the Gini coefficient the more unequal the distribution of incomes. A zero value indicates that persons within a jurisdiction are all earning the same income. A value of one indicates that the entire amount of income within a jurisdiction was generated by one person and not shared within anyone else.

Income inequality trends in the City of Toronto and the Province of Ontario are examined in the next section and compared with shooting incident trends to compare the qualitative research interview data with independent quantitative data.

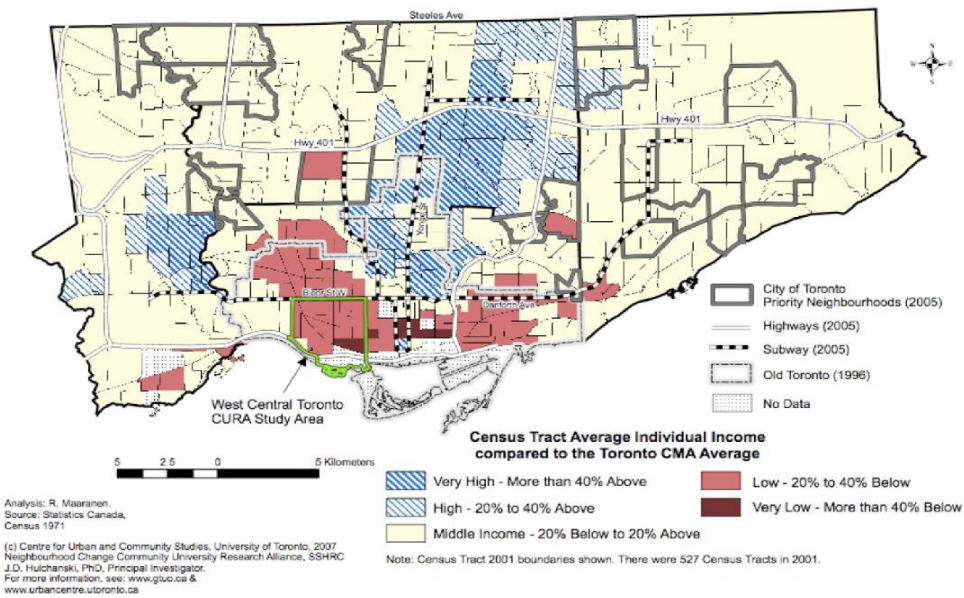


Source: (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2010) *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger*

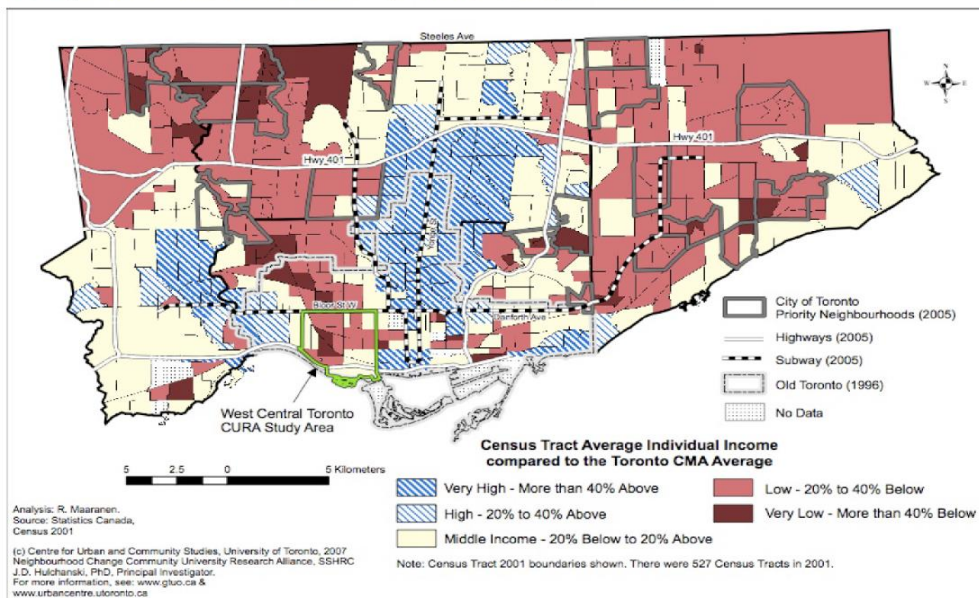
Poverty and Income Inequality Trends in Toronto

Trends of poverty and income inequality were examined through review of additional sources of literature and quantitative data. The result of this review was astounding; the City of Toronto has undergone a significant income inequality transformation since the 1970s. These changes are structural; caused by declines in the manufacturing industries, polarization of labour markets and the increasing gentrification of Toronto’s desired inner-city neighbourhoods. As illustrated below, between 1970 and 2005, there was a significant change in the wealth distribution in the City of Toronto. Between 1970 and 2005, Toronto experienced a significant growth in low income neighbourhoods and a significant reduction in middle income neighbourhoods. Impoverished neighbourhoods were pushed out of the inner city to the inner suburbs resulting in less access to public transit, lengthier commutes and greater obstacles to participation in the labour market and social institutions. (Hulchanski, 2007)

Average Individual Income, City of Toronto, 1970
 Average Individual Income from all sources, 15 Years and Over, Census Tracts



Average Individual Income, City of Toronto, 2000
 Average Individual Income from all sources, 15 Years and Over, Census Tracts



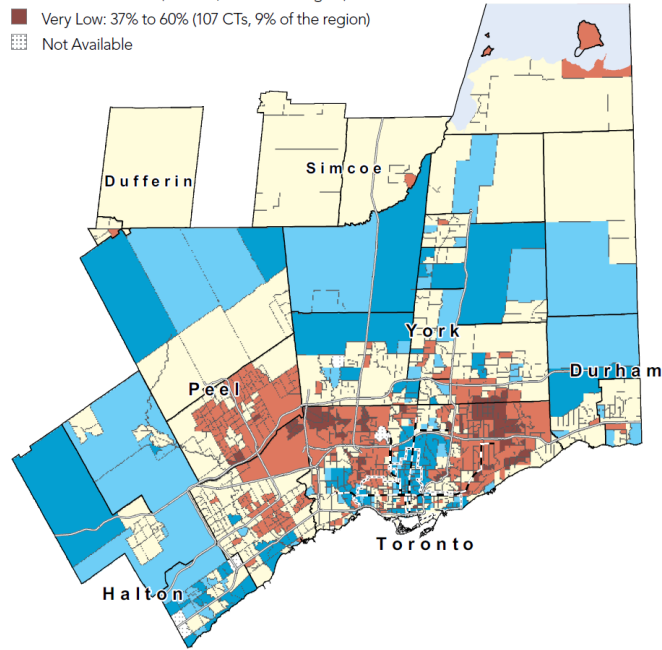
Source: Hulchanski, J. D. (2007). The Three Cities within Toronto.

While Hulchanski demonstrated the widening gap between the rich and the poor in the City of Toronto up to 2007, the United Way has provided an updated view of the poverty map and a trend line of income inequality in the Greater Toronto Area, which demonstrates the continuity of this issue.

Map 3: Average Individual Income, Toronto Census Metropolitan Area, 2015

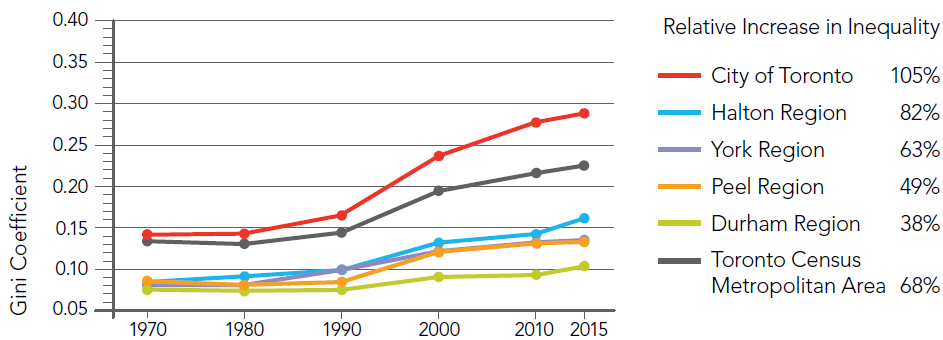
Census Tract Average Individual Income Compared to the Toronto CMA Average of \$50,479

- Very High: 140% to 831% (139 CTs, 12% of the region)
- High: 120% to 140% (81 CTs, 7% of the region)
- Middle: 80% to 120% (483 CTs, 42% of the region)
- Low: 60% to 80% (335 CTs, 29% of the region)
- Very Low: 37% to 60% (107 CTs, 9% of the region)
- Not Available



Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profile Series, 2016.

Figure 3: Income Inequality Between Census Tracts, Greater Toronto Area, 1970-2015



A Gini coefficient value of 0.0 represents perfect equality. All census tracts would have the exact same proportion of income relative to their share of the population. A Gini coefficient value of 1.0 represents perfect inequality. All of the income would be taken by one single census tract while others take none.

Notes: Halton includes parts of the Hamilton CMA and Durham includes parts of the Oshawa CMA. Calculated from census tract average individual income from all sources, before-tax. Income 1970-2000 and 2015 is from the Census. Income for 2010 is Canada Revenue Agency T1FF taxfiler data.

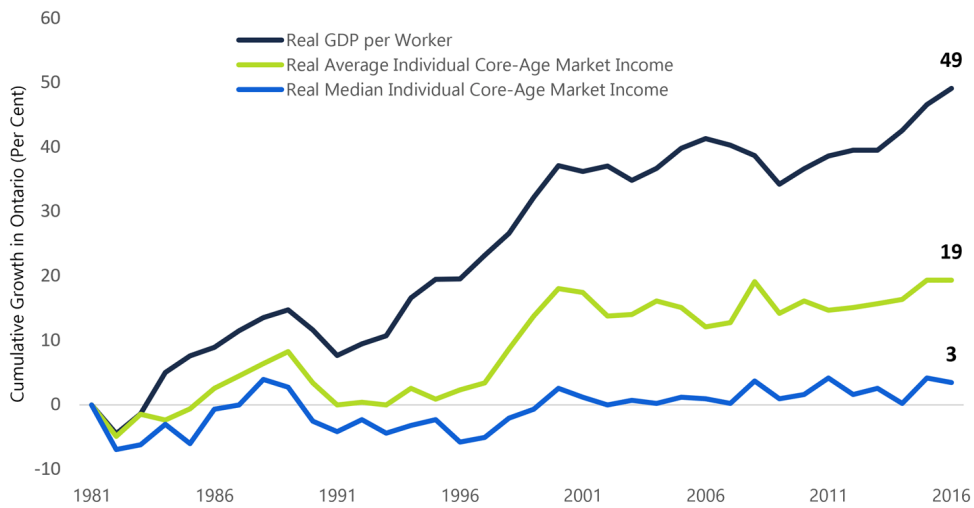
Source: (Dinca-Panitescu, et al., 2017) The Opportunity Equation in the Greater Toronto Area.

The Financial Accountability Office (FAO) of Ontario also recently released a report *Income in Ontario: Growth, Distribution, and Mobility* which focuses primarily on income in Ontario in the post-2000 period (Financial Accountability Office of Ontario, 2019). The report traces trends in personal incomes to examine how the material standard of living in Ontario is faring. It contains some startling findings. The FAO used a common way of assessing income inequality; the ratio of incomes accruing to the top quintile with the incomes of those in the bottom quintile. In 1976, the average market earnings of the top quintile were 9 times higher than those in the bottom. In 2000, this figure had exploded to 16 times higher. By 2019, this figure elevated even further to 19 times higher. In terms of income mobility, it has become more difficult for low-income Ontarians to move up the income ladder, the risk of downward mobility is higher for middle-income Ontarians, and fewer higher-income Ontarians are falling out of high-income. As a result, the number of people trading places in income distributions has decreased, making social inequality more permanent and further entrenched into the fabric of our society. While neo-liberalist policy focused on trickle-down economics³ promised that lowering taxes and regulations would result in inclusive growth, this has not been the result. In fact, despite significant increases in productivity, the middle and lower-income demographics have not reaped commensurate rewards. Output per worker in Ontario has climbed just under 50% between 1981 and 2016; however, the market income of the median wage of Ontarian's has increased by 3 percent. The economic growth has not raised the median income of working-age Ontarians.

The average individual working-age market income increased by 19% during this same period. When compared to the median, the differences in these growth rates indicates that the upper-income Ontarians are experiencing much greater income gains from the economic growth and this economic prosperity is not being shared with the lower half. The

³ Trickle-down economics: an economic theory that claims benefits for the wealthy trickle down to everyone else. These benefits are tax cuts on businesses, high-income earners, capital gains, and dividends. The theory assumes investors, savers, and company owners are the real drivers of growth and that any tax cut savings will be used to expand business, investors buy more stocks, owners invest in operations and more employees, and this trickles down to workers. (Amadeo, 2018)

trends in income inequality and mobility is consistent with recent research that asserts that these are trends are mutually reinforcing (OECD, 2018).



To illustrate the nature of the issue, consider the fact that when children of low-income families face greater obstacles in obtaining access to post-secondary and advanced education, their potential is lost. This not only lowers the potential for enhanced economic growth and domestic productivity, it reduces overall income gains and reinforces income inequality in society (Financial Accountability Office of Ontario, 2019). OECD research has demonstrated that these trends reduce the overall well-being of society, particularly low-income communities, resulting in a deterioration of social cohesion and civic participation (OECD, 2018). To present income inequality visually in Ontario, this research project obtained data from Statistics Canada on the Gini Coefficient for Ontario.



The data collected on income inequality and poverty show a significant worsening of income polarization in Toronto and Ontario. Based on Wilson and Pickett's theory that income inequality and gun violence are correlated, then gun violence should also be increasing. As income inequality increases, opportunities for Toronto's at-risk become more distant. The next section examines the increases of shooting incidents in the City of Toronto during the same time period to examine whether these trends are in fact moving in the same direction.

Gun Violence Trends: A Quantitative Perspective

To prepare the quantitative analysis on gun violence in the City of Toronto, data was obtained using the Toronto Police Service Public Safety Data Portal. Data was only available starting at 2006, which is the first year after the Summer of the Gun Part I, which is the period of focus for this research. Shooting victims were used to measure gun violence trends. Homicides was an alternative dataset that could be used. However, because homicides can be more easily influenced by extraneous variables (improvements in emergency response times, medicine, etc.), shooting victims was utilized.



Data Source: Toronto Police Service – Public Safety Data Portal

As can be seen in the graph above, there has been a significant increase in the number of shooting victims since 2006. Furthermore, both income inequality in Ontario and gun violence in the City of Toronto have both been increasing during the same time period. Between 2006 and 2018, there was an increase of 89% of shooting victims per year. That is an average annual growth rate in shootings of 8% per year. Toronto's average annual growth rate has been approximately 1.5% over the same period (World Population Review, 2019). To humanize these statistics, consider the increase of people that are shot on a yearly basis. Since 2006, 24 more people are shot per year on average. As predicted by examining income inequality trends, the City of Toronto is similarly experiencing increases in shooting incidents.

Other Root Causes

While the issue of worsening income inequality and its impact on gun violence in the City of Toronto became apparent through interviews and substantiated through data triangulation, there are other notable root causes that have been the subject of public discussion. The issue of the enhanced access to firearms surfaced during interviews, but also has been a popular topic in public discourse (Krishnan, 2018). The connection between illicit drug markets and gang activity has also been a long-standing discussion as reason for escalating violence in Canada (Tita, Troshynski, & Graves, 2007). The issue of systemic racism was well-documented in Review of Roots of Youth Violence as root cause (McMurtry & Curling, 2008) and also surfaced in research interviews. Discussed in more detail next, the interviews also revealed that poor police-community relations also contributes to the issue of gun violence. A number of other issues have been documented by the City of Toronto as reasons behind the increasing violence, which are rooted in poverty and racism, such as increasing rates of complex mental health issues, increased drug use, promotion of gang culture on social media, lack of reintegration programs following incarceration, difficulties in

engaging young people who have been failed by education and employment systems (City of Toronto, 2019).

While all of these issues are found to interrelated with the issue of increasing gun violence, this major research paper found that the most pervasive issue is income inequality. Income inequality has several negative social effects; adverse physical and mental health impacts, heightened levels of social distrust, increased drug use, lower life expectancies, higher rates of obesity, higher imprisonment and incarceration, lower social mobility and unequal opportunity, and more violent communities (Pickett & Wilkinson, 2010). As a result, this paper reveals that to address gun violence effectively, policy-makers and politicians must exercise their authority to reduce the level income inequality and reverse the current trends.

Feeling Unsafe

A common issue identified through interviews was the issue of community safety. Six of the 8 interviewees spoke about the fact that a lot of young people today do not feel safe in their community and this results in youth obtaining weapons as a source of protection. A recent research study was conducted, which interviewed 10 youth from the City of Toronto who all had firearm charges. All of the ten interview participants in the study stated that their reason for owning a gun was for protection as they felt unsafe due to the level of violence in their neighbourhoods (Chambers, Scott, & Wolak, 2018).

Interviewees noted that marginalized and racialized communities do not trust the Toronto Police Service. They do not feel that the police are there to protect them from harm; as a result, they obtain a weapon for their own protection. A City Councillor participant noted that because of the relationship between police and the community, young people are 'taking the law into their own hands' by buying a gun to deal with their issues and that this relationship needs to change. Three of the interviewees referred to issues that were exacerbated through the implementation of TAVIS. According to these interviewees, the over-policing of marginalized neighbourhoods and the practice of carding (street-checks)

deepened the mistrust between the police and the community. In a controversial report published by the Toronto Star in 2012, between 2008 and 2011, young black men were 'carded' at a rate 3.4 times higher than the rate for the young white male population and that black and brown males aged fifteen to twenty-four who were documented by police was greater than the actual number of young men of colour living in the patrol zones (Mukherjee & Harper, 2018). One of the interviewees used their own lived experience with the Toronto Police as an example, describing a situation where the interviewee had been beaten up by police in their youth years. The same interviewee spoke to the Toronto Police culture of tough policing, which causes poor community-police relation issues and with youth feeling unsafe in their communities. Mukherjee, Chair of the civilian body charged with overseeing the Toronto Police Service between 2005 and 2015, describes the culture of senior leadership in the Toronto Police supporting an aggressive police culture and the legitimization of officers acting in a muscular way (Mukherjee & Harper, 2018). The Ontario Ombudsman noted similar findings in his June 2016 report, *A Matter of Life and Death*. Justice Dube noted that police officers in Ontario receive excessive training in the use of firearms but lack effective training in negotiation, empathy and de-escalation and prioritize police officer safety over community safety (Dube, 2016). In conclusion, the current culture and practice of Policing in the City of Toronto is leading to marginalized youth not feeling safe in their community, which contributes to the issue of gun violence.

Social Media

Only one interviewee mentioned the role of Social Media in gun violence. This was an unexpected finding as the literature review on the topic of gun violence did not reveal a mention on the role of social media of escalating gun violence. The participant used an anecdotal example to describe how social media is increasing the pace and escalation of gun violence. The interviewee noted that young people are developing online personas and brands. These online personas not only form part of their personal identity, but also can be a

means of generating income. In the example, the interviewee described a situation where a young hip hop artist who was generating income through the count of views of the artists YouTube video. When insulting comments were posted in the comments section of the video, the artist felt the need to respond, otherwise it will have adverse impacts on their online brand/persona. The interviewee had observed a situation where comments were made online, resulting in a shooting occurring later that same evening.

The participant noted that our social service system has not found a way to engage and intervene in these matters and is not prepared to grapple with the complexity of this issue. A review of literature suggests that some jurisdictions are attempting to intervene using social media data. For instance, the Metropolitan Police Service in London developed a risk-assessment tool known as the Gang Matrix, to assess and rank suspected gang members according to their 'propensity for violence'. The police utilized social media to identify suspected gang members through monitoring social media for gang references, gang colours and attire. However, an investigation by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) in 2018 found that the Gang Matrix practices breached data protection and privacy laws (Information Commissioner's Office, 2018). Furthermore, research conducted on this tool by Amnesty International stated that contemporary use of data risks discriminating against already marginalized young people with a disproportionate impact on young black boys. Their research found that 78% of the persons suspected of gang membership were black, compared to a local black population of 13% as a whole. It also noted that 40% of the people listed on the matrix have no record of involvement with a violent offence and 35% have never committed any serious offence (Amnesty International, 2018). Redden also conducted a recent case study on the adoption of Big Data practices across the Government of Canada's departments and agencies and concluded that Canada's plans for adopting Big Data practices are representative of what is occurring in other countries (Redden, 2018). This interviewee's observations about the role of social media in gun violence illustrates the public policy challenges involved. As governments attempt to utilize new technologies and

data, they must balance policy intention with the constitutionally entrenched right to privacy and Canada's outdated privacy laws.

Toronto's Policy Approach to Reducing Gun Violence

Evidence-based decision making is a modern approach to policy formulation and design. Prioritizing evidence in making decisions is a contemporary policy-making movement; it aims to minimize policy failures by enhancing the information available to decision-makers as policy direction is set (Howlett, Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada, June 2009). The Policy Analytical Capacity theory suggests that capacity for evidence-based decision-making contains the following core components: environmental scanning, trends analysis, statistics and modelling, evaluations of means of meeting targets, effective monitoring and appropriate analytical resources (budgets, access to subject matter expertise).

The City of Toronto's capacity in making evidence-based decisions with respect to gun violence policy was discussed with interviewees through discussion around the design, implementation, and evaluation of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy. While the City of Toronto clearly adopted a number of modern policy-making approaches in the policy design stage, interviewees revealed that access to sufficient and timely resources caused challenges in the implementation stage. Furthermore, Interviewees noted that adopting robust formal policy evaluations will require trade-offs through the redistribution of service delivery resources. While the City of Toronto is experiencing capacity challenges in routinely evaluating gun violence intervention programs, American Cities have been conducting comprehensive external evaluations through the use of federal grants, foundations, and voter initiatives.

Innovative Policy Design & Formulation

Interviews with Civil Servant participants revealed that the City of Toronto used evidence-based decision-making in formulating the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy (TYES). Interviewees revealed that jurisdictional scans were conducted in formulating TYES. Further, TYES' was based on the extensive research conducted through the *Roots of Youth Violence*. Applied research, statistical analysis, and modelling were utilized to identify communities at highest risk of gun violence. For example, civil servants layered social indicators of health and risk-crime indexes to target resources. These practices conform with the Policy Analytical Capacity theory, which notes that institutions with capacity for evidence-based decision making utilize data and research to identify problem causation and develop alternative solutions (Howlett, Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada, June 2009).

However, evidence-based policy-making is not purely technocratic and expert-driven, as it competes with that of the political judgment of elected decision-makers. Rather, this form of decision-making is better characterized as a compromise between political and technocratic policy-making where political, non-evidence-based, policy-making is tempered by an effort of civil servant specialists "speaking truth to power". A participant noted an example of how data was utilized to redirect resources to communities in need. In this example, the Mayor's direction was to deliver gang prevention programs in Malvern, Jane & Finch, and Regent Park due to public discourse around areas with high shooting incidents. Civil servants at the City of Toronto gathered data, which demonstrated that a lot of the perpetrators of gun violence were from Mount Dennis and Rexdale, even though a lot of the shootings were occurring in Jane & Finch. In "speaking truth to power", the civil service was able to redirect the social investment into Rexdale and Mount Dennis. This is an anecdotal example of evidence-informed policy advice which effectively tempered political judgment and reduced the probabilities of policy failure.

According to the Policy Analytical Capacity theory, a common policy failure occurs at the design and formulation stage when overreaching governments attempt to deal with wicked problems and develop unattainable policy agendas. A participant acknowledged that TYES in itself cannot significantly reduce gun violence as the policy was not designed to address systemic racism and poverty. Rather, the policy design is aimed at ensuring that youth most vulnerable to violence has sufficient supports to change their course of life. This aligns with the statements in the TYES report “The Toronto Youth Equity Strategy is based on the idea that those youth who are most vulnerable to involvement in serious violence and crime do not have equitable access to the comprehensive supports they need to change their lives for the better” (City of Toronto, 2014). The same participant also commented on the significant role required of the provincial and federal governments in addressing racism. The TYES report includes an action item focused on advocating to the provincial and federal government partners (City of Toronto, 2014). It appears based on interview data, augmented by a review of the TYES report, that the City of Toronto did not overreach in attempting to resolve this problem in isolation, recognizing the limited policy levers and resources available at the municipal level of government.

Data from the interviews demonstrated that the City of Toronto’s civil service has adopted modern ‘best-practice’ approaches in policy-making. As Tony Dean, a former Secretary of Cabinet of Ontario, argues, today’s policy challenges need an integrated policy-making approach. He notes challenges of fragmented agency structures and that improving collaboration within government should be a priority area for public service leaders (Dean, 2015). Politicians and public servants have recognized that siloed approaches are not adaptive enough to tackle intractable problems. Dean argues that tackling big policy challenges requires deep collaboration and cross-ministry (or division) discussions (Dean, 2015).

Interviewees confirmed that in developing TYES, the City of Toronto assembled interdivisional tables. These tables were developed to ensure all of the relevant divisions were connecting their work resulting in shared accountability through action items and

commitments made throughout the City's divisions. Further, the development of TYES included engagement of federal and provincial ministries. TYES also held significant community roundtables, including involvement from members of a number of not-for-profits, advocacy groups, and citizens. According to one participant, the involvement of grassroots, community organizations is built directly into individual staff performance plans at the City. Governments around the world, along with policy think-tanks and not-for-profit organizations have recognized that governments do not have the capacity and resources to tackle big social issues, especially through command and control approaches to policy-making and delivery (Dean, 2015). A modern "best practice" in government ought to be co-production in policy-making where governments engage citizens, communities, and front-line professionals in developing collaborative solutions. (Dean, 2015).

The development of TYES also embodied the concept of 'user-centred design'. The concept is based on the premise that government services deeply affect people's lives and that they have a responsibility to address the needs of citizens by putting people first and taking a user-centric approach into design (US Department of Health and Human Services, 2019). As the TYES was targeted at youth, the design of the TYES had incorporated youth involvement. One participant noted how young people articulated the issues they were facing throughout the policy document. The core tool for service providers in implementing TYES action items was a youth-developed "Vulnerable Youth Spectrum". These findings revealed that the City of Toronto honoured its commitment in TYES to involve vulnerable youth in decision-making when policies and/or programs are designed (City of Toronto, 2018).

Implementing TYES

The Policy Analytical Capacity theory asserts that common policy failures occur at the implementation stage when funding issues arise or when programs lack appropriate oversight and monitoring mechanisms (Howlett, Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada, June 2009). The primary problem identified

with the implementation of TYES was the duration and instability of funding for youth programming. Two interviewees noted that short-term project-based funding commitments created challenges in the effectiveness of program service delivery. They asserted that to deal with complex issues like gun violence, funding needs to be stable and long-term. One participant noted that they have observed instances where the effectiveness of community investments starts to make a difference but then the end of project-based funding occurs, leaving the community back where it started.

However, participants also identified other aspects of the implementation of TYES as strengths, namely its governance and performance monitoring approach. A participant revealed that the TYES formed a youth advisory committee and a City of Toronto Governance Steering Committee with a mandate to monitor implementation and enhance program accountability. In October 2018, the Toronto Star released a media article asserting that the TYES was recommended at a cost of \$15M by city staff but has survived on less than \$500 thousand per year (Pagliaro, Toronto is falling behind on its own plans to help at-risk youth, 2018). Despite the criticisms noted in the article about the City's implementation of TYES, this MRP found that TYES was substantially implemented; however, with minor delays and some action items outstanding during the writing of this report. Following the Toronto Star article, the City of Toronto subsequently released a briefing note on the implementation status of TYES in February 2019. The briefing note asserts that "TYES will be fully implemented in 2019, contingent on council approval of \$2.8M in 2019 Staff Recommended Operating Budget and from within existing City Resources,". The briefing note also stated that 84 of the 110 action items have already been fully funded, 22 will be implemented in 2019, and 4 action items are no longer required due to program changes. A quick analysis of the budget attached to the briefing note shows a 2015-2019 cumulative net new investment of \$13.6M (City of Toronto, 2019). The original list of action items breakdown timelines from short-term (2014-2015) to long-term (not expected to reach full implementation until after 2016) (City of Toronto, 2014). When comparing the items to be

implemented in 2019 with the original action items list, several were marked as longer-term action items, while there are also instances of items that were to be delivered in the short-term, which demonstrates that some of the action items marked as urgent have been delayed. This Major Research Paper concludes that despite critical media coverage, the City of Toronto was primarily successful in implementing the TYES. However, a number of action items were not implemented in early 2019, some of these initiatives were late compared to their originally scheduled implementation.

To sum up, the interview participants noted challenges in the stability and short-term nature of funding commitments, but also highlighted strengths in the monitoring and accountability mechanisms. A document review of relevant briefing notes revealed the majority of TYES action items were implemented since the policy was approved by Council in 2014. While there are some action items that remain to be implemented, the City of Toronto has outlined the completion of the strategy in 2019, except for 4 action items rendered no longer necessary.

Policy & Program Evaluation

The TYES report recommends that the City of Toronto increase its capacity to evaluate the impact of youth programs (City of Toronto, 2014). The Policy Analytical Capacity theory notes that policy evaluations are a key stage of the policy cycle; evaluations provide feedback on the impact of policy interventions and that this feedback is integrated into future policy deliberations (Howlett, Policy analytical capacity and evidence-based policy-making: Lessons from Canada, June 2009). The interview process revealed however, that undertaking formal program evaluations results in a tradeoff between service delivery and funding the high cost of such evaluations.

All the interview participants recognized the value of program evaluation. However, participants differed in their perspectives on the best use of program evaluations. One participant noted that the value of evaluations is in supporting the Mayor in defending the

amount of public funding invested in youth programming. Another interviewee articulated that councillors have been asking for more data from youth programs in order to influence City Council on where to better invest funding and that funding could be better spent in violence prevention initiatives than enforcement approaches. Conversely, a different interviewee stated that funding is being committed in response to people dying from gun violence, not because of the evidence gathered through a program evaluation. Yet another interviewee noted that not all programs need to be formally evaluated and that the core value of conducting formal program evaluations is testing a new policy intervention for efficacy. Despite variation in participant perceptions on the purposes of evaluation, there was a widespread recognition of the overall value of program evaluations.

In discussion of the cost of evaluations, the Prevention Intervention Toronto (PIT) program evaluation was cited by three interviewees as a leading example of tradeoffs that are required to fund external program evaluations. The PIT Evaluation found increases in pro-social attitudes towards crime, violence and gangs, participants experienced a statistically significant improvement in attitudes towards employment in the short and long-term and no statistical differences in attitudes towards education. The PIT evaluation was a quasi-experimental study, using a time-series design and a comparison group of youth who did not receive program services (Public Safety Canada, 2013). Two participants noted that the evaluation costed as much as 20% of the total cost of the program. One interviewee suggested that 50 additional at-risk youth could have been served for the cost of conducting the program evaluation. Furthermore, a different interviewee asserted that this program was no longer funded despite the positive outcomes identified in the program evaluation report. Yet another interviewee stated that whenever the conversation turned to where the funding for an evaluation would come from, difficult decisions of what other public services need to be reduced to find the money in the budget likely followed.

Further, interviews consistently highlighted concerns about the demand on program administrators in facilitating evaluations and the difficulty in redirecting resources from

community investment into evaluation studies. One participant noted that service delivery partners have limited resources to begin with and their mandate is to save lives, not spend time filling out reports for program evaluators. A different interviewee noted that it is very difficult re-profiling scarce resources away from community organizations to fund evaluations. When making choices about scarce resources, program administrators are more interested in ensuring services are continued.

The core purpose of conducting a program evaluation can raise concerns about the legitimacy of the study. Evaluations are deemed illegitimate when they are conducted to support foregone conclusions or public relations (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). The Punctuated Equilibrium theory suggests that for some policy problems with strongly entrenched norms, selective reading of evaluations can occur to appease political direction for certain kinds of solutions (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993). A participant noted concerns of this nature and suggested that before evaluations are conducted, it requires understanding the real purpose behind an evaluation. Participants also noted the difficulty in choosing outcomes to be measured in evaluation, recognizing that the data collected is designed around the funder's needs.

The professional practice of program evaluation requires a high degree of research capacity, knowledge, and experience but also contains political inherency. Like other professions such as accounting and law, the field of program evaluation has professional associations, professional standards and ethical guidelines (Mertens & Wilson, 2012). A participant asserted that the City of Toronto is not a research institution, which presents challenges in conducting internal program evaluations. The same participant noted that in gun violence intervention, there are no clear indicators to measure; as a result, conducting formal evaluations requires the engagement of research institutions. As demonstrated above, engaging external evaluators can be a costly endeavor.

Despite the challenges noted above, the City of Toronto produced a significant number of performance measures related to the implementation of TYES. A 2019 Operating Budget Briefing Note on the Implementation Status of TYES (City of Toronto, 2019) lists 15 successes as a result of TYES investment. A few examples are listed below:

- Employment secured and educational upgrading provided for 364 youth who are most vulnerable to involvement in serious crime and violence.
- Created Toronto's first-ever "extrajudicial measures", pre-charge diversion program to engage youth in life skills development as an alternative to criminal charges.
- Helped secure full-time trades employment for 120 youth on probation or parole or who identify as having a conflict with the law.

As can be observed, the City of Toronto collects significant data on the outputs of their programs, despite challenges with evaluating them.

The *Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* already suggested that high quality program evaluations are needed in considering youth violence prevention programs to identify ineffective practices and to improve upon interventions that demonstrate promise (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). Interview participants offered ideas for enhancing the practices of program evaluation within the youth violence prevention community. Three interviewees suggested that to enhance evaluation capacity, data collection strategies needs to be built directly into program design.

Using TYES as a case study, it appears that the City of Toronto lacks requisite resources and capacity to conduct routine program evaluations. This is partially due to the high cost associated with external program evaluations and is augmented by the fact that City Council does not provide additional funding for these studies. Interviewees expressed concern about re-allocating scarce resources from high priority community investments into program evaluations. Their concern partly is associated with the fact that program evaluations do not necessarily translate into more funding being allocated to high-impact

initiatives. Furthermore, the PIT program was discontinued despite receiving a positive evaluation and significant resources committed in studying the effectiveness of the program. When considering the idea of conducting internal program evaluations, the City of Toronto does not have a research function that is scaled to manage formal program evaluations. Despite the various concerns raised, interviewees offered ideas and solutions, including scaling up not-for-profits aimed at enhancing evaluation capacity in the sector, the opening of government data to the public, building evaluation into program design and utilizing modern technologies to reduce cost and administrative burden.

The Policy Analytical Capacity theory was utilized as a framework to understand and evaluate the City of Toronto's policy approach to addressing gun violence. The data gathered through interviews demonstrated a strong capacity at the City of Toronto in evidence-based policy design and formulation. The City of Toronto's design of TYES embodied the core characteristics described in the theory but also encompassed contemporary 'best practice' approaches to policy design, such as user-focused design, networked government approaches to policy-making, and policy co-production. The short-term nature of funding for gun violence intervention programs was noted as a capacity constraint in the implementation of TYES. Discussions revealed strong governance mechanisms to monitor implementation. The majority of the 110 action items contained in TYES were implemented; the remaining action items are to be implemented in 2019, apart from 4 initiatives. Resources to support ongoing program evaluations for gun violence prevention initiatives are limited. TYES reported data on the success of a number of the initiatives. However, the high cost of external evaluations and limited research capacity of the public service presents challenges in incorporating ongoing evaluation of gun violence intervention policy.

The Inside Perspective of Toronto's Funding Decisions

The *Punctuated Equilibrium* theory discussed earlier served as a theoretical framework in interpreting research interview data. Interview discussions largely focused on how the image of policy solutions are portrayed and utilized to influence decision-makers. Data analysis also revealed organized interests influencing the policy-decisions and funding levels. Interview participants provided suggestions on how to balance the power dynamics and consequently improved evidence-informed political decision-making.

The Policy Image Contest – The Loudest Voice Prevails

Baumgartner and Jones assert that policy monopolies are punctured when a shift in attention occurs after a long period of stable policy-direction. The image of a policy plays a fundamental role in either puncturing the 'equilibrium' or maintenance of a policy monopoly (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993). Interview participants revealed interest groups and agencies attempting to shape the policy image. One interview participant asserted that funding is allocated to whoever has the 'loudest voice' in the policy arena. Having a loud voice entails having adequate financial resources, government relations capacity, and interest group access to political actors. Groups with an ability to align their interests with those of political actors are able to amplify their voice in the policy arena. The same participant reinforced this theory through stating that the more organized the interest group, the greater their ability to influence funding decisions and shape the policy conversation.

As noted earlier, the majority of interview participants noted the strength of the Toronto Police Service in influencing the perceived solutions to gun violence. Participants asserted that the Police Service is very well-resourced, politically connected, and well-organized and equipped to influence funding decisions. A participant asserted that the Toronto Police Service is effective at conveying the image that enforcement strategies can immediately reduce instances of gun violence. A different participant noted that the Toronto Police Service has a distinct advantage in influencing the policy-image due to their inside access to government as they form part of the broader public service. Mike McCormack, the

Toronto Police Services Association president, repeatedly utilizes media to convey that the gun violence problem in Toronto is due to a lack of resources for hiring more police officers. Further he suggests that the prohibition of police authority to conduct 'proactive' policing tactics, such as 'carding' is a major contributor to gun violence (Domise, 2018).

Interview participants further noted that the community groups, not-for-profits, and advocacy groups are not as well organized or as resourced as the Toronto Police Service. Three participants noted that the not-for-profits in this field are disaggregated and do not speak with a unified voice. One participant noted that these groups are competing for funding and are claiming that their unique organization can address the issue. A participant stated that there is a vicious cycle that maintains the status quo. The participant asserted that there are organized interests that profit from crime and violence, noting that significant money is made when someone is incarcerated in the form of professional services and legal fees. Further he asserted that those without the resources are those that end up being incarcerated due to the cost of justice. Through this cycle, he asserted, we observe large populations of black and indigenous persons in our prisons, which reinforces the image that these groups are perpetrators. These actions reinforce the status quo and prevent the change in perceptions and in policy-circles.

The Iron Triangle

Baumgartner and Jones describe the notion of a policy monopoly existing when there is a period of stability in policy responses to a particular issue. This stability of policy solutions is made possible when an alliance of interest group leaders, politicians and civil servants govern a sector of public policy using similar approaches to decision-making, which can be unchallenged for long periods of time. This alliance, often referred to as an 'iron triangle' is conceptualized on the basis of a government agency, interest groups, and a political body controlling a policy direction for their mutual benefit (Adams, 1981). The concept of an iron triangle was focused primarily on American politics but has been observed in other similar democratic institutions (Baumgartner, Green-Pedersen, & Jones,

2006). The research interviews revealed characteristics of an 'iron triangle' between the Toronto Police Service Association (Interest Group), the Toronto Police Service (Bureaucracy), and City Council (Political Venue).

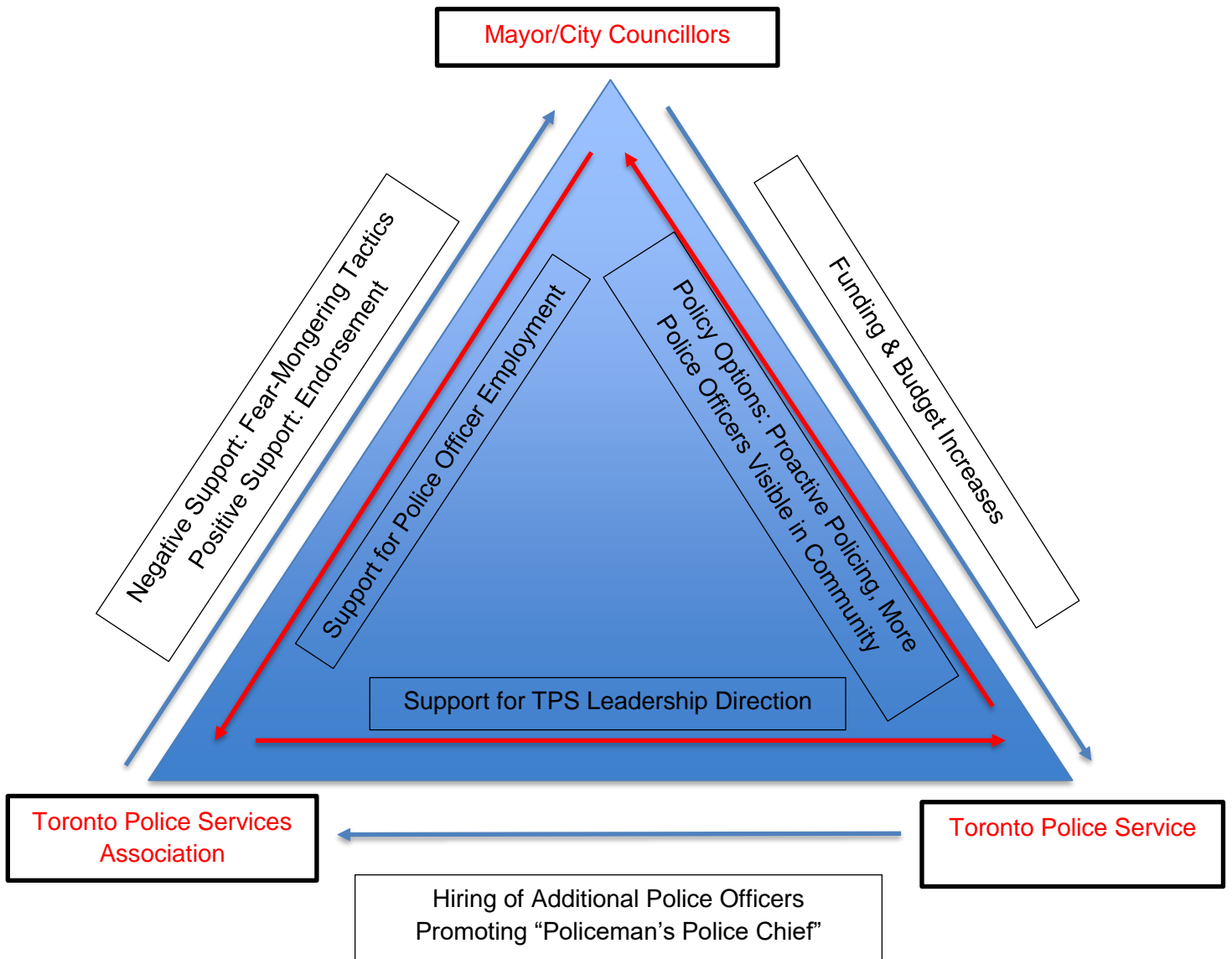
The Toronto Police Services Association has a mandate to promote and protect the interests of their members and the policing profession through representation and advocacy (Toronto Police Association, 2019). Research interviews revealed advocacy efforts and tactics used by the Toronto Police Services Association in influencing funding decisions. One interviewee noted that the Toronto Police Services Association uses fear-mongering to secure more funding for Toronto Police Officers. The same participant stated that the Association use the media and the public to communicate that the issue of gun violence is due to not having enough police officers. In a radio interview on July 10th, 2018, the Association president, Mike McCormack, asserted that the reduction in the number of police officers in the Toronto Police Force has directly contributed to an increase in gun violence (Fox & Sumran, 2019). The Association has also been known to publicly provide electoral support to political leaders, including the current Mayor John Tory. When Mayor Tory ran in 2004, he received a public endorsement from the Association of which he accepted (Mukherjee & Harper, 2018). These strategies are examples of both positive political support (public endorsement) and negative support (fear-mongering) for opposing politicians.

Research participants also noted that the Toronto Police Service utilized various tactics to protect the budget and resources of the Police Force. A participant stated when a search for a new Police Chief occurred, the Toronto Police Service desired a "policeman's police". The participant stated that when Peter Sloly was up for promotion, he openly discussed not requiring more police officers and that existing tools can be utilized to address today's issues. Mukherjee also noted that Sloly was not supported as a potential Chief of Police, as he was not "one of the boys". Sloly was not ultimately appointed and was substituted with current police Chief Mark Saunders. The participant noted that Saunders identifies himself as a "Policeman's Police". The same participant noted that this messaging garnered the support of the President of the Toronto Police Services Association. The participant stated that

McCormack and Saunders, now aligned, collectively advise politicians that they need to provide better funding for police officers 'or else'. The same participant stated that this is how you end up with a police-state, where the police begin to 'call the shots'. A different interviewee suggested that the Toronto Police Service utilize data to provide an illusion of increases of violent crime leading up to City of Toronto budget decisions. Yet another interviewee suggested that the Toronto Police Service supports politicians who need to be seen as doing something about the problem by ensuring more visibility of police officers in the community.

City Council is responsible for reviewing and approving the Toronto Police Service budget. As illustrated further in the next section of this paper, the Toronto Police Services budget has been growing at a rate faster than inflation. Furthermore, the Mayor is conventionally reserved a seat on the Board of the Toronto Police Service and the current Mayor has decided to take a leadership role as Chair (Mukherjee & Harper, 2018). During the 2018 rise in Gun Violence, the City of Toronto provided funding to put 200 more additional police officers on patrol, costing the City an additional \$3 million dollars. The CBC published an article that revealed that there was only one less shooting during the period of additional police officer deployment when compared to the 8-weeks prior (Dunn, 2018). A research participant also noted that the Toronto Police Service was the only agency of the City of Toronto that did not receive a funding reduction in the 2019 budget. In reviewing the data, the Toronto Police Service received a \$30M, or 3% increase, in its 2019 budget. A different participant concluded that the Toronto Police Association President, Police Chief, and Mayor of Toronto are "all one the same side". Despite the recent funding increases, Mayor Tory has publicly contested the need for police officers. In conclusion, the continued support for funding for the hiring of more police officers in an attempt to curb gun violence provides further indication of organized interests providing policy solutions that are in stark contrast with contemporary research on effective gun violence intervention methods. As depicted visually below, the culmination of the interview data suggests the potential of the existence of an 'Iron Triangle' in the City of Toronto. The presence of these conditions appears to influence funding

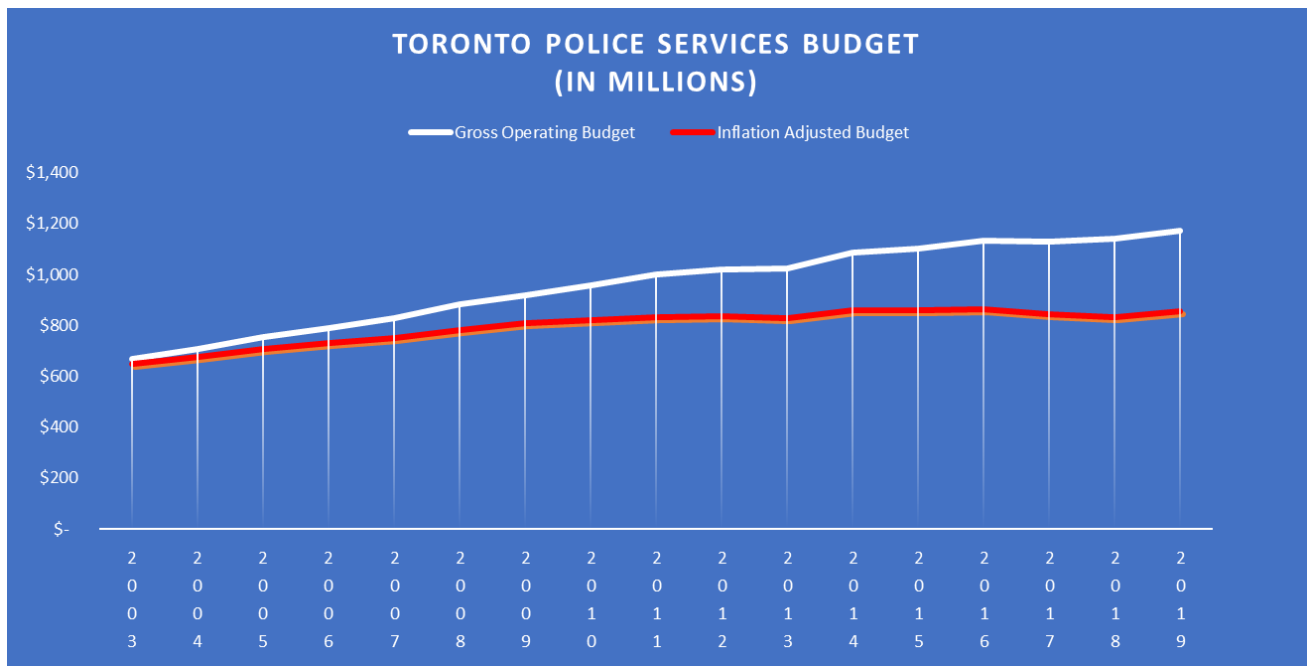
decisions with respect to policy solutions in tackling the issue of gun violence in the City of Toronto.



Policing Budget Trends & Political Maneuvering

Given the focus of the research interviews on the role of the Toronto Police Services influencing funding decisions, additional data was gathered to examine the trends on the Toronto Police Services budget. Quantitative data was collected on the gross operating budget, using the Toronto Police Service Annual Statistics Report (Toronto Police Service, 2019). To account for inflation, Statistics Canada’s data on the Consumer Price Index was

obtained (Statistics Canada, 2019). The data was used to develop 'Inflation Adjusted Budget' figures.



Data Source: Toronto Police Service – Annual Statistical Reports

As illustrated above the Toronto Police Services operating budget has been growing significantly since 2003, from \$670 million in 2003 to just under \$1.2 billion in 2019, marking a 75% increase over the past 17 years. Conversely, the City of Toronto’s total operating budget has remained constant over a similar time-period when inflation is factored into the analysis. Moreover, Slack and Cote noted that social and family services spending decreased between 2004 and 2014 (Slack & Cote, 2014). In conclusion, the Toronto Police Services budget has grown at a much faster rate than City’s total budget figures.

Alok Mukherjee provides detailed insights of the politics of policing through sharing his experiences as Chair of the civilian body charged with overseeing the Toronto Police Service between 2005 and 2015 in *Excessive Force: Toronto’s Fight to Reform City Policing*. In the introduction to the book, Mukherjee describes how the country’s police chiefs and the police unions have become deeply involved in influencing public policy (Mukherjee & Harper, 2018). In 2012, under the Ford mayoralty, there was a push for 10% reduction in the city’s

budget, including all agencies boards, commissions and departments. The police board accepted the 10% reduction but negotiated successfully with the City to have it conducted over two years. The goal for 2012 budget was a 4.6% reduction. The night before the budget, then Chief of Police met with Ford, circumventing the Board (Mukherjee & Harper, 2018) As per the data above, budget went up by 2% instead of down by 4.6%, despite Ford announcing in the media that this was the first time the police service had reduced its budget. 2013 was noted as more successful as the collective efforts of Mukherjee and City Councillor Thompson were able to reduce the budget in 2013. When Mayor Tory was elected in 2014, he assumed a leadership position on the Toronto Police Board. In previous leadership runs, he had been endorsed and accepted the endorsement of the Toronto Police Association. During Mukherjee's tenure, he noted the degree of political influence of Mike McCormack, the president of the Toronto Police Association, a son of a former Toronto Police Chief with several family members in policing. Mukherjee's documented experiences correspond with the data collected in the research interviews about the political tactics used by the Toronto Police Services Association in influencing funding decisions. Mukherjee contended that McCormack engaged in a series of intimidation factors. For example, Mukherjee had been a major proponent and author of reports focused on major overhauls to policing and reducing costs. These police reforms included recommendations such as reducing the amount of non-core policing work conducted by police officers (e.g. working movie sets, crossing guard duties, construction sets) at a high cost to the taxpayer with cheaper alternatives. Mukherjee also had made a controversial post on Facebook which appeared to be critical of Toronto Police relations with racialized communities. Following the tabling of the report and his Facebook post, Mukherjee details being the subject of intimidation efforts from police officers, including an intense barrage of voicemails, Facebook posts, pushing for his resignation.

While only one account of relations, Mukherjee's book provide an inside look at the role of the Mayor in policing, the influence of the Toronto Police Association on public policy, and how

alliances can be made with the Chief of Police to overcome attempts at curbing budgets and reforming policing. These findings concur with the data provided by interview participants, such as “fear-mongering” tactics to secure additional funding for hiring police officers. In conclusion, the additional quantitative data and literature examined correspond with the findings of the research interviews documenting the tactics used by the Police Force to influence funding decisions. Furthermore, the characteristics of an iron triangle described in research interviews correspond with experiences and observations for the former Chair of the Civilian Police Oversight body.

Puncturing the Equilibrium

The Punctuated Equilibrium theory posits that the equilibrium of policy monopolies can be disrupted by new ideas about solutions to policy problems and by periods of instability. The record-breaking year for homicides in 2018, may result in new policy images and policy solutions by entrepreneurial policy actors. These ideas often come from decision-makers in the media, specialists, experts, and other policy actors. The ideas for new solutions catch on as more people get involved in the debate and a surge in attention transpires resulting in a momentum for significant policy change (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993). Interview participants offered up suggestions on how policy change can occur within the City of Toronto.

One participant stated that the community needs to switch the conversation from a tough on crime agenda to one that is more focused on the social determinants of health. The participant asserted that this requires changing our societal norms from punitive approaches to a public health approach, specifically mentioning the use of ‘violence interrupters’, which is a component of the Chicago Ceasefire model examined earlier in this research paper. A pervasive theme was the need for a unified voice coming from community groups. A different participant noted an example where the City of Toronto assembled a roundtable of not-for-profits and the police groups together to develop a concerted voice on the issue of restorative justice. As a result, they were able to secure additional federal funds. This participant noted that this changes the discussion from a combative social development

versus an enforcement approach to a collective approach of effectively addressing the issue of gun violence.

Only one participant noted the important role of the media throughout. This is surprising given that the *Punctuated Equilibrium* theory posits that the media is central to the change in a policy image as it shifts the stance of policy participants. This shifting of policy images contributes to the undermining of policy monopolies (Baumgartner & Jones, 1993).

Another common theme during the research interviews was the need to demonstrate the social return on investment from investing in preventative interventions. An interview participant stated that it would be valuable to conduct a social return on investment study to demonstrate how much less costly it is to focus on preventative treatment of youth issues than it is to utilize the traditional approach of enforcement, prosecution, and incarceration. This participant suggestion was examined further. Discussed further in the recommendations section, the Social Return on Investment study, if conducted on an effective program, can illustrate how not only successful social programs are, but the positive fiscal benefits to decision-makers concerned with restoring fiscal balance of public budgets.

Conclusion

The aim of this Major Research Paper was to enhance thought leadership and knowledge in understanding why gun violence in the City of Toronto is increasing, how funding decisions are made, and how gun violence intervention policies are design, implemented and evaluated in the City of Toronto. These objectives were carried out through in-depth semi-structured interviews with civil servants, researchers, politicians, and other policy-actors who have been intimately involved with gun violence intervention policy.

The research findings indicate that 'gun violence' contains characteristics of a wicked problem but does not meet the pure form of a wicked problem as described by Head and Alford. While a wicked problem cannot be addressed by a policy or program in isolation of broader social, economic, and health structures, this major research paper found that

addressing income inequality could have a significant impact and reduction on gun violence in the City of Toronto. In other words, the issue of gun violence has characteristics of a wicked problem but there are clear solutions available that require firm and collective political commitment. The rise of income inequality in the City of Toronto is having an adverse impact on residents and communities and is a predominant root cause of gun violence. Over the past several decades, the City of Toronto has experienced a widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, an erosion of middle-class communities, and decrease in social mobility. In response to these trends, the City of Toronto aims to reduce poverty and gun violence. However, civil servants acknowledge that the constitutional status of municipalities limit the policy tools available and requires leadership at the provincial and federal levels of government to effectively address the issue. The lack of feeling safe in Toronto's marginalized neighbourhoods are leading youth to obtain guns. Poor community-police relations were noted as a core reason that marginalized youth are feeling unsafe. Research interviews revealed that aggressive police tactics, such as carding, and a 'tough policing culture' have played a role in deteriorating the relationships in these neighbourhoods. The concentration and severity of violence in these neighbourhoods are another primary reason why youth feel the need to obtain a gun for their own protection.

The research interview findings revealed the existence of an 'iron triangle' relationship between the Toronto Police Service, the Toronto Police Service Association, and the Mayor of Toronto. This tri-partite relationship serves as the predominant influence on funding decisions, resulting in the prioritization of enforcement approaches to resolving gun violence. The Toronto Police Service and Toronto Police Service Association utilize their access to media, fear-mongering tactics, and inside access to City Council to control the policy image of gun violence. The fragmented nature of the not-for-profit and community sector results in a lack of scalable resources resulting in a diluted voice in the policy arena, which serves to maintain the current policy monopoly held by the 'Iron Triangle'. In conclusion, the Toronto Police have a policy monopoly over gun-violence intervention funding. Developing a unified voice from the youth sector, working in harmony with the police

and civil service would serve to enhance the policy-direction to more effective policy solutions.

The City of Toronto demonstrates a high-degree of evidence-based decision-making in gun violence intervention policy decisions. The design of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy revealed a high capacity of evidence-informed decisions and best-practice approaches to policy formulation. The use of evidence and applied statistics has successfully influenced political direction limiting the prospect of policy failure through over-reliance on political judgment. In implementing the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy, the City of Toronto established governance committees to ensure effective program implementing monitoring. However, implementation challenges were observed with respect to the short-term nature of funding tied to election cycles. Politicians and Civil Servants in the City of Toronto recognize the high-value in conducting routine formal program evaluation as part of evidence-based policy-making. However, civil servants and politicians are hesitant to initiate routine program evaluations due to the trade-offs involved. Politicians and civil servants discussed the challenge in re-profiling funding away from community investment in order to fund costly program evaluations. Civil servants also expressed a limited propensity to invest in formal program evaluations due to previous experiences where positive evaluation results were underutilized and failed to influence future funding decisions as the program was discontinued.

In conclusion the City of Toronto is experiencing an uptick in gun violence primarily due to trends of increasing social inequality. The Toronto Public Service has a high capacity for evidence-based decision-making and recognizes the need to address social inequality, systemic racism, and marginalization. However, the political decisions and funding allocations are being predominantly directed at the deployment of additional police officers and proactive policing measures, which have been demonstrated as less effective policy-solutions. The discrepancy between the evidence-based decision making and political direction is being influenced by the policy monopoly held by the Toronto Police Force.

Recommendations

Program Evaluation Capacity Development

The City of Toronto has not been provided with additional resources to fund the high cost of external program evaluations, nor do they have full research capacity to routinely conduct internal evaluations. The following two recommendations are suggested as an approach that could be adopted to minimize the trade-offs involved in conducting program evaluation and community investment.

Establishment of Co-operative Research Partnerships with an Academic Institution

Cooperative Education Models were initially developed to bridge theory and practice, meet emerging needs of employers, and enhance education experiences for prospective students (Haddara & Skanes, 2007). Canadian universities have recognized the value of experiential learning and co-operative education programs. Research on this subject demonstrate significant benefits to academic institutions, students, and employers (Haddara & Skanes, 2007). Instead of a traditional co-operative education program, the City of Toronto could partner with a graduate program that has a significant program evaluation pedagogy to develop a co-operative research program. The City of Toronto could work with an academic institution to provide a competitive opportunity for high-performing, high-potential graduate students, to conduct a program evaluation on a City of Toronto programs (internal field). The program could also be utilized to provide capacity development workshops for service delivery partners (external field). The evaluation could be conducted over a year as part of the student's Major Research Project, with a small team of students selected by the City of Toronto and supervised by faculty to ensure high-quality product delivery. To illustrate the potential benefits of this recommendation, York University's Master's in Public Policy, Administration and Law (MPPAL) is utilized. The MPPAL is an executive-style, part-time program, which encompasses a significant policy and program evaluation model, along with a Major Research Paper option.

BENEFITS FROM A CO-OP PROGRAM EVALUATION PROJECT		
City of Toronto	MPPAL (York University)	MPPAL Students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost Savings of Program Evaluations • Enhanced Capacity for Research and Program Evaluation • Access to Executive Graduate Students with a minimum of five years' experience in Public Sector Management • Enhanced relationships with Academic Institutions • Development of Talent Pool of Public Policy and Administration professionals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative Education Programs increase attractiveness of programs (Haddara & Skanes, 2007) • Alignment with MPPAL's distinct market position of Public Administration program focused on experiential learning • Beneficial Partnership with large public sector employer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative education has been shown to have a positive effect on student's career trajectories and starting salaries (Haddara & Skanes, 2007) • Students in the MPPAL program gain exposure to program evaluation field and municipal governance in real-life setting

Funding to be Re-Allocated to Highly Effective Programs

The current direction at Toronto City Hall is focused on allocating the majority of public funds to policing strategies which have demonstrated limited effectiveness, adverse impacts on community relations, and overall low value for money. Politicians and other policy-actors should prioritize their funding on programs that have been proven to be highly effective. *The Review of the Roots of Youth Violence* provided evidence that programs that are most effective are ones that seek to improve educational attainment and employment prospects for at-risk youth (McMurtry & Curling, 2008). Conversely, "tough on crime" approaches have resulted in concerns around the abuse of police power and poor community relations, while scant evidence has been produced on its effectiveness. Furthermore, research evidence suggests that the hiring of additional police officers has the opposite result of reducing youth violence (McMurtry & Curling, 2008).

As previously discussed in this MRP, the U.S. based Job Corps educational program for at-risk youth has demonstrated statistically significant reductions in arrests and time spent incarcerated. It has also demonstrated statistically positive impacts on youth earnings (Schochet, Burghardt, & McConnell, 2008). A local example of a program of similar nature is *Pathways to Education Canada*, which aims to break the cycle of poverty through education. Initially established in Regent Park, the program reduced drop-out rates by 70% and has now been replicated across the country (Pathways to Education, 2019). An evaluation of the program model included a calculation of the social return on investment. The program has demonstrated substantial economic value to government and society as a whole, delivering a positive net present value of \$45,000 of societal impact for each student enrolled in the program. In other words, the tangible benefits of a youth participating exceeds the cost of the participant's enrolment by \$45,000. The benefits are widespread and include increased employment and income, improved health outcomes, and decreased involvement in crime (The Boston Consulting Group, 2011). See Appendix A for an excerpt from the social return on investment study on the Pathways to Education model. (The Boston Consulting Group, 2011). Other notable trends that should be considered for future policy direction include public health approaches to gun violence, such as the Chicago Ceasefire model examined earlier in this paper.

Shifting the policy direction from enforcement to addressing root causes, such as income inequality would increase the effectiveness of policy interventions. Furthermore, for citizens concerned about the fiscal health of governments, programs such as Pathways to Education have been proven to have high returns on investment and strong fiscal performance, as demonstrated in the Pathways to Education Social Return on Investment analysis. Redirecting funding towards programs that have been proven to have better outcomes would not only reduce the number of gun-related homicides, but would also enhanced overall social equality, health outcomes, and reduce the overall cost to taxpayers.

To ensure that the City of Toronto continues to invest in highly effective programs, it is recommended that the City of Toronto, lobbies other levels of government to provide

additional funding for program evaluations. As observed in the jurisdictional scan of American cities, the US federal government has provided significant research grant funding to cities to conduct formal external program evaluations of new policy approaches to test their effectiveness. Given the downloading of social policy to municipal governments and the inherent fiscal imbalances in their constitutional status, it is recommended that other levels of government provide additional resources to the City of Toronto for gun violence intervention strategies and formal routine program evaluation. As discussed earlier, the City of Oakland has introduced special vote measures to ensure long-term funding for gun violence intervention initiatives, which includes a requirement that 3% of all funding be allocated to evaluations and audit. In the absence of funding from other levels of governing, similar initiatives could be considered in the City of Toronto.

Opportunities for Further Research

Several opportunities were identified for further research to enhance knowledge available to policy-actors and to enhance evidence-based decision making.

- **Social Return on Investment Studies:** researchers interested in understanding the cost-benefit of intervention initiatives should study the social return on investment of a City of Toronto youth violence prevention program. This type of study enables the comparison of public costs versus the benefits of investing in this program and is helpful when considering the best and most effective use of taxpayer dollars. For example, the cost of investing in a public health program (for example, Ceasefire) could be calculated and compared against the benefits yielded (reduction in costs of incarceration, quantifiable and non-quantifiable benefits to society, decreased crime, improved health statistics, etc.). Examining programs that the City of Toronto is currently implementing could augment Council's understanding of the widespread

impacts of these initiatives in comparison to the status quo investment in enforcement-related and criminal justice approaches.

- **Longitudinal Studies on Gun Violence Policy-Windows:** an enhanced understanding of how gun violence policy arrives on the government's agenda could enhance policy-actors ability to exploit agenda setting opportunities. As different policy-windows have differing degrees of institutionalization, utilizing different policy-windows could provide opportunities to provide greater funding stability.
- **Research on the applicability of the American Ceasefire Public-Health Approach to addressing Gun Violence in Toronto.** The review of the evaluation literature on the public health focused ceasefire program revealed statistically significant reductions in shootings in various American cities. Gun and gang culture in the United States differ from the Canadian and Toronto context. However, researching which components of this program could be useful in the Toronto setting would be helpful for policy-actors as new policy solutions are evaluated.

A Unified Voice

The findings of this research paper suggest that the disaggregated nature of community organizations results in a weak competitive position relative to the Toronto Police Service in influencing policy-direction. The development of an alliance between the variety of not-for-profits, advocates, and community organizations to unify their position has the potential to scale their resources and government relations impact, enhance lobbying efforts, and media profile. Partnering with subject matter experts and developing media strategies could enhance the prospect of changing the policy image and undermining existing policy monopolies.

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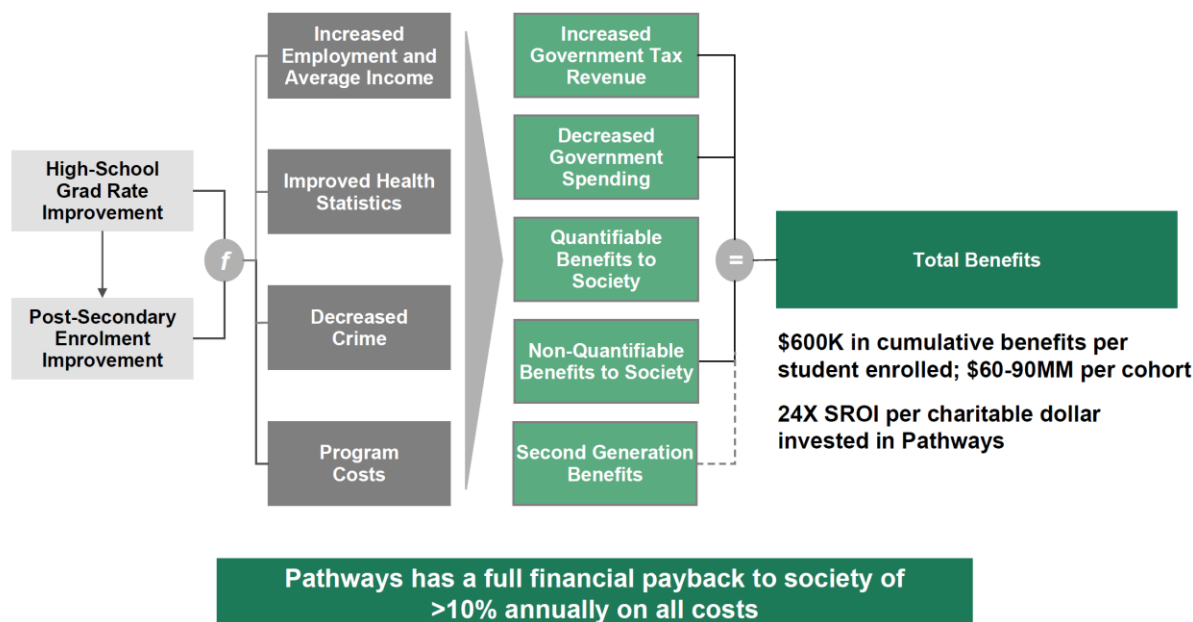
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APPENDIX A - PATHWAYS TO EDUCATION – SOCIAL RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Outcomes driving several quantifiable benefits

2010 value proof uses similar approach as 2007; includes additional program data, updated sources

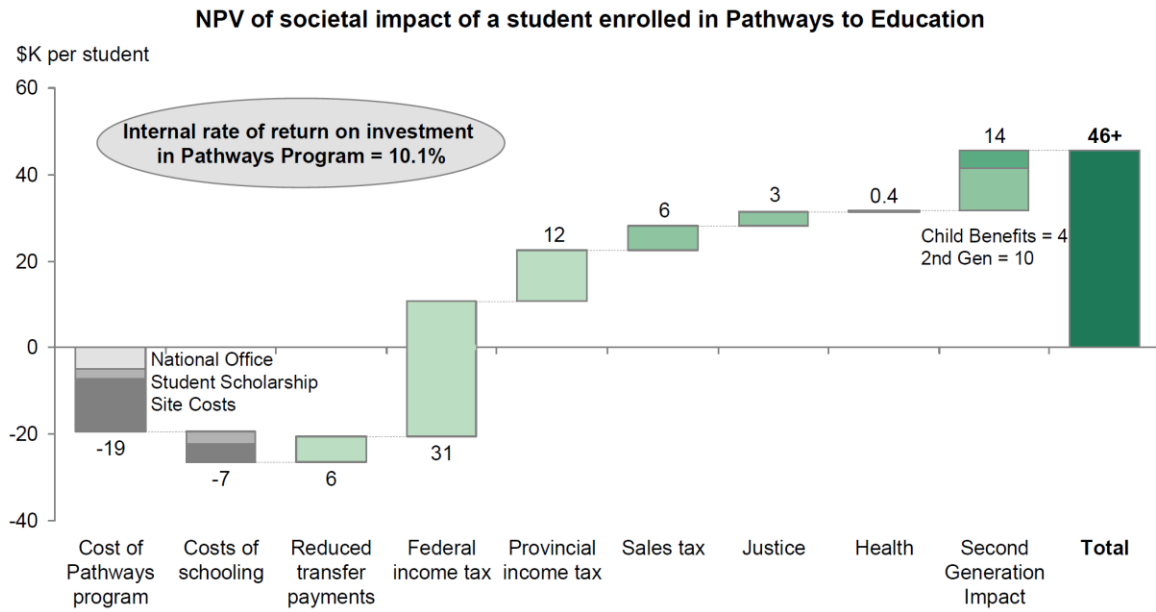


Benefits of educational attainment far exceed program costs

Increased government tax revenue	Higher expected employment income, disposable income <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher income taxes collected Higher sales taxes generated with increased consumer spending
Decreased government spending	Reduced government transfer payments, social assistance due to reduced need Lower propensity to commit crimes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Savings for the justice system and prisons with lower likelihood of incarceration
Quantifiable benefits to society	Better health opportunities; greater access to and investment in personal health Increased general health outcomes, increased life expectancy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> More preventative health care, less risk taking behaviour Reduced incidence of smoking, diabetes, hypertension, heart disease
Non-quantifiable benefits to society	Higher economic growth rates due to better educated and more productive labour force Increased civic engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased time spent volunteering; higher likelihood to donate to charity Better integration of new immigrants; tackling 1st generation education challenges
Second generation benefits	Reduced societal burden from children with better educated parents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower child benefit payments due to less need and fewer children Children with better educational attainment who produce similar benefits to society
Program Costs	Pathways costs: \$5k per year per student including program supports, infrastructure, scholarship Schooling costs: Incremental provincial costs associated with keeping students in school longer

Societal return on investment significantly NPV positive

Pathways driving >\$45K per student enrolled



Source:

https://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/sites/default/files/editor_uploads/pdf/BCG%20Assessment%20of%20Pathways.pdf