Compstat and Community Policing: Are They Compatible?

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With Tammy Kochel
Research questions on community policing and Compstat

- Extent of implementation?
- Compatibility?
Organizational theories and police reforms

- **Theory X: CS**
  - Top-down control
  - Accountability

- **Theory Y: CP**
  - Bottom-up initiative
  - Creativity
# Community policing v. Compstat doctrines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reform Element</th>
<th>Community Policing</th>
<th>Compstat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Community is central</td>
<td>Community is peripheral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policing methods</td>
<td>Community is central</td>
<td>Community is peripheral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance accountability</td>
<td>Peripheral or nonexistent</td>
<td>Highest priority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralize decision making</td>
<td>Lowest level in org.</td>
<td>Middle managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational flexibility</td>
<td>Linked to community</td>
<td>Linked to mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data-driven</td>
<td>Valued</td>
<td>Essential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative problem-solving</td>
<td>Valued</td>
<td>Valued</td>
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Our prior field work on Compstat and community policing

- Police Foundation study funded by NIJ
- In-depth study of 3 departments in 2000-2001
- All had adopted by CP and CS
- CS in place for at least 2 years
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reform Element</th>
<th>What we observed</th>
<th>Relationship between CS and CP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Mission in 2 PDs was vague or unstated</td>
<td>CS independent of CP or incompatible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 PD - focus on CS and CP generated resistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policing methods</td>
<td>CS did not involve community</td>
<td>CS independent of CP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CP structures not incorporated into CS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance accountability</td>
<td>CS strongly implemented at DC level</td>
<td>CS independent of CP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Little impact on CP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decentralize decision making</td>
<td>Both CS and CP supported, but CS was for DCs and CP for specialists and rank and file</td>
<td>CS and CP somewhat compatible, possibly independent</td>
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### Community policing and Compstat in practice (cont.)

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<td>Organizational flexibility</td>
<td>Flexibility limited by bureaucracy &amp; politics CS harnessed to crime; CP harnessed to neighborhood concerns</td>
<td>CS and CP somewhat compatible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data-driven</td>
<td>Improved data availability and utility CS data of little relevance to CP and vice versa</td>
<td>CS independent of CP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovative problem-solving</td>
<td>CS accountability limited innovation</td>
<td>CS independent of CP</td>
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National survey on community policing and Compstat

- Funded by COPS
- Municipal and county departments with 100+ sworn
- Conducted spring/summer 2006
- Sample pool: 566 departments
- Completed surveys to date: 338 (59.7%)
Adoption of reforms

Question: How much is this reform a part of the agency’s organization and operations?
Community policing and Compstat adoption profile for U.S.A.

Percent of Departments

- Minor or no adoption: 27%
- Lopsided hybrids: 27%
- Moderate hybrids: 21%
- Strong hybrid: 25%
Implementation of community policing elements

Question: To what extent has your agency implemented this approach?
Implementation of Compstat elements

- Hotspots policing
- Delegate authority to geog. cmdrs
- Crime stats for operational decisions
- Broken windows policing
- Concentrate on single mission
- Set specific crime reduction target
- Replace mid-mgrs if not meet goals

% mostly or completely implemented
Implementation of shared CP and CS elements

- Teamwork btw units
- Problem-oriented policing
- Use data to ID probs & evaluate
- New crime reduction methods

% mostly or completely implemented
## Most popular reasons to adopt community policing and Compstat

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<tr>
<th>Community policing</th>
<th>Compstat</th>
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<tr>
<td><em>Increase citizen satisfaction</em></td>
<td><em>Reduce serious crime</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Responsive to neighborhoods</em></td>
<td><em>Responsive to neighborhoods</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Reduce fear of crime</em></td>
<td>Increase service efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Reduce serious crime</em></td>
<td><em>Reduce fear of crime</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase citizen participation</td>
<td>Reduce minor offenses</td>
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High intensity challenges to implementation

- How challenging is this feature of community policing/Compstat?
  - Not at all
  - Somewhat
  - Moderately
  - Very
  - Extremely
Community policing’s most widespread challenges

- **Organization culture**
  - Officers’ support
  - Officers accept greater community role
  - Officers try innovative prob-solving
  - Support of mid managers
  - Mid managers take prob-solving initiative
  - Officers accept community priorities

- **Technology**
  - Data on officer CP performance

- **Resources**
  - Sufficient resources to do CP right
  - Doing CP and meeting CFS and CID demands

>30% of departments experienced these as very or extremely challenging.
Compstat’s most widespread challenges

○ Conflicting Demands
  ● Thorough crime analysis & rapid problem response
  ● Reduce crime & be innovative
  ● Cmdrs help each other but individually accountable
  ● Respond to community priorities & focus on mission
  ● Being innovative but risking failure

○ Technology
  ● Compatible data systems
  ● Timely crime analysis reports
  ● Managers w/ability & desire to do Compstat
  ● Hire well-trained crime analysis staff

○ Organization culture
  ● Getting police to use crime maps

>30% of departments experienced these as very or extremely challenging.
Success in overcoming community policing’s most widespread challenges

- **Organization culture**
  - Officers’ support (45)
  - Officers accept greater community role (38)
  - Officers try innovative prob-solving (40)
  - Support of mid managers (52)
  - Mid managers take prob-solving initiative (40)
  - Officers accept community priorities (41)

- **Technology**
  - Data on officer CP performance (28)

- **Resources**
  - Sufficient resources to do CP right (30)
  - Doing CP and meeting CFS and CID demands (39)

( % of departments very or extremely successful in overcoming the challenge)
Success in overcoming Compstat’s most widespread challenges

- **Conflicting Demands**
  - Thorough crime analysis \& rapid problem response (38)
  - Reduce crime \& be innovative (42)
  - Cmdrs help each other **but** individually accountable (52)
  - Respond to community priorities \& focus on mission (48)
  - Being innovative **but** risking failure (48)

- **Technology**
  - Compatible data systems (41)
  - Timely crime analysis reports (58)
  - Managers w/ability \& desire to do Compstat (54)
  - Hire well-trained crime analysis staff (54)

- **Organization culture**
  - Getting police to use crime maps (56)

(% of departments very or extremely successful in overcoming the challenge)
Leader views on CP and CS compatibility in general

- Absolutely incompatible: 49%
- Somewhat incompatible: 5%
- No influence: 3%
- Somewhat compatible: 42%
- Absolutely compatible: 1%
Self-reported challenges of CP and CS implementation in same agency

- Resource demands
- Getting acceptance from officers, supervisors, & middle-managers
- Missions conflict
  - Community priorities v. crime stats
  - Employees perceive mission conflicts
  - Satisfy community v. crime stat reduction
Sample quotes on CP/CS conflict

- “Coordinating COP and CS goals. Officers who work COP resist merging with CS.”
- “Fear that the agency will become stat-driven, as quality of life issues don’t always create big numbers.”
- “Getting everyone to understand that data produced through CS cannot alter partnerships developed through CP”
- “With CS an emphasis is placed more on officer accountability to serious crime v. neighborhood problems.”
- “CS emphasizes management from above, while CP seems to be the opposite direction.”
Self-reported benefits of CP and CS together

- CS shows what & where problems are; CP provides effective strategies
- Increased community satisfaction/support/engagement
- Reduced crime, neighborhood problems
- Greater internal & external accountability and communications
- CP & CS provide complementary information to the department
Effect of department features on overcoming CP implementation challenges

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<th>Effect</th>
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<td>Number sworn</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>CP model department</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>PERF membership</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. professional meetings in last 3 years</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-COPS adoption of CP</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong hybrid department</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>CALEA-accredited</td>
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N=252 departments adopting CP
Effect of department features on overcoming CS implementation challenges

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<td>No. of years since CS implemented</td>
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N=168 departments adopting CS
Conclusions about community policing and Compstat

- Widespread dual implementation
- Some shared goals, some unique
- Both are unevenly implemented
- Evidence of conflict
- Need to acknowledge challenges of dual implementation and focus on them
- Reason for optimism, but requires hard work