

AIRPORT SECURITY: STUDY OF STUDENTS' PERCEPTION  
AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE SELECTION OF  
AIRLINE PASSENGERS FOR  
PERSONAL SEARCHES

by

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this study is to analyze and identify the perception and knowledge of the criteria used to select airport passengers for personal searches. The study is carried out via self-administered surveys. The collected data derived from the sample of undergraduate Criminal Justice/Criminology (CRCJ) students at the University of Texas at Arlington during the spring semester of 2007. The findings of this study suggest that there are statistically significant differences in perception and knowledge between male and female students in regards to the

criteria used for the selection of airline passengers for personal searches.

Specifically, this study revealed that undergraduate students perceive that males, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched at airports than Whites. It was also perceived by undergraduate students that people from the Middle East, are less likely to be selected for personal searches at airports than people from other countries. Interestingly, this last result seems to be different than what the reviewed literature supports.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	v
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
CHAPTER	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
2.1 Effects of September 11, 2001.....	11
2.2 Enactment of New Laws.....	13
2.3 The Creation of the TSA and its Role.....	17
2.4 Enhancements to Airport Security.....	20
2.5 Airport Screeners.....	24
2.6 Terrorism.....	31
2.7 Passenger Clearance and Screening.....	44
2.8 Racial Profiling Before 9/11.....	58
2.9 Racial Profiling After 9/11.....	61
3. METHODOLOGY.....	71

4. FINDINGS.....	76
5. DISCUSSION.....	101
APPENDIX	
A. SURVEY.....	117
REFERENCES.....	126
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION.....	138



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
2.1 CRS Alerts of Racial Conflict by Issues FY 2003 Administration of Justice.....	64

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
2.1 Homeland Security Act 2002 .....	15
2.2 Customs' Policies for Personal Search by Type, Suspicion Level, and Approving Official.....	51
2.3 Prohibited and Intercepted Items at U.S. Airport Screening Checkpoints.....	54
4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.....	77
4.2 Means and P-Values for Perceptions by Gender.....	82
4.3 Gender Perceptions of Their Selection for a Frisk or Patdown.....	89
4.4 Descriptions of Attributes, Frequencies and Percentages for Perception by Gender.....	92
4.5 Means and P-Values for Knowledge by Gender.....	96

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

According to Simonsen and Spindlove (2007), the people of the United States have unpleasant memories of September 11, 2001, and will continue to experience them unless another attack is generated by terrorists directly to the United States soil. One could argue that, September 11, 2001 started as any ordinary day and that the unexpected happened when a group of male terrorists from the Middle East carried out an attack against the United States. According to Simonsen and Spindlove (2007), many reporters believe that the attacks of September 11, 2001, could have been stopped by airport security guards. However, they failed to prevent the hijackers from boarding the planes. The lack of training and scarce benefits airline employees received before September 11, attributed to their inability to perform and "airport security suffered a major blow to its performance and credibility" (Simonsen & Spindlove, 2007, p. 80).

However, Bullock et al., (2006), mentioned that the group of terrorists had carefully planned their attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., attacks that killed thousands of innocent people, a fact that "forever changed America and, in many ways, the world" (p. 14-24).

Quite likely, the task force report was correct in stating that "September 11, 2001, gave many Americans a sudden and terrifying sense of vulnerability" (Clarke & Beers, 2006, p. 11). One could say that by their actions, the terrorists tainted the honor of a country that would never have imagined that such an attack could happen.

Dr. Fishhoff (2005) described that terrorists aim to destabilize societies by producing fear that disrupts the daily life and affects the economic status of societies. Thus, not many could disagree with Larsen, Sweeney and Gillick (2006), when they argue that 9/11 had a tremendous impact on the airline industry. It is quite obvious, insofar as September 11, attributed to the serious economic blow to United States. The country was immobilized; the Reagan National Airport was very gravely affected, to the point of having to close for three

weeks. Furthermore, "the entire national aviation system was shut down on that day with consequent cancellation of international services to the United States" (Larsen, Sweeney, & Gillick, 2006, p. 27).

Due to the extent of the 9/11 attacks, an avalanche of changes were developed, some that enhanced power to some organizations and allowed for "the creation of Transportation Security Administration" within those changes "the new Department of Homeland Security assumed all aviation security functions" (Larsen et al., 2006, p. 27). Airport security has been one of the center points. Therefore, not many could disagree with Bullock et al., (2006), as he points out that September 11, 2001, permanently changed the functions of this country. As a result, airport security is now handled differently with an increased amount of procedures aimed not only at protecting the airline industry and the lives of the public, but the national economy as well (Bullock et al., 2006).

According to Donohue (2003), after September 11, 2001, one of the most important tasks of President George W. Bush, and Congress, was to develop measures that would protect the country by enhancing security. Such measures were crystallized in

Executive Orders, and in the introduction of numerous bills and resolutions that were later adopted as new legislation.

The airline industry has experienced many changes before and after the 9/11 attacks due to its vulnerability. Thus, the airport security has been modified and enhanced tremendously to "protect passengers, the public, and airline and airport employees from armed attacks, hijackings and bombings" (Flynn & Kosatka, 2005, p. 613).

Due to previous incidents and because of the vulnerability as well as the enhancements that must be enforced in a fast paced environment as it is seen in an airport, the aim of this study is to analyze and identify the perception and knowledge of undergraduate students about the criteria used to select airport passengers for personal searches. Specifically, to measure whether or not they perceive that males are more likely to be searched than females at airports, and if it is perceived that those searched are more likely to be from the Middle East, African Americans, Hispanics or Whites.

First, the existing literature will be analyzed in order to gather information in regards to airport security after 9/11 and the selection of airline passengers. After analyzing the

literature, the next step will be to identify the perception and knowledge of undergraduate students from the Criminal Justice/Criminology (CRCJ) Department of the University of Texas at Arlington.

This is important because some researchers have focused their studies on terrorism in general, while others have directed their attention to the lack of preparedness of our country; however, not many have concentrated on airport security by itself, and have thus failed to measure the knowledge and perception of undergraduate students concerning airport security, more specifically, what the subjects know, or believe to know, concerning the selection of passengers for personal searches. Performing the study with university students rather than the general public will enhance the body of knowledge since students are part of the future, specifically, they could be politicians, policy makers or governmental associates; therefore, their point of view can be of great value to this study.

This cross-sectional study attempts precisely to explore this neglected area, thus aiming to measure the knowledge and perception of graduate students of the University of Texas at

Arlington, concerning the criteria applied to guide passenger searches at United States airports after 9/11.

The author, in chapter 2, will begin with a historical overview of the attacks of September 11, 2001, attacks that led to new and modified legislation. It will focus on the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), as well as their role and responsibilities. Finally, chapter two will end with an assessment of how airport security was affected by the events of 9/11, and, in particular, their impact upon racial profiling, by comparing such practices before and after 9/11.

In chapter 3 the author will describe the methodology used in the study as well as the findings. The quantitative study will rely on the implementation of a survey distributed to undergraduate students of the University of Texas at Arlington. The survey questions focused on the knowledge and perception of the students concerning the selection of airline passengers for personal searches.

In chapter 4 the author aims to explain in detail the results of the analysis using the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS). In this chapter, an explanation of the survey



findings will be provided, along with some conclusions. The answers of the respondents will be compared, so as to find out whether their knowledge and perception is statistically significant. Further, chapter 5 contains recommendations for further study and/or policy implementation aimed at extending the results of the study.

For the purpose of this study, the following definitions will be used:

### **Knowledge**

To eliminate confusion in this study, the definition of "knowledge" as it was provided by the Random House Webster's School & Office Dictionary (1999), namely, the "familiarity, understanding, or information gained by study or experience" (p. 298). Therefore, "knowledge" in this study will be measured by the overall knowledge measured by the survey.

### **Perception**

The perception of a student is an important element of this study; thus, the definition of perception found in Random House Webster's School & Office Dictionary (1999) will be used, namely, "the act or faculty of perceiving" and "perceive" is defined as "to recognize or to understand" (p.396 ). Thus, the

measure of perception in this study will be based on self understanding. The previous definitions will serve as identifiers to differentiate perception from knowledge; they will allow the reader a better understanding of the cross-sectional study.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

*Airports face many challenges in securing their facilities and protecting the public. With the substantial increases in security that have developed from the need to combat the escalation of terrorism, a major challenge is how to facilitate travel for the public while increasing security measure.*

*Abbott & Hetzel, 2005*

There are many studies that are relevant to this study in regard to airport security. However, few studies have been performed with the intention of obtaining feedback from university students in regards to airport security. Neither have they focused on whether or not students are familiar with the criteria used by airport agents in order to search passengers. Lastly, previous studies have not used the input of Criminal Justice/Criminology undergraduate students. As a result, the need to explore this area is imperative.

This chapter contains a review of literature relevant to this study. It will begin with issues that have affected the airport industry, such as the terrorist attacks of September 11,

2001. Laws that resulted in response to the September 11, attacks in regards to airport security will be identified and discussed. Next, a review of the creation of the Transportation System Administration and its role in regards to airport security will be presented as well. This is followed by the enhancements to airport security and the programs implemented in order to better secure airports in the United States. This leads to a review of some of TSA's responsibilities, specifically, its employees, the requirements for employment, and their training, including enforced background checks. Next, a review of terrorism will be presented in order to support the intention of this study. In this section the profile of a terrorist, the characteristics, tactics, training and recruitment is described and discussed as well as the role of religion. The next section analyzes the clearance of airline passengers and the screening that eventually leads to passenger searches and the discussion of empirical studies that address public opinion relevant to this study. Finally, the last section is intended to be used by the researcher to supplement the literature review as it refers to racial profiling before and after 9/11. Concluding this chapter, a summary of the topic and the identification of the

contribution this study will make to the body of knowledge will be stated.

### **2.1 Effects of September 11, 2001**

On September 11, 2001, while visiting an elementary school, President Bush was notified about the terrorist attacks; soon after, and within a period of ten minutes, "the United States airspace was ordered cleared," and fortunately, "it was the first time that an unscheduled closing of airspace had occurred in the United States" (Bolz, Dudonis, & Schulz, 2005, p. 337).

Simonsen and Spindlove (2007), point out that the attacks of 9/11, tremendously affected the airport industry, specifically, the attacks provided major challenges to airport security, such as the need to strengthen security and to offer better protection to the public. Kronenwetter (2004) believes that nowadays "everyone who travels by plane is subjected to delays and potential indignities because of the security prompted by terrorism" (p. 1).

Black (2003) suggests that the terrorist actions against the United States were performed as "suicide attacks on the New York World Trade Center and the Pentagon, September 11, 2001, which killed 20 percent more people than the bombing of Pearl Harbor"

(p. 693).

Kronenwetter (2004) makes an interesting point as he describes how terrorism has been present even before 9/11, and not only in other parts of the world, but it has affected the United States. However, the undeniable reality is that terrorism was perceived by people of the United States to be a phenomenon occurring in other countries. They believed that "it didn't happen here," "even when it undeniably did happen here" (Kronenwetter, 2004, p. viii).

After the attacks of 9/11, and because of the hijacking of the four commercial airplanes, the U.S. government responded to counter those attacks by tightening security at airports nationwide (Combs & Slann, 2002).

Despite the efforts of the government to increase security, they were faced with many challenges. Passengers experienced fear and dissatisfaction because of the many changes that affected the airport industry. At the same time the government was faced with a different problem because the terrorists did not smuggle bombs into the airplanes, neither did they try to collect a ransom, they used those airplanes as weapons against the United States (Combs & Slann, 2002).

Therefore, and to reassure safety to the people of the United States, "the U.S. Department of Homeland Security was born out of public outrage and the aftereffects of the attacks," apparently, "something had to be done quickly," it was obvious that "the government was going to respond strongly and would not allow something terrible like this to happen again" (Simonsen & Spindlove, 2007, p. 28). It was obvious that "every sector of American Society was changed by the 9/11 attacks on the United States," and therefore, many strategies were implemented "to meet future threats" (Sauter & Carafano, 2005, p. 41).

## **2.2 Enactment of New Laws**

Bullock et al., (2006), suggest that the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks served to point out the weakness of the transportation system and allowed for an explosion of changes in the current structure. The United States government responded by implementing several laws and modifying others. One of those laws specifically allowed the creation of a new department, "on November 19, 2002, the U.S. Senate voted overwhelmingly to create a Department of Homeland Security (DHS)" (Bullock et al., 2006, p. 197).

Further, President George W. Bush, proposed several

Executive orders as well as presidential directives and signed legislative Acts with the purpose to enhance national security. The September 11 attacks "dramatically changed the power, organization and functions of the federal government" (Bullock et al., 2006, p. 69). According to the United States Code on November 25, 2002, President George W. Bush signed the Department of Homeland Security Act of 2002 (p. 116 STAT. 2142).

This new act reinforced the protection of United States and provided "the basis for the creation of the Homeland Security Department in one of the largest-ever reorganizations of U.S. federal agencies" (Barrese, Ferguson, & Scordis, 2005, p. 71). Table 2.1 describes the Security Act of 2002. With the enactment of new laws that would aid and extend the new way of fighting crime, the department was born to combat the enemy, and to increase the power of many agencies (Bullock et al., 2006).



**TABLE 2.1 Homeland Security Act 2002**

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TITLE I -DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
SEC. 101. EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT; MISSION.

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- (a) ESTABLISHMENT. - There is established a Department of Homeland Security, as an executive department of the United States within the meaning of title 5, United States Code.
- (b) MISSION.-
- (1) IN GENERAL. -The primary mission of the Department is to-
- (A) prevent terrorist attacks within the United States;
  - (B) reduce the vulnerability of the United States to terrorism;
  - (C) minimize the damage, and assist in the recovery, from terrorist attacks that do occur within the United States;
  - (D) carry out all functions of entities transferred to the Department, including by acting as a focal point regarding natural and manmade crises and emergency planning;
  - (E) ensure that the functions of the agencies and subdivisions within the Department that are not related directly to securing the homeland are not diminished or neglected except by a specific explicit Act of Congress;
  - (F) ensure that the overall economic security of the United States is not diminished by efforts, activities, and programs aimed at securing the homeland; and
  - (G) monitor connections between illegal drug trafficking and terrorism, coordinate efforts to sever such connections, and otherwise contribute to efforts to interdict illegal drug trafficking.
- (2) RESPONSIBILITY FOR INVESTIGATING AND PROSECUTING TERRORISM.-Except as specifically provided by law with respect to entities transferred to the Department under this Act, primary responsibility for investigating and prosecuting acts of terrorism shall be vested not in the Department, but rather in Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over the acts in question (p. 116 STAT. 2142).
-

The above Act authorizes the creation of Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and it states its mission as well as the responsibility for investigating and prosecuting terrorism. Moore and Turner (2005), noted that "more than twenty-two agencies from across the federal bureaucracy contributed assets and expertise to establish the DHS it [was] projected to employ over 180,000 employees" (p.1263).

Moore and Turner (2005), described the importance of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, because it provided for the establishment of four operational directorates within the DHS:

- o Information Analysis and infrastructure Protection
- o Science and Technology
- o Border and Transportation Security, (BTS)
- o Emergency Preparedness and Response, (EP&R) (p.1263).

According to the Department of Homeland Security's website, each of the previous directorates have separate functions, but they are all under the DHS mission.

Additionally, those directorates are composed of other agencies that reside under the umbrella of DHS (Department of Homeland Security, n.d.).

Similarly, among other things, the DHS's mission is

“to prevent and deter terrorist attacks and protect against and respond to threats and hazards to the nation” (The Department of Homeland Security, n.d.). It was necessary for Congress to enact many laws that would enhance this mission. For instance, the Aviation and Transportation Security Act of 2001 (ATSA), which was one of the most important laws approved by the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress in 2001 (Anikeeff et al., 2003). The act was created to establish “the new Transportation Security Administration (TSA) within the DOT” (Anikeeff et al., 2003, p. 80).

### **2.3 The Creation of the TSA and Its Role**

According to Sweet (2002), immediately after the 9/11 attacks, the need to improve airport security were clearly recognized. The transportation system had definitely suffered a tremendous impact, which resulted in the “most expensive disaster in US history to date” (Sweet, 2002, p. 20).

As a result, the Aviation and Transportation Security Act of 2001 (ATSA), was approved by the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, and it is a very important piece of legislation since it created “the new Transportation Security Administration (TSA) within the DOT” (Anikeeff et al., 2003, p. 79-80).

Before the creation of TSA, aviation security was "overseen and regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)" (National Research Council of The National Academies, 2002, p. 211). The creation of TSA as a governmental response to the 9/11 attacks, enhanced national security by being assigned a mission to protect the transportation system and to improve, maintain and enforce the law in order to protect the people and commerce as they utilize the different modes of transportation (Transportation Security Administration, 2004). In other words, "TSA is responsible for aviation security" as it was described by the ATSA (Abbott & Hetzel, 2005, p. 13).

Unfortunately, the attacks of September 11 highlighted the weakness and need of control in airport security as well as in other modes of transportation (Transportation Security Administration, 2004). The challenges of TSA are substantial insofar as passenger travel and the movement of goods are undoubtedly critical means that support the nation as it pertains to the prosperity and economy of the United States. Therefore, TSA's responsibility is critical (Transportation Security Administration, 2004).

Just as the DHS was faced with increasing the amount of employees immediately after 9/11, TSA was also faced with similar tasks and with rapid increase of power and authority that lead to an immense amount of responsibility (Berg, 2005. TSA had many mandates, but one in particular, was the mandate to hire federal screeners, starting from "zero to between 40,000 and 60,000 employees" (Anikeeff et al., 2003, p. 80). Although this mandate was a tough one to fulfill, TSA was able nonetheless to "meet the November 19, 2002, deadline" (Anikeeff et al., 2003, p. 80).

Legislative mandates cannot be accomplished without the assistance of key personnel. Therefore, TSA is headed by the Under Secretary of transportation. The Under Secretary is in charge of the security in all modes of transportation pertaining to aviation. The Under Secretary oversees the screening operations in regards to federal security, including the screening of passengers in air transportation (Department Of Homeland Security, 2006). The TSA has many more responsibilities, some of which include the development of standards to hire security personnel, as well as their training and testing (Department Of Homeland Security, 2006).

Moreover, TSA must notify other agencies including the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), of any individuals believed to be a national security risk. TSA, with the help of others, can implement governmental policies with information that is used by the airport system, allowing them to identify people who should be considered as a risk and "to take the appropriate action" (Abbott & Hetzel, 2005, p. 14).

#### **2.4 Enhancements to Airport Security**

Historically the airline industry "has been an attractive target for terrorist attacks" including "airplane hijackings" and the "bombing of airliners in flight" (Anderson & Sloan, 2002, p. 35). As previously mentioned, airport security experienced many weaknesses before 9/11, but after the attacks, the need to protect the public and the airline industry by enhancing airport security became an important task aimed to reassure the people of the United States (Combs, 2006).

Combs (2006) reinforced what other authors have said about the many programs implemented to increase airport security. He mentions that although security was enforced before 9/11, nowadays, security has improved and changed in many ways. For instance, people without a purchased airplane ticket are not

allowed in the interior of the airport beyond the screening checkpoints to wait for friends or family members at either the arrival or departing gates.

Some enhancements of airport security were noted by Facemire and Laustra (2005), as they described how new technology has been introduced at checkpoints in order to deter terrorists. X-ray systems have been updated and are used when checking luggage. The technology of metal detectors has been improved and is used to scan and to identify many dangerous objects beginning with microscopic particles to other dangerous metallic objects. A different type of equipment used for detection of explosives is the explosive trace detection (ETC), (Facemire & Laustra, 2005). In addition to technological enhancements, other steps were taken into consideration to enhance airport security including the use of the National Guard troops to temporarily train airport personal (Combs & Slann, 2002). One program that has received a lot of attention because of the tremendous increase in agents was the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS).

### **U.S. Sky Marshal Program**

The U.S. Sky Marshal Program is one that has been active for many years as terrorism is not a new phenomenon. The program started in 1970 and allowed armed undercover marshals to be present on selected flights (Anderson & Sloan, 2002). Before 9/11 the Federal Air Marshal Service (FAMS) consisted of less than 50 air marshals. After September 11, its workforce increased to thousands, causing a major reconstruction of that agency. The Aviation and Transportation Security Administration Act of 2001(ATSA), allowed FAMS' authority to be transferred from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). They later were transferred within the Department of Transportation and from there to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Bureau (ICE) in November 2003. However, in 2005, FAMS was transferred back to TSA (United States General Accounting Office, 2005). Even with the many transfers FAMS has suffered, the air marshal program is an important program since the "agents are trained for surveillance, deterrence, and combat to protect American flights" (Riley, 2005, p. 590).



## Airport Security Expenses

Airport security expenses have been an issue to the airline industry even before 9/11. According to Anderson and Sloan (2002) a White House Commission was established by President Bush after the Pan Am 103 bombings, with the objective of finding out the weaknesses in air travel security. One of their recommendations was to "increase funding for airline security by 430 million" dollars (Anderson & Sloan, 2002, p. 38). They also mentioned that a law was signed by President Clinton on October 9, 1996, that allowed \$1,097 million to be used to prevent terrorism and \$190 million was directed to FAA in order for the agency to "upgrade airport security" (Anderson & Sloan, 2002, p. 38).

Clarke and Beers (2006) in a task force report noted that September 11, 2001, has also caused the government to spend billions of dollars in aviation security. They claim that the money spent has been utilized in an effective manner. Nonetheless, they point out that "serious problems still exist in the screening of passengers, luggage, and cargo and even if gaps remain in the security of commercial or unscheduled aviation" the \$20 billion dollars spent on aviation security

were, in their opinion, well spent (Century Foundation, 2006, p. 36).

## **2.5 Airport Screeners**

One could agree that TSA has been able to meet many challenges and has yet to perform many others. Savitt (2003), states that TSA now has the responsibility to follow guidelines to hire and to train its airport screeners, as well as to the "implementation of a training program" (p. 99). As it was previously mentioned, TSA's mission is to protect the nation. Savitt (2003) suggests that security can be better implemented by applying "increased airport and airline security safeguards" (p. 97).

Therefore, TSA has a duty to screen passengers and, in order to do it efficiently, it was necessary to enforce background checks for thousands of applicants, and to train and test them. Furthermore, to oversee airport security, TSA's federal personnel wear uniforms and carry firearms to protect passengers as part of national security safety (Abbott & Hetzel, 2005).

### Employment Requirements

Employees of TSA, as well as employees that come from other federal agencies who may work as "law enforcement officers of the TSA," have the power to arrest anyone without a warrant, provided probable cause is present (Abbott & Hetzel, 2005, p. 4).

Consequently, TSA must follow the guidelines set by the FAA, in Section 108.31, when hiring or accepting personnel. As it was stated by Sweet (2002), some of the guidelines to hire security personnel are:

No certificate holder shall use any person to perform any screening function, unless that person has:

A high school diploma, a General Equivalency Diploma, or a combination of education and experience which the certificate holder has determined to have equipped the person to perform the duties of the position;

Basic aptitudes and physical abilities including color perception, visual and aural acuity, physical coordination, and motor skills to the following standards;

Screeners operating x-ray equipment must be able to distinguish on the x-ray monitor the appropriate imaging standard specified in the certificate holder's security program. Wherever the x-ray system displays colors, the operator must be able to perceive each color;

Screeners operating any screening equipment must be able to distinguish each color displayed on every type of screening equipment and explain what each color signifies;

Screeners must be able to hear and respond to the spoken voice and to audible alarms generated by screening equipment in an active checkpoint environment;

Screeners who perform pat-downs or hand-held metal detector Searches of persons must have sufficient dexterity and capability to conduct those procedures on all parts of the persons' bodies;

The ability to read, speak and write English;

Satisfactorily complete all initial, recurrent and appropriate specialized training required by the certificate holder's security program... (Section 108.31, 1-4, Internet://www.faa.gov/avr/AFS/FARS/far-108.tx.,pg.19,24 April 2001). (Sweet 2002, p. 334).

The previous requirements to hire screening personnel are mandatory. However, when there is a need of more law enforcement personnel the FAA can authorize other officers to help with airport security. After all, "providing a safe working environment for airline employees, airport employees and the traveling public is a very high priority and requires constant vigilance" (Sweet, 2002, p. 345).

### **Testing Airport Security**

Soon after 9/11, Ervin (2006) describes that President George W. Bush sent a group of undercover investigators to test airport security at different airports, when the privatized screening workforce was already in place.

Similarly, more testing was performed during the summer of 2003 and late fall of 2004, by different teams from different agencies, only to discover that no improvement in airport security had occurred within "the 450 or so airports in the country" (Ervin, 2006, p. 81). These findings are based on "hundreds of tests at airports all throughout the country- airports large and small, airports where the screener workforce was federalized as well as airports run by private contractors" (Ervin, 2006, p. 84-85).

Undercover agents used different weapons hidden on their body or in their luggage but unfortunately, on average, the screeners all failed the test because they did not detect most of the hidden objects. Regardless of the length of time that had passed, airport screeners were still not performing their job effectively (Ervin, 2006).

### **Screeners Training**

Ervin (2006) suggest that one of the problems with airport security could be the limited training received by airport screeners. Their training consists of forty classroom hours, and sixty hours of on the job training with no enforcement of

continuing education that could further enhance their terrorism awareness.

Arguably one must possess a great amount of knowledge to keep up with the ever-growing threats of terrorism. Therefore, many would agree that the training screening officials receive is critical. According to Sweet (2002), the airport population is composed of diverse groups and airport officials should know how to handle and recognize the differences between people from different cultures, gender, age, religions and disabilities.

Even though security officials interact with airport passengers on a daily basis and face to face, there are challenges to overcome because of the language and cultural differences, as well as some special needs. For instance, elderly people should be treated differently than others just as people who have some type of medical problem or even those who suffer from any type of disability (Sweet, 2002). An important factor trainers should take into account is the fact that "men and boys dominate crime" and that "gender has been advanced consistently by criminologists as the strongest predictor of criminal involvement" (Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 196).

Sweet (2002) states that screeners should be only the best due to the many challenges they face on a daily basis. Unqualified officials may perceive the previous characteristics differently and could end up with the wrong impression about a passenger. Practically, screeners are responsible for the safety of airline passengers and "they possess one of the last clear chances to catch a potential terrorist before a catastrophe occurs" (Sweet, 2002, 318).

Sweet (2002) suggests that within their training, screeners must also obtain some type of judgment training, however, because of the fast paced environment airports are in, the only choice airlines have is to hire people who are knowledgeable to prevent catastrophic consequences (Sweet, 2002). For instance, screeners must learn how to differentiate medical problems from non medical problems. For example, "the elderly may have Alzheimer's disease and may appear intoxicated or confused," and failing to recognize signs as those could create problems such as law suits (Sweet, 2002, p. 317).

The lack of training also creates other issues since "some cultures react differently to search than others;" however, by now almost every airport passenger knows that they will be

facing a search (Sweet, 2002, p. 317). One could agree with Combs (2006) that training is critical. Unfortunately, the "events of September 11, 2001, illustrate dramatically the consequences of training and equipping for the wrong type of perpetrators" (Combs, 2006, p. 57). Therefore, training should be effective and efficient because "we should all know by now that even one mistake can be one mistake too many" (Ervin, 2006, p. 91).

### **Background Checks**

Among the many problems TSA faced in regards to airport security, background checks may have been the most challenging problem. TSA was created to increase airport security, in response to the events of 9/11. According to TSA, their mission is to protect the transportation system, and to improve, maintain and enforce the law, in order to protect the people and commerce as they utilize the different modes of transportation (Transportation Security Administration, 2004).

Even with a mission as important as TSA's, many issues go unattended. Due to TSA's rapid growth, many airport screeners were hired even before their criminal background was known. Some continued to work even after TSA knew of their criminal



background. While some screeners have criminal records, others do not. One would not believe some of the crimes committed by airport employees. Ervin (2006) states that airport screeners have committed crimes that range from "false identification to burglary and rape" or "voluntary manslaughter" (p. 93).

Unfortunately, issues such as those raise questions as to whether or not those who work at airports are to be trusted with the security of the nation (Ervin, 2006). Apparently, Ervin (2006) makes a legitimate point by stating, "the bottom line is that if government investigators today can consistently evade detection despite all the billions spent and all the focus and attention on aviation security—terrorists can, too" (p. 93). In spite of the training, background checks, and tests that screeners and airport personnel have been submitted to, TSA screeners may still not be ready to detect everything that comes their way (Ervin, 2006).

## **2.6 Terrorism**

Combs (2006) suggests that terrorism as it is known, has always existed, and as the time passes by, it continues to change and it will not end regardless of what happens to the current leaders. Some would think that terrorism decreased after

the cold war ended and with the apprehension of some of the most known terrorists. However, terrorism is growing and September 11, 2001, is an example of it. The effects of 9/11 are a reminder, and the attacks were, "a wake-up call," apparently, the damage did not only had an effect in the United States, it also affected the world, and " terrorism continues to constitute a clear and present danger, a weapon evolving often faster than are the world community's responses to it" (Combs, 2003, p. 2).

It is imperative to first describe what many believe terrorism to be, before engaging in an explanation of the profile of a terrorist, the characteristics, tactics, training or recruitment of such people. Although, there has not been an agreement of what terrorism is, Combs (2006) states that terrorism may be described differently in different situations.

Reinforcing Combs' statement, Cooper (2004) states that a definition of terrorism is crafted according to whomever needs to define its meaning. For instance, there are various definitions that serve the purpose of "governments, academics, and practitioners" due to "their own political, research, or constituent agendas" (Cooper, 2004, p. 54).

Furthermore, ordinary people usually know that terrorism is politically motivated and is aimed specifically with the intention to hurt a certain audience (H.H.A. Cooper, 2004). Terrorism, according to Garner (1999), refers to "the use or threat of violence to intimidate or cause panic, esp. as a means of affecting political conduct" (p. 1484). For instance, a more complete definition is stated as follows:

The standard FBI definition presents terrorism as the unlawful use of force or violence against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social goals (Griset & Mahan, 2003, p. 17).

Although the meaning of terrorism is not unanimously agreed on, what is agreed is that it creates fear in a large audience, or terror, into those who are affected (H.H.A. Cooper, 2004). Combs and Slann (2002) also agreed with the majority when they noted that there is no universal definition about terrorism. However, they describe some important components terrorism must have in order to be recognized as such. Terrorism, "involves an act of violence, and audience, the creation of a mood of fear, innocent victims, and political motives or goals" (Combs & Slann, 2002, p. 209).

Furthermore, Howard and Sawyer (2002) quoted C. Wright Mills, stating that "all politics is a struggle for power and that "the ultimate kind of power is violence" (p. 93). Thus, terrorism explained in the following manner reflects the meaning of the previous quotes.

Terrorism, accordingly, is where politics and violence intersect in hopes of producing power. And, terrorism ineluctably involves the quest for power: power to dominate and coerce, to intimidate and control, and ultimately to effect fundamental political change. Violence, (or, the threat of violence) is thus the sine qua non of terrorism; evidencing the terrorists' irreducible conviction that only through violence can their cause triumph and their long-term political aims be attained (Howard & Sawyer, 2003, p. 93).

Although, terrorism is viewed differently by many, the most critical parts of the definitions are agreed upon as those in the previous paragraph. Perhaps, terrorism is difficult to describe because as Combs and Slann (2002) noted, the United States has not experienced as much domestic terrorism as other countries have.

Additionally, terrorism continues to change; for instance, the threats experienced in the last century were different than what the twenty-first century is experiencing. For example, terrorism switched from ideology to what is now a bigger threat,

which is the use of biological and chemical weapons, as well as weapons of mass destruction (Combs, 2006).

Apparently one of the most devastating acts of terrorism, as previously mentioned, was faced by the United States, when a declared holy war was invoked by Osama bin Laden (Combs, 2006). As a result, the United States was attacked on September 11, 2001 when:

Two hijacked airliners crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. Soon thereafter, the Pentagon was struck by a third hijacked plane. A fourth hijacked plane, suspected to be headed for a high-profile target in Washington, crashed into a field in southern Pennsylvania. More than 3,000 people were killed in these attacks. U.S. intelligence information indicated that Osama bin Laden, based in Afghanistan, was responsible for coordinating the attacks (Combs, 2006, p. 7).

As a result of those terrorist acts, the United States, has also declared and engaged in a "war on terrorism" (Combs, 2006, p. 7). Few would argue about the fact that this war brought about a massive reaction from the government, including providing better airport security, as well as engaging in the search for "the networks of individuals responsible for those attacks" (Combs, 2006, p. 306).

## **Characteristics of a Terrorist**

Just as with terrorism, the definition of a terrorist is not one that is easily agreed upon (Howard & Sawyer, 2002). Although there are many traits, which may be said that characterize terrorists, not every terrorist behaves the same way.

Nevertheless, what is known about individual terrorists continues to be useful information. That information can be added to data already stored by "security and intelligence organizations" (Combs, 2006, p. 57).

Terrorists can be difficult to characterize due to the differences in backgrounds of different terrorists and terrorist groups. According to Combs (2006) the difficulty may be due to the fact that terrorists come from different parts of the world, they are members of different cultures, and their political and religious beliefs are not the same.

For instance, Combs (2006) cites Edgar O'Balance whom in his book, *The Language of Violence*, described several characteristics that a terrorist could have. Dedication to a cause was the first one. Personal bravery referred to how brave a terrorist is. The third characteristic is the lack of emotions, pity or remorse because a terrorist must be willing to

kill. A fairly high standard of intelligence is another characteristic that, according to this author, a terrorist must possess in order to evade police or security forces. A fairly high degree of sophistication is the fifth characteristic, since it is said that a terrorist must be highly sophisticated in order to remain undetected. Finally, the sixth characteristic refers to education, specifically, a college or university degree is considered to be almost mandatory for a terrorist.

While one would think that those characteristics describe a terrorist, it has been noted earlier that not everyone agrees to specific characteristics of a terrorist. However, Combs (2006), states that "all that most experts seem to agree on regarding terrorists today is that they are primarily young people" (p. 66). Combs and Slann (2002), point out that many people also agree that most of the terrorists are young males who are tougher while in groups, and the females that are terrorists, are more likely to be terrorists for longer periods of time. They also mentioned that university education as stated before has been a requirement until recently, but its importance seems to be decreasing. Thus, the understanding of political

philosophies is also declining, giving them an unclear view of the reason why they became terrorists in the first place.

Nowadays there are fewer terrorists from middle-class homes than before. Today's terrorists are more likely to be socialized with violence, "their youth and their patterns of socialization make them unique, even in the long history of terrorism" (Combs & Slann, 2002, p. 218). Those may not be the only characteristics a terrorist may have.

### **Religion and Terrorism**

It was stated by Combs (2006) that "Islam is not, in any sense, a violent religion. Neither is Christianity, Judaism, or any of the other religions in whose name violence has been carried out" (p. 23). The same author mentions that many people have killed thousands of innocent fellow humans in the name of their religion. September 11, 2001 is an excellent example, since it was carried out in the context of the "holy war called for by bin Laden from Islamic fundamentalists" (Combs, 2006, p. 47).

Ever since the terrorist attacks of September 11, many people perceive Islam as being a religion that legitimizes and promotes violence. It was reported that the terrorists were



nineteen male Arab Muslims. However, although it is true that those terrorists were Muslims and willing to die in name of their faith, the majority of the Muslim community does not share the same values. Even though issues as those are constantly reported by the media, they are not what they seem to be. However, many people seem to still believe that Islam promotes violence (Silverman, 2004). A good example could be that, after the attacks of 9/11 the only thing people knew was that the attackers were Muslim extremists (Hunt, 2005).

Hunt (2005) states that Muslim extremists such as al Qaeda "are killers who use theology and deception to justify their actions" (p. 61). It is also known that some terrorists only believe what they think to be a representation of the Islam religion, as it was with the 9/11 hijackers. However, some terrorists use violence as many have used it "in the name of faith" (Silverman, 2004, p.148).

### **Terrorist Tactics**

Terrorists are known to use many tactics, some of which were used before and seem to have been successful such as "bombing and hostage taking" (Combs, 2006, p. 151). Surprisingly, even now terrorists use tactics such as assassinations, hijackings,

kidnappings, and bombings. Those tactics are believed to be "the first choice of most terrorists" (Griset & Mahan, 2003, p. 227).

Anderson and Sloan (2002) mentioned that the hijacking of an airplane was the most common form of terrorist attacks against the airport industry. Thus, such attacks increased to more than 200 hijackings during the 1960s, and 80 out of those were American carriers. During the 1990s, there were fewer hijackings. Perhaps, the sanctions aimed to punish countries that gave political asylum to terrorists discouraged individuals who were planning hijackings and the enhanced security in airports around the world also attributed to the reduction in hijackings. In fact, Anderson and Sloan (2002) note that many countries including "the United States have developed hostage-rescue response capabilities that put hijackers intending to hold hostages on an airport runway at a distinct disadvantage" (p. 37). Although there are many tactics terrorists use, some may be limited due to the recent enhancements in security, for instance, there are more airport officials now than before, better and new technology is being utilized, and new programs have been implemented thus, "increased security has indeed been productive and lifesaving" (Sweet, 2002, p. 25).

## **Terrorist Training**

Hunt (2005) points out that some terrorists are well trained and organized with a clear direction. This may be due to their abundant funding, and their logistics and intelligence, as well as their state sponsorships. For example, groups such as al Qaeda, are well prepared, trained, and most of all disciplined. Factors as those are what allow them to continue to be successful in their illicit organization.

Hunt (2005) states that al Qaeda's training camps have been televised allowing people to view the inside of their training camps and how they train. He mentions that their training concentrates for the most part, in the use of weapons such as handguns, rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and missiles such as the SA7. Moreover, part of their training deals with real fire which is induced in small but closed places. They are also trained in how to take hostages, including but not limited to robbing banks, and how to kill people. Terrorists are trained to disregard pain. They may kill civilians in the process, and minimizing the death toll is not one of their concerns.

Muslim extremists such as al Qaeda could be said to be trained by the book. Hunt (2005) states that a manual was found

in Afghanistan by the British SAS and contains 180 pages that concentrate specifically in training terrorists how to kill and how to do it better. As part of their training, some terrorists have attended flight schools in the United States. Unfortunately, for the 9/11 attacks, Florida and Oklahoma flight schools were used for this purpose. Apparently al Qaeda had managed to train some pilots. However, they needed others to assist with their plan (Simonsen & Spindlove, 2003).

### **Terrorist Recruitment**

Hunt (2005) describes how the recruitment of terrorists differs depending on the group. For instance, one group is called the al Qaeda, and it is considered to be one of the most dangerous organizations with extreme religious views. Al Qaeda is an organization that started from the bottom after the Cold War. Since then, it continues to multiply itself and at the same time it disguises reflecting sleeping cells that may not be stopped (Clarke, 2004).

Hunt (2005) explains how al Qaeda operates in more than eighty countries and has been able to recruit more than twenty thousand members. They recruit people who are educated and with computer knowledge as well. Thousands of al Qaeda's recruited

members are Arabs who have fought in the Afghan war, and some are fundamentalists who were recruited in different parts of the world. Their organization is composed of independent but small cells situated throughout the world, without a central point of communications, and mobility along with secrecy is an important factor for them. No one person in the cells is allowed to know who their higher commanding officer is (Hunt, 2005). Perhaps some people would agree with Hunt (2005) as he points out that "they are murderers who run one hell of an effective terrorist organization" (p. 49-53).

### **Women Terrorists**

Historically, male terrorists have been more active than female terrorists. However, there are some women who are terrorists and have created extreme fear. Those women may be reacting violently against governments that use a mode of domination and repression (Griset & Mahan, 2003).

For instance, there are female terrorist who are Muslims and follow military types of operations. There are other terrorist groups that include women who may even hold high command ranks. Women terrorists are more likely to follow an ideology that

varies depending on the different terrorist groups (Griset & Mahan, 2003).

## **2.7 Passenger Clearance and Screening**

As a result of the 9/11 attacks on the United States, and due to the impact that the attacks created to the airline industry, passenger travel diminished, placing an unbearable burden on the airline industry (Sauter & Carafano, 2005).

Since 9/11, airport security has increased tremendously especially in regards to the screening procedures of passengers. This was not the only time that security has tightened. One instance refers to when "one of the most devastating acts of Islamic terror perpetrated against the west," as it was when Pan Am Flight 103, its passengers and crew suffered a tremendous attack in 1988 (Lance, 2005, p. 36).

Combs and Slann (2002) point out that many years have passed since Pan Am Flight 103 was attacked, and that terrorist acts are intentional, directed towards innocent people and are usually intended to make political points after creating fear. Thus, the screening of passengers and property must be done before boarding the airplane and it should be performed by federal employees (Abbott & Hetzel, 2005).

Rarely, the screening is performed by the FBI, as it was done in an isolated situation when a group of Saudi Nationals left the United States soon after the September 11 attacks. The Saudi government knew that in order for the group to leave the United States, an investigative screening was to be conducted by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI), including the checking of several databases to confirm that the group had no relationship with the attacks of 9/11 (U.S. Government's 9/11 Commission Report).

Precautions as those are used to "deter, identify, and disarm threats to the safety and security of the traveling public and the transportation infrastructure" (Facemire & Laustra, 2005, p. 957). Those safety methods may be inconvenient for some passengers due to the slow process, however, the TSA is not willing to sacrifice the public by reducing the screening time just to please some passengers, even if that would cut down on screening expenses (U.S. Department of Transportation Administration, 2006).

In order to increase safety and to speed the screening process, FAA developed a new computer-assisted passenger screening (CAPS) process; this method is used to pre-screen

passengers by separating them into two categories. The first category contains risk passengers. The second does not. CAPS, is designed to save time, warn officers, and to check the baggage of passengers who belong to the risk category by using explosives detection technology (United States General Accounting Office, 1998).

Similarly, but more recently, Section 4012 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (IRTPA), reinforces that TSA can conduct pre-screening with information received from airlines. Thus, TSA can compare that information to a terrorist watch list from the federal government. Once the comparison takes place, then, TSA decides if a passenger in question needs to be submitted to closer screening, or if that person is allowed to travel at all (National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC), 2006).

### **Passenger Searches**

Previously, police officers were called when pat-down searches needed to be conducted. The searches were conducted privately to diminish public embarrassment. Nowadays, the searching of passengers is faster and can be done either with a



"hand held device" or by entering a "metal detector portal," unless more intrusive measures are needed (Sweet, 2002, p. 304).

Because safety is TSA's main mission, everyone must clear the airport checkpoints before proceeding to the boarding areas. Some passengers may be subjected to searches such as the walk through, hand-held metal detector scanners or in some instances intrusive searches such as frisks or pat-downs and body searches. Searches such as those are not the only type of searches TSA relies on. Passengers are searched according to the situation presented to the officer in charge (Sweet, 2002). Furthermore, passengers have several choices before an alarm is triggered. First, they can either reject or consent to a pat-down, and/or a body search. If the person in question decides to leave, airport officials cannot intervene (Sweet, 2002).

Unfortunately, officials "are not criminal investigators sworn to arrest and detain every criminal, their mission is to 'deter individuals from gaining access to an aircraft with a dangerous weapon'" (Sweet, 2002, p. 310). A body search can be performed in the following manner.

The police officer or employee should stand behind the passenger and begin the search with the head, touching the scalp. Particularly in the case of large amounts of hair [...], the officer should be alert

to the possibility of a weapon being concealed in the hair. Feel firmly between the shoulder blades, moving on down the back to the belt area. From the

waist, move your hands up the passenger's sides to the arms. Cover first the right arm (using both hands) and then the right front of the body above the waist. Repeat for the left side. From behind the passenger, place one hand on the inside of the left leg and move down from the crotch to the ankle. Repeat the procedure for the right leg. Because of the embarrassment involved, the place most frequently neglected in a pat-down search is the crotch area. As has been noted, this makes the crotch a common choice for concealing a weapon; it is essential that the crotch area be included in the search (Moore, 1976, p. 41).

While tests such as those are performed to enhance airport security and may be conducted with consent, there is a possibility in special situations when a passenger can choose between a metal detector or body search. This may apply to passengers who have medical problems (Sweet, 2002).

According to Larsen, Sweeney, and Gillick (2006) due to the critical situation airports face in regards to terrorism and because they are vulnerable targets, screening and searches without warrants are legal only if related to transportation security because those searches are treated as administrative searches and not as criminal investigations. It is perceived by the government that passengers give their consent to be screened

and searched in return for airport safety. However, not many women agree to passenger pat-downs and they have protested.

Since TSA's mission is the safety of all passengers, according to *United States v. Hartwell*, once an alarm has been triggered at an airport checkpoint, the passenger does not have the option to deny consent of being screened or searched until the alarm issue has been resolved. In regards to the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment, according to Larsen, Sweeney and Gillick (2006) the court stated that TSA agents should not "give a prospective passenger who has triggered an alarm the option of avoiding a secondary search by choosing not to fly" (Larsen, Sweeney, & Gillick, 2006, p. 607).

Although passenger searches have increased even more since 9/11, so has the recognition of patterns and behaviors among certain people, which allows trained officers to intercept unlawful contraband that would otherwise have gone unnoticed. For example, customs inspectors can search passengers "on the basis of Customs' policies and procedures and their professional judgment and experience" (United States General Accounting Office, 2000, p. 2). Table 2.2 describes methods used by U.S. customs inspectors during a study done by the United States

General Accounting Office (GAO), using data from 1997 to 1998, to decide the type of search needed, the level of suspicion required and the type of approval if needed in order to search someone (United States General Accounting Office, 2000).

**TABLE 2.2**  
**Customs' Policies for Personal Search by**  
**Type, Suspicion Level, and Approving Official**

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**Search type:** Immediate patdown (Commonly referred to as a frisk)  
**Search definition:** A search necessary to ensure that a person is not carrying a weapon

**Suspicion level required:** Suspicion that a weapon may be present  
**Approval required:** No approval required

**Search type:** Patdown for merchandise  
**Search definition:** A search for merchandise (including contraband) hidden on a person's body

**Suspicion level required:** One articulable fact  
**Approval required:** On-duty supervisor

**Search type:** Partial body search.  
**Search definition:** The removal of some of the clothing by a person to recover merchandise reasonably suspected to be concealed on the body  
**Suspicion level required:** Reasonable suspicion based on specific, articulable facts  
**Approval required:** On-duty supervisor

**Search type:** X-ray  
**Search definition:** The use of a medical x-ray by medical personnel to determine the presence of merchandise within the body  
**Suspicion level required:** Reasonable suspicion based on specific, articulable facts  
**Approval required:** Port director and court order needed without the consent of suspect. Only port director is needed with the suspect's consent

**Search type:** Body cavity  
**Search definition:** Any visual physical intrusion into the rectal  
Or vaginal cavity

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**Table 2.2 Continued**

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**Suspicion Level required:** Reasonable suspicion based on specific articulable facts

**Approval required:** Port director and court order needed without the consent of suspect. Only port director needed with the suspect's consent

**Search type:** BMB

**Search definition:** The detention of a person for the purpose of determining whether purpose of determining whether contraband or other merchandise is concealed in the alimentary canal

**Suspicion level required:** Reasonable suspicion based on specific, articulable facts

**Approval required:** Port director

---

The previous table indicates the types of searches and the level of suspicion customs inspectors must follow in order for a search to occur (United States General Accounting Office, 2000). Important factors such as those should be considered when making decisions to search an airline passenger, but the following should be considered simultaneously in order to decide whether or not an individual should be searched:

- **Behavioral analysis** is the recognition of physiological signs of nervousness. Examples include cold sweats, flushed face, and avoiding eye contact.
- **Observational techniques** involves recognizing physical discrepancies in appearance. Examples include unexplained bulges in clothing and an unnatural gait.

- **Inconsistencies** are conflicts identified in the interview/and or documentation. Examples include catching the person making a false statement and an unreasonable explanation for travel.
- **Intelligence** is information developed by another officer that may include information from automated intelligence systems.
- **K-9** involves searches conducted in response to an alert by a Customs canine.
- **Incident to a seizure or arrest** involves searches conducted in continuation of a seizure action related to previously discovered illegal or hidden merchandise. For example, finding contraband in a false-sided suitcase would provide a basis for conducting a patdown to determine if additional merchandise is hidden on the person United States (General Accounting Office, 2000, p. 5-6).

The previous descriptions allow the reader to notice the great deal of discretion customs inspectors have and can use in order to search an individual that is perceived as being a risk to others. Even though airport security has improved, there are still challenges that security professionals continue to face due the evolution of new threats (Facemire & Laustra, 2005). For instance, Table 2.3 identifies the discovered objects at U.S. airports, which were collected from passengers in 2004 according to the U.S. Department of Transportation.

**Table 2.3**  
**Prohibited and Intercepted Items at U.S. Airport Screening**  
**Checkpoints**

<b>Items</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
Other cutting instruments	2,973,413	3,567,731
Knives	1,961,849	2,058,652
Incendiaries and Explosive/ Flammable materials	494,123	693,649
Clubs	25,139	28,813
Box cutters	20,991	22,350
Firearms	683	650
Other	638,414	717,754
<b>Total prohibited items</b>	<b>6,114,612</b>	<b>7,089,599</b>

According to the TSA, the table above reflects an increase of 16 percent in prohibited items intercepted in the year 2004 over the previous year (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2006). It was stated that under "other cutting instruments, the objects found were metal pointed scissors, hatchets, swords, sabers, meat cleavers, ice axes, and picks" (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2006, p. 41). The table only reflects items



found by airport officials and it does not include the overlooked items in other flights.

### **Punishment for Violations**

To counter the evolving security threats of terrorism either national or international and in order to deter the criminal activity, many laws exist including state and federal laws that protect the aviation system. Willful violation of federal laws and targeting airports or the aircraft could result either in fines, restitution, or imprisonment and if any deaths resulted from the violation the death penalty is possible (Speciale, 2006).

### **Public Opinion**

Soon after the attacks of 9/11, in support of the war on terrorism, some "government agencies began using mass profiling based on race, nationality, and religion," apparently that was done without public opposition (Nguyen, 2005, p. 81). That may have been due to lack of information about Arabs and Middle Easterners as well as the Islam religion. As time passed by, public opinion against racial profiling started to change. Before 9/11, there was an opposition of about 80 percent towards racial profiling, but after 9/11, the opposition decreased with

as much as "70 percent in favor of some form of racial profiling for national security" (Nguyen, 2005, p. 80-81).

Derbyshire (2003) also agrees with Nguyen (2005) that a large part of Americans are more in favor of racial profiling now than before 9/11. This was actually confirmed when "in September 20, three men 'of Middle Eastern appearance' were removed from a Northwest Airlines flight because other passengers refused to fly with them" (Derbyshire, 2003, p. 57).

Immigrants were not the only ones receiving negative views before September 11, because Arabs were in the same category. Levitas (2004), described the results of a 1991 ABC News poll, which stated that 59 percent of Americans perceived Arabs to be "terrorists," 58 percent perceived them as "violent" and 56 percent viewed them to be "religious fanatics" (p. 122). Soon after September 11, a Newsweek poll reported that "32 percent of Americans favored putting Arabs under special surveillance like that of Japanese-Americans during World War II" (Levitas, 2004, p. 122). Although the majority of the American respondents answered the poll in disagreement to that, with a result of sixty-percent, "Anti-Arab attitudes have not softened much since" (Levitas, 2004, p. 122).

The USA Today/Gallup poll taken on July 28-30, 2006, measured feelings of prejudice against people of the Muslim faith, and the poll results showed that people were in favor of using tight security measures with Muslims as a way to help prevent terrorism. The Gallup poll questioned participants on U.S. attitudes towards Muslims living in the United States. It reported that 22 percent of the participants would not like to have a Muslim as a neighbor (Gallup, 2006). In a different question, the Gallup poll reported that 18 percent of the participants would feel nervous if a Muslim woman was flying in the same airplane as they were flying. Regarding male Muslims, it was reported that participants were more nervous if a male Muslim was flying in the same airplane, with 31 percent reporting they would feel nervous, a 13 percent increase from the female Muslim question. Respondents were also asked if they thought Muslims were too extreme in their religion. The poll revealed that 44 percent of the participants answered yes to that question. The survey indicated that 87 percent of the respondents perceived that Muslims are committed to their religious believes. The Gallup Poll also disclosed that when participants were asked whether or not they had some feelings of

prejudice against Muslims, nearly four in ten Americans or (39%) expressed, that they were slightly prejudice. Similarly, when asked if participants favor special security checks at airports for Muslims, four out of ten Americans surveyed answered yes. The meaning of special security is that a Muslim would have to submit to more intensive security checks. Other questions were asked in regards to whether or not respondents knew someone who is a Muslim. The results provided that seniors are more likely to be negative in their attitudes about Muslims, and are more supportive of tighter security restrictions in regards to Muslims (Gallup Poll, July 28-30, 2006).

On a different survey, Davis and Silver (2004) described that the majority of Americans prefer to keep most of their civil liberties, including their personal freedoms, rather than give them all up because of terrorist threats.

### **2.8 Racial Profiling Before 9/11**

Racial profiling has existed for decades, and historically, it relates to government officials and law enforcement (Nguyen, 2005). One could agree with the fact that racial profiling trends change depending on war paradigms. According to Bah (2005), originally, Blacks and Hispanics suffered the

consequences of racial profiling in regards to the wars on drugs. Traditionally, racial profiling has been related to "bias law enforcement practices to which Blacks and Hispanics have been subjected" (Bah, 2005, p. 76-77). Protecting the public is one of the missions law enforcement must accomplish, and the rationale for racial profiling is mostly linked to protection against crime. Therefore, protection to the public against drug trafficking is where Blacks and Hispanics became targets for racial profiling (Bah, 2005). According to Bah (2005), racial profiling continues to escalate. It was stated that the Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) reported that between 1997 and 2001, there were 27,079 cases of minorities claiming to be victims of racial profiling by officers of the New York Police Department. The old saying about "driving while black and driving while brown" expresses the biased treatment of law enforcement against minorities when enforcing stops, searches, arrests, or even when police brutality is used (Bah, 2005, p. 78).

According to Bah (2005), in Los Angeles County, records were obtained from the Los Angeles Police Department for 2003, showing that 496,416 drivers were stopped. However, "Blacks and

Hispanics are more likely to be stopped, searched, and arrested by the Los Angeles police compared to Whites" (Bah, 2005, p. 83). Only 5% of the White drivers were searched during that year compared to 20% of the Black and Hispanics drivers. In regards to arrests, only 2% of the white drivers were arrested, but 4% Blacks and 5% of the Hispanics were also arrested. When stops were performed, "White drivers were far less likely to be searched or arrested after they have been stopped" (Bah, 2005, p. 83).

O'Malley (2006) suggests that racial profiling can be manipulated by the criminal justice system because it is based on conviction rates. And those rates may be tailored by the actions of law enforcement and the criminal justice system if there is a selection of certain groups.

While one would think that racial profiling should be part of the past, President Bush during the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Organization of black law enforcement in July 2001, reinstated what others have mentioned; "times have changed in America" and with that he ordered an examination of racial profiling and declared it as being "wrong in America," and

expressed that "we've got to get rid of it" (The White House, n.d.).

## **2.9 Racial Profiling After 9/11**

Prior to the 9/11 attacks and because of the war on drugs "young men of color became the new urban threat" (Nguyen, 2005, p. 143). During that time, Muslims and Arabs were not as much viewed as terrorists. However, that point of view changed after the September 11 attacks. In this new era, there are many people who believe that "profiling of Arabs and Muslims is indispensable to homeland security" and many polls revealed the "support for antiterrorism safeguards directed at Arab and Muslim Americans" (Edley, 2003, p. 172). Furthermore, Coke (2003) describes the following instance that occurred after 9/11:

The government round up 8,000 young Arab men for questioning; require thousands more to register with the INS; arrest and jail hundreds of them on minor immigration violations; describe them as 'suspected terrorists,' holding some for months without formal charges; and then deport them (Edley, 2003, p. 106).

Bah(2005) mentions that now airport officials, specifically U.S. Customs, do not only focus on drug smuggling, they also look for illegal "documents-blueprints, drawings, photographs,

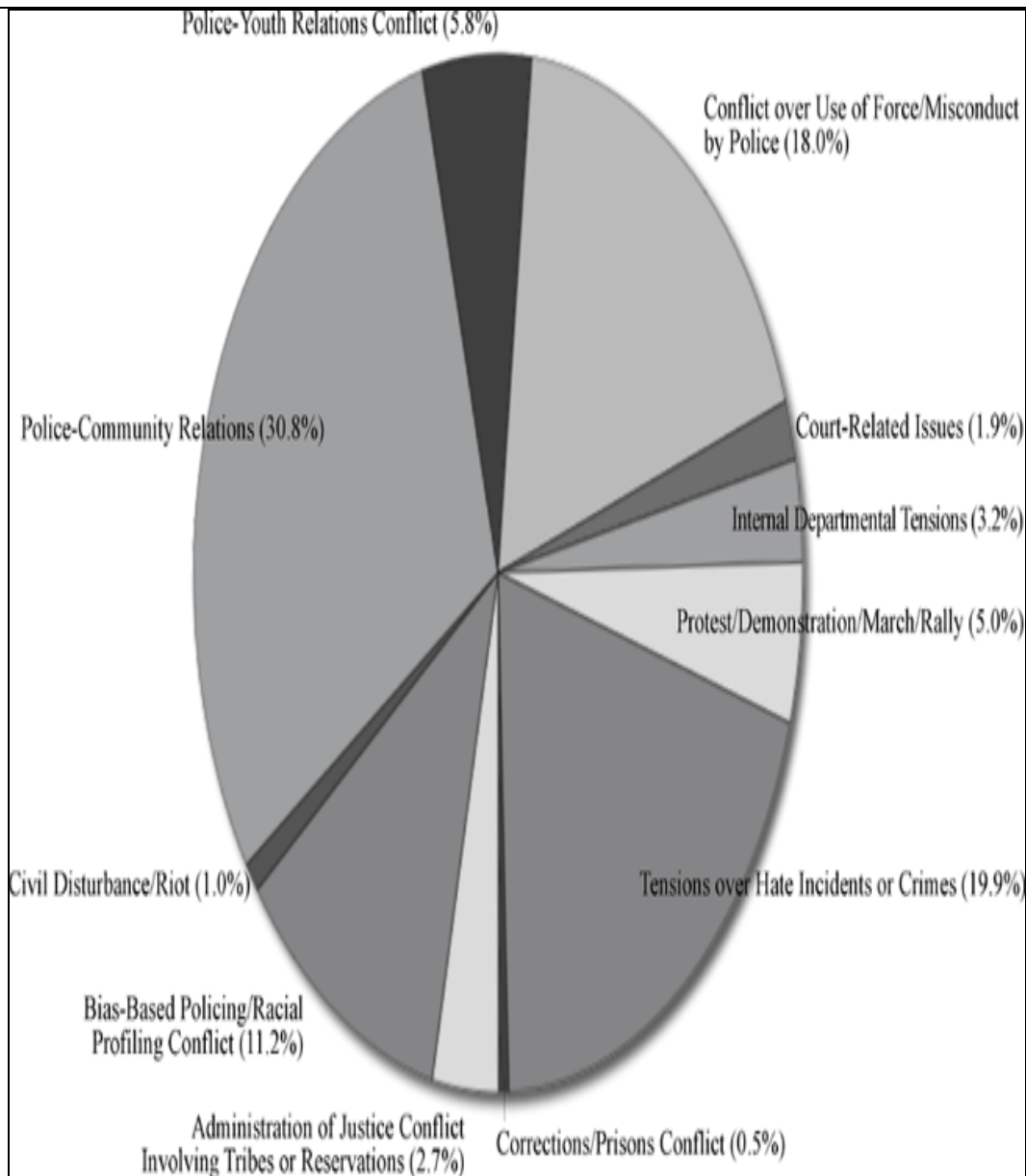
flight manuals, chemical data - that might be carried by terrorists" (p.86).

U.S. Customs requires officers not to use "a person's gender, race, color, religion, or ethnic background as a factor in determining any level of suspicion." They are also required to base their findings in facts and approval of higher authorities (United States General Accounting Office, 2000, p. 4). However, some airline passengers have complained and "filed lawsuits against the Customs Service" claiming to be unfairly singled out on the basis of discrimination and searches specifically "strip-searches and x-rays" (United States General Accounting Office, 2000, p. 1).

In spite of U.S. Customs policies and requirements, in 1997 and 1998 it was reported in a study of Custom inspectors and airline passengers, that "generally, searched passengers of particular races and gender were more likely than other passengers to be subjected to more intrusive types of personal searches (being strip-searched or x-rayed) after being subjected to frisks or patdowns" (United States General Accounting Office, 2000, p. 2).



Reinforcing Wolfe's (2003) statement about the many incidents against Muslims and Sikh's after 9/11, the U.S. Department of Justice also describes in its website that prior to September 11, 2001 that law enforcement did not have much contact with Arab, Muslim or Sikh Americans including the South Asian-American communities. However, after 9/11, contact with law enforcement and public complaints in regards to racial profiling increased (U.S. Department of Justice n.d.). Table 2.1 describes the assistance provided by the Community Relations Service (CRS), in regards to issues of racial profiling among Arabs, Muslims and Sikh-Americans (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.).



**Figure 2.1 CRS Alerts of Racial Conflict by Issues FY 2003 Administration of Justice**

Sikh-Americans are from India, but their turbans make them targets of violence from people who dislike Muslims. An

important point displayed in table 2.1 is that the CRS' third most required service in FY 2003 was their involvement with issues of racial profiling which amounted to 11.2% of their time. On the other hand, in FY 2002, CRS' most required services pertained to racial profiling issues as well.

Unfortunately, racial profiling disagreements were their "first highest issue in administration of justice services" (U.S. Department of Justice, n.d.). Even though CRS was less occupied with racial profiling issues in FY 2003 than in FY 2002, Bumbarner (2004) claims that "one thing is absolute after 9-11: far fewer people are absolutely against criminal profiling that were before" (p. 76). Soon after 9/11, many incidents were reported against Muslims and Sikhs who were targeted due to Muslim similarities (Wolfe, 2003).

Furthermore, Nguyen (2005), states that Michelle Alexander, a law professor of Stanford University, believes that "the war rhetoric" is only an excuse that could be used by "law enforcement to engage in racial profiling," since it has been done before with the "war on drugs" (Nguyen, 2005, p. 81). However, nowadays, the war is on terrorism, and "both wars create a 'by any means necessary attitude that encourages law

enforcement to target people based on race'" (Nguyen, 2005, p. 81).

However, tougher law enforcement practices have been enforced since September 11, 2001, in regards to racial profiling. For instance, in June 2003 President Bush prohibited racial profiling by "federal law enforcement agencies, but included 'exceptions permitting use of race and ethnicity to combat potential terrorist attacks'" (Nguyen, 2005, p. 141). Many people disagree with the order including the ACLU, arguing further racial profiling including in borders and airports or where federal agents could apply justifications to impose national security (Nguyen, 2005).

It was suggested by Edley (2003) that some people believe that racial profiling is used as a tool to reassure people who are suspicious and afraid. It reassures those persons that terrorism is being fought because of their fears. Edley (2003, makes a good point when he states the following:

With our exploding demographic diversity, including the enormous rate of growth of the Islamic population in the United States, it is not too dramatic to claim that our nation's stability in the next generation will depend on finding far better ways to deal with ethnic and religious differences (p. 181).

Sadly, nowadays, because of the war on terrorism, "the

victims are mostly Arab Americans and foreign nationals," they have suffered due to the mass roundups after 9/11 and the "considerable harassment on the basis of virtually no evidence of danger or disloyalty" (Edley, 2003, p. 46). Fisher (2006) stated that most of the people who were required to register after 9/11 were males and when they did register with the INS; they were apprehended for further questioning.

### **Summary of the Topic**

The review of the literature in this study reflects a changing paradigm in the airport security environment that has tightened and increased after the events of 9/11. The security at airports has become one of the most important topics of interest in the literature due to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

The literature also reveals that historically, racial profiling has been an active issue against minority males, and has presented significant challenges to law enforcement. The public did not accept racial profiling before 9/11. However, Cole (2003), suggests that since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, people think differently about "racial and ethnic profiling" in regards to law enforcement (p. 48). It appears that after 9/11,

profiling may be an issue that is not only affecting law enforcement, but it has also extended to challenge airport security as well. For instance, in an example given by Cole (2003), he described the problems three highly educated male airplane passengers faced, after they had already cleared security. The three males sitting together were ready to depart to Tampa Florida; however, someone perceived them to be suspicious and complained while mentioning their "brown skin," an issue that resulted in their removal (Cole, 2003, p. 47). That incident, eventually, lead to a discrimination law suit that was filed by two of the passengers based on persuasion based on race and gender. Many others after 9/11 also reported different types of abuses, specifically, profiling against males who appear to be Arab or Muslims. The progressive increase in reports received by the Council on American-Islamic Relations surpassed 1,658, on January 2002, only four months after 9/11. Some of the reported incidents included abusive police practices, and airline-related discrimination against Arabs and or Muslims (Cole, 2003). Apparently, just about everyone has a different way of thinking now, than before the 9/11 attacks, including the airline employees, and the government. After the

9/11 attacks, people are more likely to think that any "Arab or Muslim male" could be a "terrorist" (Cole, 2003, p. 49).

**The Contribution This Study Will Make to the Body of Knowledge**

It has been reviewed that racial profiling is prohibited and "the Equal Protection Clause presumptively forbids government authorities from relying on racial or ethnic categories" (Cole, 2003, p. 55). It has also been noted that racial profiling is ineffective, and that it may even be a distraction that has prevented law enforcement from capturing many dangerous criminals. For example, Cole (2003) suggests that law enforcement agents were probably waiting for a certain type of group, rather than someone like the "shoe bomber," Richard Reid, the British male who was able to board an airplane with a bomb in his shoe as he departed from Paris with a destination to Miami (p. 55).

Cole 2003 states that the government has implemented many measures to prevent racial profiling among law enforcement officers. They have also used strategies so "ethnic stereotypes" are not part of their practice, as that may be attributing to the lack of their effectiveness due to the limited concentration on individual behavior. In spite of the measures taken to

prevent racial profiling, it has been suggested that 9/11 has changed the way many people think about racial profiling.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to find out if undergraduate students perceive that males are more likely to be searched than females at airports, and if it is perceived that those searched are more likely to be from the Middle East, African Americans, Hispanics, or Whites. Although, there are many authors that have contributed to the literature in regards to airport security, there is a limited amount that refers their writings to airport security and racial profiling, specifically, in regards to the knowledge and perception of undergraduate students. The outcome of this study will also contribute and augment the knowledge as it pertains to the criteria used to select passengers for personal searches.



## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of data collection, the undergraduate students of the University of Texas at Arlington, specifically, the Criminology Criminal Justice program was selected by the researcher of this study. The data were collected by administering a survey during the spring semester of 2007. Out of the entire student population, 934 students were enrolled in the Criminology and Criminal Justice undergraduate program. The data collected reflects the knowledge and perception of 103 surveyed CRCJ undergraduate students.

#### **Subjects of the study**

In order to evaluate the significance between the knowledge and perception differences of CRCJ undergraduate students in relation to Airport Security and the selection of passengers for personal searches, a purposive sample design was utilized to gather the cross-sectional data for this study. Findings are

strictly limited to the sample and not generalized to the entire population.

The sample was based on the course list provided by the Criminal Justice Department. The list reflected the class offerings and student enrollment for the 2007 spring semester. In the selected classes, an e-mail was first sent to each professor asking for permission to distribute the questionnaires in their class. Once permission were granted by the professors, the researcher hand-out the surveys to each student who was present that day. The classes were chosen according to course level, for instance, introduction, intermediate or advance criminology. The researcher, announced to the respondents, to disregard the survey if a similar survey had already been completed in a previous class, it was also noted to the respondents that the survey was voluntary and they could stop anytime they choose to stop.

There were about 934 enrolled students in the Criminology/Criminal Justice program during the spring semester; however, a power sample was used for the purpose of this study. According to Cohen (1988), a power sample is an estimate of the number of participants needed in order to obtain a correlation

of a sample size. According to Cohen a sample size of at least forty-five participants is necessary if the intent is to achieve an eighty percent chance of obtaining a statistically significant correlation at the .05 level (p. 53-56).

### **Measurement/Data Collection**

The purpose of designing this instrument was to determine if undergraduate students perceive that males are more likely to be searched than females at airports, and if it is perceived that those searched are more likely to be from the Middle East, African Americans, Hispanics or Whites. Additionally, the instrument was designed to measure the student's knowledge about the criteria used by airport security agents for the selection of passengers for personal searches.

The procedures for the data collection began immediately after permission was granted by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), of the University of Texas at Arlington. After the approval of the survey the respondents cooperated with their voluntary participation. The researcher handed the surveys to the participants within a two-week period during the spring semester in April, 2007. The researcher developed the survey from data obtained throughout reviewed literature, specifically,

in a study performed by the United States General Accounting Office (GAO) of (2000). The survey described the purpose of the research, and it allowed the survey taker to decline participation at anytime and it assured respondents that participation was voluntary.

The confidentiality of the respondents was also reinforced when the researcher verbally announced to each class that their name was not necessary. The data originated from a 25-item instrument constructed by the researcher with information obtained by reviewing the literature as it pertained to airport security.

The questionnaire was designed with a 5-point Likert Scale, in which "1" represented the strongest level of agreement, and "2" a lower level of agreement. The selection of a "3" referred to neutrality and "4" revealed a lower level of disagreement, "5" indicated the strongest level of disagreement. The strategy was to measure the respondent's knowledge, perception and to find out their demographics such as gender, race, and income. The twenty-five question survey was divided in categories such as perception, knowledge and demographics. The first nineteen questions of the survey were designed to measure perception and

knowledge, using close ended statements that reflected a five-point Likert Scale. The last six questions were constructed with the intention to measure the demographics of the respondents who participated in the research.

Once the respondents completed the surveys, the researcher immediately collected them to evaluate the data by coding the surveys into the Statistical Program for Social Sciences (SPSS) Graduate Pack 14.0 for Windows (Wadsworth Edition) software.

This chapter described the methodology used to carry out the research and it explained how the study was performed. Chapter 4 will focus on the findings of the study. It will describe the results of the quantitative research by explaining the coded responses of the sample in SPSS. The results will be analyzed and described in detail in order to find out whether or not undergraduate students of the Criminology/Criminal Justice Department, of the University of Texas at Arlington perceive that males are more likely to be searched than females at airports and if those searched are more likely to be from the Middle East, African Americans, Hispanics, or Whites.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

A 100% return rate was achieved by the researcher due to the method selected for distribution of the surveys. The researcher handed a total of 103 surveys to the participants and they were all collected immediately after their completion. A t-test was utilized by the researcher to measure and obtain the results of the study. Furthermore, the t-test, determined whether or not the differences of the means were statistically significant when compared to the selected variables. The variable gender was used for control and to determine the means and p-values of each variable. Finally, the SPSS was used and a t-test measured the perception and knowledge of the sample via-survey.

#### **Demographical Information**

The demographic information of the sample derived from the 103 surveys collected by the researcher as previously stated, although, the surveyed classes include 157 enrolled students,

because the surveys were administered before and after the Easter weekend, student attendance was low resulting of only 103, or a (66%) response rate. The demographical information breakdown is described in Table 4.1, which represents the demographic profile of the sample.

**Table 4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

	n	Percent	Cumulative %
<b>Gender:</b>			
Male	39	38	37
Female	64	62	100
Total	103	100	
<b>Age:</b>			
Missing	3	3	3
18-24	69	68	70
25-30	21	20	90
31-35	4	4	94
36-40	3	3	97
41-45	1	1	98
46-50	1	1	99
51-55	1	1	100
Total	103	100	
<b>Employment:</b>			
Governmental agency	8	8	8
Non-governmental	95	92	100
Total	103	100	
<b>Education Classification:</b>			
Freshman	3	3	3
Sophomore	17	17	20
Junior	26	25	46
Senior	54	52	46
Total	100	97	
Missing	3	3	
Total	103	100	

**Table 4.1 Continued**

	n	Percent	Cumulative %
Degree:			
Missing	32	31	31
Broadcast/ Journalism	1	1	32
Biology	1	1	33
Business	1	1	34
CRCJ	58	56	90
Economics	2	2	92
Education	1	1	93
Interdisciplinary	1	1	94
Management	1	1	95
Nursing	2	1	97
Political Science	1	1	98
Psychology	1	1	99
Undeclared	1	1	100
Total	103	100	
Race/Ethnicity:			
White	52	51	53
African American	13	13	66
Hispanic	18	18	85
Middle Eastern	3	3	88
Asian	9	9	97
Other	3	3	100
Total	98	95	
Missing	5	5	
Total	103	100	
Income Range:			
0-\$20,000	41	40	43
\$21,000-\$40,000	40	39	84
\$41,000-\$60,000	6	6	91
Over \$60,000	9	9	100
Total	96	93	
Missing	7	7	
Total	103	100	

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Note: N=103

According to Table 4.1, thirty-nine respondents were males (38%), and sixty-four females (62%) demonstrating the majority



since they accounted for more than half of the sample. The table also allows the reader to note that the majority (67%) of the respondents are between the ages of 18-24. Respondents between the ages of 25-30 years represented (20%) of the sample. On the other hand, a scarce amount of respondents indicated to be between the ages of 31-35 (4%). While respondents who reported their age to be between 36-40 years represented only 3% of the sample; similarly, only three respondents followed between the ages of 41-55, or one respondent per every 5 year increments and (3%) of the surveyed sample.

Table 4.1 also reviews that out of the 103 respondents, no one is over the age of 55. And when referring to employment, only eight respondents were employed for a governmental agency (8%). The majority of the sample did not work for a governmental agency since 95 participants declared it in their answers, totaling (9%). In regards to education only three respondents belonged to the category of freshman (3%). Seventeen participants identified themselves in the sophomore category or (17%). Following with the junior category, a total of twenty-six respondents selected this choice ending in a percentage of (25%). In the senior's classification, 54 of the respondents

were seniors, and the percentage of the selected category is (52%). As described in table 4.1, out of the sample of 103, three respondents did not select a classification.

It should be noted that 58 respondents selected a Criminology or Criminal Justice degree that amounted to (56%) meaning that the majority of the sample are Criminology or Criminal Justice majors. As a result, only 10 participants or (12%) of the participants were enrolled in classes unrelated to Criminology or Criminal Justice. One of the students reported to have an undeclared status (1%). Surprisingly, thirty-two participants did not respond to the open ended question that resulted in (31%). The race/ethnicity classification included the majority as being White, 52 or (51 %), African Americans, 13 or (13%), Hispanics, 18 or (18%), Middle Eastern respondents, 3 (3%), Asians, 9 (9%), in the attributes listed as "other," three respondents checked this selection (3%), and only five answers were missing accounting for (5%) of the responses. Finally, the last section of the demographic variables refers to income and the majority of the respondents, 41 or (40%) selected to have income between 0-\$20,000, and this represented the lowest in its category. Next, within the income variable, forty or (39%)

represents the \$41,000-\$60,000 attribute category. Nine respondents (9%) selected to be part of the over \$60,000 category. Seven or (7%) of the participants did not choose an income category.

### **Perception**

As previously mentioned, the intent of this study was to analyze and identify the perception and knowledge of the criteria used to select airline passengers for personal searches via self-administered surveys to Criminology/Criminal Justice undergraduate students.

Table 4.2 demonstrates the thirteen variables constructed to measure perception and the means of male and female students, including correspondent p-values with "Gender" as a control variable. Variables in table 4.2 were measured with the intent to find out if there were any significant differences between male and female responses. Out of the thirteen variables testing perception, six resulted to be statistically significant.

**Table 4.2 Means and P-values for Perceptions by Gender**

Variables	Male	Female	P-Values
I believe that African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched at airport checkpoints than Whites.	2.51	2.77	<b>0.001**</b>
A frisk (immediate patdown) is necessary if a person is suspected of carrying an illegal object and no approval of a higher authority should be necessary.	2.37	2.63	0.143
An approved patdown is necessary if there is some suspicion of illegal substance hidden on a passenger's body.	2.18	2.05	0.357
If there is reasonable suspicion, an approved partial body search should be enforced to remove some of the passenger's clothing which is suspected of hiding something, including shoes.	2.21	2.20	0.957
Based on reasonable suspicion more intrusive searches such as X-rays and body cavity should only be given with the consent of a court order and an airport director, unless the suspect gives consent.	1.89	2.44	<b>0.002**</b>
Monitored bowel movements are more intrusive searches and should only be supervised by an airport director under reasonable suspicion.	2.71	2.94	0.213
After 9/11, to determine a level of suspicion an officer is required to know a passenger's gender, race, color, religion, or ethnic background.	3.45	3.73	<b>0.043**</b>
Airport officials are allowed to use racial profiling only with the intention to capture terrorists.	3.03	3.39	<b>0.050**</b>
Airport officials should search people based on their personal appearance.	3.28	3.86	<b>0.000**</b>
People who perspire while waiting at the passenger screening checkpoint should be searched by airport officials.	3.31	3.55	0.156

**Table 4.2 Continued**

Variables	Male	Female	P-Values
I believe that people who wear loose fitting clothing are most likely to be searched.	3.13	3.25	0.384
People who arrive late at the airport should not be searched.	4.28	4.53	<b>0.030**</b>
I believe that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is ready to confront any terrorist attacks, as long as they do not involve the transportation system.	3.54	3.32	0.115

**\*\*Statistically significant at the 0.05 confidence level**

Table 4.2 displays the results of the detailed analysis measured using the SPSS statistical program and are described as follows. The first statement of reveals an statistically significant p-value of 0.001 representing the variable "I believe that African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched at airport checkpoints than Whites," this in fact, indicates that there were statistically significant differences among male and female responses. The mean value of this first variable representing male students is 2.51 and females 2.77. This is an indication that male students showed a higher level of agreement in their responses in regards to this variable.

The following statement, "A frisk (immediate patdown) is necessary if a person is suspected of carrying an illegal object, and no approval of a higher authority should be necessary," attributed to an insignificant p-value of 0.143. This variable recorded the male means as being 2.37 and female means of 2.63 revealing insignificant correlations for the variable.

The analysis of the statement "An approved patdown is necessary if there is some suspicion of illegal substances hidden on a passenger's body," revealed male means to be 2.18 and 2.05 in regards to females, which accounted to a p-value of 0.357 demonstrating another insignificant result and agreement to this statement as well.

In regards to the variable "If there is reasonable suspicion, an approved partial body search should be enforced to remove some of the passenger's clothing which is suspected of hiding something, including shoes," a p-value of 0.957 was revealed by the t-test and describes an insignificant variance; however, the result is very close to being significant. The table displays male means of 2.21 and female means of 2.20

referring that both genders agree for the most part, but females are slightly more agreeable than males.

Subsequently, a t-test in the variable "Based on reasonable suspicion more intrusive searches such as X-rays and body cavity should only be given with the consent of a court order and an airport director, unless the suspect gives consent," reflected means of 1.89 for males and 2.44 for females including a statistically significant p-value of 0.002. A p-value as this indicates that males agree more in regards to this variable than females, therefore, there is a difference and the results are statistically significant.

The mean value for "Monitored bowel movements are more intrusive searches and should only be supervised by an airport director under reasonable suspicion," in relation to males is 2.71 and females are 2.94 with a p-value of 0.213 displaying a non-significant value. Thus, both male and female students stated agreement in their responses to this variable.

On a different question, and one that resulted to be statistically significant which reflected in mean values of 3.45 for male students and 3.73 for females the variable asked "After 9/11, to determine a level of suspicion an officer is required

to know a passenger's gender, race, color, religion, or ethnic background," which developed a p-value of 0.043. Interestingly, with an "n" of 39 males, and 64 females the results were neutral and mean values for males were slightly lower than females, which were leaning more towards disagreement.

An important finding revealed p-values of 0.050 for a variable as "Airport officials are allowed to use racial profiling only with the intention to capture terrorists," were found among genders with mean values of 3.03 for males and 3.39 for females displaying statistically significant results indicating that males were more agreeable to this variable.

Measuring perception differently, as the question read, "Airport officials should search people based on their personal appearance," this variable was also found to be statistically significant. It contained male means of 3.28 and female means of 3.86 with a p-value of 0.000. The calculated means of this variable demonstrated that males were more agreeable than females.

While male students selected responses that amounted to a mean value of 3.31, females, on the other hand, choose responses totaling 3.55 when the variable of "People who perspire while



waiting at the passenger screening checkpoint should be searched by airport officials," was presented. In this question the p-value reached a 0.156 in the t-test comparison and no significant variance was developed.

Table 4.2 describes that the following variable resulted insignificant, "I believe that people who wear loose fitting clothing are most likely to be searched," this variable generated neutral responses because the male mean value responses were 3.13 and 3.25 relate to females with P-Values of 0.384 in the t-test comparisons.

Interestingly, the results of variable "People who arrive late at the airport should not be searched," were statistically significant. The disagreement resulted with mean male values of 4.28 and females 4.53, and a statistically significant value of 0.030. There is a difference of responses among male and female students in regards to this statement, as males have a higher level of disagreement than females.

The last variable measuring perception, revealed, male means of 3.54 and female means of 3.32 when asked "I believe that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is ready to confront any terrorist attacks, as long as they do not involve

the transportation system," this statement was not statistically significant it provided neutrality among both male and females with a p-value of 0.115.

Importantly, of those thirteen statements measuring perception, six reflected statistical significances among male and female undergraduate CRCJ students. The other seven variables, on the other hand, showed p-values of insignificant differences among the student sample.

To measure perception with a different perspective several options were given to respondents under the following variable "While waiting in line at the airport, but before entering the boarding area, how would you feel if an airport official selects you, out of all those persons just to be frisked or patdown?" Table 4.3 indicates the attributes used to measure this variable among male and female respondents along with frequencies. Of those seven attributes displayed on table 4.3, the majority of agreement came from the attribute "Do not care." Out of 39 males 11 selected this attribute or (28%). Of the 64 females 16 provided this as their favorite response ending with a (25%).

**TABLE 4.3 Gender Perceptions of Their Selection for a Frisk or Patdown**

Attributes	Frequency	Male %	Frequency	Female %
a. Proud	3	8	0	16
b. Embarrassed	3	8	11	17
<b>c. Do not care</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>25</b>
d. Nervous	2	5	2	3
e. Angry	4	10	7	11
f. Discriminated	1	3	6	9
g. Cooperative	10	26	12	19

In regards to the same variable but measuring a different attribute, table 4.3 presents that "Proud," generated male responses of 3 frequencies and (8%). On the other hand, female frequencies resulted in zero responses with (16%) which attributed to their missed response.

The next attribute used for the same variable was "Embarrassed" in which 3 male participants selected it as their choice (8%). Interestingly, 11 female participants or (17%) selected this attribute to be among their favorite choices.

Although, the amount of frequencies reflected two, the attribute "Nervous," was the only category in which there was consensus among both male and female participants. Male respondents ended with (5%) and females with (3%), however, there was agreement between male and female students.

Four males or (10%) of the male sample selected the attribute "Angry," when asked to reflect their perception about this variable. Seven females, or (11%) of the female population in this sample, described themselves to be "Angry" when selected for a frisk or a patdown while at the airport.

Another of the attributes measuring gender perception was presented as "Discriminated." As the previous table describes it, this attribute contains the lowest frequencies out of all. Only one of the males selected it (3%) and 6 females or (9%) reflecting a higher percentage among females.

One of the highest percents referred to the "Cooperative" attribute in which a frequency of 10 males chose this selection or (26%). Also with a high level of agreement a frequency of 12 female participants or (19%) selected this as one of their choices used to measure the perception of undergraduate students of the Criminology/Criminal Justice department.

Similarly, using the same perspective but with a different variable respondents were given several choices used to measure "How would you feel if you were selected to be searched with permission of a supervisor and a court for a more intrusive search?"

The first attribute used to test the previous mentioned variable is "Disappointed." Only three males or (8%) answered as feeling disappointed pertaining to the previous asked variable, and in regards to female frequencies five of them (8%) also selected this attribute as their choice. Therefore, females are more disappointed than males as they responded when the variable "How would you feel if you were selected to be searched with permission of a supervisor and a court for a more intrusive search?" was asked. Table 4.4 describes the various attributes including gender frequencies and percentages used in SPSS to measure this variable.

**TABLE 4.4 Descriptions of Attributes, Frequencies and Percentages for Gender Perception**

Attributes	Frequency	Male %	Frequency	Female %
a. Disappointed	3	8	5	8
b. Embarrassed	0	0	7	11
c. Do not care	4	10	6	9
d. Nervous	2	5	2	3
e. Proud	1	3	0	0
f. Discriminated	2	5	1	2
g. Cooperative	6	15	11	17
<b>h. Angry</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>

Interestingly, table 4.4 suggests that the male population of this study did not select the attribute "Embarrassed" as their choice for the same variable "How would you feel if you were selected to be searched with permission of a supervisor and a court for a more intrusive search?" However, a total of 7 females or (21%) decided for this selection.

Four male respondents or (10%) indicated favoritism for the attribute "Do not care" used to measure the same variable. Six

female participants or a percentage of 9 also selected the same attribute in this study. Therefore, this attribute had a higher level of support from the male population of this study.

Different results were found with the attribute "Nervous," which generated some agreement among the sample population. The results indicated frequencies of two males (5%), as well as frequencies of two females or (3%). Although, the percentages are different because of the "n" size of males as being 39 and females 64 the frequencies are the same.

Regarding the attribute "Proud," the results of this study showed the lowest agreement between both male and female participants. Pertaining male participants, one student, did select this as his choice when asked "How would you feel if you were selected to be searched with permission of a supervisor and a court for a more intrusive search?" his answer attributed to (3%) in this study. On the other hand, females did not select this attribute as their answer.

The next attribute or choice for the same variable was "Discriminated." As the previous table displays it, this also had the lowest agreement among male and female respondents. There were only two males who preferred this choice among the

others resulting in (5%) of the male population. In regards to females, only one female respondent selected this choice as her preferred answer, this means that (2%) of the female population favored this choice.

More than fifteen percent of the respondents who participated in this study agreed with the "Cooperative" attribute for the same variable. Six males chose this attribute or (15%) and eleven female respondents (17%).

The last attribute with the same variable referred to "Angry," this attribute generated the highest level of agreement among the aggregate of this study. The highest agreement derived from the 17 male participants which ended with a (44%). Female participants generated a (21%) due to the 20 females who decided to choose this as their answer.

### **Knowledge**

In order to effectively measure the knowledge of undergraduate students of the CRCJ department, the SPSS graduate packet was used for this study as it was previously mentioned. The emphasis was placed in the variable gender, which was used to control the variables in order to obtain the differences in responses. The following table reveals a list of the variables



provided in the surveys with both male and female mean values, including the p-value results of each statement. In table 4.5 the statistically significant p-values are noted with "\*\*\*" placed at the right side of that p-value. The table reflects the nine variables used to measure the knowledge of undergraduate students of the CRCJ department in regards to airport security and the selection of airport passengers to be personally searched as previously mentioned. Out of those nine variables only two resulted to be statistically significant.

It is important to mention that the variable "I am familiar with the physical characteristics of a terrorist," displayed a statistically significant variance among male and female students. A p-value of 0.001 was obtained with this variable.

**Table 4.5 Means and P-Values for Knowledge by Gender**

Variables	Male	Female	P-Values
I am familiar with the physical characteristics of a terrorist.	3.00	3.58	<b>0.001**</b>
I know that airports are safer Now that what they were before the terrorist attacks of 9/11.	2.72	2.80	0.641
After 9/11, airport officials always give Whites a break when they arrive to passenger screening checkpoints.	3.54	3.75	0.116
People who seem to be nervous while at the passenger screening checkpoint of an airport should be searched.	2.49	2.51	0.916
At airports males are searched more often than females.	2.38	2.84	<b>0.000**</b>
Due to the attacks of 9/11, people from the Middle East are more likely to be searched by airport officials than people from other countries.	1.77	1.87	0.448
I know that by taking my shoes off at the passenger checkpoint, I am complying with a new airport mandate.	2.00	1.75	0.095
I know that after 9/11 airport officials became better trained to spot terrorists.	3.03	2.86	0.311
After the 9/11 attacks, airport security increased resulting in more passenger searches.	1.87	1.75	0.373

**\*\*Indicates, Significance at the 0.05 confidence level**

As indicated in Table 4.5 the mean value for males in regards to this variable is 3.00 and for females the results were slightly higher 3.58. It could be said that females were lining more towards disagreement than to neutrality.

According to the statistics developed in the SPSS program, the p-value obtained from the variable "I know that airports are safer now than what they were before the terrorist attacks of 9/11," was 0.641. As it is displayed on the following table the mean value for males was 2.51 and 2.77 for females. This reflects a lower level of agreement among females than males.

A p-value of 0.116 resulted from the mean value of 3.54 in regards to male respondents and 3.75 for female respondents. When measuring the variable, "After 9/11, airport officials always give Whites a break when they arrive to passenger screening checkpoints," the t-test results did not discovered a statistically difference among male and female students. In this variable, there is neutrality; however, males show higher level of neutrality.

As indicated on table 4.5, there was no apparent statistical difference between male and female respondents when asked "People who seem to be nervous while at the passenger

screening checkpoint of an airport should be searched," in this variable the p-value revealed 0.916. The mean value for males reflected 2.49 and for females 2.51 which describes higher level of agreement in regards to male respondents.

An important discovery is reflected in the results of the calculations in regards to the variable "At airports males are searched more often than females," since there was a significant difference among the responses of male and female students who participated in the study. The mean value for male respondents was 2.38 and for females 2.84. The p-value for this variable revealed to be statistically significant at the 0.000 level. Those results indicated that male respondents had higher level of agreements in regards to the statement.

A t-test determined the p-value of 0.448 as an insignificant variance. The variable measured was "Due to the attacks of 9/11, people from the Middle East are more likely to be searched by airport officials than people from other countries," displaying the interesting results obtained from mean values regarding male participants of 1.77 and from female participants at 1.87. This variable presented findings of higher level of agreement among males than with females.

Focusing on a different variable but still measuring knowledge, "I know that by taking my shoes off at the passenger checkpoint, I am complying with a new airport mandate," this variable pertains to the p-value of 0.095. This was obtained from male mean values of 1.95 and from female mean values of 1.75. Those calculations resulted as not being statistically significant among male and females as table 4.5 reflects it.

Analyzing a different variable, one that dealt with mean values for male respondents of 3.03 and with mean values of 2.86 for females resulted as not being statistically significant. Those mean values developed the p-value of this variable, which amounted to 0.311. The variable reflecting those values is "I know that after 9/11 airport officials became better trained to spot terrorists," in this statement male participants leaned more towards neutrality than female participants who answered with higher levels of agreement.

Referring to the statement of "After the 9/11 attacks, airport security increased resulting in more passenger searches," table 4.5 displays an agreement. The agreement of male mean values for the previous variable derived from calculations of the t-test performed in the SPSS in which the

male mean values reached 1.87 and female mean values 1.75, in this statement the p-values were insignificant at 0.373. This indicates that females displayed higher agreement to this question in their responses than males.

The following chapter contains a discussion of the quantitative study and provides recommendations for further study and/or policy implementation aimed at extending the results of the study.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to measure the perception and knowledge of undergraduate students enrolled in the Criminology/Criminal Justice Department at the University of Texas at Arlington during the spring semester of 2007. The findings of this study were compiled from responses obtained from the 103 survey questioners collected from each of the respondents. Chapter 5 will review the findings of the study; the findings will be summarized and discussed providing the base for recommendations to further research. The recommendations are based on the explored literature and data obtained from the collected surveys.

The data obtained from the surveyed sample revealed statistically significant differences of perception and knowledge between the male and female respondents in regards to the criteria used by airport agents for personal searches.

Furthermore, the demographic profile of the sample in regards to the majority was reflected from the data collected and suggests that respondents were likely to be female (n=64) or (62%). The sample is more concentrated of respondents who fall under the category of 18-24 years old (67%), and are less likely to be employed for the government (n=95) or (92%), education classification "senior" (n=54) or (52%), more than half of the respondents are pursuing a degree in Criminology or Criminal Justice (n=59) or (57%), race/ethnicity (n=52) or (51%) were white respondents, and (n=41) or (40%) of the participants had an annual income of less than \$20,000.

### **Perception**

Of the fourteen statements constructed to measure perception, six resulted in statistically significant differences when a t-test was performed to the variable gender, which included male and female responses. Important results were revealed by the first statement when asked "I believe that African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched at airport checkpoints than Whites." The findings of this variable support the literature reviewed since it has been stated that African Americans and Hispanics have been targets of



law enforcement agents. The t-test performed to this variable affirmed to be statistically significant at the 0.001 level.

Similarly, an statistically significant result was demonstrated by the t-test performed in the following variable, "Based on reasonable suspicion more intrusive searches such as X-rays and body cavity should only be given with the consent of a court order and an airport director, unless the suspect gives consent," and interestingly, male responses in this statement amounted to a higher level of agreement. A p-value was generated and resulted in being statistically significant at the 0.002 level. In regards to this variable, the generated results also support the reviewed literature probably because males may feel vulnerable as well as females. This could be because there are more males who commit illegal activities and more females have been chosen for more intrusive searches.

An important finding revealed the outcome of the following variable, "After 9/11, to determine a level of suspicion an officer is required to know a passenger's gender, race, color, religion, or ethnic background;" this variable revealed to be statistically significant. Although, the responses between males and females were neutral, however, once more, males revealed

higher levels of agreement than females. Females leaned more towards disagreement. The t-test revealed this variable as being statistically significant at the 0.043 level.

When participants were asked "Airport officials are allowed to use racial profiling only with the intention to capture terrorists," they responded with neutrality. Within the neutrality males, once more, revealed high levels of neutral agreement in regards to this variable. On the other hand, female participants leaned more towards disagreement. The results of the t-test revealed this variable to be statistically significant at the 0.050 level. Although, it could be said that the literature reviewed has revealed a change in paradigm, from the "war of drugs" to the "war of terrorism," it has also revealed the opposite of this variable.

Neutral results were also the preferred choice of the respondents in regards to the following variable, "Airport officials should search people based on their personal appearance." However, the level of agreements within the neutral responses between male and female respondents varied. Males responded with higher levels of neutral agreement than females. This variable also represents to be statistically significant at

the 0.000 level. It could be said that the findings of this variable do not support the literature review.

The only variable that reflected to be disagreement by both male and female respondents was "People who arrive late at the airport should not be searched." The results of this variable revealed that male participants had lower levels of disagreement than females. Furthermore, the t-test presented to be statistically significant at the 0.030 level. The results produced by the t-test in this variable supported the literature reviewed as it states that everyone should be searched regardless of the time it takes (Department of Transportation Administration, 2006).

The previous six variables were aimed to measure perception, based on the responses provided by the participants of the study. They revealed to be statistically significant; however, the other eight did not reveal to be statistically significant.

### **Knowledge**

This study aimed to measure the respondents' knowledge via the voluntary survey provided by the researcher in regards to the selection of airport passengers for personal searches. Eight

statements were constructed and later evaluated through t-tests that revealed the significance of the variables. Out of those eight statements only two revealed to be statistically significant.

Interestingly, the variable "I am familiar with the physical characteristics of a terrorist," revealed neutrality among both male and female answers. In fact, males specifically responded with absolute neutrality, while females responded with higher levels of disagreement within the neutral scale. The result of the t-test represents to be statistically significant at the 0.001 level. It is hard to say whether or not the findings of this variable support the literature review as it has been said that researchers do not agree on the characteristics of a terrorist (Howard and Sawyer, 2003), since the response of the participants neither agrees nor disagrees with the variable.

It is of great importance to note the results of the following variable, "At airport males are searched more often than females;" this variable, revealed that both male and female respondents agreed. Within their agreement, males responded with higher levels of agreement than females who leaned more towards

neutrality. The t-test of this statement reflected to be statistically significant at the 0.000 level. It could be said that the results corroborate with the literature review in general because it has been mentioned that males are more likely to commit crime than females (Messerschmidt, 2005). Therefore, it makes sense that it is perceived by undergraduate students that they are more likely to be searched than females.

Surprisingly the findings of the t-test performed to the variable "Due to the attacks of 9/11, people from the Middle East is more likely to be searched by airport officials than people from other countries" revealed to be insignificant statistically. The findings of this variable differ from the literature. Therefore, what is perceived by undergraduate students in regards to this variable contradicts what has been written by many authors.

The findings of this research provided support to the hypothesis of the researcher. In addition to that, the body of knowledge one could say receives an important contribution from the results of this study because the findings can be generalized to the population, specifically, to the student population.

### **Policy Implications**

Soon after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States, and due to the war on terrorism, governmental agencies as well as non-governmental agencies were faced with many requirements and modifications that affected their daily operations. Those changes created an internal as well as an external impact in the airline industries. For example, the airline industry was faced with modifications such as new laws, hiring more employees, training or retraining officials. They were faced with a new paradigm such as "the war on terrorism" which is usually associated with male Muslims from the Middle East as it has been reviewed in the previous literature.

Therefore, the findings of this study are important not only to the government or to the airline industry, but they are important to society in general. This study revealed valuable information that can be useful for further research because the findings relate to Whites, African Americans, Hispanics, and to the male population including people from the Middle East.

One of the overall findings of this study is that it is perceived by both male and female respondents that males, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched

at airport checkpoints than Whites. The intention was also to find out whether or not undergraduate students of the Criminology/Criminal Justice Department perceived that people from the Middle East were more likely to be selected for personal searches than people from other countries. The findings of the study revealed to be important, because they demonstrate the opposite of what the reviewed literature suggests.

Therefore, it is imperative that the government reacts quickly. First of all, measurements should be taken immediately by TSA to educate airport officials. At this time, they may be paying more attention to males, when in fact; they should be concentrating on searching females.

The TSA should also be aware that it is perceived that African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched than Whites. Therefore, TSA should take these results in consideration and modify their daily activities. If they are concentrating in searching those groups more than the others, then, the others may be getting away. If undergraduate students perceive this to be the case, then, others may perceive the same thing. Thus, airport officials should concentrate on conducting more personal searches that include Whites and people from the

Middle East. Perhaps, if males, African Americans and Hispanics know that it is more likely that they will be searched, they are less likely to commit an illegal offence while crossing a checkpoint of an airport.

The TSA should not be the only governmental agency that could benefit from the results of this study. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) should be notified as well. After all, its mission is to protect the United States. The DHS could alert its directorates, and they could communicate with the agencies that answer to them about the perception of undergraduate students. The DHS should arrange for new programs, provide more training, allow more hours of continuing education, and enforce higher standards that could benefit the outcome of their mission.

Congress should also be alerted and perhaps, financial assistance may be increased due to the importance of this study. The financial assistance should be used to help the TSA to hire more personnel with college degrees. The TSA should adjust its hiring policies in regards to officials who screen and search passengers. The TSA should require four year college degrees rather than high school degrees.



Due to the findings of this study, and because the reviewed literature mentioned that terrorists are highly educated, it seems obvious, that someone who has the authority to select a passenger to be searched, is also highly educated and maybe even more educated than the people who is being searched.

Law enforcement should definitely be aware of the results of this study. Perhaps, because it was perceived by the respondents of this study that males, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched than Whites. The law enforcement agencies should also develop new programs that could retrain officials and maintain their focus not only on African Americans and Hispanics as it was with the "war on drugs" but to have a clear mind and perhaps to focus little more on Whites and on individuals from the Middle East. Law enforcement agencies would benefit by requiring new officials to have a four year college degree. They could be better prepared to handle their daily activities and to continue with the "war on terrorism."

Universities should also be aware of the findings of this study because their mission is to educate the students who are the future of this country. Other universities may conduct more studies similar to this one or replicate this study to see if

they obtain the same results. They could include in their curriculum new classes with the emphasis of more terrorism awareness to benefit future officers who could work for the Department of Homeland Security, or for the Transportation Security Administration.

President George W. Bush should be among the people who must know about the findings of this research. The president, absolutely supports the "war on terrorism" and has been doing it since the 9/11 attacks. However, he prohibits racial profiling and has order to implement programs that would diminish it. Therefore, he must know that it is perceived by undergraduate students of the University of Texas at Arlington that males, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched than Whites, and that those students perceived that people from the Middle East are less likely to be searched than people from other countries.

Furthermore, the public deserves to know that there is a misconception about people from the Middle East, in relation to the "war on terrorism." They should know what undergraduate students perceive. The results of this study could probably allow people from the Middle East to feel less tense or fearful

when they travel. On the other hand, the findings of this study could alert African Americans, Hispanics, and males in general, and as a result, become more aware and anxious at airports.

Unfortunately, terrorists could use the results of this study to their advantage. They could probably use or may be using females for their purpose. Terrorists could also utilize people from the Middle East since it is perceived the opposite. Not only that but they could even use Whites since it was perceived by the participants of this study that they are less likely to be searched than African Americans and Hispanics. And they may continue to recruit people with college degrees since they know that airport officials are only required to have a high school diploma and have limited training.

### **Strengths of the Study**

The strength of this study is that it was performed at the right time. Airline issues faced after September 11, 2001 may be unique here in the United States, and are worthy of further exploration. This study has the possibility to enhance the methods used for airport security and to strengthen the knowledge of officials in regards to the selection of questionable passengers. One of the strengths of the study is

the contribution it makes by looking at the criteria used at airports to select individuals for personal searches, rather than at just one single issue in regards to airport security.

Fortunately, there are many studies that focused on airport security. However, not many have used as their sample university students whose major for the most part is in criminology and criminal justice as their sample. Specifically, there has not been one that would focus on surveying undergraduates about their perception or knowledge in regards to the criteria used for the selection of passengers for personal searches at airports. It could be said that undergraduate students are a reflection of future generations; therefore, many would agree that their input in research is valuable and must be taken into consideration in order to obtain significant feedback. Undergraduate students are part of the future and may become policymakers.

### **Weaknesses of the Study**

The results of the study will contribute in great amount to the body of knowledge. However, paradigms do change, and although the results are valuable at this time, they may not have the same value at a different time or if they were

conducted in a different place. The sample was composed of undergraduate university students. It could have been more beneficial if the study was conducted among undergraduate and graduate university students. The study was conducted during the spring semester; the results could have been different if the study was conducted during the fall or the summer semester.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The unit of analysis used in the study, specifically, referred to Criminology/Criminal Justice undergraduate students of the University of Texas in Arlington. This represents limitations in the study because the results cannot be generalized to the entire university population.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

Multiple studies of undergraduate as well as graduate students of different departments could reveal results in support of this study since findings such as these are significant not only to the airline industry but to law enforcement, individual males and universities in general. Students are part of the public who at some point or another will use the airline system. Additionally, this study could be

replicated to measure the perception and knowledge of other university students producing results in a much larger scale.

The findings of this study suggest further research. Specifically, because, the findings relate to the delicate issue in regards to the "war on terrorism" in relation to people from the Middle East. It is important to conduct further research due to the results obtained in this study in regards to people from the Middle East; the findings contradict the reviewed literature. In addition to that, the findings of this study touched on a delicate issue that referred to African Americans and Hispanics such as the "war on drugs." Further research should also be conducted because the male population is perceived to be the gender that would be more likely to be selected for personal searches at airports as well as African Americans and Hispanics.

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

**STUDENTS KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTION ABOUT THE  
SELECTION OF AIRPORT PASSENGERS  
TO BE SEARCHED**

This survey aims to measure the perception and the knowledge of undergraduate students within the Criminology and Criminal Justice (CRCJ) program of the University of Texas at Arlington, about passenger searches at United States airports after 9/11. Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary, anonymous, and confidential. You may stop participating at any time during the survey. If you have any questions pertaining to the utilization of this survey, please contact:

Esthela C. Hernandez (817)467-2894

**Student Survey**

1. Your participation in this research survey is voluntary.
2. You may stop participating in the survey at any time and doing so will not result in any penalty of any kind.
3. Your personal identity and responses will remain confidential and anonymous as far as possible within the state and federal law.



Please answer each of the following questions by circling one response.

1. I am familiar with the physical characteristics of a terrorist.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

2. I believe that African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to be searched at airport checkpoints than Whites.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

3. I know that airports are safer now than what they were before the terrorist attacks of 9/11.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

4. After 9/11, airport officials always give Whites a break when they arrive to passenger screening checkpoints.

Strongly Agree    1    2    3    4    5    Strongly Disagree

5. People who seem to be nervous while at the passenger screening checkpoint of an airport should be searched.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

6. Please choose the category which best describes your opinion of the following passenger inspections and personal airport searches.

- a) A frisk (immediate patdown) is necessary if a person is suspected of carrying an illegal object, and no approval of a higher authority should be necessary.

**Strongly Agree** 1 2 3 4 5 **Strongly Disagree**

- b) An approved patdown is necessary if there is some suspicion of illegal substances hidden on a passenger's body.

**Strongly Agree** 1 2 3 4 5 **Strongly Disagree**

- c) If there is reasonable suspicion, an approved partial body search should be enforced to remove some of the passenger's clothing, which is suspected of hiding something, including shoes.

**Strongly Agree** 1 2 3 4 5 **Strongly Disagree**

- d) Based on reasonable suspicion more intrusive searches such as X-rays and body cavity should only be given with the consent of a court order and an airport director, unless the suspect gives consent.

**Strongly Agree** 1 2 3 4 5 **Strongly Disagree**

- e) Monitored bowel movements are more intrusive searches and should only be supervised by an airport director under reasonable suspicion.

**Strongly Agree** 1 2 3 4 5 **Strongly Disagree**

- f) After 9/11, to determine a level of suspicion an officer is required to know a passenger's gender, race, color, religion, or ethnic background.

**Strongly Agree** 1 2 3 4 5 **Strongly Disagree**

7. At airports males are searched more often than females.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

**In the next question please select the answers that best describe your point of view.**

8. While waiting in line at the airport, but before entering the boarding area, how would you feel if an airport official selects you, out of all those persons just to be frisked or patdown?

- a. Proud                    (   )
- b. Embarrassed (   )
- c. Do not care (   )
- d. Nervous                (   )
- e. Angry                    (   )
- f. Discriminated (   )
- g. Cooperative            (   )

9. How would you feel if you were selected to be searched with permission of a supervisor and a court for a more intrusive search?

- a. Disappointed (   )
- b. Embarrassed (   )
- c. Do not care (   )
- d. Nervous                (   )
- e. Proud                    (   )
- f. Discriminated (   )
- g. Cooperative            (   )
- h. Angry                    (   )

10. Due to the attacks of 9/11, people from the Middle East are more likely to be searched by airport officials than people from other countries.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

11. Airport officials are allowed to use racial profiling only with the intention to capture terrorists.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

12. Airport officials should search people based on their personal appearance.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

13. People who perspire while waiting at the passenger screening checkpoint should be searched by airport officials.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

14. I know that by taking my shoes off at the passenger checkpoint, I am complying with a new airport mandate.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

15. I believe that people who wear loose fitting clothing are most likely to be searched.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

16. After the 9/11 attacks, airport security increased resulting in more passenger searches.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

17. People who arrive late at the airport should not be searched.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

18. I believe that the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is ready to confront any terrorist attacks, as long as they do not involve the transportation system.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

19. I know that after 9/11 airport officials became better trained to spot terrorists.

**Strongly Agree**    1    2    3    4    5    **Strongly Disagree**

20. Are you currently working for a governmental agency?

Yes ( )    No ( )

21. Please select your sex:

Male ( )    Female ( )

22. Please choose your age:

18-24 Years ( )    25-30 Years ( )    31-35 Years ( )  
36-40 Years ( )    41-45 Years ( )    46-50 Years ( )  
51-55 Years ( )    56+ years ( )

23. Education:

a. Undergraduate Student

Freshman ( )    Sophomore ( )    Junior ( )    Senior ( )

b. Graduate Student

3-6 Credit Hours ( )      6-12 Credit Hours ( )  
12-18 Credit Hours ( )      18-24 Credit Hours ( )  
24-30 Credit Hours ( )      30-36 Credit Hours ( )  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

c. What is your degree?

\_\_\_\_\_

24. What is your race/ethnicity?

White ( )      African American ( )      Hispanic ( )  
Middle Eastern ( )      Asian ( )      Native American ( )  
Other ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

25. Income range:

0-\$20,000 ( )      \$21,000-\$40,000 ( )  
41,000-\$60,000 ( )      Over \$60,000 ( )

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Esthela C. Hernandez was born in Mexico City, to Victoria and Jaime Cabrera, who are also the parents of Sara, Jaime and Ruth Cabrera. During 1970 her family relocated to Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas. Unfortunately, Esthela dropped out of school while in the eight grade and worked to alleviate the family's financial circumstances. In 1972 her family moved to Dallas, Texas. She later obtained her GED, and a Certificate in computer operations and programming. In 2005 Esthela graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington with a Bachelor of Arts in Criminology/Criminal Justice. As an undergraduate, Esthela was a member of Golden Key International Honour Society, Alpha Chi National Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa Society, and the Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity International. She received a Certificate of Honor Roll, a Deans List Certificate, and graduated with Cum Laude honors. Esthela will be graduating from the University of Texas at Arlington on August 2007, with a Masters of Arts in Criminology/Criminal Justice. Future plans are to obtain a Ph.D. in criminology or a law degree.