

# Criminal justice: police culture paper assignment

Law



Police culture, the group of individuals who may have similar personality traits. What properties enable police culture? What is the foundation of this culture? We may not understand the togetherness if we do not venture its history. Let us venture yet another aspect of law enforcement history. Police Culture and Associated Stresses Some people may agree that most officers behave in a similar manner.

In a study conducted by a group of prominent sociologists and criminologists, including Goldstein (1968), Interfered (1969), and Isoclinic (1966), policemen and Oligocene had very distinct personality traits (Grant & Terry, 2012). These individuals based four theories that lead to what they believed to be police culture (Grant & Terry, 2012). According to Law Enforcement in the 21st Century, the four theories are stated as Psychological theories.

These theories argue that core attitudes are formed before the individual enters the police force and are a function of such things as family background, social status, and prior education. Educational theories. These theories state that core attitudes are acquired during police training ND early years on the street and are passed on to recruits by older, more experienced police officers. Sociological theories. These theories state that police attitudes are shaped by the daily demands of police work and reflect the “working culture” of policing.

Organizational theories. These argue that police attitudes and values are shaped by the organizational and working culture of policing and the demands placed upon officers by their police colleagues. (Grant & Terry, 2012, p. 105 However, this point of view has been challenged. Many people

also believe that officers join the police force for job stability, the excitement of the job; they have an assertive attitude, the ability to be authoritative and the heart to make a difference in their community (Grant & Terry, 2012).

Whether it is because of the theoretic approach or common interest, police culture can create understanding and build morale within a department.

Most jobs have specific ways of doing things because new people are often trained by senior members and pass their knowledge on. Police culture will only become dangerous to the department if individual officers have unhealthy motives towards the general public. Police officers are faced with many issues and problems on a day to day basis. Some of these problems are stresses.

We have to understand that police officers are still human. They have family, friends and social lives. Therefore our society has to become better individuals to relieve some stress from our law enforcement officers. Two of the stresses that police men and women often face are occupational stress: eustress (stress that is normal and good, even providing on-the-job motivation) and distress (stress that is outside of the normal range and very harmful over time) (Grant & Terry, 2012). There are also external and internal stresses.

Examples of external stresses include: lack of interagency cooperation or community support, ineffective criminal justice system, overly lenient courts, political interference in police policy and decision making, overly critical media coverage of police actions and poor police-minority relations (Grant & Terry, 2012). Internal stresses include

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By chantage troublesome or offensive internal policies and procedures, excessive paperwork and or or substandard equipment (Grant & Terry, 2012).

Women and Ethnic Minorities in Policing Policing for women has made a drastic change. Female restrooms did not exist and men officers often changed in front of them influencing sexual harassment. Some women were changed by the physical activities associated with academy training and other women like minorities were just not accepted. However, things began to change upon the civil rights law of discrimination against all women (Walker & Katz, 2011). The change in law led to the percentage of all sworn women officers to increase from 2 percent in 1972 to 4. Percent in 1978 and 10. 6 percent in 2000 (Walker & Katz, 2011). Women now have more advantages and are treated equally; however, there are still more men in law enforcement than women. The employment of minority police officers has increased significantly over the years (Walker & Katz, 2011). Some people still believe that police departments are prejudice to minority groups; however, majority of police departments have become very diverse. Some minority individuals do not meet the general qualifications of locong, but they are not being discriminated based on race.

Many minorities also have a bias opinion of policemen and decide not to join the force, but that is still not discrimination. It can certainly be safe to say that to join any career is one's own choice and solely dependent on their desire for success as they view it. Law enforcement agencies however, have now ventured to open policing opportunities to both women and minorities. Internal and External Mechanisms that Control Police Discretion Every career

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has its own influence to a certain degree. When it comes to police discretion each officer is allowed to choose how he or she wants to handle problems or events.

This can be the choice to make an arrest or use a particular level of force. In policing there are also both internal and external mechanisms that control their level police discretion. An example of internal mechanism is how the officer personally feels about the offense. It can also be the relationship between the two offenders, their motive for calling the police, the nature of the crime or their behavior. Some external mechanisms is the environment of the crime, the number of offenses for that particular individual, the description of the person and the nature of the crime.

Police officers often face similar offense and can make sound judgments from experiences; however, there are also times that some officers may abuse their discretion. Therefore it's important for every member of society to know their rights, respect authority. Our law enforcement officers are not perfect because they are still human; however, each day they are at our service to protect our lives and better our community. Their culture has hedged our many lives, communities and themselves.