



Cultural Diversity

In Law Enforcement

Ola Public Safety

Cultural Diversity

- Cultural Diversity – differences in age, ethnic heritage, gender, physical abilities/qualities, and sexual orientation



Dimensions of Culture

- Primary Dimensions – cannot be changed
 - Age
 - Gender
 - Physical abilities/qualities
 - Race
 - Sexual orientation
- Secondary Dimensions – can be altered
 - Educational background
 - Geographic location
 - Income
 - Marital status
 - Parental status
 - Religious beliefs
 - Work experience

Theories of Prejudice

- Cultural Transmission Theory
 - Stereotypes and social distance

- Children are taught stereotypes
- Social distance: the desired distance that a group sets on contact with other groups. Social distance begins when certain traits are identified as “good” or “bad” and then are linked with stereotypes or particular groups



Theories of Prejudice (continued)

- Personality Theory
 - Frustration and aggression
 - Asserts that social frustration caused by struggles for power within society causes aggression by members of one social group against members of another group
 - Cognitive dissonance: thoughts (social/moral) that sharply conflict with each other



Theories of Prejudice (continued)

- Group Identification Theory
 - Ethnocentrism causes people to gather in groups that view outside groups as different and inferior
 - Strong communities through familial and social ties based on intimacy
 - Ethnocentrism causes prejudice



Theories of Discrimination

- How can discrimination cause prejudice?
 - Children learn to discriminate before they learn to be prejudiced
 - Preexisting discrimination can create a “vicious circle” of discrimination
- Situational Pressure Theory
 - People’s actions under pressure in particular situations do not always match their professed beliefs and attitudes
 - The gap between belief and action is called *creed/deed discrepancy*

Theories of Discrimination

(continued)

- Group Gains Theory
 - Dominant social groups discriminate against subordinate groups because the individual members of the dominant groups enjoy concrete gain as a result
- Institutional Structure Theory
 - A steady decline in the living standards for racial and ethnic minorities
 - Shame combined with prejudice results in discrimination
 - Segregated schools and/or neighborhoods emerge
 - Built into the structure of society

Differentiate Between Culture and Subculture

- Culture: the sum total of the learned behavioral traits, values, beliefs, language, laws, and technology characteristics of the members of a particular society
- Cultural relativity: belief that no culture can be judged by the standards of another and that every culture must be approached on its own terms
- Subcultures: small groups of people within a society whose values differ from those of the majority
- Counterculture: made of subcultures that sharply challenge and reject some of the norms and expectations of the dominant culture
- Contracultures: social groups that have developed values and models of behaviors that are in continual conflict with the prevailing culture

Implicit Bias and Law Enforcement

- Implicit Biases: are unconscious biases that affect our decision-making; everyone has them
 - Are shaped by personal history and cultural influences
 - General research findings include: (Gove, 2003)
 - Implicit biases are pervasive
 - People are often unaware of their implicit biases
 - Implicit biases predict behavior
 - People have different levels of implicit bias
 - Well-intentioned officers might act on their implicit biases, but this does not excuse unethical police behavior

Equity in Law Enforcement

- Police agencies should
 - Hire a diverse workforce and people who can police without bias
 - Utilize community policing because it
 - Facilitates positive interactions between community members and the police
 - Can promote fair and impartial policing
 - Have clear policies that inform officers
 - Have supervisors who are trained in implicit bias
 - Address biased behavior in police officers or squads

Equity in Law Enforcement

(continued)

- Police officers should acknowledge scenarios with the highest risk of manifesting bias, such as
 - Traffic stops
 - Consent searches
 - Reasonable suspicion to frisk
- Resources
 - <http://trustandjustice.org/resources/intervention/implicit-bias>
 - <http://cpe.psych.ucla.edu/>