June 2019

Determining the Level of Cultural Competence of College Police Departments: A Study of Three Different Campuses

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Determining the Level of Cultural Competence of College Police Departments: A Study of Three Different Campuses

Michelle Fletcher
Randolph Burnside
Stephanie Pink-Harper
Southern Illinois University-Carbondale

This research examines the understanding that police chiefs on three college campuses have about cultural competence and determines how organizationally integrated cultural competence is in their police departments. This article uses semi-structured interviews and surveys to determine the levels and organizational integration of cultural competence. The findings indicate that there are varying degrees of cultural competence across the three departments. This was primarily based on three factors: the level of understanding of cultural competence, the emphasis placed on promoting cultural competence by departmental leadership, and administrative or legal barriers. Given the complexity of cultural competence, the article concludes by offering suggestions for researchers to use multiple tools in assessing cultural competence of service delivery organizations.

There has been an increase in shooting deaths of unarmed citizens, accusations of excessive force, and police brutality incidents associated with policing and law enforcement in college campus communities across America. Two examples are Samuel DuBose, an Ohio man killed during a routine traffic stop by University of Cincinnati campus police officer Raymond Tensing (Perez-Pena 2015), and Martese Johnson, a student at the University of Virginia brutally beaten by Alcoholic Beverage Control agents after being accused of presenting fake identification at a bar adjacent to campus frequented by college students (Kingkade 2015). While these cases differ and vary in outcome, there are important commonalities across these incidents that deserve scholarly attention. Samuel DuBose and Martese Johnson are both examples of unarmed, African American males accused of minor infractions, whose interactions with police resulted in bodily harm or death. These incidents and others justify the need for researchers to offer explanations as to why such incidents continue to occur.

In trying to explain this phenomenon, we turn to the work on street-level bureaucrats by Lipsky (2010). His work offers a plausible answer to why these events occur, and how...
we can best address them as academics and practitioners. In his work, Lipsky (2010) notes that “many people are convinced that police officers disproportionately single out African-Americans for scrutiny and wrongly use skin color and racial characteristics to target blacks for attention” (p. xiii). He argues that police departments deny profiling as a tactic used and notes they allege their stops are based on the actions of the individuals. However, Lipsky (2010) counters this by noting that “to the extent that racial profiling exists, it arises not from official policy or direct racial orientations, but out of the way police officers draw on social stereotypes in exercising the discretion sanctioned by their departments” (p. xiii). If what Lipsky contends is true, then policies and training that addresses these societal stereotypes could have a substantive impact on reducing conflict between police officers and people of color. Given the nature of street-level work done by police officers, we explore the following questions in this study.

**Research Question 1:** What level of cultural competence is displayed by college campus police department commanding officers?

**Research Question 2:** How organizationally integrated are culturally competent policies in college campus police departments?

The objective of this study is to ascertain the level of cultural competence within college campus law enforcement agencies. The cultural competence theoretical framework will provide vital insight into understanding how communication and interaction between citizens and police might be enhanced. To help answer our question, we assess the level of cultural competence of law enforcement agencies on college campuses.

There are several reasons university campuses are advantageous for this type of study. First, university/college towns are demographically unique, particularly in their ability to attract a culturally diverse population (Florida 2002). In many cases, college campuses are much more diverse than the communities in which they are embedded. Second, many campus police departments lack cultural diversity on their police forces, in part due to the lack of eligible minority candidates in the areas in which campuses are located, which in many cases tends to be highly rural and white in makeup. Finally, college campuses provide a community that is largely representative of young adults and college students. As we noted earlier, the conflicts between police and racial minorities are particularly focused on young males. Thus, college campuses and their police forces provide us with a unique opportunity to examine cultural competence in an area where one could argue it is most needed.

In addressing how college campus law enforcement agencies can improve public service delivery, we provide a discussion of the relevant literature examining public safety and the structural components of law enforcement agencies. This is followed by an overview of the cultural competence theoretical framework guiding our research and the qualitative methodology used to assess the levels of cultural competence among the chiefs of police from three college police departments. We discuss the cultural competence self-assessment questionnaires, organizational policy assessments, and respondent interviews conducted as part of this study. Finally, this information is used to assess the cultural competence level of each college campus police department. We conclude by suggesting future research to improve public safety service delivery.
Police in America are the first line of contact in maintaining public safety. These “street-level bureaucrats” often enjoy a significant level of professional discretion in their daily implementation of public policies (Marynard-Moody & Musheno 2003, p. 10). They are expected to effectively serve communities while engaging in safe interactions with citizens from all ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Simultaneously, citizens expect to receive fair, equitable, and safe law enforcement services from police, without fear of excessive force, racial discrimination, or brutality (Peffer 2012, p. 32). It is reasonable for students and college campus communities to place the aforementioned expectations on law enforcement professionals.

The literature on fairness in the criminal justice system, ethics in policing, and the constitutionality of laws is extensive (e.g., Hurwitz & Peffley 2005; Cole 2000; Weitzer 2000; Butler 1985). Researchers have addressed the internal cultures of police agencies; including the development of psychological assessments to measure law enforcement leadership competencies (Miller, Watkins, & Webb 2009). This literature has enabled researchers to develop an understanding of the attitudes, beliefs, and expectations that influence the behaviors of law enforcement professionals. There is not, however, a preponderance of literature on cultural competence in the administration of public services, which include college campus law enforcement.

The American public has increasingly valued equity and effectiveness in public administration, nursing, social work, and medicine (Carrizales, Zahradnik, and Silverio 2016, p. 137). As discussed by Norman-Major and Gooden (2012), integrating cultural competence and initiatives promoting organizational diversity contribute to the effectiveness of government services. In the public sector, cultural competence empowers practitioners to embrace and negotiate the cultural context of interactions with the public. We argue that this capacity is also a professional imperative for college campus police departments (Rice 2007, 2011; Norma-Major and Gooden 2012; Carrizales, Zahradnik, and Silverio 2016).

Conceptualizing Cultural Competence
Developing cultural competence in the public sector has been a research emphasis in healthcare, social work, child welfare, and psychology since the 1980’s. According to Cross, Bazron, & Issacs (1988), “cultural competency is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or professional and enable that system, agency or professional to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (p. 1). Rice (2008) states that cultural competence is best operationally defined as the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services, thereby producing better outcomes.

Why Develop Cultural Competence in College Campus Policing?
While defining cultural competence based on the definitions used in the wider body of research is fairly simplistic, addressing this topic through the broader lens of public administration is more challenging. Carrizales (2010, p. 593), and Rice (2007) denote four significant reasons for accepting cultural competence in public administration:

- Cultural competence recognizes the cultural context in which public encounters occur.
• Cultural competence presents an opportunity to address the often inaccurate public service and programs provided to minority populations.

• Cultural competence increases the relevance of a public agencies administration, services, and programs to groups that can best utilize them.

• Service delivery officials are better prepared to do their job.

The reasons cultural competence should be embraced in the field of public administration are equally relevant for campus police departments. Specifically, these law enforcement professionals encounter individuals living in diverse multicultural communities daily. As the populations of these culturally diverse communities increase, it becomes vital for law enforcement professionals to possess the cultural competence, cultural knowledge, and communication skills necessary to appropriately engage the community while performing their jobs.

Cultural Competence in Law Enforcement: What Works?
According to Cross (1989), cultural and linguistic competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and polices that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. Similar to the service delivery barriers experienced by healthcare professionals, law enforcement agencies must discover strategies for integrating culturally competent policies in their professional community. Therefore, based upon the existing definitions of cultural competence, we conclude that cultural competence in law enforcement is best defined as the collective behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in the law enforcement system, agency, and law enforcement professional, enabling each component to communicate and work effectively in cross-cultural situations. As in other fields, developing cultural competence in law enforcement requires a commitment to training professionals and a willingness on their part to acquire and apply the knowledge they acquire to effectively serve culturally diverse communities.

Developing cultural competence at the organizational level begins with a leadership team that recognizes the importance of tailoring information, communications, and policies to serve a diverse population. “To make a public program or public agency culturally specific, the design of the program and/or agency integrates the target group’s values, attitudes, and beliefs” (Cheng 1996; Rice 2008). Part of this process involves establishing an organizational structure that encourages development of culturally and linguistically competent attitudes and behaviors. Human resource professionals play an integral role in developing the policies and structures necessary to facilitate the recruitment, hiring, training, and development of culturally competent organization members. Prior to establishing specific policies to move an organization toward cultural competence, it is important to conduct individual and organizational assessments to determine current skill levels and institutional support. Therefore, police agencies interested in improving cultural competence must have the capacity to evaluate current cultural competence levels and must demonstrate a commitment to assessing the development of these skills (Wyatt-Nichol & Naylor 2012).

Rice (2008) argues that public organizations may need to develop culturally competent administrative programs, while also promoting cultural competence throughout the organization. “A public agency’s cultural competency is measured by several characteristics including the racial and ethnic diversity of its staff, whether an agency’s mission statement acknowledges and supports the importance of cultural diversity, if staff are expected to
receive training in cultural competency, and if the organizational environment is perceived as welcoming by the clients who use it.” Thus, developing cultural competence in law enforcement requires police agencies requires:

- Human resource management strategies that promote diversity;
- Institutionalization of the agency’s commitment to cultural competence;
- Implementation of training and socialization strategies that promote a high public service ethic for diverse populations;
- Commit to organizational policy assessments and individual assessments to measure the development of cultural competence.

These policies and actions help improve interactions between law enforcement and culturally diverse groups, ultimately improving outcomes for citizens and police agencies. Based upon these premises, we hypothesis the following.

**Hypothesis 1:** College campus police department commanding officers that work in culturally diverse environments are more likely to exhibit higher levels of individual cultural competence.

**Hypothesis 2:** Culturally competent police department commanding officers are more likely to have police departments that formally integrate culturally competent policies into practice.

### The Importance of Rural University Towns

In college campus police departments located in rural areas, officer socialization is a salient aspect in organizational development. Student populations of many college campuses located in rural areas are very diverse, especially when compared to the towns, municipalities, and counties that surround these institutions. Presented below in Table 1, the location of the respondent’s university affects the population dynamics of the university minority student population and the surrounding (adjacent) counties dramatically. More specifically, the surrounding populations of these rural communities are mostly white. Census records are also illustrative of this point. For example, in 2012, the college located in the Midwest had a minority undergraduate student population of 33 percent. Conversely, in 2012, the surrounding (adjacent) counties population was 76 percent white (U.S. Census 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Town #</th>
<th>University Undergraduate</th>
<th>Surrounding Counties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Town #1</td>
<td>Deep South 26.9%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Town #2</td>
<td>Midwest 33.1%</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University Town #3</td>
<td>Southeast 20.6%</td>
<td>91.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1 Source: University Fact book*
Problematically, these communities do not contain a large diverse applicant pool for job positions within college campus police departments. Accordingly, proper training and socialization of these police officers can help improve service delivery and reduce tensions between officers and citizens in college communities.

Methodology
Exploring the aforementioned hypotheses, we examine the level of cultural competence of three university police chiefs. The following Carnegie Classifications were used as criteria to select the university police departments included in this study: 1) a high research activity community engaged university located in the Midwest; 2) a very high research activity and community engaged university located in the Deep South; and 3) a private liberal arts college located in the Southeast. These institutions represent college campuses located in small or rural communities developed around the university or college.

The Carnegie designations have implications for each institution’s mission and goals. For instance, the high research activity community engaged universities located in the south and mid-west represent institutions with high levels of student diversity, while the private liberal arts college has fewer students from diverse backgrounds. The discrete characteristics that distinguish the educational institutions clustered within each classification help determine the capacity, preparation, and need for institutional mechanisms to deal with issues of diversity. Furthermore, their rural location and limited levels of community diversity provide a unique opportunity to examine if cultural competence plays a significant role in their policing activities.

Cultural competence self-assessment, organizational policy assessment, and respondent interviews are all used to measure the current level of cultural awareness and the presence of appropriate organizational policies that address cultural diversity. These assessment tools facilitate the identification of human resources policies, training, and self-assessments that measure the cultural competence level of university police departments. The interviews and self-assessment questionnaires measure individual level cultural competence among police leadership and measure organizational integration of cultural competence. In addressing our research question, measurement of cultural competence on these two organizational levels are not exclusive to either method of data collection. There are significant areas of overlap:

- Self-assessment: respondent understanding of cultural competence and police chief perception of service delivery.
- Organizational policy assessment: the existence of organizationally integrated internal policies (hiring and staffing), policies that recognize culture and diversity, and department response to cross-cultural situations.

See Appendix for more detail on the interview protocols and institutional assessments.

Questionnaire Development
The National Center for Cultural Competence (2006) developed the Cultural and Linguistic Competence Policy Assessment (CLCPA) to support community health centers. Although the CLCPA instrument was developed for health administration and other health and human services organizations, our modified questionnaire measures the organizational integration of cultural competency levels among college campus police departments. The questions
contained in the assessment for this study specifically relate to those areas of cultural competence relevant to professionals in law enforcement. The Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Questionnaire developed for this study includes 23 questions measuring knowledge of diverse communities, organizational philosophy, and human resources subscales similar to the CLCPA tool.

**Respondent Interviews**

The interviews were conducted with the chiefs via telephone and lasted 60 to 90 minutes. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed using the exact wording of the police chiefs. The cultural competence self-assessment questionnaire portion of this study was conducted via email with all three participants submitting their responses directly to the author(s). The interviewees were presented open-ended questions to further develop their responses to questions about their knowledge of cultural competence and organization capacity. The interview tool consists of seven questions designed to address our first research question and to follow-up on the assessment questionnaire. Additionally, the interviewer used probes to clarify responses from the three respondents, as well as elicit more detail to obtain a richer contextual result for the purposes of greater understanding of their knowledge of and implementation of culturally competent polices.

**Results**

Assessing the cultural competence levels of college campus police departments is not a simple task. This can be a particularly difficult process when attempting to account for each respondent’s perception of what cultural competence is and what it means for their police department. The self-assessment tools and interview questions were selected because they focused on organizational systems and structural functions of police departments.

The self-assessment questions revealed that most police chiefs were aware of gaps in service delivery and policy development for specific cultural groups (see Appendix for scales). The scored portion of the assessment included 14 questions with 43 measures each worth three points for a maximum cultural competence score of 129. Questions 1-9 assessed organization knowledge of identified cultural groups and the existence of organization policies that consider the cultural needs of these group (see Appendix).

For each question in this section of the self-assessment, the respondent received points based on the existence of cultural awareness/policies that consider the needs of each designated cultural group. The self-assessment tool revealed that each college campus police department struggles to identify many of the social strengths, vulnerabilities, and contextual realities that exist among diverse populations. We find that institutional structures, legal barriers, and police chief knowledge play a large role in determining organizational cultural competence levels.

**Organizational Knowledge of Diverse Communities**

This section of the assessment examined organizational knowledge of the following culturally diverse groups: African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Asians, LGBTQ, and other student groups. The self-assessment findings indicate that the presence of culturally diverse communities is often identified by police agencies, but more specific knowledge of these cultural groups and policies to address their needs require organizational development and structural integration. This point is further supported by the respondent answers to the interview question:
What are the biggest concerns of the department in regard to the delivery of police services and interactions with the multi-ethnic/cultural populations of this community?

Respondent 1: Representation; the department is not representative of many of the community’s members.
Respondent 2: Available training.
Respondent 3: We have an understanding that this training must be continuous and the policy is strictly enforced when a violation arises.

Responding to this question, the police chiefs discussed the lack of available training and cultural representation among police officers. One police chief discussed the need to seek continuous training and strict enforcement of the General Operating Orders of his police department. These responses demonstrate that the leadership of the police departments participating in this study recognize specific areas of concern in regard to service delivery in culturally diverse communities.

Figure 1: Organizational Knowledge of Diverse Communities

The highest cultural competence score received in this section of the assessment was 19 out of 30, illustrated in Figure 1. It is interesting to note that Respondent 2 is the chief of University Town 1, which is the most diverse university community in the study. However, some caveats should be made about the subjective nature of these scores. First, based on the overall assessment and interview process, each educational institution has a campus police department that demonstrates some level of cultural capacity and cultural competence-related departmental policies. However, the cultural competence scores received by each police department were reduced when the specific designated cultural group variable was introduced in the self-assessment.

For instance, during the interview session, Respondent 3 stated: “The University has a cultural diversity center, we annually have our staff receive training on the harms of bias based profiling and discrimination. In addition, the Human Resource Management office
gives employees diversity and sensitivity training.” This interview response demonstrates the presence of some institutional structures that address cultural competence related issues, but these efforts may not be specific to each of the designated cultural groups measured as part of the assessment.

Leadership Knowledge of Cultural Competence
We hypothesize that campus commanding officers that work in more diverse environments are more likely to exhibit higher levels of individual cultural competence. The police chiefs that participated in this study possessed various levels of understanding in the areas of cultural competence and diversity. For example, during the interview process, interviewees are asked: When you hear the term “cultural competence” what comes to mind?

Respondent 1: Diversity, representation in the workforce compared to the population.
Respondent 2: A fairly convoluted understanding, generally associated with the ability to understand, converse and identify characteristics, information, and issues, and problems confronting various cultures.
Respondent 3: The coming together of attitudes, behaviors and norm that help groups work effectively different cultural be it racial, ethnic, religious or social.

In general, the responses to this interview question included a variety of elements respondents thought were related to cultural competence. But, as demonstrated by the conceptualization of cultural competence in this study, Respondents 1 and 3 did not demonstrate a well-developed understanding of the concept. As noted by the answers to the interview question, Respondent 2, from the university in the Southeast, demonstrated the highest level of knowledge of cultural competence. However, among our cases, Respondent 2 represents the college campus location with the lowest level of culturally diversity. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is not supported.

Integration of Organizational Policies
Hypothesis two states culturally competent police department commanding officers are more likely to have police departments that formally integrate culturally competent policies into practice. The interview process revealed that the respondents with the lowest overall cultural competence scores demonstrated the highest levels of organizationally integrated cultural competence when responding to interview probes (See Figure 3). Inconsistencies in police chief awareness of cultural competence between interviews and the assessment questionnaire suggests that some police chiefs may have chosen response selections based on social desirability cues to seem more culturally competent. For instance, Respondent 3 received one of the lowest overall cultural competence scores, but when probed during the interview session he gave the response listed below:

In what ways has the department addressed the ethnic and cultural needs of citizens as they receive police services? (Sensitivity to cultural differences, assurance of equitable services, language diversity)

Respondent 3: As part of our department General Operation Orders 130: This general order establishes the Department’s position regarding
the treatment of people based on race, national origin, citizenship, religion, ethnicity, age, gender or sexual orientation. While the University Police Department currently has and enforces a policy of equal treatment of all persons with whom we have contact, we recognize the need to clearly define our position on this specific issue for both the community and our own employees.

This response demonstrates cultural competence in the area of cultural awareness and structural functions (service delivery). Furthermore, this interview response indicates that the organization has a well-documented policy that is integrated into the organizational system structures. Respondent 2 received the highest overall cultural competence score on the assessment, but his response to the same question sharply contrasted with that of Respondent 3:

Respondent 2: If department personnel believe that ethnic and cultural issues are present and they do not feel competent to handle them, they are comfortable referring the matter to other offices on campus that can assist.

The response given by Respondent 2 does not demonstrate a high level of cultural capacity within the structures and polices of the campus police department. It should be stated that an awareness of the resources and programs available in other departments is an important part of serving the community. Nevertheless, referring employees and students to other offices does not establish the presence of culturally relevant services and policies within the campus police department.

Next, we discuss the results of the organizational policy assessment portion of the questionnaire as part of the cultural competence audit of each police department. Questions 11-15 assess organizational philosophy, evaluating the incorporation of cultural competence into the organization’s mission statement, structures, practice models, and collaboration with the community. In this section of the assessment, respondents received 0-3 points on each question for a maximum cultural competence score of 30. Figure 2 illustrates the cultural competence scores obtained by each participant in the area of organizational policies and philosophy.

All respondents indicated that their police department systematically reviews department procedures to ensure that they are relevant to the delivery of culturally competent services. However, these responses were not consistent with the findings of the previous section of the assessment, which identified gaps in service for designated cultural groups. Furthermore, the assessment and interview process revealed that none of the campus police departments possessed well developed structures and policies that would insure a representative workforce.

Respondent 1 is the current chief of police for the college campus police department located in the Midwest. His response to one of the questions included on the organizational policy assessment indicated that the department had procedures to achieve the goal of a “culturally and linguistically competent workforce” in the areas of staff recruitment, hiring, and promotion and retention. When interviewed, Respondent 1 gave the following response:
What if any ethnic/cultural professional programs can be developed and/or instituted at the department to attract culturally competent staff and professionals?

Respondent 1: We can redefine our recruitment policies, but we have to stay in line with state regulations. Per state regulations if I pull a test list for a police officer (applicant) I have to take the top three scores. Generally speaking, this comes from people who have taken the test multiple times, and who have prior experience. That’s not necessarily what I am looking for; I am looking for a well-rounded individual and someone who can represent the community, has an ethical background, and can meet the goals established by our agency.

This response represents one of the most important findings of this study, and a number of relevant observations can be drawn from the information acquired from this interview response. First, in addressing our second hypothesis, the mixed findings obtained from our evaluation of organizational integration of cultural competence suggest that this hypothesis is not supported. We expected the influence of culturally competent commanding officers to contribute to the organizational integration of culturally competent policies. However, interview answers suggest that, in the areas of staffing and hiring, documented culturally competent policies are invalidated by state regulations. Respondent 1 states that his department seeks applicants that represent the community, but state law stipulates that the department only consider the top three applicants with the highest test scores.

Thus, while a police department may possess culturally competent programs, policies, and procedures to attract applicants from diverse backgrounds, state laws may prohibit the department from considering these applicants if they do not have specific test scores. This finding further supports the need to promote cultural competence and cultural awareness among white officers. It also supports the need to attract applicants who are culturally competent, because applicants from culturally diverse backgrounds may not possess the test scores, previous experience, and training necessary to meet state requirements.
to become law enforcement professionals.

Finally, this response reinforces the importance of including open-ended questions and, if possible, respondent interviews, when assessing an organization’s cultural competence level. The assessment tool captured data based on standardized measures and closed-ended questions that could not account for concepts that were previously unaddressed in the existing research on cultural competence. Based on these findings, future researchers may want to consider the impact of existing laws and regulations on the hiring practices and representativeness of public organizations that serve diverse communities.

As illustrated in Figure 3, findings in the overall cultural competence scores of each college campus police department suggests that improved internal structures, policy development, and service delivery procedures are necessary to develop the cultural competence levels of these agencies. It also appears that the empirical cultural competence scores captured by the assessment tool do not adequately convey the actual cultural competence level of these police departments. As supported by the previous examples, the interview portion of the cultural competence assessment proved to be an invaluable addition to the research, as it improved the accuracy of our cultural competence evaluations for each department.

The research instruments used in this study secured data based upon quantifiable and reliable measures used in previous cultural competence policy work and research. However, the interview protocols used in this study allowed respondents to answer more open-ended questions, giving them the opportunity to fully convey the cultural capacity of their organizations. Respondent interview answers also supplemented the responses given as part of the cultural competence assessment tool, making it possible to identify possible issues with term conceptualization and response consistency. Utilizing cultural competence assessment tools and questionnaires independently may aid in measuring the dimensions of organization behavior known to impact cultural competence. These instruments, however, are insufficient if researchers seek to expose previously unaddressed concepts and relationships that impact cultural competence. The findings of this study reveal that interview protocols and other conversational techniques are more appropriate for extracting information that yield a well-defined picture of organizational cultural competence levels.

**Figure 3: Overall Organizational Cultural Competence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University Town</th>
<th>Respondent #1 (Deep South)</th>
<th>Respondent #2 (Southeast)</th>
<th>Respondent #3 (Midwest)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key: Cultural Competence Scores ranging from 0-30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 = Low</td>
<td>30 = High</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #1 (Deep South)</td>
<td>15.67</td>
<td>15.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #2 (Southeast)</td>
<td>19.09</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent #3 (Midwest)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions and Future Research
The objective of this study was to ascertain the level of cultural competence integrated in college campus law enforcement agencies. We hypothesized that culturally competent campus police department commanding officers would be more likely to have police departments that formally integrate culturally competent polices into practice. Although some comparisons between respondent answers were used within the data analysis of this study, these comparisons were not used to attribute a positive/negative appraisal of the current cultural competence levels that exist within participating police departments.

The findings of this study and the previous literature suggest that college campus law enforcement agencies can use cultural competence to improve public service delivery through hiring and selecting culturally competent employees, developing policies and programs that promote cultural and linguistic competence, and by properly socializing employees. Cultural competence assessments are useful for determining the beliefs, attitudes, and cultural capacity that exists within college campus police agencies. However, well-developed leadership knowledge and understanding of cultural competence, and a willingness to participate in conversational methods of assessing cultural competence, aid in obtaining an accurate depiction of organizational cultural competence capacity.

It is important to note that cultural competence levels are based on a continuum. Individuals or organizations may have low cultural competence in one area, while higher levels of cultural competence can be present in other areas. Cultural competence levels are dynamic, based upon policy shifts and training. Organization leaders and members must maintain a commitment to continual assessment, self-appraisal, and cultural awareness. According to Rice (2007), this form of self-assessment includes a focus on agency governance, administration, policy development, personnel practices, dealing with culturally biased incidents, and promoting cultural appropriate methods of service delivery. The findings of this research indicate that each police department participating in the study has numerous areas in which cultural competence policies require more comprehensive development and integration. The findings also revealed several barriers to the development and implementation of culturally competent personnel practices and recruitment strategies limiting the representativeness of college campus police departments when compared to the campus communities they serve.

Future researchers should focus on identifying additional barriers that inhibit the development of culturally competent policies in law enforcement. Our findings recognizing state mandated testing as a barrier is an example that may merit future investigation. Unveiling barriers that obstruct the development of cultural competence is an integral aspect in moving organizations and individuals toward culturally competent public service.

The methods used to investigate current cultural capacity and internal organizational culture of public servants affect the information acquired during the assessment process. To extensively explore the central question guiding this research, triangulation was employed, exploring various theories, synthesizing the existing literature, conducting self-assessments and respondent interviews. However, future research should explore mixed methodology of data administration to fully assess the cultural competence level of college campus police departments. As previously discussed, literature in the area of cultural competence in law enforcement is limited. Future studies can further improve this body of research by examining a larger population using the methodologies discussed in this article.
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References


**Appendix: Questionnaire Scoring Key**

**Questions 1-9 Knowledge of Diverse Communities:**

This subscale concerns organizational knowledge of the identified cultural groups, how they differ internally and how they differ from the dominant culture. Its central focus is organizational policy that takes into consideration cultural beliefs, strengths, vulnerabilities, community demographics and contextual realities (NCCC, 2006).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Answer Response</strong></th>
<th><strong>Score Key</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barely</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly well</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 87 -
Questions 11-15 Organizational Policy and Philosophy:
The subscale involves organizational commitment to the provision of culturally and linguistically competent services and the extent to which it is legitimized in policy. It probes the incorporation of cultural competence into the organization’s mission statement, structures, practice models, collaboration with consumers and community members, and advocacy (NCCC, 2006). Follow-up questions in this section ask if the police department has a policy to support each of the concepts measured in each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Response</th>
<th>Score Key</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly often</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very often</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Score Key:
- 0: No Services/Policies
- 1: Limited Services/Policies
- 2: Basic Services/Policies
- 3: Well Established Services/Policies

All figures that report cultural competence scores have been standardized to fit a 30 point scale. Organizational Knowledge of Diverse Communities was originally scored from 0 to 99 and Overall Organizational Cultural Competence was originally scored from 0-129. However, each point on the scale is now converted to fit a 30 point scale, which means that every 1 point on the Organizational Knowledge of Diverse Communities scale is now standardized to 0.3 points. For Overall Organizational Cultural Competence, each 1 point is now worth 0.23 on the standardized scale. No changes were made to the Organizational Policy and Philosophy scale because it was already standardized to a 30 point scale.