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# ATTITUDE STRUCTURES OF DIFFERENT ETHNIC AND AGE GROUPS CONCERNING POLICE

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The purpose of this study is to compare attitude structures of different ethnic and age groups concerning police and policing. Although a number of studies have compared different ethnic and age groups' attitudes towards police, they generally have failed to consider that the groups being compared may not share the same ways of conceptualizing aspects of policing. Problems arise when studies use composite scales developed from samples which include divergent populations. When members of the group being studied do not share the same abstract notions about the police, using composite scales may lead to faulty interpretations, and may measure something other than what is described. In the present research, attitudes about police and policing are examined by comparing the unique clustering of responses of several groups. Specifically, attitude structures of Blacks, Cuban-Americans, Anglos (nonhispanic whites), teenagers, and adults are examined and compared.

## I. THE LITERATURE

Attitudes toward law enforcement was a popular topic of study in the 1960's and early 1970's, due in part to the civil disturbances of that period. The subject has been studied less frequently in recent years, as attention has focused on other timely issues. An early, yet important study conducted by the President's Commission on

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Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice,<sup>1</sup> noted that citizens' attitudes are extremely important to, and have a great impact on, police work and police behavior. The Report states:

Poor police-community relations adversely affect the ability of the police to prevent crime and apprehend criminals. People hostile to the police are not so likely to report violations of the law, even when they are the victims. They are even less likely to report suspicious persons or incidents, to testify as witnesses voluntarily, or to come forward and provide information . . . . Yet citizen assistance is crucial to law enforcement agencies if the police are to solve an appreciable portion of the crimes that are committed . . .<sup>2</sup>

This Report summarized studies from several sources which indicated that the public as a whole rated law enforcement as "good" or "excellent." When these studies separated the opinions of Whites and nonwhites, however, they found that nonwhites, especially Blacks, rated police much lower than the general public. At about the same time, the Kerner Commission, established by the President to study civil disturbances, similarly noted "deep hostility between police and ghetto communities as a primary cause of the disorders."<sup>3</sup>

Following this investigation, a large number of studies comparing Blacks' and Whites' attitudes toward the police were conducted and published. Almost all of these studies found Blacks to be less favorable than Whites in their judgments of different aspects of law enforcement, and some reported that race was even a more important predictor than age, gender or socioeconomic status.<sup>4</sup>

Other studies examined age groups within racial categories and found that they differed in their assessments of police. Boggs and Galliher<sup>5</sup> and Klyman and Kruchenberg<sup>6</sup> report that White and

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<sup>1</sup> The President's Comm'n on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, Task Force Report: The Police (1967).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 144.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Kerner Comm'n, Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders 299 (1968).

<sup>4</sup> See Albrecht & Green, *Attitudes Toward the Police and the Larger Attitude Complex: Implications for Police-Community Relations*, 15 CRIMINOLOGY 67 (1977); Apple & O'Brien, *Neighborhood Racial Composition and Residents' Evaluation of Police Performance*, 11 J. POLICE SCI. & AD. 76 (1983); Block, *Fear of Crime and Fear of the Police*, 19 SOC. PROBS. 91 (1971); Chackerian & Barrett, *Police Professionalism and Citizen Evaluation*, 8 URB. AFF. Q. 345 (1973); Gramson & McEvoy, *Police Violence and Its Public Support*, 391 ANNALS 97 (1970); Hadar & Snortum, *The Eye of the Beholder: Differential Perceptions of Police by the Police and the Public*, 2 CRIM. JUST. & BEHAV. 37 (1975); Hahn, *Ghetto Assessments of Police Protection and Authority*, 6 LAW & SOC'Y REV. 183 (1971); Smith & Hawkins, *Victimization, Types of Citizen-Police Contacts, and Attitudes Toward the Police*, 8 LAW & SOC'Y REV. 135-152 (1973); Walker, *Black Police Values and the Black Community*, 5 POLICE STUD. 20 (1983).

<sup>5</sup> Boggs & Galliher, *Evaluating the Police: A Comparison of Black Street and Household Respondents*, 22 SOC. PROBS. 393 (1975).

Black youth are more negative toward police than their elders, while Smith and Hawkins<sup>7</sup> found that age was an important factor for Whites but not for Blacks. Unfortunately, minority and ethnic groups other than Blacks have only rarely received attention.

A limited number of studies have considered the attitudes of Hispanic groups toward the police, though there is evidence that as a minority group they have suffered as much discrimination in the criminal justice system as Blacks.<sup>8</sup> For example, Carter<sup>9</sup> found that Mexican-Americans in Texas evaluated police less favorably than the general public, and Mirande<sup>10</sup> reported negative feelings toward police among Chicanos in Southern California. We were unable to locate any literature on Cubans' or Cuban-Americans' attitudes toward police, and it would be stretching the inference of research data to generalize findings for other Hispanic groups to the Cuban-Americans. Cuban-Americans generally came to the United States under very different circumstances than other Latins<sup>11</sup> and, as a group, Cuban-Americans are better educated, more affluent, and politically more conservative than other Hispanic groups.<sup>12</sup>

While the studies discussed above compare attitudes of different groups, none examines the underlying structures of these attitudes or the possibility that fundamental differences exist among the various groups. Research on attitudes in general, however, indicates that attitudes are rarely unidimensional, but are in fact multidimensional, multifaceted and complex.<sup>13</sup> Hence, simplistic measures of attitudes are useful only when the people sampled share the same conception of the attitudes.

Scaglione and Condon<sup>14</sup> reported the only research findings we

<sup>6</sup> Klyman & Kruckenberg, *A Methodology for Assessing Citizen Perceptions of Police*, 2 J. CRIM. JUST. 219 (1974).

<sup>7</sup> Smith & Hawkins, *supra* note 4, at 138-39.

<sup>8</sup> S. Cox & J. Fitzgerald, POLICE IN COMMUNITY RELATIONS 120-24 (1983).

<sup>9</sup> Carter, *Hispanic Interaction with the Criminal Justice System in Texas: Experience, Attitudes, and Perceptions*, 11 J. CRIM. JUST. 213 (1983).

<sup>10</sup> Mirande, *The Chicano and the Law*, 24 PAC. SOC. REV. 65 (1981).

<sup>11</sup> Portes, Parker & Cobas, *Assimilation or Consciousness: Perceptions of U.S. Society Among Recent Latin American Immigrants to the United States*, 59 SOC. FORCES 200 (1980).

<sup>12</sup> Queralt, *Understanding Cuban Immigrants: A Cultural Perspective*, 29 SOC. WORK 115 (1984).

<sup>13</sup> See, e.g., A. COFFEY, E. ELDEFONSO & W. HARTINGER, HUMAN RELATIONS: LAW ENFORCEMENT IN A CHANGING COMMUNITY (1982); Kerlinger, *Social Attitudes and Their Critical Referents: A Structural Theory*, 74 Psychological Rev. 110-122 (1967); Kerlinger, *The Structure and Content of Social Attitude Referents: A Preliminary Study*, 32 Educ. & Psychological Measurement 613 (1972); F. KERLINGER, BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH: A CONCEPTUAL APPROACH (1979).

<sup>14</sup> Scaglione & Condon, *The Structure of Black and White Attitudes Toward Police*, 39 HUM. ORG. 280 (1980).

were able to locate that compared the multi-dimensional and multi-faceted attitude structures of Blacks and Whites regarding police and policing. They found that Blacks and Whites have very dissimilar cognitive structures and pointed out the need to examine the formation of attitude structures in subsequent studies. Although the present research moves beyond that of Scaglione and Condon, it certainly has been influenced by their ideas.

In the present research we add a Hispanic group (Cuban-Americans) to the comparison of Blacks' and Anglos' attitudes toward police and policing. Responses to questions about police procedures and activities as well as questions about the police themselves were included in the analysis. Further, we compare teenagers and adults within the different ethnic groups. This study adds to the knowledge about citizens' attitudes toward police, helps to explain the cognitive structures of different groups, and assists in putting into perspective the routinely negative responses that we receive from minority groups concerning the police.

## II. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This study is part of a larger research project completed for the Metropolitan Dade County Police Department (The Miami Study) on attitudes toward police behavior in different ethnic neighborhoods. The samples include adults and students from different neighborhoods in greater Miami, Florida.

### A. RESEARCH SAMPLES

Our adult samples were selected from neighborhoods chosen because of their unique qualities. No attempt was made to obtain a representative cross-section of Dade County. Indeed, the overall population of Dade County is so segmented by ethnicity and social class that any overall characterization of the population would be difficult, if not impossible.

With the assistance of the Dade County Planning Department and the 1980 census data, five neighborhoods were selected to study:<sup>15</sup>

1. A small community of upper-middle class Black professionals;
2. A government subsidized housing project of low-income Blacks;
3. A Cuban neighborhood with immigrants from the 1960's containing working-class residents;

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<sup>15</sup> G. ALPERT & R. DUNHAM, *THE MIAMI STUDY: POLICE BEHAVIOR IN A MULTI-ETHNIC SETTING* (Metro-Dade County, Florida Police Department) (1986).

TABLE 1  
RESULT OF FACTOR ANALYSIS FOR ALL GROUPS

Question #	Variables	Cuban Adults					Cuban Teens						
		F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7
1.	Courteous	.81	.03	-.11	.07	-.00	.38	.01	.17	-.02	.02	.25	.23
2.	No discreet	.24	-.16	.24	.10	.50	.09	-.23	.11	.52	-.12	-.21	-.01
3.	friendly	.84	-.00	-.27	.18	.03	.69	-.04	-.06	.11	-.12	.13	.05
4.	black	-.21	.27	.55	.02	.07	-.03	.09	-.10	.06	.72	-.11	.11
5.	fair	.83	-.16	-.18	.19	.11	.17	.05	-.02	.14	-.08	.61	.04
6.	pol only-Dade	.15	-.04	.10	.80	.11	-.10	.07	.74	-.07	.09	.06	-.01
7.	stretch laws	.46	-.00	.31	.00	-.01	-.05	-.02	-.06	.64	.07	.23	.19
8.	rude	-.79	.35	-.03	-.09	-.07	-.58	.32	.07	.20	-.05	-.16	-.02
9.	some aggress	.03	.14	.71	.18	.24	.02	.03	-.10	.36	.07	.06	.01
10.	listen	.92	-.13	-.06	.11	-.02	.22	.00	-.00	.13	.07	.09	.48
11.	no respect	.67	-.30	-.01	-.15	-.18	.29	-.50	.04	.05	.05	.41	.11
12.	ignore minor	-.16	.33	.17	.14	.15	-.00	.43	-.03	-.07	-.00	.07	-.04
13.	Hispanic	-.21	.72	-.00	-.09	.01	.03	.56	-.04	.11	.58	-.06	-.27
14.	patrol felony	-.04	.08	.12	-.06	.38	-.11	.52	.18	.03	.13	-.06	.08
15.	kicking	-.72	.53	.09	-.16	-.00	-.37	.47	.04	.10	-.02	-.35	-.04
16.	disbelief	.81	-.28	-.06	.15	.05	.49	-.41	.05	-.25	.14	.02	.21
17.	unrespon low cl	.72	-.34	.06	.06	.01	-.42	.29	.05	-.18	.07	-.14	.06
18.	+ strict in some	-.04	-.08	.52	-.01	.07	.03	.03	-.37	.37	.01	-.11	-.10
19.	pol only-my area	.24	-.01	.07	.52	-.30	-.00	.09	.70	-.04	-.26	-.12	-.03
20.	concern	.76	-.26	.08	.13	-.06	.53	.02	-.17	.13	.01	-.00	.28
21.	Anglo	-.45	.50	.14	-.12	-.26	-.09	.43	.08	-.08	.26	.09	.12
22.	respect	.65	-.08	-.06	.42	.06	-.26	-.08	.06	-.11	-.18	.37	.29
	Eingevalue	8.58	1.75	1.01	.83	.54	3.51	1.66	1.37	1.06	.71	.61	.42
	Pct of Var	67.5	13.8	7.9	6.6	4.2	37.6	17.8	14.7	11.4	7.6	6.5	4.5
	N of cases	103					120						

TABLE 1 (continued)

#	Variables	Black Adults								Black Teens							
		F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	F8	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	F7	
1.	Courteous	.71	.12	.07	-.05	.05	-.06	-.02	-.11	.35	-.18	.45	-.02	-.12	-.11	-.01	
2.	No discreet	.04	.31	-.20	.23	.02	.44	-.08	.15	.03	.04	.21	-.10	.00	.00	.51	
3.	friendly	.21	.08	-.10	.56	-.03	.02	.00	-.01	.24	-.09	.80	.07	-.09	.07	.10	
4.	black	-.09	.66	.02	.02	.09	-.01	-.06	-.08	-.22	.69	-.03	-.11	.00	.11	.01	
5.	fair	.67	-.07	-.05	.21	-.18	-.05	.24	-.10	.21	.03	.40	.02	-.11	-.15	.05	
6.	pol only-Dade	-.04	.38	.43	.15	.02	.07	.12	-.05	-.10	.16	.09	.49	.17	.07	-.03	
7.	stretch laws	-.16	-.12	-.26	-.05	-.03	.48	.34	-.05	.29	.04	.06	-.04	.11	.01	.19	
8.	rude	-.29	.20	.20	-.26	-.12	.38	.15	-.22	-.51	.10	-.14	.10	.28	.13	.14	
9.	some aggress	.01	.04	.07	-.03	.00	.40	-.07	-.12	.10	.03	-.11	.19	.14	-.13	.56	
10.	listen	.58	-.25	.09	.19	.18	.45	-.16	.15	.42	.17	.22	-.05	.20	-.24	-.02	
11.	no respect	-.05	-.11	-.04	-.09	.68	-.04	-.01	.20	.72	-.05	.13	.11	-.13	.01	.02	
12.	ignore minor	-.14	.15	-.03	-.24	.52	-.13	.10	.27	.01	.10	-.10	.12	.54	-.01	.05	
13.	Hispanic	-.00	.79	-.03	-.02	.14	-.01	-.06	.12	.04	.59	-.12	.27	.17	.08	.07	
14.	patrol felony	-.12	.39	-.10	.03	.33	.05	-.06	.05	-.07	.20	-.12	.13	.40	.00	.16	
15.	kicking	-.50	.27	-.18	.07	-.03	.06	-.11	-.29	-.58	.12	-.14	.04	.18	.10	.02	
16.	disbelief	.05	-.00	-.02	.04	-.03	-.08	.03	.49	.44	-.09	.09	.06	-.42	-.20	.04	
17.	unrespon low cl	-.15	.04	.09	.78	.03	-.03	.09	.05	-.19	.15	-.11	.02	.04	.72	-.13	
18.	+ strict in some	-.21	.05	-.56	.02	.22	.07	.08	.18	-.02	-.10	.09	-.59	.18	.19	.04	
19.	pol only-my area	.01	.07	.84	-.09	.14	.03	.03	.12	.01	.02	.06	.63	.26	.15	.13	
20.	concern	.25	-.14	-.05	.10	.06	-.06	.70	.10	.42	-.03	.27	-.16	.32	-.21	.08	
21.	Anglo	-.10	.59	.22	.06	-.03	.09	.03	-.04	.07	.65	.01	.28	.20	-.03	.04	
22.	respect	.50	.12	.01	-.00	-.13	-.01	.12	.28	.48	-.01	.12	-.01	.15	-.01	.17	
	Eigenvalue	2.87	1.88	1.52	1.13	.97	.83	.73	.58	3.46	2.09	.96	.86	.78	.58	.46	
	Pct of Var	27.3	17.9	14.5	10.8	9.2	7.9	7.0	5.5	37.7	22.7	10.4	9.3	8.5	6.3	5.0	
	N of cases	78								190							

TABLE 1 (continued)

Question #	Variables	F1	F2	F3	Anglo Teens		F5	F6	F7
					F4	F7			
1.	Courteous	.71	.01	-.07	-.02	.08	.10	.41	
2.	No discreet	.09	-.08	.00	.05	.01	.83	.05	
3.	friendly	.85	-.06	.01	.18	-.05	.07	.00	
4.	black	-.15	.85	.13	-.17	-.10	.10	.03	
5.	fair	.66	.02	-.02	.30	-.04	.03	-.07	
6.	pol only-Dade	-.06	.05	.10	-.05	.53	.14	-.16	
7.	stretch laws	.12	-.04	.01	.57	-.16	.04	.16	
8.	rude	-.74	.16	.13	.15	-.14	-.03	-.20	
9.	some aggress	-.03	.16	.27	.17	-.06	.21	.31	
10.	listen	.27	-.15	-.06	.45	.07	-.04	.54	
11.	no respect	.67	-.21	-.24	.13	.20	-.07	.16	
12.	ignore minor	-.02	.16	.81	-.09	.06	-.05	-.04	
13.	Hispanic	-.18	.78	.23	.05	-.08	.06	-.18	
14.	patrol felony	-.16	.07	.40	.02	.01	.06	.02	
15.	kicking	-.72	.22	.28	-.10	-.00	.05	-.05	
16.	disbelief	.44	-.20	-.20	.33	.25	-.15	-.02	
17.	unrespon low cl	-.18	.03	.30	-.04	.13	-.02	-.32	
18.	+ strict in some	-.14	.15	.07	.03	-.32	.18	.03	
19.	pol only-my area	.08	.16	.04	-.08	.61	-.06	.12	
20.	concern	.46	-.05	-.12	.46	-.01	-.20	-.08	
21.	Anglo	-.05	.55	.02	-.03	.11	-.26	.08	
22.	respect	.24	.00	-.38	.13	.35	.19	.20	
	Eingevalue	5.24	1.76	1.24	.91	.87	.72	.58	
	Pct of Var	46.3	15.5	10.9	8.0	7.7	6.4	5.2	
	N of cases	89							



4. A Cuban neighborhood with recent immigrants from the 1980 Mariel boat-lift;
5. An established Anglo middle-class suburb.

A representative sample was chosen from each of the neighborhoods. Interviewers of the same racial or ethnic background as those chosen to be in the sample were trained and sent to the subjects' homes to conduct the interviews. We obtained interviews from 78 Black adults, 103 Cuban adults and 38 Anglo adults.

Our student samples were selected from high school students from each of the five neighborhoods. Questionnaires were administered to juniors and seniors in required classes in order to insure that all juniors and seniors had an approximately equal chance of being in the sample. We received completed questionnaires from 190 Black teens, 103 Cuban teens, and 89 Anglo teens. For this analysis of attitudinal structures we aggregated respondents into the following groups: Black adults, Black teens, Cuban adults, Cuban teens and Anglo teens. Unfortunately, too few Anglo adults were in our sample to analyze separately.<sup>16</sup>

#### B. MEASURES AND FACTOR ANALYSIS

We reviewed prior research on attitudes toward the police and located thirty questions taken from various scales that were used in this study.<sup>17</sup> Eight of these questions were not significant in any of the scales and therefore are not discussed. All of the questions were scored on a one-to-five likert-type scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These questions are presented in the Appendix along with their assigned variable names.

To determine the unique structuring of attitudes among the groups, we used a factor analytic technique to cluster similar variables into meaningful conceptual units. A separate factor analysis was conducted on each group's responses. The occurrence of unique clustering represents differences in the structuring of basic attitudes toward the police.

### III. RESULTS

In this section, we examine first the number of factors for each group, the strength of the factor loadings, and the eigenvalues. This information details the complex nature of the conceptualiza-

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<sup>16</sup> *Id.* at 29-38.

<sup>17</sup> See, e.g., S. BRODSKY & H. SMITHERMAN, HANDBOOK OF SCALES FOR RESEARCH IN CRIME AND DELINQUENCY 43-97 (1983); M. BROWN, WORKING THE STREET: POLICE DISCRETION AND THE DILEMMAS OF REFORM (1981).

tions of each group. Second, we discuss the factors, including the similarities and differences among the various groups.

#### A. COMPARISON OF ALL FACTORS

Results of the factor analyses indicate that there are both structural differences and similarities among the samples which were examined. Data presented in Table 1 allow for a comparison of the responses for different groups. A comparison of the responses demonstrates that Cuban adults have fewer factors and subsequently fewer dimensions in their conception of police than do the other groups. Their responses generate only five factors compared to seven for each of the three teen groups and eight for the Black adults. Among the variables within factors for Cuban adults there are more high factor loadings than for the other groups. This is particularly evident in Demeanor Factor (F1). In addition, the eigenvalues, taken together, are higher for the adult Cubans than for the other groups. All groups have eigenvalues that are below 1.00 for at least two factors and for Black teens, five of their seven factors have eigenvalues below 1.00. Because we are concerned with comparing the way groups structure their attitudes and are not using the factor analysis for index construction, the lower values are useful in that they indicate patterns or degrees of structuring. We have chosen the eigenvalue of 1.00, however, as our cut-off point in the discussion of the content of factors.

Because the Cuban adult responses loaded much higher on the Demeanor Factor (F1) than on the other factors, Cuban adults have a much more unidimensional conception of the police than do the other groups. The Anglo teens have a somewhat similar pattern, in that they also load much higher on the first factor than on the other factors. The eigenvalue for the first factor of the Anglo teens' responses (5.24) does not approach the strength of the eigenvalue for the Cuban adults' responses (8.58). In addition to the strength of the factors, the Anglo teens have two more defined factors than the Cuban adults, indicating a more multidimensional conception.

The Cuban teens, Black adults, and Black teens hold multidimensional ideas of police and imprecisely define conceptions within each dimension, as indicated by low factor loadings and low eigenvalues. The teen groups appear to conceptualize police differently from their adult counterparts. The Cuban teens' responses have more defined factors than Cuban adults, whereas Black teens' responses have fewer factors than their elders. Cuban, Black and Anglo teens' responses all have seven definable factors, but the in-

ternal composition of those factors differ. This indicates that teens generally conceptualize police multidimensionally, but the various dimensions differ among the groups. The strength of the Demeanor Factor (F1) sets the Anglo teens apart from their Cuban and Black cohorts. The Black and Cuban teens' patterns resemble one another more than those of Anglo teens. It is likely that this is a reflection of the groups' minority statuses.

#### B. DEMEANOR FACTORS

In all five groups the first and most important factor is what we call "Demeanor." While the internal structures of this factor vary among groups, the variables included are similar enough to be classified as the same attitude domain. The data in Table 2 show the

**TABLE 2**  
**DEMEANOR FACTOR FOR ALL GROUPS**

Q#	Variables	Cuban A	Cuban T	Black A	Black T	Anglo T
1	courteous	.81		.71		.71
5	fair	.83		.67		.66
10	listen	.92		.58		
15	kicking	-.72*		-.50	-.58	-.72
22	respect	.65		.50		
8	rude	-.79	-.58		-.51	-.74
11	no respect	.67			.72	.67
16	disbelief	.81				
20	concern	.76	.53			
3	friendly	.84	.69			.85
17	unresp. low cl	.72				
Eigenvalues		8.58	3.51	2.86	3.46	5.24
Pct of Var		67.5	37.6	27.3	37.7	46.3
Factor #		1	1	1	1	1
N of Cases		103	120	78	190	89

\* The factor loading score for kicking is .53 in factor 2.

Demeanor Factor loading scores above .50. This factor has the greatest amount of explained variance for Cuban adults (67.5%), and is stronger than the demeanor factors for the other groups. The next strongest factor is for Anglo teens (46%). The Cuban adults have eleven variables which loaded greater than .50 on this factor, but no more than six loaded this high for any of the other groups. Only three variables loaded above the cut-off for either Cuban or Black teenagers. All variables of the Demeanor scales that

loaded .50 or higher are a subset of the variables that were included in the Cuban Adult's scale.

The variables that construct the Demeanor Factors underline the different ways these groups think of police demeanor. The Cuban adults' responses include a wide range of ideas which are part of their views of police demeanor. For example, this factor includes different variables such as "courteousness," "rudeness," "having respect," and "having no respect."<sup>18</sup> These results imply a complex and multifarious conception of police.

The Demeanor Factors for Black adults and Black teens share only the variable "kicking," which is based on the response to the statement "Police officers enjoy kicking people around." For Black adults, the Demeanor Factor is composed of the variables "courteous," "fair," "listen," "kicking," and "respect"; whereas, for Black teens the factor includes the variables "kicking," "rude," and "no respect." The young Blacks perceive police demeanor in essentially violent terms, whereas their elders see police demeanor in far more neutral terms.

Anglo teens similarly incorporate "kicking," "rude," and "no respect" into their factor, but they also include several more neutral aspects such as "courteous," "fair," and "friendly." Cuban teens employ the negative variable "rude" but otherwise had the positive variables "concern" and "friendly."

### C. ETHNIC FACTOR (F2)

Data from each of the groups except the Cuban teens produced a factor which we call the "Ethnic Factor." These data are presented in Table 3. The variables included in this factor are three variations of the statement "The police are justified in regarding a (Black, Hispanic, Anglo) as one who needs to be watched more than others." This factor ranked second for all groups except the Cuban teens, for whom it ranked fifth, with a very weak eigenvalue of only .71. The Ethnic Factor explained 22.7% of the variation for Black teens, which is a much larger percent than that for the other groups.

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<sup>18</sup> The inclusion of contradictory variables does not mean that the subjects responded inconsistently. For example, the Cuban adults agreed that police are courteous with a mean of 2.25, but disagreed that they are rude with a mean of 3.61. (The responses were scored from 1 for strongly agree to 5 for strongly disagree). Similarly, both respect and no respect have similar means of 2.30 and 2.26 respectively. It is important to remember that the factor loading scores are correlations of each variable to the entire list of other variables.

**TABLE 3**  
**ETHNIC FACTOR FOR CUBAN ADULTS, BLACK ADULTS AND TEENS**  
**AND ANGLOS**

Q#	Variables	Cuban A	Black A	Black T	Anglo T
4	Black		.66	.69	.85
13	Hispanic	.72	.79	.59	.78
21	Anglo	.50	.59	.65	.55
Eigenvalues		1.75	1.88	2.09	1.76
Pct of Var		13.8	17.9	22.7	15.5
Factor #		2	2	2	2
N of Cases		103	78	190	89

The interesting aspect of this factor is that while all of the groups sampled have an Ethnic Factor, not all of the ethnic groups are included in all ethnic Factors. Both of the Black samples and the Anglo sample include in their Ethnic Factor all three ethnic groups. The Cuban adults' factor, however, includes the Hispanic and Anglo statements but excludes the statement that concerns Blacks. This suggests that Cuban adults perceive police relations with ethnic groups differently from Blacks and Anglos. Since the Cuban adults group themselves (Hispanics) with Anglos, this suggests that they may identify with the Anglos or the majority group. The Cuban-Americans in Miami comprise a strong ethnic community numbering some forty percent of the total population. While they still qualify as a numerical minority, Cubans have successfully integrated themselves into the local power structure. Further, many of the Cuban adults now in the Miami area were middle class and without minority status in Cuba before they came to the United States.

#### C. OTHER FACTORS

There are five other factors which emerged from this study. The eigenvalues for all of these factors are fairly low and indicate weak dimensions. Nevertheless, they suggest different patterns of conceptualization for the various groups which we sampled. These factors each stand independently for just one of the five groups.

The Control Factor emerged as the third factor for Black adults. The data on this factor are shown in Table 4 and include an eigenvalue of 1.52. This factor contains two variables derived from statements concerning who is responsible for controlling crime in a particular area. These control statements are: "Only the police can control crime (in my neighborhood), (in Dade County)." Another

variable which loaded greater than .50 on the factor for the Black groups is the statement "Police are more strict in some neighborhoods than in others." The Black adults see police discretion (i.e., "Police are more strict. . .") as conceptually linked to police responsibility for crime control.

**TABLE 4**  
**CONTROL FACTOR FOR BLACK ADULTS**

Q#	Variables	
6	pol only in Dade	.43
18	+strict in some	-.56
19	pol only in my area	.84
Eigenvalues		1.52
Pct of Var		14.5
Factor #		3
N of Cases		78

The "Neighborhood Factor," the third factor for the Cuban adults, consisted of the following statements: "The police are justified in regarding a Black as one who needs to be watched more than others," "In some neighborhoods, physical combat skills and aggressive behavior will be more useful to a police officer than a courteous manner," and "The police are more strict in some neighborhoods than in others." The data for this factor reported in Table 5, appear to reflect a racial prejudice which other groups do not express.

**TABLE 5**  
**NEIGHBORHOOD FACTOR FOR CUBAN ADULTS**

Q#	Variables	
4	Black	.55
9	some agress	.71
18	+strict in some	.52
Eigenvalues		1.01
Pct of Var		7.90
Factor #		3
N of Cases		103

Analysis of Cuban teens' responses shows a "Persecution Factor" which was unique to their group. This factor, reported in Ta-

ble 6, pulled together variables which included "Police officers do not show me respect," "The police officers are justified in regarding a Hispanic as one who needs to be watched more closely than others," and "A really effective police officer is one who patrols for serious felonies rather than worrying about misdemeanors." The creation of this factor indicates that Cuban teens are sensitive to the police harassing Hispanics. It may be that this perception grows out of their second generation minority status.

**TABLE 6**  
**PERSECUTION FACTOR FOR CUBAN TEENS**

Q#	Variables	
11	no respect	-.50
13	Hispanic	.56*
14	patrol felony	.52
Eigenvalues		1.66
Pct of Var		17.80
Factor #		2
N of Cases		120

\* The score for Hispanic is .58 in Factor 5, Ethnic Factor. See Table 3.

Both Anglo teens and Cuban teens produce discretion factors, but each factor reflects a very different emphasis. These data are reported in Tables 7 and 8. We name them "Minor Offense Discretion" and "Beyond the Law Discretion." The Anglo teens developed a one variable factor based on the statement that, "It is alright for police to ignore minor offenses if it is inconvenient to enforce them." The Cuban teens conceptualized the following statements as a Discretion Factor: "In some neighborhoods, a police officer must enforce all laws just to maintain order," and "In order to prevent crimes and catch criminals, the police are sometimes required to stretch the search and seizure laws and other procedural safeguards." A comparison of these two factors indicated that the Anglo teens see police discretion or flexibility as arising out of officer convenience, and focusing on which minor offenses to pursue. The Cuban teens conceptualize discretion as involving the neighborhood in which the police are working rather than convenience or the type of crime that is being considered. That is to say, the police have the discretion of choosing which offenses to deal with only in some neighborhoods, but not in others. Cuban teens also define

**TABLE 7**  
**MINOR OFFENSE DISCRETION FACTOR FOR ANGLO TEENS**

Q#	Variables	
12	ignore minor	.81
Eigenvalues		1.24
Pct of Var		10.90
Factor #		3
N of Cases		120

**TABLE 8**  
**BEYOND THE LAW DISCRETION FACTOR FOR CUBAN TEENS**

Q#	Variables	
2	no discret	.52
7	stretch laws	.64
Eigenvalues		1.06
Pct of Var		11.40
Factor #		4
N of Cases		120

discretion as the ability of the police to go beyond the bounds of the law in their pursuit of law enforcement.

#### IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Our examination of the attitudinal structures of Black adults, Black teens, Cuban adults, Cuban teens, and Anglo teens concerning police and policing reveals that these groups exhibit structures that are similar in some respects and different in others. Age and ethnicity are both important variables effecting attitude structures. Cuban adults have the most unidimensional attitudes toward police, whereas the adult Blacks have the most multidimensional. The three youth groups are remarkably different in the way each structures its attitudes. The Cuban and Black teens, however, are closer to one another than to the Anglo teens. This fact can be explained by the minority status that Cuban and Black teens share.

The present study indicates that demeanor is the most important factor in attitudes toward police. All of the groups in our study conceptualize a Demeanor Factor that expresses police officers' deportment or bearing. Although the Demeanor Factors are not com-



prised of all of the same variables, they explain a greater percentage of the variance than any of the other factors which emerged. Responses from the groups, except the Cuban teens, produce an Ethnic Factor in which the variables are similar but which explain a smaller percentage of the variance. There were no other factors which any two groups held in common. This fact highlights the differences in the ways each group structures its attitudes.

This study suggests some specific differences in conceptualization that exist among the groups. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this article to explore thoroughly those differences. The following areas are particularly fertile and need to be examined in future research. One area of interest concerns the differences between adults and teens among minority groups. For example, violence plays a larger role in the conceptualization of police demeanor for Black teens than it does for Black adults. The present study suggests that the Cuban adults and teens differed in their respective thinking patterns. Future research might enable us to determine whether these differences are affected by first and second generation status differences, the result of the adults suffering from shifts in social status when they fled to the United States, or the result of a common generation gap.

A significant question raised by this research is how to interpret the attitudes of minority group members when they have been measured by scales which are inappropriate for these sub-populations: scales that cluster well in the majority population, but not for specific subgroups. Because factor analysis groups items based on the consistency of individual responses, summarizing an inappropriate scale will result in scores that regress toward the mean. Rather than being cumulative, extreme scores will tend to negate each other, masking important differences. Taking this statistical phenomenon into account, scales that are inappropriate for specific sub-populations will result in scores regressing to the undecided category. Because attitudes toward police are generally positive, we are led to interpret the less positive scores of minority groups as the result of measurement bias.

The most important conclusion to be drawn from this study is that attitudes are not unidimensional and are structured differently for different groups. While this is not a new finding or discovery, it is one that is frequently overlooked or ignored. Caution must be exercised whenever dissimilar groups are compared using attitude scales or indexes. If the groups do not share the same cognitive structure, then it is inappropriate to compare them based on simple attitude scales which do not pretend to get at various dimensions of

the attitudes. In other words, cultural differences may be more important in measurement theory than we have previously considered.

**APPENDIX**  
**MEANS AND STANDARD DISTRIBUTIONS FOR VARIABLES**

#	VARIABLES	CUBAN A		CUBAN T		BLACK A		BLACK T		ANGLO T	
		mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd	mean	sd
1	Courteous	2.25	1.10	2.72	.78	2.06	.87	2.85	.97	2.53	.98
2	No discreet	1.65	.65	2.20	.84	2.50	.79	2.48	1.02	2.31	.83
3	friendly	2.24	1.12	2.89	.95	2.72	.94	2.71	1.03	2.72	1.10
4	Black	2.88	1.30	3.35	1.16	3.37	1.06	3.09	1.61	3.64	1.10
5	Fair	2.24	1.06	2.76	.88	2.83	.83	2.83	.92	2.71	.92
6	pol only Dade	2.51	1.03	3.90	.92	3.24	1.06	3.84	1.12	3.83	.86
7	stretch laws	2.29	.89	2.58	1.02	2.77	.85	2.71	.96	2.70	1.04
8	rude	3.61	1.09	3.26	.95	3.27	.94	4.00	1.09	3.56	.88
9	some aggress	1.99	.90	2.89	1.08	2.85	.94	3.02	1.12	2.55	1.01
10	listen	2.29	1.05	3.06	1.12	2.77	1.02	2.88	1.13	3.17	1.01
11	no respect	2.26	1.12	2.47	.91	2.91	.93	2.45	.92	2.67	1.08
12	ignore minor	3.49	.91	3.73	.91	3.36	.85	3.74	.78	3.63	.96
13	Hispanic	4.14	.91	3.84	.93	3.42	.88	3.71	.94	3.72	1.03
14	patrol felony	2.50	1.06	3.30	1.21	2.96	.87	3.37	1.05	3.34	1.05
15	kicking	3.90	1.03	3.22	1.05	3.04	1.16	2.92	1.08	3.13	1.34
16	disbelief	2.44	1.13	3.29	1.06	3.15	.93	3.44	.98	3.10	.94
17	unrespon low class	2.47	1.20	3.08	.95	3.19	.94	2.56	1.06	3.21	.85
18	+ strict in some	1.64	.57	2.11	.83	2.47	.16	1.79	.85	1.94	.61
19	pol only my area	2.49	1.05	3.52	1.03	3.17	1.09	3.53	1.04	3.55	.92
20	concern	2.39	1.05	2.77	.98	2.89	.97	2.61	.85	2.92	.99
21	Anglo	3.76	.96	3.64	.99	3.26	.92	3.65	.94	4.00	.99
22	respect	2.30	1.20	2.99	1.04	2.67	.85	2.91	1.06	3.04	.94

## APPENDIX

## ATTITUDE STATEMENTS

Subjects were asked to respond to the following statements by indicating if they strongly agree, agree, are undecided, disagree, or strongly disagree. The variable names used in the text and the tables precede the statement and are in italics.

1. *Courteous*. Police are usually courteous to people.
2. *No discret*. In some neighborhoods, a police officer must enforce all laws just to maintain order.
3. *Friendly*. Most police officers are usually friendly.
4. *Black*. The police are justified in regarding a Black as one who needs to be watched more than others.
5. *Fair*. Most police officers are fair.
6. *Pol Only-Dade*. Only the police can control crime in Dade County.
7. *Stretch Laws*. In order to prevent crimes and catch criminals, the police are sometimes required to stretch the search and seizure laws and other procedural safeguards.
8. *Rude*. Most police officers are usually rude.
9. *Some Aggress*. In some neighborhoods, physical combat skills and aggressive behavior will be more useful to a police officer than a courteous manner.
10. *Listen*. Most police officers give people a chance to explain.
11. *No Respect*. Police officers do not show me respect.
12. *Ignore Minor*. If it is inconvenient to enforce minor offenses, it is o.k. to ignore them.
13. *Hispanic*. The police are justified in regarding a Hispanic as one who needs to be watched more than others.
14. *Patrol Felony*. A really effective police officer is one who patrols for serious felonies rather than worrying about misdemeanors.
15. *Kicking*. Police officers enjoy kicking people around.
16. *Disbelief*. Police officers usually do not believe you even when you are telling the truth.
17. *Unrespon low cl*. Most police officers are unresponsive to lower-class people.
18. *+ Strict in Some*. The police are more strict in some neighborhoods than in others.
19. *Pol Only-My Area*. Only the police can control crime in my neighborhood.
20. *Concern*. Police officers show concern when you ask them questions.

21. *Anglo.* The police are justified in regarding an Anglo as one who needs to be watched more than others.
22. *Respect.* Most police officers usually respect me for who I am.