

**What effect does race have on citizens' attitudes toward the police?**

I believe race has several effects on citizens' attitudes towards police. Minority races have a much more negative attitude toward the police because of racial profiling and other actions that may be considered racist by citizens. I believe many racist actions have occurred in the past and still today, which create disparity within the minority communities. There is a great lack of trust towards police officers because of current and past events and even anger. Many citizens in a minority group will become angry and even claim they were being racially profiled, even if the officer was justified in pulling them over. Because this type of behavior was so common in the past, minorities may feel they will always be mistreated in the criminal justice system. The fact that African Americans make up 48 percent of the prison population and only make up 12 percent of the United States population shows that police officers are more likely to stop an African American than any other race. The white U.S population is around 72 percent and they make up 50 percent of the prison population. Whites and Blacks prison populations are very similar, but the U.S. populations are greatly different. If there is 50 percent of whites making up the prison population with a percentage of 72 in the total U.S. population, one would think that there would be many more whites in prison. These statistics could make race seem like a very important factor in the way police make arrests.

I am not certain if the mentality would derive from race or if the attitudes would spring from the particular location. What I mean by this, I am from a small town, the area is very rural and there is literally almost no cultural diversity at all. As far as attitudes go toward the police in that area in regards to race would be seemingly nonexistent.

If you were to look at this perspective from a different location it would be different. If you were to live in an area in which most of the residents are primarily African American or Latino, and if they were to be relatively poverty stricken or riddled with crime then those people who live there would have many interactions with the police and the perspectives would be that the police are only coming around the neighborhood to arrest. The attitudes toward the police would be that of a negative perception instead of that of something positive. As race would pertain to attitudes toward the police it would absolutely be dependent upon the circumstances in which the police were often seen and how they interacted with those who lived in that area. If the police were only coming around or seen to be arresting or questioning potential suspects then they would be seen as a threat and viewed in a negative untrustworthy light. This all depends on the perception as well as the area.