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**Deontological Decision and Moral Behavior in Law Enforcement**

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### **Deontological Decision and Moral Behavior in Law Enforcement**

People must comprehend the meaning of deontology when discussing ethics. The deontological theory asserts that specific actions depend on their intrinsic nature (Yagmussova & Akylov, 2020). For example, when a known criminal is apprehended. The law enforcement agents know that this individual has information on other possible target locations that could result in the demise and maiming of innocent civilians, but the terrorist refuses to speak. For that reason, the police are playing around with the idea of torture to get this suspect to talk. Assessing this example using deontological theory shows that torture is morally wrong, but stopping another attack and saving the lives of other innocent persons justifies the decision to torture the terrorist. Ultimately, one can use deontological thinking to suggest that it is morally wrong for police officers to torture the individual regardless of the intended outcome.

Deontological decisions can assist law enforcement officers in deciding what is moral and what is not. For instance, when confronted with a situation they would want to avoid, police officers must remember that they swore an oath to perform police duties. Someone must do police duties, and that responsibility falls on them; therefore, they must carry out their mandate. An example is where a patrol officer on duty pulls over an acquaintance. The associate is drunk while driving, and the officer is in a dilemma to arrest and detain this individual or let them go. Deontological decisions here are that the police officer's duty must be carried out in good faith, meaning that the officer should not act if the officer is aware that he lacks moral principles to do his duty (Yagmussova & Akylov, 2020). The police officer, in such instances, have a responsibility, and they must do their duty as expected because it is the moral and right thing to do.

Leadership is an intrinsic element of enhanced control and guideline in law and order. According to Hehir et al. (2019), police officers should adhere to the established norms and take necessary responsibilities to ensure the safety of citizens. The law enforcement officers should also acquire leadership skills to cope with the leadership demands in their work environment. When considering behavioral and leadership patterns among police units, moral values and ethics are the most significant concerns in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Unethical conduct among law enforcement officers generates adverse outcomes, like bribery, corruption, and unequal enforcement of the law. Regarding these considerations, principled leadership and conduct pose a test to law enforcers.

The reluctance of police officers to follow the cardinal principles of morals and ethics breeds corruption in the justice system. Precisely, ethical perceptions of law enforcement are linked with identity crises. Police officers are challenged by the duty to protect the citizens according to the constitution. As a result, they are faced with conflicting circumstances when deciding their loyalty and personal interests. According to Dammert (2019), the organizational culture of the law enforcement agencies is a factor that sabotages the officers while proving to be obstacles to the much-needed change.

Moreover, the aggressive approaches by police officers, though they contribute to society's safety and security, barely meet the common conventional principles of ethical conduct and leadership among law enforcers. More importantly, unethical and illegal practices start from the higher echelons of the police hierarchy, resulting in ethical misconduct and unfair misconceptions at the lower levels (Dammert, 2019). Consequently, ethical behavior and leadership ought to be included in the police training programs.

In conclusion, unethical conduct and behavior and the lack of leadership among law enforcement officers can create problems and conflicts if there is no apparent ethical code of conduct. Corrupt dealings and identity crises are some of the outcomes of these problems. In this respect, there must be legal mechanisms adopted to ensure that law enforcement agencies do not surpass the boundaries of ethics and morals. Furthermore, it is important to train law enforcement officers on the ethical principles and laws that guide their daily actions to avoid some of the challenges highlighted.

### References

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