

## **Factors Influencing Police Image in Public** (A Study of University Students Perception in KPK Pakistan)

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### **Abstract**

This study titled “Factors influencing police image in public” explores university student’s perception regarding police image in the light of their own experiences, knowledge and observations. The sample size was determined with the help of Sekaran table (Sekaran, 2003). University students of final year from faculty of social sciences of Kohat University of science and technology were selected as respondents of the study. Total population of the above mentioned groups of respondents was 213, out of whom a sample size of 138 was selected. Data was collected from the above sample group through a structured questionnaire by using Likert scale. Sample comprises both male and female respondents and proportional allocation was made through stratified random sampling. It is found that most of the respondents viewed police as corrupt and considered police personnel as biased. Less use of advanced technology was considered as barrier in police performance. The study concludes that police image in the public has been distorted due to their inefficiency, culture of corruption, lack of accountability, lack of training and low salaries. The study suggests that for better image in the public, the police force needs to be reformed on modern lines. There should be proper check and balance on police personnel while misusing powers. More and more incentives, better training and quality education should be provided to police for improving their image in the public.

**Keywords:** Factors, Police, Public, Image, University, Students Perception

### **Introduction**

Policing is an integral part of human life and is essential for regulating human behaviour, controlling crime and protecting the citizens (Newburn,2003).According to the famous Roman political philosopher Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC), “the safety of the people shall be the highest law.” The nations that prospered, progressed and developed have given the highest priority to public order and safety (Khosa, 2015).Effectiveness of the criminal justice system is dependent on the level of the trust the people have in the system (Lea and Young, 1984; Lyons, 2002). Public can trust the police when they discharge their duties, with fairness, equity and determination. Public trust is essential to police department for earning legitimacy from the citizens (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003). Public cooperate with the police department when they are satisfied from their performance (Mishler and Rose, 1998).

Police is a public institution and is distinguished in terms of legitimacy, structure and functions. Police is the enforcing arm of the state's criminal justice system and includes the adjudicatory arm comprising the courts and the correctional arm comprising the prisons and corrections services (Sarre, 2002). Among its formidable powers include those of arrest, detention and the use of force. It is one of the very few institutions of the state that have a monopoly on the legitimate use of force (Zubair and Khan, 2014). In the exercise of these powers, the police institution is allowed a significant degree of discretion. While these powers are dependent on public consent in principle, it is often difficult to keep to principle during the actual use of police powers in the real world (Sanders & Young, 2003).

Nowadays, the duties of police force is not just implementing the law anymore, it is a component of social work community. In modern day society, in addition to their traditional law enforcing responsibilities, the police has to perform challenging role in sensitive and difficult situations (Dogutas, *et al.*, 2007).

The UN International Police Task Force (1996) concisely describes the characteristics of democratic policing:

*In a democratic society, the police serve to protect, rather than impede freedoms. The very purpose of the police is to provide a safe, orderly environment in which these freedoms can be exercised. A democratic police force is not concerned with people's beliefs or associates, their movements or conformity to state ideology. It is not even primarily concerned with the enforcement of regulations or bureaucratic regimens. Instead, the police force of a democracy is concerned strictly with the preservation of safe communities and the application of criminal law equally to all people, without fear or favour.*

Another important concept in this regard is of community policing which has two components: partnership and problem solving. International Crisis Group Report (2008) concludes that to develop community partnership, police should develop positive relations with community and involve community for crime prevention. Community policing allows the police to tap into expertise and resources of communities thereby reducing some of their own load. Civil society organizations, student unions traders and other segments of society can help police in crime prevention.

However, Pakistan has inherited the institution of Police from British India as a colonial legacy, still exhibiting most of its colonial traits.

Colonial police force considered itself answerable to and sought to secure the interests of the colonizers and their bureaucracy and not that of the people. They were meant to control the population, rather than protecting the community, and were trained to remain outside and distinct from the very community. The police was designed as an extremely hierarchical structure ensuring loyalty to the leadership and the regime rather than to the rule of law. Policing in Pakistan does not reflect the transformation that ought to have taken place following the independence. The policeman is not understood as a citizen in uniform providing lawful services to the population (Siddiqi, Butt and Afzal, 2014). Police force in Pakistan is one of the most poorly managed department in the country and is known for its deeply politicised and corrupt culture. Although it has succeeded in curtailing criminals in certain operations, but overall its performance is not up to the international standards (Rohde, 2002). Sauddle (2008) former Inspector General of Police Sindh and Director General of Intelligence Bureau, stated that police force has earned a bad name due to its incompetency, inefficiency, politicization, institutionalized abuse of power and distorted public image. In addition Imam (2011) argues that police has always continued to serve those in power and probably these people misuse police for their personal and political gains. Due to these factors the perception of people regarding police has badly shaken in Pakistani society.

### **Literature Review**

The word 'Police' means city and is the modern form of an ancient Greek work. In 18<sup>th</sup> century the word 'Police' was used for the first time when police personnel were sent out to Scotland. The term 'Policing' or 'Police' or 'Police Department' refers to an institution responsible for the up-lift of law and community protection (Imam, 2011). During the age of empires, the duties of police were not limited to maintain law and order, curtailing the rebellion, protecting the life and properties of citizens, they also served the ruling elite (Arain, Arain and Manzoor, 2014). Before the arrival of the British in the subcontinent, the ruler was the best judge and he decided the disputes. He was also facilitated by the local notables who served as judges and justice was enforced by the military who performed the duties of police organization as well (Niaz, 2011).

### **Pre-Independence Police**

Before independence police "functioned de jure and de facto," as an organization subordinate to the executive and carried out its

commands. Laws were implemented just for the protection of British rule and Crown. The government had dictatorial powers and the police department had been used a tool by the former for their vested interests (Green, 2010).

### **Post-Independence Police**

Pakistan inherited police system from British India. British created this police system under 1861 Act. The ultimate objective of this system was to protect and expand colonial rule in India while keeping public under strict scrutiny (Ghosh, and Rustamji, 1993). In the words of Dr. Muhammad Shoaib Suddle, “Police was designed to be a public-frightening organization, not a public-friendly agency” – something that police in Pakistan still exhibits (Jamal, 2011). The purpose was admirably served by adopting Irish Constabulary model, which placed police under executive authority through the office of the District Officer – an agent of the colonial government. It is important to mention that Police Act of 1861 was promulgated in the aftermath of 1857 mutiny, and therefore, the primary purpose of the Act was to ‘control’ the natives and prevent the members of the police force from joining mutineers ever in future (Saeed, 2014).

The Inspector General maintained and checked the department at the district level. He would be assisted by the deputies and it was his sole office that held sway on all the matters of the police. Secondly, the office of the District Magistrate also controlled police department (Siddiqi, Butt and Afzal, 2014). But the transfers and postings did not come under the office of the Inspector General; rather it was a provincial domain. This dual control left police devoid of its independence, which paved way for the most damaging problem of politicized police force in post-independence Pakistan. Same organizational, operational, and administrative procedures envisaged in Police Act of 1861 were adopted by the State of Pakistan after it got independence and continued till the promulgation of new Police Order 2002 in Pakistan (Suddle, 2015).

### **Police Force in Pakistan**

Police is a civilian law enforcing agency for the protection of lives and properties of the people. In addition, the police also serve to resolve dispute and maintain law and order situation in country. Although police is considered as the arm of law criminal justice system in Pakistan, yet the working condition of police is not up to the marks and their image is worsening day by day. Pakistan is also among those countries where

people's trust on police department has been gradually eroded (Siddiqi, Butt and Afzal, 2014).

The public is no longer respecting the role of policemen owing to the latter's inefficiency, corruption, malpractices and organizational loopholes. A public survey conducted across the country on a sample of 2,679 men in both rural and urban areas by Gallup Pakistan in May 2014 revealed that 24% of Pakistanis themselves or the people in their neighborhood have no trust in police, 49% have very little trust in police and 27% have a lot of trust in police (Saeed, 2014).

### **Analyzing Factors that Hinder Effective Policing in Pakistan**

#### **Historical Factors – Outmoded Law**

Developed as superior power equipped to intervene rather than protect citizens in the aftermath of the 1857 uprising against the British, Pakistan got police department in its legacy which was created in 1861 yielded an authoritative, oppressive and brutal force (Arain, Arain, Manzoor, 2014). A cursory view at its provisions shows that it was out of touch with the requirements of an un-dated and progressive government. Unfortunately Pakistan continued with these laws till 2002, when finally a new reform oriented police order was promulgated but even the new police order has been changed frequently amended many times since, damaging its original intent and spirit. Its implementation largely remains an unfulfilled dream. In sixty 60 years, almost two dozen commissioned reports on reform of Pakistan police were produced but it was very rare that any of their suggestions and feedback was incorporated. Interestingly, India continues with 1861 Police Act in many parts of the country amid demands for change and reform (Daruwala, Joshi and Tiwana, 2015).

#### **Structural Problems**

Primarily, law and order is the responsibility of the provincial government, while both the federal and provincial governments can enact laws with the centre's legislation taking precedence over provincial law. Capital police in Islamabad, and four provincial police forces largely act independent of each other, but the senior executive roles are filled from the ranks of the Police Service of Pakistan (PSP) cadre, a central career service from which officers can be transferred anywhere in Pakistan. There is disappointment among the officers of PSP cadre and the junior officers as the later rarely get the high level positions. In addition, the PSP is a change resistant group and there is no standard for transfers, postings and promotions in the provincial police departments creating disparities (Imam, 2011).

**Thana Culture and Disregard for Human Rights:**

Police force is responsible for maintaining law and order in the society and for bringing the criminals to the justice (Fasihuddin, 2010). However police force in Pakistan has earned a bad name due to their corrupt culture, inept organizational structure, poor performance in protecting the criminals (Jamal, 2011). Due to their abusive and merciless behaviour the people seldom visit the police stations. 'Thana' is the word used for a police station in the local Urdu/Punjabi language (Arain and Arain, 2016). The term, 'Thana' is used to show the mistreatment, cruelty and exploitation during interrogation in police custody. In addition, the fake police encounter, un-authorized search, and arrest are reported daily by the newspapers. Furthermore, police force in Pakistan is known for its arrogant behaviour, slang language of police with common masses and complainants as well (Radalet and Carter, 1994; Hasan, 2015). Thana culture negates community policing concept and discourages people involvement with police (Arain and Arain, 2016).

**Inadequate Training and Investigation Facilities**

Pakistani police force is characterised as the poorly trained and ill equipped for curtailing the increasing crime rate in Pakistan (Rhode, 2002). There is lack of training facilities and the available training centres are in very poor condition (Hameed and Jamshed, 2013). Due to lack of sophisticated means of investigations, the police force still uses torture for eliciting confessions. In addition, Pakistan's forensics capabilities are highly undeveloped and lack the required equipment and trained staff for investigating crimes. Till late 1990s, there was only one major laboratory in the whole country (located in Rawalpindi) with a handful of experts.

**Corruption**

Corruption is prevalent in police department and it is one of the major hurdle in the way of crime prevention and investigation in Pakistan (Kumssa, 2015) According to Transparency International's "Global Corruption Barometer 2007", police is the most corrupt public sector agency in Pakistan. Pakistan has only 350,000 police personnel for a population of around 172 million people: around one police officer for 477 citizens and in the prevailing circumstances police frequently provide guard and VIP duties, further diminishing its overall capacity. In addition a police constable is getting almost 100 US dollars per month which is not sufficient for keeping body and soul together. In my recent interview with

the chief of police of a major city of Punjab, the officer told that according to the estimates around 20 percent of his police force is involved in crimes and that he has detained many personnel. Furthermore, the law minister of Punjab stated that his government intends to increase the salaries of the police force which will help them in fighting corruption and other evil practices in the police department (Radalet and Carter, 1994). Due to the corrupt practices in police force, the people's perception about police is quite indifferent and the people consider police force as incapable in discharging their duties.

### Method of the Study

Data for study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The study was quantitative in nature and was conducted in Kohat University of Science & Technology, Kohat. The students (both male and female) of final year from faculty of social sciences were selected as the population of the study. Objective of the study was to find out factors influencing police image in public. A close ended questionnaire was used as a tool of data collection for the study. For data collection the sample size has been drawn by using Sekaran table (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). Proportionate stratified sampling method was used to determine the sample size for each strata whereas systematic sampling was applied to pick the samples from the two selected sample groups. The total size of population was 213, among which 176 were male and 37 were female. Out of total population, 114 male and 24 female were selected as a sample size from two selected sample groups' i.e. final year male and female students of social sciences. The sample method was adopted as follows.

### Breakup of the composite sample size:

S. No	Sample Group	Population Size	Sample Size
1	Female students in social science (KUST)	37	24
2	Male students in social science (KUST)	176	114
<b>Total</b>		<b>213</b>	<b>138</b>

(Source: Director Academics KUST, 2016)

## **Results and Discussion of the Study**

### **Demographic Information**

Table I shows Demographic information of the respondents. Nature of the respondents' educational level and their age are very important variables which determine their level of maturity, knowledge and awareness about the concerned topic i.e. factors influencing police image in public. Out of total 138(100%) in which respondents 114(82.6%) were male and remaining 24(17.4%) were female. Out of total 138 (100%) respondents, 57(41.3%) respondents were in the age group between 19 to 21 years, while 77(55.8%) respondents were in the age group between 22 to 24 years, and remaining 4(2.9%) were in age group from 25 to 27 years. Out of the total respondents, 63(45.7%) respondents were from rural area and 75(54.3%) from urban area. Besides this, 5(3.6%) respondents were married and 133(96.4%) were unmarried. Furthermore 54(39.1%) respondents were having nuclear family, while 75(54.3%) respondents were having joint family and the remaining 9(6.5%) respondents having extended family. Furthermore, 106(76.8%) respondents were students of BS (Hon), while 32(23.2%) were final year students of M.A/M.Sc (For detail. See Table I).

### **Results and Discussion**

Table 2 shows different aspects affecting police image in public. Out of total 138(100%), 117(84.8.5%) respondents agreed that police are involved in corruption, while 8(5.8%) respondents did not agree, and the remaining 13(9.4%) did not respond to the statement. Similarly, 86(62.3%) respondents opined that main reason of corruption in police department is due to lack of transparency and 80(58.0%) respondents were of the opinion that Police are involve in corruption due to lack of resources. Thus this indicates that police are involved in corruption, and corruption is one of the most dreadful problems in police department. The main reasons for corruption in police are their low salaries, lack of resources and lack of accountability. People do not trust police because they think that police personnel are involved in corruption. Bribe that is taken by police is considered legal by police themselves (Suddle, 2008). Table II further shows quality services aspects of police personnel. Out of the total respondents, 59(42.8%) respondents agreed with the statement that police provide quality service, while 61(44.2%) views disagreed with the statement. 62(44.9%) respondents agreed that police services are unbiased in their area, while 46(33.3%) disagreed with the same statement. Similarly 46(33.3%) respondents views were in favour that police personnel reach on time at crime spot, while 73(52.9%) din not favour the same statement. 51(37.0%) respondents agreed that Thana

culture provide justice to offenders , while 68(49.3%) disagreed with the statement. Results reveal that due to corruption, police force can-not provide quality services to the people. In addition due to Thana culture police did not deliver to the people, that's why there is mistrust between police force and the public (Jamal, 2011).

The table further shows the crime prevention aspect of police and public image. Out of total 138(100%), 70(50.7%) respondents view that police did not play its proper role in crime prevention, while 54(39.1%) respondents were against this statement. Out of the total respondents, 88(63.8%) respondents agreed that role of police in crime prevention is weakened due to political influence while 35(25.4%) respondents disagreed about the statement. Out of the total respondents, 79(57.2%) respondents agreed with the statement that existing rules and regulations creates many problem to prevent crime while 39(28.3%) respondents disagreed with this statement. This table's result indicates that nowadays police force is not playing its role in crime prevention because corruption in police makes their roles ineffective. The role of police in crime prevention is weakened due to the political interference, lack of specialized training to prevent crimes (Perito and Parvez, 2014). Table II also shows police community relationship and public image of police. Out of total respondents 138(100%), 46(33.3%) respondents agreed with the statement that police behaviour is friendly with citizens, while 81(58.7%) did not agreed and remaining 11(8%) did not answer to the statement. Further 49(45.5 %) respondents views were in favour regarding police behaviour regarding cooperation with minorities, while 77(55.8%) don't favour the statement. Out of the total respondents, 84(60.9%) respondents agreed that police behaviour is harsh towards drug addicts, while 38(27.5%) respondent disagreed with this statement. Out of the total respondents, 53(38.4%) respondents view that Police is cooperative in registering the FIR, while 62(44.9%) respondents were did not agreed with this statement. The table shows that police behaviour is not so friendly with citizens especially with minorities, while their behaviour with refugees is also not cooperative. They treat offenders very harshly verbally abuse the masses. They are not so competent enough to control the disturbing law and order in society. Police treat the masses very harshly and they are not so cooperative with them therefore, the people do not trust them (Greene, 2010).

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Police department is an integral part of the law enforcement in any country. People's perception about police changes with their performance in controlling car and providing peaceful environment to the people. There are multiple reasons due to which the people consider police force as incompetent, corrupt and deeply politicised. In addition due to lack of accountability, transparency, low salaries, lack of resources the police force has become the most corrupt and unaccountable to both the people and government. The attitude of police with the general public is harsh and non cooperative. As a result people's perception about police is negative as compared to other departments. The study concludes that due to the un-responsive attitude and Thana culture; the people seldom visit the police stations. Furthermore, the people also don't cooperate with the police force in crime prevention and investigation of crimes.

The study suggests that for crime prevention, public-police cooperation is the order of the day. Moral and ethical aspects of police training should be improved and the idea of community policing should be encouraged. Police should be made accountable to both governments as well as public; should be made free from political interference and there should be proper check and balance system. Strict laws should be framed and implemented for punishing the corrupt officials of police department. The salaries of police force should be revised for discouraging corrupt practices and motivating the police force for improving their efficiency and earning a good name for the police department in the country.

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### Annex-I

**Table I: Demographic information of the Respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Male	114	82.6%	138(100%)
Female	24	17.4%	138(100%)
<b>Age of Respondent</b>			
19-21 years	57	41.3%	138(100%)
22-24 years	77	55.8%	138(100%)
25-27 years	4	2.9%	138(100%)
Above 27	Nil	Nil	138(100%)
<b>Area Of Residence</b>			
Rural	63	45.7%	138(100%)
Urban	75	54.3%	138(100%)
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Married	5	3.6%	138(100%)
Unmarried	133	96.4%	138(100%)
<b>Family type</b>			
Nuclear Family	54	39.1%	138(100%)
Joint Family	75	54.3%	138(100%)
Extended Family	9	6.5%	138(100%)

<b>Education Qualification</b>			
Bs(Honors)	106	76.8%	138(100%)
Ma/M.Sc.	32	23.2%	138(100%)
MS/M.Phil.	Nil	Nil	138(100%)
PhD	Nil	Nil	138(100%)

**Table 2: Factors affecting police public image**

<b>Corruption as a factor affecting police public image</b>					
<b>S. No</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Police are involved in corruption	117(84.8%)	8 (5.8%)	13 (9.4%)	138(100%)
2	Lack of transparency is one of the major reason of corruption in police	86(62.3%)	25(18.1%)	27(19.6%)	138(100%)
3	Police are involve in corruption due to lack of resources	80(58.0%)	44(31.9%)	14(10.1%)	138(100%)
4	Corruption in police affect its role in crime prevention	109(79.0%)	23(16.7%)	6(4.3%)	138(100%)
<b>Quality of services affecting police public image</b>					
<b>S. No</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Police provide quality services to every common man	59(42.8%)	61(44.2%)	18(13.0%)	138(100%)
2	Police personnel in your area is biased	62(44.9%)	46(33.3%)	30(21.7%)	138(100%)
3	Police personnel reach on time at crime spot	46(33.3%)	73(52.9%)	19(13.8%)	138(100%)
4	Thana culture provide justice to offenders	51(37.0%)	68(49.3%)	19(13.8%)	138(100%)
<b>Crime Prevention and police public Image</b>					
<b>S. No</b>	<b>Statements</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Police do not play its proper role in crime prevention	70(50.7%)	54(39.1%)	14(10.1%)	138(100%)
2	The role of police in crime prevention is weaken due to	88(63.8%)	35(25.4%)	15(10.9%)	138(100%)

	political influence				
3	Existing rules and regulations creates many problem in crime prevention	79(57.2%)	39(28.3%)	20(14.5%)	138(100%)
4	Less advanced technology creates barrier in prevention of crime	88(63.8%)	33(23.9%)	17(12.3%)	138(100%)
<b>Police community relationship and public image</b>					
S. No	Statements	Yes	No	Don't Know	Total
1	Police behavior is friendly with citizen	46(33.3%)	81(58.7%)	11(8.0%)	138(100%)
2	Police behavior is cooperative with minorities	49(35.5%)	77(55.8%)	12(8.7%)	138(100%)
3	Police behavior is harsh towards drug addicts	84(7.9%)	38(27.5%)	16(11.6%)	138(100%)
4	Police is cooperative in registering the FIR	53(38.4%)	62(44.9%)	23(16.7%)	138(100%)

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