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Ethics in Police and Social Change

Executive Summary

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Funded by

Bureau of Police Research & Development (BPRD)

New Delhi

INTRODUCTION

Social Change in a right direction is desired by the society. The state of the society depends upon the rules and regulations framed by the government and more importantly how these rules and regulations are implemented. Police Plays an Important role in executing and implementing some of these rules and regulation. The integrity of police organisation will play a considerable role in shaping the society. This study focuses on Ethics in Police and Social Change.

1- POLICE AND ETHICS

Police ethics applies the principles of applied ethics. Police ethics is relatively underdeveloped. There are several reasons for this, the major ones being the paramilitary philosophy of policing and misunderstanding of the need for police ethics (Paragon, 2000). First, within the paramilitary philosophy of policing, police officers are assigned the role of executors of orders from their supervisors. They are not supposed to question those orders, so there is not much need for moral deliberations. The basic virtue of police officers within this framework is obedience. Police leadership, on the other hand, is either not accountable to anyone (since they are setting their own goals and can always tailor the statistics to fit their needs) or they are accountable only to the party in power, with which they are in a symbiotic relationship. It is not surprising that police ethics does not thrive in such a context. Second, some practitioners are misled by a belief that as far as police officers perform their work strictly by the law, they need no police ethics. Proponents of this view also deny police officers the right of discretion. Unfortunately, when one is faced with a moral or ethical dilemma, the laws prove themselves to be of little use. Nowadays it is hard to find a curriculum at a police academy or a program in police studies at a university that does not include a subject of police ethics. At the same time, the number of police agencies with a department, task force, or a committee on police ethics is rapidly increasing. The majority of police agencies also have adopted a code of police ethics, in a more or less articulated form. As already mentioned, police ethics is still at the beginning of its development. The following are some methods for development of ethics in police.

2- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to study ethics in police and social change the following objectives were taken up.

- a-To examine the public perception regarding ethical values in police.
- b-To study the value system practiced by police.
- c-To identify reason of deviation from the value system.
- d-To find out appropriate value incorporation system.
- e-To investigate the effect of value enriched police on social change.

In order to trace out the possible causes of problems the study was based on the following assumptions.

H1-Majority of the people considers police unethical in behaviour.

H2-There is significant reason for deviation from value system.

2.1 Research Design-

In order to reveal what kind of ethics or value system being followed by police and to know the perception of general public towards the police & policing a quantitative method employing personal (direct) survey was selected and for this purpose the descriptive type of research has been chosen to get the required results .The study is based upon the primary survey, interviews, discussions with police and public.

Sample Size:-1500 (1000 public and 500 Police)

Sampling Unit: - Police Personals and General public above 18 years.

Universe: - J&K and Punjab states.

Research Instrument Used:-Structured Questionnaire,

The questionnaire was first pretested via a pilot survey and modified as well approved by the BPRD, New Delhi, besides interviews, discussions were also held with public and police personals in order to achieve the objectives.

Sampling; - The present study is descriptive and conclusive in nature and the sampling technique used was simple random sampling and convenience sampling.

The function of descriptive statistical analysis has been performed for each of the section and also factor analysis was used to reduce the large number of factors to few factors; with the help of SPSS 15.0. The variables were then grouped together on the basis of the rotated component matrix after analysing the communalities value less than 50% representation of the data. The factor analysis was done and the groups were made for further subjective

analysis on the perception of people towards the ethics of police. The analysis was done for J& k , Punjab and combined, separately . Further the analysis has been done with the help of Mean Values, Pie Charts etc.

2.2 -LIMITATION:-

- The unrest problem in Kashmir valley was one of the major limitations for interaction with local people and police personals in that region.
- Police and public were very reluctant to fill the questionnaire and respondents agreed only on the assurance of anonymity.
- It was very difficult to get time for discussions with police personals.
- There was time constraint with the researcher.
- People may not have given their right opinion.

3- CONCLUSION

3.1 OBJECTIVE 1:- To examine the public perception regarding ethical values in police.

The following is the perception of public regarding ethical values in police. There exists some police personals who follow value and ethics. Each candidate should also be evaluated for ethics while entry in police. Public expects that each individual should follow ethics in day to day life. Public perceives that corruption is one of the features of Police. There are situations in which police do not follow morals and values besides there is violation of rules and regulations by Police.

From the hypothesis test it is concluded that in general public perceives police unethical in behaviour and also agrees that there is sufficient reason for deviation from value system.

From the mean scores it can be concluded that public expects :-

- a) One should follow ethics in day to day life.
- b) Ethics evaluation of candidates should be there before recruiting into forces.
- c) Following of rules and regulations will not lower crime.
- d) There should be ethical training in police.

The factor analysis of the data reveals about the perception of public towards the ethics in police which can be generalized and grouped under Ethical Competence, Reliability, Integrity, Responsiveness, Adherence to Law & Ethical Behaviour.

- The perception of people regarding the ethical competence of police is largely based upon the components of behaviour and the training of ethical behaviour provided by the system. The behaviour of the police personnel in the various situations at the level of integrity and ensuring the reliability defines the ethical competence of the police. It creates a positive influence and perception amongst the people in general. The perception of ethical competence is largely based in the general perception of the involvement in corrupt practices in the public dealing. The research emphasis on the requirement of the strong training of ethical practices and creating a process in the police system that would henceforth increase the reliability and install confidence in the general masses for the system. The ethical competences is embedded in mapping the social change and exhibit the practices with the help of training and process that would in turn increase the reliability of the police.
- The ethical competence and reliability are largely reflected by the level of integrity shown by the police and seen by the public in general. The public behaviour of the involvement in criminal and unlawful activities leads to the opinion building and hence has an effect on the moral of not only people but also the police. Bribing has come out as a most unanimous and widespread reflection of low integrity towards the job of police in the perception of general public. Bribing as an activity contributes as a major component for the description of integrity, along with the regular and general violation of the rules and regulations by the police personnel themselves. The general mass in J&K and Punjab has a positive image of the responsiveness of the police in terms of their compliance of the duty. This is a pleasant perceptual component construct that has emerged out of this study. The public in general perceives that in general the efforts are sincere but incongruently the low knowledge towards the human right issues does acts as a hindrance towards application in duty with sincere efforts. This may be one of the lacunas and may require a definite set of procedures and system not only for the education of the human right issues but also towards its implementation. This is a real challenge for a force that has to shift its objectives in the changing social perspectives where the perceptions are based on previous experience, expectations are as per current social contexts and duties have the challenge of the experiences of past, technology of future and compliance of contemporary situations. The general perception towards the ethical behaviour also leads towards the feeling of incongruence in the ethical behaviour and police. The people have a general perception that the police and ethics in social context do not

have any relationship. The phenomenon is strange and maybe it is an outcome of large number of adverse experiences and low publicity of the ethical behaviour of police. It is expected that the one should follow the ethical behaviour but police system is not in line with ethics in the perception of general public. This can be stated as a very sardonic statement for the perception of people towards the system of police and it requires a mass appeal with the establishment of a process of behavioural adaptation and modification as well as establishing the faith for having a better image in the public. One has to take this into account the system is a part of society and is for the society.

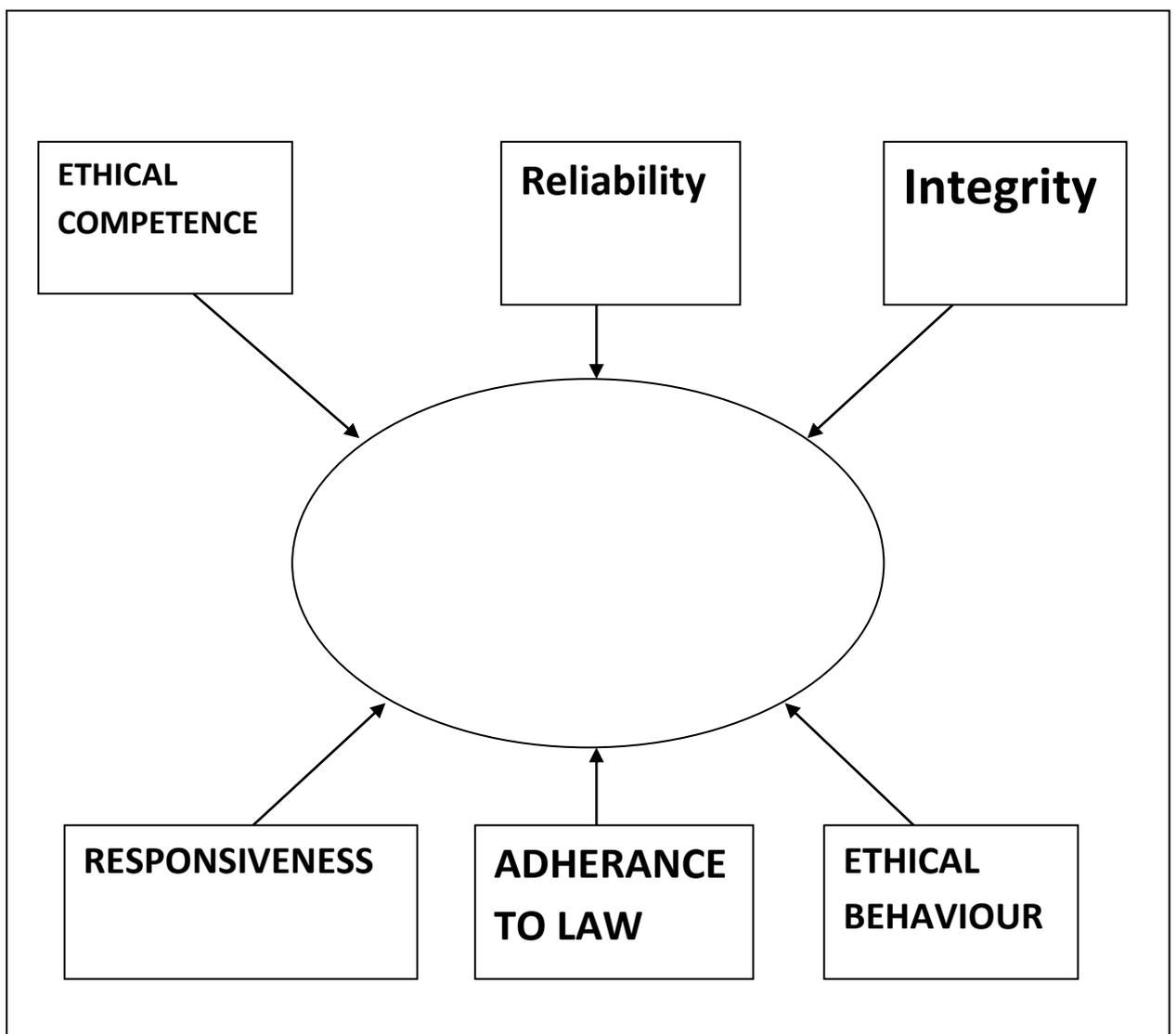


Fig 1 Public perception regarding ethical values in police

3.2 OBJECTIVE 2-To study the value system practiced by police.

a-Majority of the police personnel in J&K and Punjab do not follow ethics while dealing with public.

b-Neglecting the neutral responses majority of the police personnel follow orders regardless they appear ethical or unethical.

c- In both the states it is very difficult for the police personnel to follow ethics always.

d-Majority of the police respondents from both the states are of the opinion that there exists corruption in police department.

e-A considerable proportion of police personnel from both the states consume liquor while on duty.

f- There are considerable instances for the police organizations of J&K and Punjab that cases are moulded to avoid trouble.

The ethical practices for the police organization of J&K and Punjab are not in good state.

3.3 OBJECTIVE 3:- To identify reasons of deviation from the value system

a-There is considerable misuse of official position by the officers of police organization of J&K and Punjab.

b-Colleague in police organizations of J&K and Punjab create such circumstances where one is unable to follow ethics.

c-Employees of both the police organizations are not satisfied by the pay they are getting.

d-For employees of both the police organizations it would be difficult to perform their duties if they follow ethics.

e-Majority of the senior officers of J&K Police are influenced by the political parties while this is also true for Punjab police but the percentage is less as compared to J&K.

3.4 OBJECTIVE 4:-To find out the appropriate value incorporation system

a-Ethics training should be incorporated in the various training program .

b-There should be removal of police officers who is found unethical i.e through negative reinforcement.

c-The best way of learning ethics is during their Job followed by the guidance of seniors.

3.5 OBJECTIVE 5:-To investigate the effect of value enriched police on social change

a-If there is no discrimination on any ground with the public stake holders this will help in changing the society.

b-Awareness of rights in general public could bring change in the society.

c-If the root cause of crime is eliminated besides regulating crime this will initiate change in society.

Value enriched police organization can bring social change in society.

4 -RECOMMENDATIONS

- Police organizations of both the states (J&K and Punjab) should try to improve the value system practiced by the police of these states. Police organization should try to build their image in the eye of the public based on the following factors. Ethical Competencies, Reliability, Integrity, Responsiveness, Adherence to Law and Ethical Behaviour.
- The following factors should be worked upon for having a better value system practices in police organizations i.e.
 - a) Personnel should follow ethical codes while working with public.
 - b) Police organization should try to incorporate transparency in the system.
- Police organizations should work on building an organization wide culture with focus on public service with integrity. Also focussing on developing an institution wide culture with ethics at its core.
- Training modules for ethics should be developed in such a way that it enhances the capability of the police to use ethics logically in all odd situations with practical cases and should be incorporated in the training program.
- Police besides executing normal responsibilities can focus upon the various evils of the society and can work to eliminate it in association with the community.
- Police organization should focus on developing leaders who can lead by example.
- Police organizations should focus on brand building.

The following steps are recommended for the development of a police organization with high value system:-

- 1) Police organizations should fix standards that how they want to be looked like.
- 2) Find out the standards of value system required.
- 3) Estimate what is the present status of the value system.
- 4) Find out the deficiencies which are to be improved.
- 5) Prioritize the components of value system which requires to be worked upon on the basis of requirements to be improved.
- 6) Involve police personnel in the transformation process.
- 7) If required go for benchmarking it against the best practice police organizations.
- 8) Work upon the set directions.
- 9) Communicate organization wide as well as to public.

