Socio-Psychological Analysis of Citizen's Perception About Police Behavior in Educated Youth of South Punjab, Pakistan

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Abstract

Policing plays a fundamental role in human life which is important for ruling human behavior and citizens trust police when they emancipate their duties with justice, equality, and willpower. The core objective of this research was to analyze the citizens' perception of police behavior in educated youth. A cross-sectional research design was followed, and the Multistage sampling technique was used to select the targeted population. Questionnaire-based on socio-economic and demographic characteristics and non-western Matrofski's model (1999) was distributed among N=310 students. Results indicated that there is a significant correlation among age, gender, level of education, current living, parents qualification, father's work sector,

residential ownership, family size, monthly family income, any other house than living, habit of watching television, using internet for watching coverage of criminal activities, preference and reliability of modern means of information provision and perception towards police behavior. This study concluded a significant relationship between a citizen's socio-economic status and perception towards police behavior.

Keywords: People's Perception, Police Behavior, Socioeconomic Status, Youth.

Introduction

Investigating the perception of citizens towards unethical behavior of police is important as it can increase the self-belief of citizens towards police. So that people can be able to report cases regarding criminal acts, in the same way, the morale of police officers will be increased. The efficiency of the criminal justice system depends upon the pillars of public trust in law enforcing agencies (Lyons, 2002). As per definition the United Nations International Police Task Force (1996), in a democratic state, the duty of the police is to serve and protect the citizens rather than obstruct their freedom. The first and foremost purpose of the police is to provide safety, stable environment in which independence can be enjoyed. Democratic police services are not apprehension with citizen's beliefs and ideologies, but it cares about maintenance of safe environment and conformity of law uniformly without an errand and oppression. Public trust is important to the police sector to bring in legitimacy from the populace (Sunshine & Taylor, 2003), but after exposure to unethical behavioral incidents from socio-territorial, personal experience and neighborhood characteristics directly influence the citizen's perception about police behavior (Son et al., 1997).

In India Rout (2017) discovered that after exposure to unethical behavior of police there are the chances that

citizens may distrust the police which may influence police power to control over crime because when citizens distrust rulers, they may hide the real information from the police. In this way, these perceptions towards unethical behavior of the police encircle the whole process by reducing the efficiency, boosts up criminal activities and furthermore less trust in police. There are few other indicators that contribute in developing public negative perception about police in this way, another research Miethe, Venger and Liberman (2019) indicated that watching media coverage and reporting on television, reading newspaper, watching videos on social media about such incidents play significant role in developing perception of citizens about police system (Cox, 2017; Freelon, McIIwain & Clark, 2016). These negative perceptions of citizens about police behavior are highly influenced by the socio-economic status, age, and educational background of an individual (Rout, 2017). Different researches stated that people from low socio-economic status tend to perceive police behavior more negative than the others (Cao et al., 1996).
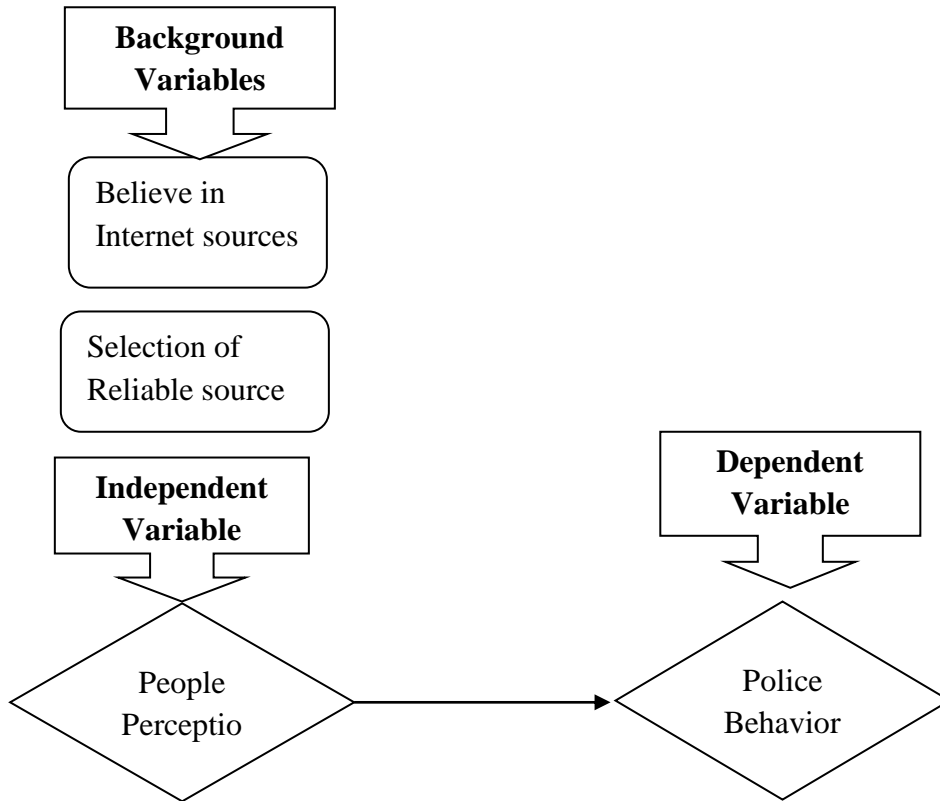
The core objective of this research is to analyze the educated citizens' perception of police behavior. Moving towards the context of the present research, the police force has always been perceived as one of the leading forces of violating the rights of public and mishandling its power and always troubling the public through different mechanisms (Zubair & Khan, 2014). Although various behavioral reform pieces of training are being introduced in police academics which can help to enhance their understanding and relationship with a susceptible group including women, children, and minorities (Abbas, 2012). Let us rememorize the recent cases like model town incident 17 June 2014 in which 14 citizens were killed included two pregnant women and approximately hundred of the citizens were injured (Akhter,2017). Another more recent incident happened on 19 January 2019 on highway Sahiwal, Pakistan in which four citizens including three family members and one car driver were encountered by the six police officials (Dawn,2019). Similar to above both, a recent prominent

case of Salahuddin was arrested in robbing an ATM on 30th August 2019 was encountered on the very next day of his arrestment. Salahuddin was later discovered as an abnormal person who was just trying to get back his stucked debit card from ATM (Haq, 2019). In all cases, police and government have been considered responsible for such matters.

Literature Review

The structure of police in Pakistan has been originated from Mughal and British colonial era, although numerous reforms are established throughout the century, our police system is still following the assumptions of colonial time in which elite class has become the neo-colonial masters and police system is getting failed in serving the humanity. Till now, the police system has constantly served those who are in power (Imam, 2011) and these elites are trying to declare legitimacy of their violent actions for personal and political benefits (Zubair & Khan, 2014). The present research contributes to the literature in a subsequent manner, because prior recent researches have been conducted in a western context. In non-western context and there is the paucity of literature in our context especially in south Punjab. As far as there is a paucity of literature in this domain and Matrofski's model (1999) is utilized among the population of the present study for the very first time.

Figure: 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Hypothesis

*H*1: There is a significant relationship between people's perception and police behavior among the youth of South Punjab, Pakistan.

*H*2: There is a significant role of socio-economic status in establishing perception towards police behavior in educated youth of South Punjab, Pakistan.

Material and Methods

Cross-Sectional research was designed to target the students of all the public universities in South Punjab. Prior to recent

research Ashraf, Asif, Iqbal and Warraich (2019) a multistage sampling technique was used to select the targeted population. In the first phase, there were 36 districts of Punjab province, of these 36 three districts Bahawalpur, Multan, and Dera Ghazi Khan was randomly selected. In second phase, among these three district public universities, the students of Islamia University, Bahauddin Zakariya University, and Ghazi University students were targeted.

In the third phase, researcher selected the respondents who were present on the day of data collection through the convenient sampling technique. At the final stage, total numbers of students in aforementioned universities were 45,153 and data was collected from 310 students respectively. Sample size was derived by using yammni's formula, such as Comrey & Lee (2013) also recommended that 300 sample sizes consider as adequate for the population of the research.

Demographic profile was designed to measure the socio-economic status of the respondents, these questions were including Age/Gender/ Level of education/current living of the respondent/father's educational background/ fathers work sector/mothers qualification/mothers work sector/monthly family income/ residential ownership/place of residence/ family size retrieved from Pakistan Social and Living Standard Measurement (2013-14) (PSLSM), although watching television/ watching news on televisions/ using internet/ reliable source of information were measured due to strong influence of media on perception building prior to recent research (Miethe, Venger, & Lieberman (2019).

Citizen's perception about police behavior was measured through a non-western model by Matrofski's model (1999), this scale was consist of nineteen items comprised of six various dimensions, such as attentiveness, reliability, fairness, manners, responsiveness, and competence. The

items were measured on five points Likert scale from 1(Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Data Analysis

3.1 Descriptive statistics

Table No: 3.1.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variables	Categories	F(%)
Age	18-20	109(35.2)
	21-23	106(34.2)
	24-27	73(23.5)
	>27	22(7.1)
Gender	Male	152(49)
	Female	158(51)
Level of Education	Graduation	178(57.4)
	M.Phil	100(32.3)
	Ph.D	32(10.3)
Living currently	University hostel	156(50.3)
	Private hostel	46(14.8)
	Relatives	16(5.2)
	Own house	92(29.7)
Father's qualification	Illiterate	38(12.3)
	Primary	51(16.5)
	Middle	32(10.3)
	Matriculation	49(15.8)
	Intermediate	37(11.9)
	Graduation	54(17.4)
	Master's	41(13.2)
	Other	8(2.6)
Father's work sector	Governmental	93(30)
	Semi-Governmental	76(24.5)

	Private	105(33.9)
	Un-employed	36(11.6)
Mother's qualification	Illiterate	59(19)
	Primary	76(24.5)
	Middle	55(17.7)
	Matriculation	42(13.5)
	Intermediate	18(5.8)
	Graduation	39(12.6)
	Master's	15(4.8)
	Other	6(1.9)
Mother work sector	Governmental	46(14.8)
	Semi-Governmental	55(17.7)
	Private	65(21)
	Housewife	144(46)
Ownership status of the house	Own	245(79)
	Rented	65(21)
The family income per month	5000-15000	45(14.5)
	15001-25000	49(15.8)
	25001-35000	95(30.6)
	35001-45000	78(25.2)
	>45000	43(13.8)
Place of Residence	Rural	89(28.7)
	Urban	221(71.3)
Family size	3-5	104(33.5)
	6-8	100(32.3)
	8-10	106(34.2)
	>10	0(0)
Any houses other than you are living in	Yes	156(50.3)
	No	154(49.7)
Do you watch	Yes	290(93.5)

television

	No	20(6.45)
Do you watch the news on television	Yes	243(78.3)
	No	
		67(21.6)
Do you use the Internet	Yes	310(100)
	No	0(0)
Source of information regarding criminal activities is more reliable	Television	51(16.4)
	Internet	188(60.6)
	Newspaper	71(22.9)

N=310 f= frequency, %=percentage

Table 3.1. Described the socio-economic and demographic status of the participants. Maximum of the respondents 109(35.2), 158(51) were females, 178(57.4) were graduation's students, 156(50.3) respondents were living in university hostel, 54(17.4) of the respondents fathers qualification was graduation, 105(33.9) of the respondents father were working in private sector, 59(19) of participants' mother were illiterate, 144(46) of the respondents mother were housewives, 245(79) of the respondents had their own residential ownership, 95(30.6) respondents had 25001-35000PKR family monthly income, 221(71.3) students had place of residence in urban area, 106(34.2) had 8-10 family size, 156(50.3) had another house than living, 290(93.5) respondents watch television, 243(78.3) watch news on television, 310(100) respondents use internet and 188(60.6) reported internet as a reliable source of criminal activities.

Table No. 3.2.

Responses regarding police behavior

Items	SD (%)	D (%)	N (%)	A (%)	SA (%)
Police listens to citizens' complaints	83(26.8)	72(23.2)	54(17.4)	97(31.3)	4(1.3)
Police responses on time	58(18.7)	67(21.6)	81(26.1)	77(24.8)	27(8.7)
Easy to approach the police	26(8.4)	95(30.6)	70(22.6)	80(25.8)	39(12.6)
Police officials have knowledge about the rules	64(20.6)	37(11.9)	79(25.5)	92(29.7)	38(12.3)
Police resolves citizens issues	64(20.6)	73(23.5)	75(24.2)	69(22.3)	29(9.4)
Police officials are well trained	83(26.8)	52(16.7)	82(26.5)	60((19.3)	33(10.6)
Police provides fair services to the public	52(16.8)	76(24.5)	71(22.9)	74(23.9)	37(11.9)
Biasness is not an issue in police	94(30.3)	43(13.9)	77(24.8)	62(20)	34(11)

department					
Police officials treat citizens equally	40(12.9)	88(28.4)	72(23.2)	83(26.8)	27(8.7)
Fair decisions while subjecting citations	54(17.4)	75(24.2)	71(22.9)	72(23.2)	38(12.3)
Police address the citizens in suitable tone	107(34.5)	86(27.7)	44(14.2)	46(14.8)	27(8.7)
Police officials pay full attention towards citizens	82(26.5)	54(17.4)	72(23.2)	52(16.8)	50(16.1)
Police services are regular	90(29)	73(23.5)	50(16.1)	44(14.2)	53(17.1)
Police officers maintain a comfortable environment	104(33.5)	54(17.4)	64(20.6)	32(10.3)	56(18.1)
Police officers fulfill their commitment with citizens	96(31)	76(24.5)	70(22.6)	25(8.1)	43(13.9)

Police officials respond quickly	123(39.7)	57(18.4)	69(22.3)	41(13.2)	20(6.5)
Police meets expected behavior	54(17.4)	98(31.6)	61(19.7)	53(17.1)	44(14.2)
Police took proper action towards resolving problems	90(29)	57(18.4)	95(30.6)	37(11.9)	31(10)
Police behavior is neutral	65(21)	86(27.7)	73(23.5)	45(14.5)	41(13.2)

Note: N= 310, %= Percentage, SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, N=Neutral, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree

Table No. 3.2. Reveals the description of the participant's answers towards police behavior regarding the police officer's attentiveness, reliability, fairness, manners, responsiveness, and competitiveness. Maximum of the participants 26.8% were strongly disagreed to police listens to the citizens' complaints, 26.1% respondents did not agree nor disagree that police responds on time, 30.6% were disagreed with easy to approach the police, 29.7% were agreed that police have knowledge about rules and regulations, 24.2% were not agreed nor disagreed with police resolves citizens problems, 26.8% were strongly disagreed with good training of police officials, 24.5% disagreed with police fair services, 30.3% were strongly disagreed with biasness is not an issue, 28.4% have disagreed with police treats citizens equally, 24.2% disagreed with police address fair decisions, 34.5% were strongly disagreed with police suitable tone, 26.5% were

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strongly disagreed with police officials pay attention towards citizens, 29% strongly disagreed with regular services of police department, 33.5% were strongly disagreed with police maintenance of comfortable environment, 31% were strongly disagreed with police fulfillment of commitment with citizens, 39.7% were strongly disagreed with police responds quickly, 31.6% have disagreed that police officials meet expected behavior, 29% were strongly disagreed that police took proper action towards resolving problems and 27.7% have disagreed that police behavior is neutral.

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Table No. 3.3
Correlation between socio-economic status and citizen's perception about police behavior

Variables		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	PB
Age	R	1																	.027**
	P																		
Gender	R	.047**	1																.327*
	P	.000																	
Education	R	.043*	−.051	1															.397**
	P	.000	.372																
CL	R	.034**	.17*	.008**	1														.205*
	P	.000	.002	.000															
FQ	R	−.118*	−.105	−.040	.301**	1													.300*
	P	.0	.93	.48	.0														

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            3   4   6   0
            8           0
F   R   −   3   .   .   −   1                                   .
W   P   .   0   0   0   1                                       1
S       0   0   5   2   9                                       7
        7   *   4   3   3                                       5
        0   *   .   .   *                                       *
        .   .   3   6   *                                       *
        2   0   4   8  .0
        2   0   3   6   0
        0   0               1
M   R   −   −   −   .  .3   −   1                                .
Q   P   .   .   .   2   9   .                                    1
        0   0   0   0   8   0                                    7
        8   9   1   6   *   9                                    6
        7   5   1   *   *   3                                    *
        .   .   .   *  .0   .                                    *
        1   0   8   .   0   1
        2   9   4   0   1   0
        5   3   0   0       3
                        0
M   R   −   2   -   .  .1   .   2   1                            -
W   P   0   9   .   2   0   1   1                                .
S       6   5   0   0   4   4   5                                0
        1   *   7   5  .0   2   *                                1
        .   *   0   *   6   *   *                                3
        2   .   .   *   7   .   .
        8   0   2   .       0   0
        1   0   1   0       1   0
        0   7   0           2   0
                    0
R   R   2   -   .   -   -   -   -   1                            .
O   P   0   .   0   .  .0   .   .   0                            0
S       4   0   4   0   2   0   0   .                            7
        *   5   1   5   7   8   2   7                            2
        .   0   .   6  .6   7   5   2
        0   .   4   .   4   .   .   .
        0   3   7   3   2   1   6   2
        1   8   3   2       2   5   0
        4       8           8   9   6
P   R   0   .   .   .   2   -   .   -   .   1                    .
O   P   .   1   3   0   8   .   0   .   0                        6
R       0   1   0   0   5   0   6   0   6                        5
        5   5   0   2   *   1   1   9   9                        1
        .   *   *   .   *   4   .   6   .                        *
        9   .   *   9  .0   .   2   .   2                        *
        3   0   .   7   0   8   8   0   2
        4   4   0   4   0   1   5   9   4
            3   0           1       3
                0
F   R   .   .   .   -  .2   .   -   -   .   .   1                .
S   P   0   1   0   .   1   0   .   .   1   1                    0
        8   7   1   0   5   3   0   0   4   0                    0
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		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14		15
(cont.)		.3..147	.6**.002	.5.798	.13.821	**.000	.2.572	.37.520	.34.556	.3*.012	.0.079			1			.1
OH	R	-.001	.055	.105	.020	-.050	.062	-.069	.102	-.023	-.044	.014	1				.113
	P	.989	.337	.065	.725	.380	.277	.228	.073	.683	.444	.811					*
Watch television	R	.328**	.045	.020	-.039	-.071	-.015	.301*	.055	-.020	.226**	.302*	.055	1			-.011
	P	.001	.427	.725	.498	.210	.789	.000	.334	.720	.000	.000	.335				
News on television	R	.008	.227**	-.035	.001	-.031	-.080	-.018	.038	-.036	-.054	.063	.652**	.655**	1		-.011*
	P	.882	.000	.543	.180	.509	.122	.759	.500	.525	.343	.271	.000	.000			
Use internet	R	.344**	.322**	-.020	.089	.299**	-.030	-.050	-.061	.367**	.047**	-.032	.024	.226**	.226**	1	.038**
	P	.003	.000	.725	.177	.000	.596	.000	.287	.240	.003	.580	.002	.000	.000		
Reliable source	R	.227**	.225*	.300**	.046*	.652**	-.039	.024	.018	.063*	.031	.038**	1.001	.399	.393	1	.036
	P	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.439	.668	.755	.000	.580	.000	.000	.855	.000		

0	0	0	0	0	9	0	3	0	3	0	0	7	0	0
0	0	0	3		8			0		3	0	9	0	1
0		0									0	5	0	

N=310, r= correlation coefficient, p= 0.01**, 0.05*, CL= current living, FQ= fathers' qualification, FWS= fathers work sector, MQ= mothers' qualification,
MWS= mothers work sector, Ros = residential ownership status, POR= place of residence, Fs= family size, OH= other house than living and PB= Police behavior.

Table 3.3 depicts the bivariate correlation between student's socio-economic background and perception about police behavior. Results from correlation coefficient indicated that age of the respondents (r=0.027**, p<0.01), gender (r=.327*, p<0.05), level of education (r=0.397**, p<0.01) , current living (r=0.205*, p<0.05), father's qualification (r=0.300*, p<0.05), fathers work sector (r=0.175**, p<0.01), mothers qualification (r=0.176**, p<0.05), place of residence (r= 0.651**, p<0.01), any other house than living (r=0.113*, p<0.05), watching news on television (r= o-.011*, p<0.05), using internet (r= 0.038**, p<0.01) and reliable of source of information (r=0.038**, p<0.01) has significant relationship with citizens perception about police behavior.

Discussion

Pakistan is considered a country that is continuously encompassing practical changes, particularly in state-based institutions. Due to these reasons, citizens have less trust in public sectors. Henceforth, this research aimed to investigate the citizens' perception of police behavior by following Matrofski's model (1999) based on non-western context. Results from acquired responses of present study indicated that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic background of the respondents including age, gender, level of education, current living, fathers' qualification, fathers work sector, mother qualification, residential ownership, another house than living, watching news on television, using internet, reliable source and perception about police behavior among youth of south Punjab. These results are consistent with the findings of previous researches such as Chermak et al. (2001) discovered that the age of the citizens is highly significant with their perception of police behavior. Similarly, Jefferis et al. (1997) stated that there is a significant relationship between gender and the perception of police behavior. Of these citizens, Murphy and Worral (1999) described that the people who belong to wealthy families, and those who are educated have a less negative perception about police behavior than those who

belong to lower socio-economic backgrounds.Gallup and Knight (2018) revealed that people tend to have less believe traditional means of media for example they less believe in those news and coverage's that are displayed on television or mentioned in newspaper regarding police behavior in U.S.

In the same way, results of present research about reliable source of information regarding criminal activities are consistent with the results of recent study conducted by Grieco (2017) which described that citizens having the age of fewer than 30 years are more likely to trust on internet than the traditional means. Results from descriptive statistics regarding police behavior indicated that 26.8% participants were strongly disagreed to police listens to the citizens' complaints, 26.1% respondents did not agree nor disagree that police responds on time, 30.6% were disagreed with easy to approach the police, 29.7% were agreed that police have knowledge about rules and regulations, 24.2% were not agreed nor disagreed with police resolves citizens problems, 26.8% were strongly disagreed with good training of police officials, 24.5% have disagreed with police fair services, 30.3% were strongly disagreed with biasness is not an issue, 28.4% disagreed with police treats citizens equally, 24.2% disagreed with police address fair decisions, 34.5% were strongly disagreed with police suitable tone, 26.5% were strongly disagreed with police officials pay attention towards citizens, 29% strongly disagreed with regular services of police department, 33.5% were strongly disagreed with police maintenance of comfortable environment, 31% were strongly disagreed with police fulfillment of commitment with citizens, 39.7% were strongly disagreed with police responds quickly, 31.6% disagreed that police officials meet expected behavior, 29% were strongly disagreed that police took proper action towards resolving problems and 27.7% disagreed that police behavior is neutral. These results are consistent with Ullah et al. (2016) results of recent research on citizen's perception about police image which indicated that 50.7% participants were mentioned that police officials are not reliable in crime prevention while 25.4% of the participants replied those police officials are biased in terms of political influence in certain incidents (Perito & Parvez, 2014). But the

results of present study in terms of perception about police and citizens relationship are also consistent such as 58.7% of the participants had reported a miserable and unavoidable irritating relationship with police officials while 44.9% participants mentioned that it is not easy to approach police officers because they use massive and harsh language with citizens (Greene, 2010).

Conclusion and Suggestions

This research concluded that there is a significant relationship of socio-economic status including age, gender, level of education, current living, parents educational background, parents work sector, family size, monthly family income, residential ownership, habit of watching television, watching news on television, reliability of means of providing information in establishing citizen's perception about police behavior. Future research should be conducted on a citizen's personal experiences, the need for police reforms. Moreover, there must be proper training sessions for police officials to smoothen their behavior while interacting with the citizens.

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