RESEARCH ARTICLE

JOB SATISFACTION AND COMMITMENT AMONG INDIAN POLICE

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	The study of job satisfaction and commitment among the police officers is of considerable significance as they are engaged themselves with the maintenance of law and order in society. As such, the satisfactions they derive and dissatisfactions they suffer on the one hand and the commitment they exhibit in the performance of policing could be of immense significance in understanding the standards of police functioning on the other. This will enable us to understand the problems and prospects of police officers and also to come out with solutions and suggestions to improve their working conditions in terms of professional sophistication, discipline, commitment, competence and excellence along with their levels of satisfaction with regard to the occupation. The study has two major objectives-first, to examine the level of satisfaction among police and its determinants particularly the social traits and, second, to identify the impact of professional traits on commitment. The measurement of job satisfaction and commitment of police officers was based on various aspects of police profession and functioning. Research was conducted on 143 police officers with an interview schedule in Bangalore city, the capital of Karnataka, India. Findings reveal that police were less satisfied, but highly committed with age, having a say in determining satisfaction and commitment is significantly associated with the competence and ethics of police.

INTRODUCTION

The police profession has been one of the most essential and integral part of modern society. It forms the basis of law and order system of any administrative setup. Generally, functions of police include crime investigation, station administration, beat duty, public order management, traffic regulation, wireless communication and so on. Increasing cosmopolitan population and migration in search of employment has increased the problems of the city's manifold. Maintenance of law and order system in this situation makes the police community to work hard. Increasing population, illegal settlement of slums, increasing vehicular population and increasing number of crimes have added to the pressure and stress on the police department and its staff. It is a distinct social occupation considered stressful as it requires dealing with the people at large and taking quick decisions that could have serious impact on physical, health, social well-being of the public (Kyriacou, 2001). Thus, they have a challenging task with the changing scenario of economic, political and social environment.

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Police officers tend to be exposed to emotional situations such as death, illness, accidents and crimes on a regular basis (Bakker and Heuven, 2006 and Hochschild, 1983). Further, they need to perform with a high level of skills and efficiency. However, the efficiency, skills, commitment and performance can be attributed to the work culture of the police organization in general and the behavior and gratifications of the individuals in particular.The police stations are the fulcrum points which come in contact with the public in general. Hence, the relationship between the superior and the subordinate, leadership, incentives, decision making and working conditions could influence the satisfaction levels, efficiency and effectiveness of the police force.

Policing in India: The organizational structure and formal functional relationships in the modern policing in India is articulated by the Police Act of 1861. State Governments in India have made concerted efforts, through civil police organizations to address the task of Law and Order maintenance and to recruit police personnel across gender and social groups. Of course, there is a growing trend, in the recent past to employee women police, however, women account only 6.44 percent of the total civil police force (Bureau of Police Research and Development [BPR and D], 2015).Police stations in India are manned by the rank of constable, head constable, assistant sub-inspector (ASI), and sub-inspector

(SI). Personnel who join in the rank of constable get promoted in due course of time to the rank of head constable, ASI, and sometimes SI. On the other hand, personnel who are recruited in the rank of SI get promoted to the rank of inspector and other senior positions. The present study is limited to police officers like ASI and SI as these positions play a key role in discharging duties related to Law and Order maintenance. ASI is supposed to assist the SI or the inspector in administering the police station. The ASI may also directly investigate cases, supervise investigation of cases, and provide lead for public order maintenance. The SI and inspector are key positions in the police hierarchy in India. The SI is usually the station house officer or the officer in charge of medium or small police station. He is responsible for public order maintenance, crime prevention and detection, and public service tasks undertaken by the police station. Besides having competence in core police work, he should also successfully administer the police station, maintain liaison with the community, and lead the police in their jurisdiction. The inspector is a more senior position, and generally supervises a circle with one or more police stations in each circle, or is in charge of a large police station. There is a marked variation in job profiles across the ranks.

Review of literature: An attempt is made here to review some of the studies that would focus on the aspects of commitment and job satisfaction.Job satisfaction has been conceptualized by various theorists. Absence of job satisfaction may result in low organizational commitment (Vandenberg and Lance, 1992). Dantzer (1994) highlighted in his study that special attention needs to be paid to the aspects of job satisfaction and commitment among police officers which would be beneficial to both the police department and administrators. Age is an important demographic factor influencing job satisfaction. Studies have indicated both alinear relationship (Hickson and Oshagbemi, 1999; Hunt and McCadden, 1985; Savery, 1996) and a curvilinear relationship between age and job satisfaction (Clark, Oswald, and Warr, 1996; Gazioglu and Tansel, 2006; Zeitz, 1990). The curvilinear relationship has been found with younger workers being dissatisfied or having lower level of job satisfaction compared to their elder counterparts (Gazioglu and Tansel, 2006). Additionally, Meyer *et al.* (2002) identified a significant relationship between job satisfaction and affective commitment. Other researchers have found an inverse relationship between work stress and other job-related outcomes, such as job satisfaction, for Australian nurses (Joiner and Bartram, 2004). Police officers are similar to nurses in that their occupations require extensive public interaction and quick decision-making, possibly impacting significantly upon the public's physical and psychological health and well-being. Scholars like Dick (2011) have noted the studies on organizational commitment in police are between few and far. Noblet *et al.* (2009) have conducted a study on an Australian police agency and found that job demand and control have varying results on job satisfaction and commitment. Dick's (2011) study on a sample of English police officers showed that organisational and workplace experiences of how officers are managed were found to be the strongest influences on their organisational commitment.The association between job satisfaction, commitment and performance could be emphasized by dealing with the efficiency of the satisfied employee (Robbins, 1998). Commitment and job satisfaction are interlinked wherein satisfied workers perform at higher levels than those who are not satisfied in an organization (Eckman, 2004, Rayton, 2006).

From the above studies, it can be presumed that there is a dearth of knowledge and literature on the aspects commitment and job satisfaction. Hence, an attempt has been made in this article to focus on the said factors from a sociological perspective.

Significance of the study: The relationship between work environment and employee satisfaction has been studied extensively in Western developed economies for decades, although relatively few studies have focused on the determinants of employee satisfaction among the police (Nalla et al. 2011). In the opinion of Nalla et al. (2011), studies that extend beyond the relationship between demographic characteristics and employee satisfaction are even harder to find (for example Boke and Nalla, 2009; Zhao et al. 1999). However, few studies have examined the causal relationship between job satisfaction and commitment. Every society needs a satisfied and committed bunch of police officers who play a vital role in the maintenance of law and order by ensuring the rule of law. In a country like India, where the population in general and metropolitan cities in particular is large in size, overcrowded, diverse with multi-cultural and multi-ethnic characteristics their role becomes highly significant, inevitable and essential. The police officer is supposed to play the role of a soldier, in fighting against violation of laws: a doctor, in treating the social diseases: a lawyer, in possessing legal knowledge and an educator, in socializing the public at large. Thus, there has been an attempt by social scientists to understand the police personnel from various dimensions.

Objectives: The present study is aimed at the following objectives:

- To measure the level of satisfaction and commitment among police officers.
- To analyze the determinants of satisfaction and commitment among the police

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study has focused on police officers in an urban setting. The stratified random sampling method is adopted for this study. The data were gathered from 143 police officers through an interview schedule in Bangalore city. The police officers included in the study are drawn from law and order department. And police officers of ASI and SI ranks have been Included deliberately due to time limitation. The data have been analyzed by using appropriate statistical methods. The scales on job satisfaction, commitment, competence and ethics of police officers were constructed based on the responses and scores given by the respondents.

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

Job Satisfaction: The study of job satisfaction among the police officers is of considerable significance as they are engaged themselves with the maintenance of law and order in society. As such, the satisfactions they derive and dissatisfactions they suffer in the practice of their police profession could be of immense significance in understanding the standards of police functioning on the one hand and the state of the mind of the police officers who involve in it on the other. Hence, an attempt is made in this study to throw an empirical light on the levels and determinants of job satisfaction among police officers.

Table 1. Job Satisfaction

Level of Job Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Low	107	74.83
High	36	25.17
Total	143	100.00

Table 2. Job Satisfaction and Age of the Respondents

Job Satisfaction	Age of the Respondents			Total
	Young	Middle Aged	Old	
Low	06 (42.86)	38 (71.70)	63 (82.89)	107 (74.83)
High	08 (57.14)	15 (28.30)	13 (17.11)	36 (25.17)
Total	14 (100.00)	53 (100.0)	76 (100.00)	143 (100.00

X^2 = 10.52; d.f.=2, C = 0.262; significant at 0.01 level

Table 3. Job Satisfaction and Professional Ethics

Job Satisfaction	Professional Ethics		Total
	Low	High	
Low	31 (28.97)	15 (41.67)	46 (32.17)
High	76 (71.03)	21 (58.33)	97 (67.83)
Total	107 (100.00)	36 (100.00)	143 (100.00)

X^2 = 2.01; d.f.=1, C = 0.118; Not significant.

Table 4. Professional Commitment

Professional Commitment	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Low	45	31.47
High	98	68.53
Total	143	100.00

Table 5. Professional Commitment and Professional Competence

Professional Commitment	Professional Competence		Total
	Low	High	
Low	35 (39.77)	10 (18.18)	45 (31.47)
High	53 (60.23)	45 (81.82)	98 (68.53)
Total	88 (100.00)	55 (100.00)	143 (100.00

X^2 = 7.33; d.f.=1, C = 0.221; significant at 0.01 level.

Table 6. Professional Commitment and Professional Ethics

Professional Commitment	Professional Ethics		Total
	Low	High	
Low	9 (19.57)	36 (37.11)	45 (31.47)
High	37 (80.43)	61 (62.89)	98 (68.53)
Total	46 (100.00)	97 (100.00)	143 (100.00

X^2 = 4.45; d.f.=1, C = 0.173; significant at 0.05 level

The level of job satisfaction among police officers is ascertained by introducing a scale of job satisfaction consisting of 19 statements. These statements are aimed to measure the satisfaction of police officers with regard to various aspects of their police profession and functioning, such as the existing system, social status, skills, performance, promotion, salary, working conditions, devotion of time, rewards, the relationships with superiors and colleagues, welfare schemes and so forth. The levels of job satisfaction so ascertained and measured reveal (as presented in the table-1) that three-fourths (74.83 percent) of the police officers, experience a low level of job satisfaction. The findings seem to suggest that an overwhelming majority of the respondents derive lower levels of satisfaction from their police profession. The people in high prestige and high-ranking occupations are more prone to derive a sense of satisfaction from their work as compared to those with low prestige occupations. It could be stated that police officers in India have some ambiguity in accepting the police profession as a high prestige and a high ranking profession.

Further, the traits of police profession, such as the present police and judicial system, lower social status, performance skills, salary, uncomfortable working conditions, lack of material rewards, support of colleagues and administration could themselves to remarked as the causative factors for the greater amount of dissatisfaction among the police officers.

An attempt is made here to ascertain the determinants of job satisfaction among the police officers by cross tabulating it with other social and professional background variables. It is assumed that the level of job satisfaction varies from individual to individual, depending upon the other social, subjective and professional traits. The data pertaining to the job satisfaction of the respondents are cross tabulated with their age. It may be observed from the data presented in the table-2 that the higher level of job satisfaction decreases and the lower level of job satisfaction increases proportionately with the age of the police officers indicating to a very fascinating association between the age and level of job satisfaction. The proportion of those with highly satisfied is as low as 17 (17.1 percent) among the older age group while the corresponding proportion is as high as 57 (57.14) percent among those in the younger age group. That is, nearly 83 (82.89) percent of the police officers in the old age category experience a low level of job satisfaction. It may, thus, be assumed that as one spends more years as a police officer, the job satisfaction one has for the profession gets deteriorated. As such, the younger police officers due to shorter span of exposure to the profession are quite optimistic and enjoying their statuses and roles. However, the police officers of young generations appear to be more satisfied than that of their middle aged and old counterparts. On the whole, it could be stated that the Indian police officers, particularly the most experienced are dissatisfied with their status, salaries, and rewards, working conditions, skills, colleagues, administration and so forth.

This inference gains further support in the fact that the association between the level of job satisfaction and span of career is also of the same nature. Job satisfaction is found to be varying independent of social origin, with police officers from both low and high social origin experiencing reasonably lower levels of job satisfaction. Further, the analysis reveals no statistically significant association between the gender and the level of job satisfaction of police officers; the data seem to indicate that the female police officers experience a greater level of dissatisfaction compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, a statistically significant association is not found between the level of job satisfaction and rural/urban background of the police officers. It could be stated that the police officers, in the present study with their levels of satisfaction, are distributed equally irrespective of their rural and urban origins. With regard to the repercussion of educational achievements, the data seem to indicate that there is a positive association between the level of educational achievement and the level of job satisfaction. On the other hand, it could be noted that the level of job satisfaction varies independently with the level of educational grades also. However, the data reveal some significant trends. It could be noted that as many as 43 (42.86) percent of those with high educational grades, experiences a high level of job satisfaction, whereas the proportion is 24 (24.47) percent among those with low educational grades. Thus, it could be assumed that the level of educational attainments and grades of the police officers have no implications for the satisfaction they derive.

Further, it is quite fascinating to note that, quite contrary to expectations, the level of job satisfaction is found to be varying independent of span of career and professional competence. With regard to the impact of professional ethics, the data seem to suggest a negative association between the level of job satisfaction and the level of professional ethics among the police officers. Though the job satisfaction does not vary significantly with the professional ethics of the police officers, the data presented in the table-3 seem to indicate some interesting findings. The table reveals that a relatively majority (58.33 percent) of the police officers with high level of professional ethics derive higher level of satisfaction, whereas, a significant proportion (28.97 percent) of the police officers with lower levels of ethical considerations experience lower level of job satisfaction. It could be stated that ethical consideration of police officers has some implications on the level of job satisfaction. The measure of satisfaction, which the police officer derives from his police job, has also to deal with his professional commitment.

Professional commitment: Although the concept of commitment and job satisfaction are employed as interchangeable in the literature on organizational behavior, they need to be distinguished separately. Commitment on the part of occupational and professional members is important in all work situations. It is found to vary by organization, job, occupation, profession and so forth. Commitment symbolizes a complex form of human behavior resulting from the interplay of several forces such as human, organizational, social, and occupational and so forth. It is a well-known fact that no occupational role could be satisfactorily performed unless the individuals have the requisite interest and identification with their respective roles. It could be presumed that the interest comes either through the dedication to the type of work being performed, or through the working conditions prevalent in any work organization. Few social scientists have pointed out that facilities related to salary, promotion, transfer, placement, interpersonal relationship with seniors and subordinates also contribute to a large extent in making a person committed to his work.

After considering all these factors, the level of professional commitment, in the present study, is ascertained and measured by asking the police officers to respond to such imaginary situations that could provide us with an estimate of their professional commitment. There were eight such situations being in which the police officers were asked to respond pertaining to their liking and preference to continue the present job. It is heartening to observe from the table-4 on the professional commitment of the police officers that a majority (68.53 percent) of them exhibit a high level of commitment. Police profession, like other professions, also deserves commitment on the part of its members. Further, a significant proportion (31.47 percent) of the police officers exhibiting a low level of commitment could be a matter of serious concern. Hence, it is advisable to conduct more and more researches on the reasons for the low level of commitment among the police officers. Further, the data on the professional commitment of the police officers are viewed in the light of other contexts and background variables to find whether their level of commitment is conditioned by these variables. These data so cross tabulated seem to suggest that the level of professional commitment of the police officers is not significantly determined by most of the variables. With regard to age, the data seem to indicate that, the level of professional

commitment is found to be varying independent of age of the police officers. In the sense, the age of the police officers is found to be of practically no consequence for the level of professional commitment with proportions of those with high and low commitment being almost equal among young, middle aged and elder police officers. When we take into account, gender of the police officers, the data seem to indicate that the male police officers are relatively more committed to their profession (69.41 percent) compared to their female counterparts (55.56 percent). It could be stated that the social origin, rural, urban background, educational achievement and grades have no say in determining the level of professional commitment of the Indian police officers. With regard to span of a career, the analysis reveals some interesting trends. The data seem to suggest that a sizeable proportion (83.33 percent) of younger officers exhibit higher level of professional commitment compared to their senior counterparts (64.60 percent). This strengthens the finding on the lower level of job satisfaction among the police officers of older generations. Further, corresponding to their dissatisfactions, they are lowly committed to the police job compared to their juniors. It could also be stated that as one in the police profession gets older and older, starts feeling dissatisfied and subsequently, his level of commitment also gets decreased.

The analysis further reveals that the level of commitment varies positively with the level of competence and the association between the two is significant at 0.01 level. It may be observed from the data presented in the table-5 that a sizeable proportion (81.82 percent) of the police officers with a higher level of competence tends to exhibit a high level of commitment, whereas in case of those with low professional competence, a significant proportion (39.77 percent) of them tend to exhibit a low level of commitment to their jobs. The association between professional commitment and competence of police officers thus points out to a mutual reinforcement. One thing that needs to be stated here is that these two very important dimensions of professional practices could be reflected upon divergent traits and conditions of occupational functioning. Further, the level of professional ethics is found to be positively associated with the level of commitment of police officers.

The data presented in the table-6 reveal that more than three-fourths (80.43) of those with high professional, ethical considerations are those with low professional commitment, on the other hand, the proportion of such police officers is as high as 63 (62.89 percent) among those with high professional commitment. Whereas, a few (19.57 percent) of them with weaker ethical considerations tend to exhibit lower level of professional commitment. Thus, it could be stated that the police officers with strong moral, ethical considerations tend to be committed themselves to their policing duties assigned by the state. However, a very weak association is found between the level of professional commitment and the level of job satisfaction. In the sense, the composite variable, job satisfaction, in the present study, appears to be neither influencing nor being influenced by the level of professional commitment of the police officers. This might indicate that mere liking and preferential aspects of a profession could be having little or no say in determining the traits of the police profession. On the contrary, professional aspects like competence and ethics could be having their own implications for determining the other functional traits of the police profession.

Further, it could be stated that, the more satisfied and well committed professional or occupational members could play a positive role not only in the development of a profession or occupation but also in the overall development of the nation. To have more satisfied and committed members in any profession or occupation, it is necessary to see that the profession or occupation provided greater avenues, facilities and opportunities for the growth and development of its members. Similarly, professions in general are attached with greater responsibilities and expectations, so as the police profession in society. On the other hand, it could also be stated that the police profession is not as prestigious as medical, legal, engineering, teaching and scientific professions. Further, it is fascinating to study the police officers or the member of the police community, their background factors and professional traits and so forth.

Conclusion

Indeed, it is disheartening to note that most of the police officers are not satisfied with their policing career. It could be stated that an overwhelming majority of the police officers derive a lower level of job satisfaction from their police job. However, it varies significantly with age and professional ethics of the police officers. With regard to age, it is obvious that the elder police officers are lowly satisfied than that of their younger counterparts. Thus, it is noticed that as one spends more and more years as a police officer, the job satisfaction one has for the professional gets deteriorated. Further, the desirability of higher level of job satisfaction is supported by the fact that there is a significant association between job satisfaction and the level of ethics. This shows that professional ethics and job satisfaction are complementary to each other. As such, the existence of an ethically stronger manpower depends to a considerable extent, on the satisfaction they derive from their police job. As far as the professional commitment is concerned, Indian police officers seem to be professionally highly committed. It is found that the level of professional commitment of the police officers seems to vary independently of such variables as age, sex, rural-urban background, social origin, span of career, educational achievement and grades. Professional aspects like competence and ethics could be having their own implications for determining the other functioning traits of the police professions. Further, it could be stated that, the more satisfied and well committed professional or occupational members could play a positive role not only in the development of a profession or occupation but also in the overall development of the nation.

The present study in the field of sociology of professions has come to focus some important dimensions of police community in India. It has sought to ascertain such aspects of police community and its members that have rarely been touched upon by the previous studies conducted by Indian scholars in general and sociologists in particular. Quite a few aspects of police profession have been touched upon in the present study such as career patterns, professional competence, professional ethics, job satisfaction and professional commitment. These aspects of the police profession in general and police officers in particular are not only of academic interest, but also of applied value in improving the quality of police services in India. Generally, policemen are expected to engage themselves in keeping good physique in order to meet their tough policing tasks more effectively.

The reasons for such phenomenon are need to be traced out by the social scientists in general and sociologists of the police in particular.

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