iJRASET
International Journal For Research in Applied Science and Engineering Technology



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH

IN APPLIED SCIENCE & ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY

Volume: 9 **Issue:** X **Month of publication:** October 2021

DOI: https://doi.org/10.22214/ijraset.2021.38593

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International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)
ISSN: 2321-9653; IC Value: 45.98; SJ Impact Factor: 7.429
Volume 9 Issue X Oct 2021- Available at www.ijraset.com

Police: A Public Safety Institution of Governance

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Abstract: ***The most and constantly visible institution of governance" police" constitute the embodiment more pervasively than any other unit of administration. In a democratic welfare policy like India, the police, in addition to their primary role of maintenance of law and order, prevention and detection of crime, have to perform the crucial task of reconciliation of authority with human dignity and personal liberty and assure the functions of a social service organization. Police have to operate within the legal framework and in conformity with the Indian constitution. Its activities are constantly scrutinized by the judiciary, legislature, and the people. They have to be courteous, gentle, and friendly with the law-abiding citizens and have to be tough and fearsome to the criminals and law breakers being the executives of law and executers of the rule of law. They should ensure the safety of the lives and properties of the citizens. They should provide relief and succor to the needy and so should develop an attitude ode of respect for the dignity of the citizens, understanding the human rights and strict adherence to the principles will earn goodwill and adulation of the people. The equations between the police and the community have to be built on firm foundations of social accountability and mutual appreciation and support. The mantle of ideal citizen is the most prominent one for the policeman. A law-abiding policeman is the visible symbol of all that is good in society. On his moral and ethical fiber, depends on the quality of life in a democracy. They have to be model law-abiding citizen even when dealing with the hardened criminals. The policeman stands for good citizenship, on emblem of' Truth' and 'Right.' He is the reality that the most ignorant man can comprehend.***

Keywords: police, Democratic welfare policy, law and order, legal framework, judiciary, legislature, criminals and law breakers, law abiding citizens, rule of law, executives of law, social accountability, moral ethical fiber.

I. INTRODUCTION

The word democracy denotes the rule of law of the people. It means a system of government by the whole population through elected representatives. It is answerable to the people through their elected representatives in the parliament and legislatures. The activities and efforts are directly towards the welfare and betterment of the people. Constitution of India clearly spells the duty of the Republic is to secure to all the citizens. In this process rulers could be changed periodically every five years through free and fair elections periodically, has to be an instrument of change to be brought about, non-violently from one stage of political, economic and social evolution to the next. It means not merely of the government but of the system, change of government does not bring about change of the system.

A. Challenges of Change

Indian society today is involved in rapid social change-democratically directed and accelerated. Any change is bound to bring about a measure of disequilibrium which is manifest in the Indian society today. At the advent of political independence, we have resolved to move in the direction of socialism, secularism, and egalitarianism. Seven decades of economic growth, however, has not resulted in mitigating problems of poverty. It is widely accepted that the pre- existing socio-economic disparities are accentuated. Our present situation can be summed up thus: we attained great economic heights, but in the process, lost certain social sights that we have set for ourselves as the end objectives of political independence and economic growth. Thus, our silent revolution that brought us political freedom has not only not fructified, but indeed stands distorted, as of today. We do not even seem even to be moving in the cherished direction. Social discord and turbulence are growing.

B. People's Perception on Policing

Presently the police may be said to be at crossroads due to decline in their credibility and professionalism. To be more introspective, the image of police is not up to the mark as should be expected. Despite the necessity for dependence on police for their safety and security, yet the people look at them with apathy and fear. They try to alienate themselves from police as far as possible either in their expectation to get their grievances redressed or to figure out as a witness in their investigation. What is actually wrong? Is the policeman more sinned against than sinning? Why was public confidence on him nosedived? Is democratic development and distortions of social change affect the policing? The expectations and demands of the society from police are rising even in the face of erosion of its image and decline credibility.

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Factors for making policing complex:

1) The general perception of public is that the police adopted and adapted itself to corrupt surroundings. The basic ingredients of corruption are money and power.
2) Nonregistration of cases as common practice.
3) Police resorting to extra judicial methods in solving crimes leaving the legal and scientific inputs.
4) Partial towards rich influential mainly the politicians. General impression of public on police is that it is non courteous, immoral, brutal, insular, corrupt, absence of spirit de corps and devoid of ethical standards.
5) Shielding goondas and bad elements, murderers.
6) Urbanization.
7) Increase in population and their increased mobility.
8) Fast growth of communication group.
9) Socio economic disparities are accentuated.
10) Increase in awareness in tribal poor of their democratic rights in the form of their suppression by feudalists
11) Loss of consensus in socio and political values resulting in group clashes and communal clashes.
12) Human rights and civil liberties movements upsurge in the form of naxalism and terrorism.

C. *Professionalism: A key Element in Policing*

Professionalism implies acquisition of certain skills and expertise by the members of the profession and constant efforts on their part to refine and improve those skills. Today professionalism in police is at a discount. Issues of professionalism in police emerge in the context of the challenges of democratic development and distortions of social change. The process of democratic development and social change has thrown up certain dilemmas and conflicts within the police organization and its leadership exposing them to severe stresses and strains. The police have to cope up with these dilemmas and conflicts in order to perform their role efficiently and effectively. Professionalism provides a way out. Indeed, professionalism constitute an imperative. Then what is professionalism? Professionalism represents the qualitative dimension of excellence in service to the community. It represents the value orientations of a group and ethos of an organization. Devoid of that ethos any group degrades into a careerism and slide further down would reduce it to mercenaries. For making a group into a professional organization, leadership constitutes a critical variable. In other words, the stature of an organization and its professional status is determined by the quality of leadership. Quality of enforcement is directly related equitable and just laws. Social acceptance of the need for peace and existence of an idealistic, modern, motivated, humane, and professionally competent police service. To be effective he should have the capacity to interpret the legal concepts, ability to discern right from the wrong, a social commitment, a penchant for bringing succor and relief to the needy and host of skills in physical, medical, and behavioral sciences. More than the professional expertise, the humane qualities of a policeman, determine the quality of life in society. After joining police service, he should acquire the knowledge of society, law, crime, criminals, skills to maintain order, security, prevent and detect crimes, proper attitude public service and habits befitting a social worker in uniform. All these can be imparted if the individual has the basic desire to become a policeman and has chosen the calling willingly and voluntarily.

D. *Proposed Suggestions*

1) Very prior the police have to accept the well-grounded criticism with a willingness to change. The public have a right and the police have the duty to provide a non-discriminating service which upholds the law fairly and firmly.
2) Criminal justice system is the cutting edge of the rule of law, its functional lancet is the police force, the cadres, leaders alike. They are the salt of the law and order, but biblically put if the salt lost its savor, where with shall it be salted? Who will police the police? Freeing the police force from the grip of corruption should be the priority. Non-corrupt police is the beacon of healthy society.
3) Every policeman should view the organization as a dynamic corporate enterprise and vigorously project its image as a transparent organization wedded to the cause of law enforcement without trampling on the legitimate democratic rights of the citizen, He should emphasis on means justifying the ends. On the other hand, the police have to enlarge their vision and consider themselves as a dynamic instrument of socio-economic change.

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4) Police contribution by controlling the fundamental criminogenic factors through positive social activities-protecting the juvenile from being misdirected towards deviance and drug addiction. "Juvenile aid center prayas" opened by Delhi police on the children's day in 1988 is doing a good job. The police should remember that from every juvenile kept away from delinquency, they will be rewarded with one more law-abiding citizen and one less criminal to tackle.

5) On the mayhem and murders perpetrated against the Sikhs in Delhi, the Nanavati report has stated that the situation was exploited by local political leaders for their political and personal gains like increasing their clout by showing their importance popularity and hold over the masses. As a corrective measure against such gross misuse of police by politician, the commission has recommended that "there should be an independent police force which is free from political influence and is well equipped to take immediate and effective action". Therefore, the government has to spell out the measures it proposes to take for the implementation of this recommendation.

6) Observance of human rights -personal liberty a foremost human right is barricaded by Article 21 and 22 and by the criminal procedure code; civil liberty is not the grace of the government but is our impregnable human right under the republic. These fundamentals are often flagrantly ignored by some under the power. This should be removed.

7) Need for the check on the deterrent people: There are three identified groups of people in the society. Group A consists of people by nature law abiding and treads on the path of rectitude (small number). Group B people who remains law abiding partly out of fear that they come to grief and get punished if they commit offences(large number).Group C people who have no inborn inhibitions against the deviant behavior and take crime as a matter of convenience and advantageous option. If the criminal justice system fails to check the deterrence of group C (small number), a good number of people from Group B (large number) will be influenced. Criminal trials are badly delayed in the course of legal wrangling over the admissibility of formal evidence. This aspect needs thorough check up.

8) The police should transform himself from lathi wielding policeman which causes fear and awe to friend of public. It would be worthwhile to designate him as "public safety officer".

9) Political parties and politicians adopt by persuasion or by statutory direction, a certain code of conduct while they deal with the policeman and those who violate them, be exposed, proceeded against according to law.

10) A key element of policing is the preservation of law and order and how it has to be preserved: Law and order can be preserved only when the ordinary citizen, the bureaucracy and those who wield the constitutionally sanctioned authority, respect law. This aspect needs to be observed in letter and spirit.

11) To entrust the responsibility of postings, promotions and transfers of police personnel to "Police service boards "consisting of 2 or 3 senior most officers and some eminent persons to remove the erosion of the prestige and efficiency of the police force.

12) Police-press relation: Police have a big selling job to do, they must display their merchandise to the best advantage and for that the finest showcase is the first page of our newspapers. Harmonious police, press relationship is therefore a sine qua non for projecting a balanced image of police. Instead of regarding the press as their best critic, the police should look at them as a mirror with the help of which, they can, not only remove their defects but also reflect a presentable image to the public at large.

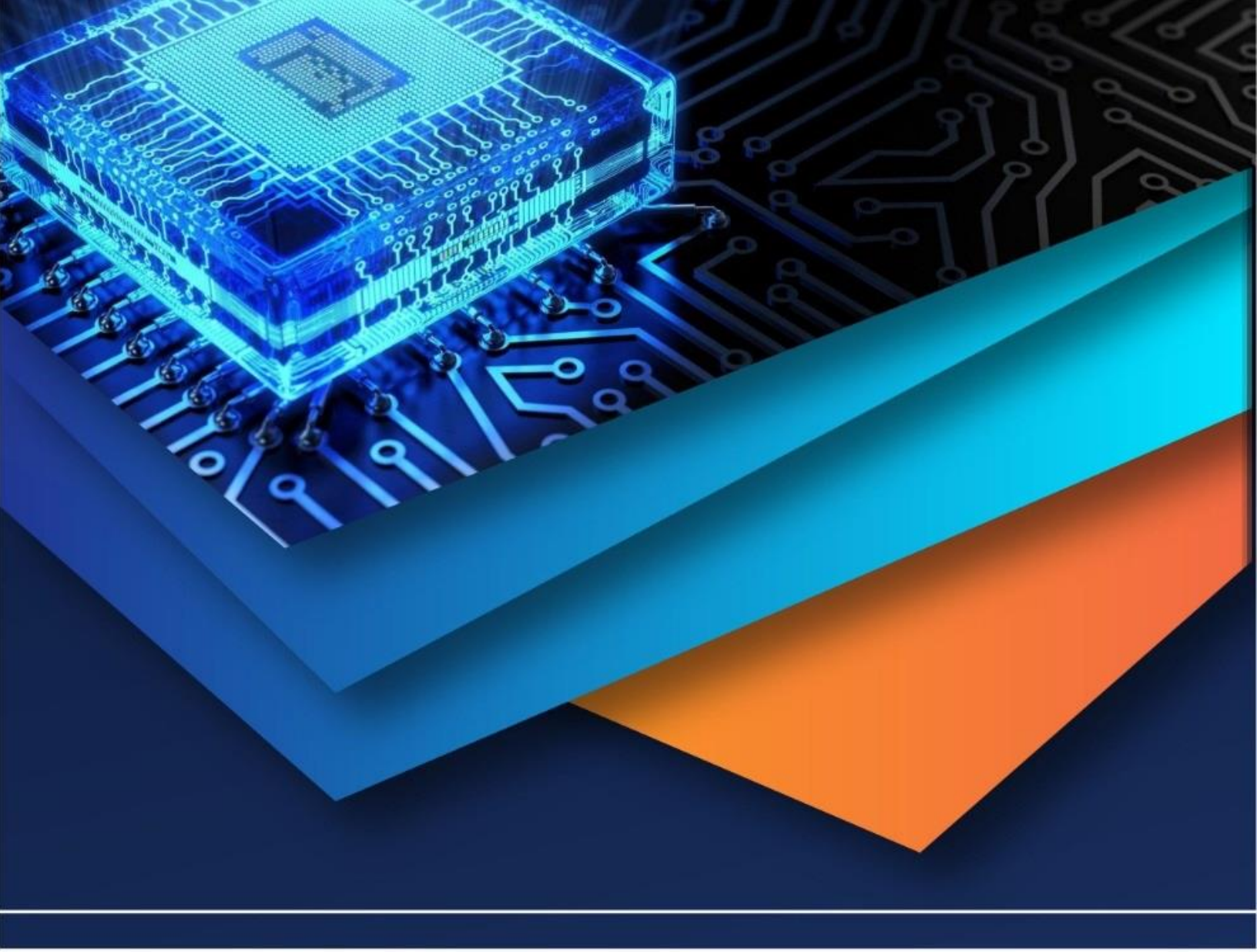
II. CONCLUSION

The role of police should of an activist, expansive and reflective of a broad perspective of public service. The police mandate requires a sense of total involvement in the community's life. Narrow simplistic, "we are only here to enforce the law" philosophy will prove to be counterproductive. The role police in contemporary times requires a thorough and complete interweaving into all facets of the community fabric. It is not enough to make arrests and direct traffic. The police must also research the problems, participate intimately in the community's activities, plan for and anticipate events, understand the mediative dimensions inherent in peace preservation and become active participants in community issues of all stripes and persuasions. The ideal police service requires full participation, total knowledge, and complete commitment to the concept of service to the citizen. On a continuing basis all professions strive to attain excellence. As such, the leadership of police should derive measures of excellence, measure the levels of merit attained and tell to the society in their efforts to win over and secure social support and recognition.

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