CASE STUDIES

(Personal Interviews of Women in Police: Karnataka)

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CASE STUDIES

Personal Interviews of Women in Police: Karnataka

1. Smt. Sashikala
   Woman Police Constable
   Sriramapuram Police Station
   Bangalore City.

   (Transcribed and translated from a video Interview)

   Sashikala was born in a small village in Tumkur, a District 115 km North West of Bangalore. Her parents are farmers. She is the youngest of three children. She has an elder brother and elder sister. She comes from a very ordinary rustic family. She is married. Her husband is employed in Private sector. His income is higher than hers. They have two children. Her daughter is studying in UKG and son in Pre-nursery. She said that her husband supports her in household responsibilities. Her relatives also chip in to look after the children. She said that she finds she does not get enough time with family. She said ever since she had the second child, she seems to be working round the clock, either in the station or at home. She said she enjoys spending time with family, celebrating festivals, but when at work she forgets home and devote her full attention to work.

   Before joining police Service, Sashikala said she was quite scared of the Police. Her teacher had suggested that she could apply to the Police. She said she is happy she joined the Police and that she is proud to be a Police Constable. She said that her work load is much more in Police than for her friends who have joined the other departments, and her working hours and working conditions are more
strenuous, but her friends envy that she wears the uniform, she is able to work with men with equality and that she has a more significant job where she can help people. They also come to her for advice.

Sashikala asserted that her status has improved significantly in the family after joining the Police. To a question whether her family respects her or not, she said that she felt she commands far greater respect now than before joining the Police service. Though she is the youngest in the family, family consults her more than her elder sister, or even the elder brother, and she has a role in family’s decision making process in major matters. She said that just because she is in Police, her family is not scared of her.

Sashikala feels that a woman can get a lot of satisfaction in working as a police official, as a lot can be done every day to help someone or the other. Once she starts her work, there is always so much to do. Police station work is one continuous flow like a river. There appears so little time, work always expands, before they can finish one task, two other have come on top of that.

There are many things to change if police functioning has to improve. The laws and procedures should be made simple. These now create more hurdles in functioning effectively. One cannot always follow the cumbersome procedure, and writing everything down before and after doing anything if one has to work effectively in Police. In the day of fast communications, we have to also work with lightning speed sometimes, to prevent an offence or to catch a criminal. There is a lot of fear of punishment to do anything out of the way, even to help the complainants or victims of crime. She went on to say that we are working for the Public, all actions
are in Public interest; superiors should understand this. Communication of Superiors should improve.

Sashikala felt the communication is vital in police, which is now lacking. Communication of Police with the public should improve. Communication with the Superior Officers should also improve a great deal, so that the problems the lower staff face can be communicated to them and they can solve them easily. Performance levels also can be improved considerably if communication channels are open, as after taking quick guidance or giving information to higher ups they can move.

Police service is also a great opportunity for realising your dreams, fulfill some of your desires to serve society. Sashikala said she is a daughter, wife and mother. When she sees the injustice that exists against women in society, she feels for it. It is her dream to work towards minimising it or eliminating it. These days, there are so many offences against small children being brought to light. It is her dream that she should be able to minimise it. She prays to God that she should be given more strength and courage to fight against such evils against women and children. She said she would like to keep these goals in front and continue to strive towards achieving these.
2. **Smt. Sree Ranjini**  
**W.P.C.**  
**Malleswaram Police Station,**  
**Bangalore City.**

(Transcribed and translated from a video Interview)

Sree Ranjini was born in Kolar and brought up in Bangalore. Her father is no more. She is the eldest, and she has two younger sisters. They haven’t done well in studies. One did up to PUC and the other B.Com. They are both married and settled. They are not working outside.

Sree Ranjini is married. Her husband is an accountant, working in a private office. His salary is higher than hers. They have just one son. He is 9 years old, studying in 4th Standard at Devaraja Urs School. Family decisions are taken after consultations in the immediate family and she plays a role in major decisions in the extended family. She said she has a great influence on the decisions on education and careers of family and friends.

When Sree Ranjini joined service, she did not know what Police work would be like. She had assumed that as a woman, she would be doing office work. Now she is working in executive line in the heavy police station in Malleswaram where all kinds of crimes are reported. She is able to tackle all kinds of situations in the Police station with ease.

Sree Ranjini said that joining the service itself was not very difficult. She had to pass in physical efficiency and other tests. It was a tough test. But, it was not that difficult for her to pass. She wanted a government job and this job came her way.
Because of her physique, and her commanding voice, her friends suggested joining police and when the opportunity came, she applied and got in.

Sree Ranjini is happy she joined the Police. She feels that her status, self-confidence and self-respect as improved a lot. Within the immediate family of her husband and son, she doesn’t feel like a Police officer at all. But in the extended family and circle of friends, everyone behaves with her with more respect than with the other women in their circle. Her family and friends are not scared of her, just because she is in Police. They feel happy and proud that being a lady, she has joined such a Department. They take her support and advice whenever they have any problem.

Sree Ranjini is proud of being a Police official. She said that before joining the police her self-confidence was low. Now she works with confidence and she can face any situation boldly. She has been able to get good support from her colleagues and bosses. Her ambition is to go as far high as possible in the Police department.

Sree Ranjini’s mission is to achieve within the Department better working conditions and at least to reduce some of the critical conditions, which she didn’t want to elaborate upon. Regarding improvements in the system she said that the working system in Police Department also should become like the atmosphere in the Corporate. In that case, it will help the public a lot and will also improve the image of the Police. Now, with the introduction of “Sakala Scheme” already quite a lot of improvement is there.

The communication between the Superior Officers and Constabulary has to improve a lot and communication between Police Department and the public should
also improve considerably. In Sree Ranjini’s opinion, the Superior Officers should visit the work stations, take feedback from the grass roots level which hold back a lot of significant information. This feedback which can easily be tapped, but generally go unutilised. The superiors can also do counseling to improve the work and service delivery. This will support and encourage lower echelons and they will be able to serve the society in better.

Sree Ranjini’s ambition is to acquire higher qualifications to get more promotions to powerful posts so that she can serve the people in an effective manner. She also wants to eliminate the atrocities against women in the city. When a woman comes to her with some problem, small or big, she wants to have the strength to support and help the poor victim and reduce her misery.

To a question about what would she choose as of prime importance, Society, Department, Family or Self, Sree Ranjini said, for her, family is of prime importance. She reflected that whatever service she renders, however best she works, for one mistake she will be crucified by the department or the Public. But her family will stand by her in rain or shine. Herself is also very important if any harm comes to her Self, any dent in the self-respect, then the whole world collapses. However she said Department is important, it gives her a platform for her identity, allows her great job satisfaction in serving the public who come to Police in times of dire trouble, and also gives her economic security and social status.
3. Smt. Manjula, P.S.
WPC-9928,
Mahila Sahaya Vani (Women’s Help Line)
Bangalore City

(Transcribed and translated from a video Interview)

Manjula was born in Besaranahalli village of Chennapatna Taluk, in Ramanagara District, 65kms South of Bangalore. Her parents are ordinary farmers. She is seventh of a family of eight children of five sisters and three brothers. The eldest sister has not gone to school at all. Others have done schooling up to various levels. One has completed PUC and another SSLC. The youngest, her brother is working as an Engineer. All her siblings are married except the youngest brother.

Manjula’s husband is also working in Bangalore as a Constable in Bangalore City Armed Reserve Police (North). Her husband’s salary is a little less than that of hers as her seniority is higher and she is in Civil Police and she is in the Armed Police. They have one daughter, aged two-and-half years. She has not yet started schooling. They have to now think of a school for her.

Manjula said she was a mere ordinary woman before joining the police. In the house, one among many children, the youngest girl child. Her voice had little weight or value. After joining the Police, everyone looks up at her for guidance, and her opinions influence decisions in the family, in her community and in the village. She is well liked in the neighbourhood where they stay and gets involved in social activities and enjoy life, when time permits.

Manjula always wanted to join the Services. She was forever dreaming of the Air force. Even when she was a child, she wanted to do something positive for
society. Her family does not have a tradition of people in uniformed services. She is the first person to join the Police Service or to don a uniform. She did not face any opposition from her family. Everybody was happy when she joined the Police.

Today Manjula is very happy she joined the Police. Before joining the Police Service, she loved the idea of being in the Police Service. She was inspired to see Woman Police on TV and in movies, she also wanted to be a Women Police Officer wearing the uniform and doing adventurous and significant things.

In the patriarchal system of society, women are facing a lot of problems and discrimination. Manjula always felt that if she joins the Police, she will be able to do something to better the position of women. Since she had this kind of an attitude before joining the Police itself, she works in a committed way to improve the conditions of the women who are suffering injustice in the society.

To join the Police force, surprisingly Manjula did not find any difficulty. She was eligible for reservation under caste, rural category and Kannada medium. But, since she got high marks in the selection and also had Sports Certificates, the selection was very easy. She did not even prepare much for the selection.

Before joining the service, Manjula did not know anything. Joining the Police she got an identity. Now she gained the confidence to tackle any issue, to face any situation after her training and experience. Now she is more knowledgeable about social issues. She is also aware of what all she can do to improve the conditions in society. She understands more and she is confident about her capacity to work for the people.
Manjula has many goals in her life. First and foremost, she wants to work hard and go up in the hierarchy to higher posts within the Police Department. A greater goal is to work specifically for removing the discrimination and violations against the women. Even before joining the service, she was distantly aware of the problems. Now that she is aware of law and her own powers, to change things, she is all the more committed to work for women’s issues.

Manjula’s ambition is to fight for the rights of women and fight against discrimination and atrocities. If we compare the conditions of 10 years ago, working conditions in Police Service has improved a lot now. But, she feels that there is still scope for improvement. The opportunity that you get to serve the community in the Police, no other Department can provide.

These days, people are losing confidence in the Police. Manjula often wonders what all the reasons could be. She said she cannot understand if it is because of the public’s changing expectations or police apathy. However she feels that everybody in Police should consciously work to remove this feeling in the public. Police officers should be able to show them that the Department is for the service of the public. They have to demonstrate that all the members of the Department will work in an upright and committed manner. In a sense, Police have to develop the sensitivity to see the public as their own family. Police officers have to consciously cultivate the confidence among the public.

The Superior Officers have a great role to perform. They should be responsive to the difficulties of the lower staff. If they are responsive, the lower staff will work in a more dedicated manner. Manjula felt that the superior officers do not have the insights into the issues as they do not have the time or inclination to
understand the grass root issues of the Police Constables, nor do they have hands on experience of the problems on the ground, as they are far removed by layers of hierarchy.

Because she is working in Women’s Help Line Section, in the Bangalore City Police Commissioner’s office, Manjula feels, she gets time and opportunity to listen to and contemplate on the multitudinous problems faced by Women. She now has a deep understanding of the offences against women. Most of the times, women are harassed too much. They even lose the will to live. She also feels bad about how innocent children are being attacked by vicious and perverted men. She feels much moved by the plight of the elderly. Though she does not handle the Makkala Sahayavani and Vrudhara Sahayavani, the stories get shared and she feels great empathy with the Victim, be it Woman, Child or an old age person, when they are suffering torture or neglect.

Women in Police have a special additional duty to perform, according to Manjula. They have to be role models to women as they will be able to instill confidence in these women when the women in Police counsel them. It is miserable what happens in Indian households. Women are made to adjust to any situations in the husband’s family till she loses all the will-power. Women Police working in Mahila Sahayavani feel a lot of satisfaction when we instill confidence in such women and bring a smile back to their faces.

To a question about her ambitions and long-time goals in life, Manjula said her heart is still in the Air Force, being in a plane and soaring high in the sky, and even now if she can get a chance, she will join Air force. However in the circumstances she is placed in, it is her ambition to work hard, reach as high as
possible, may be a Dy. Superintendent or Superintendent of Police and retire in Police itself. Even after her retirement, her ambition is to join some NGO and work for the cause of women.

To a question, about her priorities, does she perceive the Public, Department, Family or herself as the most important, Manjula said, in a way she will give equal importance to all the four. Family is important. Self is also important. Society and Department are also very important. She is a happy, wholesome personality and a successful police officer. (1290)
4. **Rupa Ramachandra Siddi**  
**Woman Police Constable**  
**State Human Rights Commission**  
**Bangalore.**

Rupa is from a village in Haliyal Taluk, (450 kms from Bangalore), Uttara Kannada District, in the forest area of Western Ghats. Her parents are very poor, working in farms as labour. Her husband and she are the only people from the family and Community who are educated, have got government jobs and in Bangalore. There is no facility for education for her community as they lead quite an isolated life.

Rupa explained that she belongs to the Siddis of Karnataka, who are an ethnic group whose members are descended from Bantu peoples from Southeast Africa that were brought to the Indian subcontinent as slaves by Portuguese merchants. There are only 50,000 strong Siddhi population across India, of which more than a third live in Karnataka. They are concentrated around Yellapur, Haliyal, Ankola, Joida, Mundgod and Sirsi taluks of Uttara Kannada and in Khanapur of Belgaum and Kalghatgi of Dharwad district. Many Siddis have migrated to Pakistan after independence.

Rupa did not find it difficult to join as she had been recruited under sports quota. She is a weight Lifter. As she was a Siddi she got the advantage of ST quota also. She got married to a Police Constable who also is a Siddi and moved to Bangalore. Both she and her husband are from very similar background. Her husband is the eldest of 11 children and helped the others to study. She also has 9 siblings. Both of them support their families. They are the only 2 in the community people who had joined Police and are the only people who have moved to Bangalore.
Rupa’s husband has already become a Head Constable. She lost 4 years of seniority when she opted to move from the District strength to Bangalore. She has 2 children and they are studying in an English medium school in Bangalore. She and her husband takes decisions, consulting each other. She feels the government job that too in Police has given her a lot of prestige in her community and also her family. The Siddis of Haliyal looks up to them for guidance.

In her job Rupa sincerely works and have earned good reports. She facilitates women complainants to seek redress from the Commission. She gets support from her colleagues and superiors. About the facilities she said that a lot more is to be done. She felt that seniors should have more interaction with the Constables and should solve their problems.

About her dreams Rupa talked eloquently. She said that she wants to leave the job once her children are settled and work for uplifting of Siddi people whose struggle to live is pathetic even today. She said her aim is to become an MP from her area. She likes Politics as she feels only politicians have the powers to change things. She feels greatly indebted to government policies which took her from her forest home to the Metropolitan city of Bangalore and given her financial security for life and educational opportunity for her children. She feels honoured to be in the Police Force. The department has opened up her world and working in Bangalore and in the Commission gives her wide exposure and helps her to learn and grow. Life has so much to offer and it should be appreciated and utilised. Police has so much to offer society and it should be realised by the officials and work to their potential, as life is so short and only the good that one does, lives after one is gone, she added philosophically.
5. Smt. Geetha Kulkarni  
Police Inspector  
City Crime Branch  
Bangalore

Geetha joined the Police as a direct recruit PSI. Before joining police, she had a fair idea about the Police as her father works in the same department. She was born in Hubli city. Her mother is a teacher. She has a brother who is working in a bank. Her sister is a home maker, married to an inspector. Her mother ensured that they got good education. She helped them with studies and insisted on good grades. Her financial and social status has gone up a lot after joining the Police. Her parents’ life style was more modest and at a much lower level. She has a son studying at Bishop Cotton Boys School in 7th std. She is able to send him to Bangalore’s prestigious school also because of her position.

Geetha had a good opinion about the Police and knew one can do a lot in this department. did not have to struggle to get into Police. The tests were very tough. But she has always been a sports person and physical efficiency tests were not that difficult. She is a national level sharp shooter and has won many medals. Since weapons are a part of Police and handling weapons and target practice is tough even for men, her ability earns her a lot of respect for her in the department.

Further, when Geetha was posted in Bangalore City as Traffic Sub Inspector, Cubbon Park, she earned a name for herself as she was seen everywhere in the city centre on her motorbike. Her area was important and sensitive being the CBD because of Vidhana Soudha, Rajbhavan, MG road, Cubbon Park etc. where a lot of people, work, pass through or congregate. Everyone noticed her as she was the only
woman on a Traffic Police motor cycle ever seen in Bangalore. She was known for her upright and firm but polite handling of traffic offenders.

Geetha’s family and neighbours respect her for her position as a high ranking and powerful officer as compared to them, she is at par with any man. This power combined with her helpful nature and amiable manners has won her friends and admirers in the public she serves and in the neighbourhoods she lives. Her family and friends are not unnecessarily scared of her, but constantly calls upon her when taking decisions especially about acquiring expensive household items, property, the children’s’ education or career choices.

Geetha is very happy proud to be a Police Inspector. She always knew one can do a lot in this department. She feels that the Police department has to improve a lot. She is convinced that the officers themselves can do a lot to improve the working atmosphere and the quality of service delivery. If the officers are given a free hand and adequate facilities, many crimes can be prevented and maximum crimes can be detected. In her opinion the migrant labour is responsible for a lot of offences. The security personnel themselves are tempted by the opulence they see daily and gets into nexus with hardened criminals and plan offences as a means of making quick money. She said that she is enjoying her work in the Crime branch, Investigation of complicated cases are referred to CCB. She said it is more brain work, and after toiling away, when the clues fall into the jigsaw puzzle and they detect each offence, it is very thrilling she said. She gets an opportunity to work with senior officers in this post and she says, she is learning and growing in the department, with their insightful guidance.
Geetha feels women should be allowed equal opportunity in the society by the male patriarchs. Women are capable but sometimes they themselves are not aware and get trapped in situations. She feels very bad about the atrocities against women and violations of the children. She hopes that one day she will get an opportunity to work for the safety of women. She feels that the basic respect for women is lacking in society. Especially women, children and senior citizens.

Geetha’s dream is for everyone to be literate. 100 percent literacy is an attainable goal for Bangalore and Karnataka, she feels. Another wish of hers to inspire many more girls to join police. She says that though she is not stout and strong in stature, though she is polite and gentle by nature, but because she is tough, knowledgeable and thorough when it comes to hard core policing, she has been able to establish herself as a top notch police officer. She has proved that women can be equally effective in the Police. At times women can do better than men. She feels strongly that the stereotype of the rude and crude, uncaring and corrupt Police image has to be broken. She is of the opinion that today, men in Police have to be healthy, cool and smart. There should be more clarity, transparency and integrity in the police system and structure. Over all, she says she wants to serve the society want to be good citizen, a role model to women in society and in Police. She wants to be a role model as an effective police officer.
Anita joined the Karnataka Police in 2008, as a direct recruit Dy.S.P. through a state wide selection exam conducted by Karnataka Public Service Commission. She has put in 6 years and 10 months of Service. She is currently working in the office of the Commissioner of Police Bangalore City. As the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Public Relations Officer, she gets an overall view of all that is happening in Bangalore City with relation to police in Bangalore City. She is the main interface of the City Police with the public and the media. As such every day is a tight rope walk for her.

Anita was born in a village in Ron Taluk of Gadag District, in the North Karnataka. Her father was also in government service, and retired as Executive Engineer in Karnataka Public Works Department. She has a sister and 3 brothers. Her mother is a housewife who looked after the children and their education while the father was away on different postings. All of them are graduates. One brother and sister are doctors and the other two brothers are in business.

Anita is married to an Engineer working in a private firm in Bangalore. Their salaries are almost equal. They do not yet have any children. She felt her family is not scared of her but definitely they respect her a lot more after she joined the Police. She feels her status has also improved after she joined the Police service.

Anita said that she was very much fascinated by the uniformed service. She developed this love when she joined the NCC in College. She served in NCC for 3 years and even earned a ‘C’ certificate. The opportunity one has in Police to serve the society you do not generally get anywhere else. The dynamic life also motivated me.
Her thoughts were very optimistic when she attempted the exam to join the Police Service. It was a tough selection process with the written examination and Physical Standards Test. She had to prepare for one year for the competitive examinations. But it was not too tough for her. She is proud to be a police officer.

As some of her achievements in Police, Anita said that she successfully investigated more than 100 cases of atrocities against Scheduled caste and Scheduled tribes, as also several murder cases. She enjoyed the work of the supervision of cases, maintaining Law & Order in her jurisdiction. She has the satisfaction that she gave her job her best attention and have been able to give good administration.

Anita feels the weakest point in the department is keeping a large number of posts vacant. This puts a lot of stress in giving good service for the community. As it is, Police strength is not sufficient to do all the work one is supposed to do. Trying to fill all the vacancies sanctioned would go a long way to relieve some stress on the staff and department. She feels that if more women staff are recruited in Police, the working conditions also will undergo a change as well as the Police will become automatically more citizen friendly.

Anita feels that a lot of improvements in Police can be brought about the Superiors in the Police department as they have vast powers and exercising those powers a lot can be done. They have to become aware of what the real problems are at the grass root level. For this communication channels are to be kept open. Every problem has an easy solution and a difficult one. The easy solutions themselves can bring a transformation in the department. As an example, she mentioned that the seniors can take care of the problems regarding hierarchical harassment. They can help provide an atmosphere of discipline and a friendly environment within the
department so that automatically a friendly service can be given to the public. Unlike the olden times, Police work is not only handling the rowdies and hardened criminals. The nature of crimes have also changed. Many white collar crimes and disputes reach the Police station as well as crimes against women and children. All these don't need “macho” or highhanded handling. An intelligent and sensitive handling is an essential prerequisite for such work.

Anita said she has many goals and dreams. They are all very simple, easy to achieve goals. Her dream is to give her best to the society, and serve the public with utmost sincerity. About the department also her goal is to work in such an effective and sensitive way that through her work, boost the respect of public for the department, and Police department earns a very good name as a responsive and responsible force. About her family also is a simple agenda. To be a good wife to her husband first and foremost and then be helpful and supportive of family members. About herself she has a big dream of gaining her expertise and expanding herself by working for a doctoral degree, a Ph.D. in Criminology and Forensic Science.
7. **Sarah Fathima**  
*Assistant Inspector General Of Police (Crime),*  
*Police Headquarters,*  
*Bangalore*

Sarah has a service of 7 years and 11 months, having joined the Karnataka State Police Service in 2008, as a directly recruited Deputy Superintendent of Police.

Sarah was born in Chamarajnagar, which used to be one of the most backward area of Karnataka, 200 kms South East of Bangalore. She did her schooling in also in a rural area, Bannur in Mysore District. She obtained a Bachelor of Business Management in Mysore University.

Fatima's Father, Mokhtar Ahmed was a businessman and Mother, Munaver Sultana home maker. She is proud of her sister Dr. Saba Fathima who is a young Gynaecologist in Mallya Hospital, Bangalore. Her brother Sadiq also is educated well. He is a Telecom Engineer working, working abroad, with Saudi Business Machines at Saudi Arabia. Her mother spends time with her in Bangalore or with her brother in Saudi.

Fathima is married to Ameer Adil Syed. He is also an engineer, who is highly qualified with a BE and MS degrees. He is working with IBM in Bangalore. They are blessed with a daughter Simrah Mariyam, who is 4 yrs. Simrah is studying at the prestigious Sophia High School, in Bangalore.

Fathima is very happy and proud that she joined Police, though she is from a conservative Muslim family. She was motivated by her uncle who is an IGP in Karnataka Police. Her dream was to lead a corporate life. She said that her status and economic position improved considerably after joining the police. She said that she has gained a lot of respect both in the family and outside in the community as
she is the first lady from Muslim community in Karnataka to join the Police at this highest level of recruitment in Karnataka Police.

Her career has been very good so far. She worked in Criminal Investigation Department (CID), in Cyber-crime department. She worked as Dy. SP, in the executive post in Dandeli, for two years. She also worked as ACP Malleswaram with Law and Order responsibilities. She was proud that she was the only lady Assistant Commissioner of Police in Bangalore City at that time. She got promoted recently as Additional Superintendent of Police and got posted in her current post. She is the recipient of Chief Minister's Medal. She is one of the youngest Police officer to receive this coveted medal.

She is more practical than idealistic. She wants to do her best in the Police Service, for herself and for the department and Society.