CHAPTER IX

CITIZEN - POLICE RELATIONSHIP

In a developing country, administration is more demanding with the growing technicalities and complexities. This predicament has emerged out of rapid pace of development, pressure of industrialisation, urbanisation and egalitarian objectives.¹

The preamble to the Constitution of India envisages the creation of a new social order through democratic process in which both the civil servants and the citizens have to play a meaningful cooperative role to translate into action the developmental goals.² Though the Britishers withdrew, yet the machine of administration remained intact - not only as a manual of office-procedures, physical buildings and human bodies but also established habits, prejudices, interests and class barriers.³ There was hardly any departure from the past, and renovations

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were few. Bureaucracy, nurtured in the colonial tradition, continues to exhibit the traits of impersonality, compulsive professionalism and procedural rigidity.

The citizens come into contact with civil servants physically or through representations and applications. Unsophisticated and illiterate as most of them are, they have to face delay, harassment and even discourtesy. The mounting grievances against the civil servants are exhibited by the citizens through frequent agitations and bandhs. It creates, in general, a perception of hostile alienation — perception not necessarily based on any individual or specified experience but the development of certain image regarding the total administrative process.

The nature of an organisation is determined not so much by the structural reforms as by the behaviour of its personnel who support or distort, build or undermine the


organisational objectives. The civil servants are the trustees of public good trying to implement the policy laid down within the framework of power and authority delegated to them by the public through chosen representatives. They, therefore, cannot afford sitting in an air-conditioned apartment, taking decisions on policies with a blurred idea of the feelings of the public. They have to feel the pulse of the people and shed off some of the misunderstandings which are responsible for lacerating the feeling and embittering the minds of both the citizens and the civil servants.

The police are the most ubiquitous, widely and prominently visible of the bearers of outer social authority and governmental agencies for the average citizen and their work is conspicuous, complicated, delicate and dangerous. The manner in which they perform their duties can, therefore, affect the texture of civil regard. The details about their role and performance have already been discussed in previous pages.

The popular image of the police administration in India appears to be neither static nor exclusive to be characterised with epithets like 'Fair' or 'Foul'.

Actually, it is relative and subjective and these images further vary a great deal. Micro-studies may be useful to measure and evaluate in depth the socio-psychological and attitudinal perspective of the people about various categories of policemen and vice versa.

This chapter is mainly based on the questionnaire which had been administered to the police and to the citizens. The break-up of the sample has already been discussed in Chapter I. The data have been analysed in subsequent pages and the comparisons wherever possible have been made with similar studies conducted earlier. There are four studies in particular which have touched the same in recent years and it was thought useful to present their main findings in a comparative perspective so that the problem is looked at from various dimensions. What people in general think of the police as an organisational whole is important but still more important is what the police officials think of their own job, of their own colleagues, and of their own organisation.

When the police and the non-police samples were asked, "What do you think about the image of police in India" the response


(d) P.D. Sharma, Indian Police: A Developmental Approach, (New Delhi, 1977).
was as follows:

Table: Image of Police Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Police Sample (in %)</th>
<th>Non-Police Sample (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair/Satisfactory</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foul</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corrupt and harassing</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No reply</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300  n = 300

The respondents in both the samples concede that the present-day image of police administration is far from being 'excellent'. Similarly, the difference between the police and the non-police respondents who accept the image as 'foul' is insignificant. The most striking familiarity is found where majority of the respondents in both the samples view the image of the police as 'corrupt and harassing'. Similar have been the findings of other studies which have gone into similar questions. For example, Dr. Saraswati Srivastava in her study of "Public Image of the Police" also reached similar conclusions on the basis
of a survey of 150 respondents.\textsuperscript{1} Dr. Sharira while
discussing the police image in India on the basis of a
sample of 75 policemen and 105 non-policemen, spread over
a wide spectrum of varied age groups and ranks presents
similar findings, but with a slight difference. Whereas
the majority of the respondents in the police sample
(56.01\%) have a 'Fair' self-image, the non-police sample
(61.36\%) views them as corrupt and harassing.\textsuperscript{2} Professor
Bayley's study based on the general public samples drawn
from Bangalore city in Mysore state, and Kanpur city in
Uttar Pradesh state consisting of two thousand four
hundred interviews, leaves no doubt that suspicion of
police honesty is widely felt. In urban Mysore 23.2 per
cent of respondents thought there was a great deal of
corruption in the police. Only 1.5 per cent said there
was none. In rural Mysore, 24.5 per cent thought there
was a great deal. Rural respondents show themselves, once
again, less willing to give opinions (43.0 per cent) and

\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
1. The Police are a corrupt lot & 88.6 \\
2. The Police are not corrupt & 2.6 \\
No response & 2.6 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}

\textit{Journal of the Society for the Study of State}
Governments, (Varanasi, July-December, 1972),
p.252.

somewhat less critical of the police. In Kanpur, 55.1 per cent of the residents and 40.5 per cent of rural migrants thought there was a great deal of corruption in the police. Thus, people in the North are more critical on this score than people in the South. In S.J. Eldersveld study, it was found that a large percentage of the public did not have a high opinion of the police department. Further, it was also revealed that the police officials seem to entertain greater doubts about the integrity of the personnel in their own department. Only about 9% in rural and 15% in urban areas held that all the police officials were honest in their public dealings. About 30% of the police officials, in rural areas, and 25%, in urban areas, were of the view that only a few were corrupt, while 9% in the rural and 18% of the urban samples felt that one-fourth to one-third of them were honest. The view that more than half the police officials were corrupt was held by 24% of the police officials in rural and 9% in urban areas. A little over

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2. Percentage distribution of population by their opinion regarding the prevalence of corruption in the police department is as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Urban</th>
<th>Rural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes (there is corruption)</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualified-depends</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not ascertained</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the tenth of the rural as well as the urban police officials admitted the prevalence of corruption in their department, though they were not certain of its extent.\footnote{1}

All the above studies, thus, testify to the fact that the image of the police in the eyes of the public is far from being satisfactory.

The respondents were further asked, about their opinion, about the groups in Indian society which help the police in being corrupt and harassing. Out of several groups pointed out by the respondents, the prominently figures in both the samples are: (a) Politicians, (b) Businessmen, (c) Elites/Influential People and (d) Smugglers/Black-marketeers. In Sharma’s study, it was revealed that the non-police sample (51.02\%) looked upon the political leaders as the most obnoxious group which help the police in being corrupt and harassing.\footnote{2}

Police officials, like every other individual, are

\footnotesize

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid.
\item In Dr. Sharma’s study, some of the reasons for the discourteous behaviour checked by the majority of the members of the community were as follows:
(a) Students: They are power-drunk.
(b) Businessmen: They are corrupt.
(c) Intelligentsia: They are illiterate and unfortunately placed.
(d) Political Leaders: They are agents of the ruling group.
(e) Religious Leaders: They are immoral.
(f) Civil Servants: They do not have professional ethics. P.D. Sharma, op. cit., pp. 273-74. Also the National Police Commission is of the view that so long as political patronage of police personnel exists it is extremely difficult to punish the guilty. \textit{The Tribune}, 10 February, 1980, p. 1.
\end{enumerate}
influenced by environmental factors and their attitude towards public is broadly conditioned by many considerations. For public officials, no attitude scales or quantifiable methods have been evolved in India and most of the studies are based on responses to select questions. Professor Bayley had used four different kinds of scales to evaluate attitudes of outsiders towards the police organisation and organisational behaviour of the policemen in India. In the present study, similar questions were posed and the respondents were asked to characterise the attitude of the people towards the police. The responses were as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Police Sample (in %)</th>
<th>Non-Police Sample (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspicious</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-cooperative</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300 n = 300

The table shows that the respondents in both the samples thought the attitude of the people towards the police is far from being friendly and cooperative. The police view people's attitude towards them as indifferent and non-cooperative. There was disagreement in both the samples
on the pattern of response as 'Suspicious'. In Bayley's study, the survey results demonstrate forcefully that the Indian public is deeply suspicious of the activities of the police. On the basis of the data collected in the survey, Professor Bayley observes, "The Indian people doubt very seriously the honesty, propriety and integrity of their police. Such a lack of trust would not tend to encourage contact with the police." But it is noteworthy that in Bayley's study the attitudes of the people of the area toward the police are not as negative as what they reveal themselves. The results are summarised in the table below.

Table: Attitudes of Others Toward the Police

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area and Percentage of Residents</th>
<th>Bangalore Rural Residents</th>
<th>Tumkur Residents</th>
<th>Kanpur Residents</th>
<th>Kanpur Rural Residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friendly</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indifferent</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>20.2</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspicious</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>14.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-cooperative</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: David H. Bayley, op. cit., p. 204.

In Sharma's study, it was found that people in India are generally non-cooperative and rarely friendly with the police.  

2. P.D. Sharma, op. cit., p. 275.
In a democratic system of government, the citizens and the public servants are not two separate entities. Much of the success of the police depends on their capacity to enlist public cooperation and this can be achieved if they themselves are sensitive and responsive to the dynamics of change. They must earn the public confidence and respect by consistently displaying an uncompromising devotion to truth and a total commitment to the service of the people. The manner in which citizens are treated by the police authorities may affect or influence the citizens' impression of the police administration.

Table: Attitude of the Police Towards Citizens

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Police Sample (in %)</th>
<th>Non-Police Sample (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Do you think that police are a friend of the public?</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Do you think that policemen are generally helpful?</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Do the police officials serve the public to the best of their ability for various important jobs?</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300  n = 300

The data in the table reveal that majority of the respondents in the non-police sample were of the opinion
that the attitude of the police towards citizens was not friendly and generally helpful, but 66 per cent of the police sample believe that they were friendly and helpful to the citizens. Above 59 per cent respondents in both the samples seemed to be in agreement that the police did not serve the public to the best of their ability. In Dr. Saraswati Srivastava's study, similar conclusions were drawn. Dr. Sharma's study also corroborates the popular belief that the police in India are generally non-cooperative and rarely friendly with the public.

The widespread popular belief in the need for political pull in dealing with the public officials, whatever may be the reason, is a limitation upon the ideology of the Welfare State and the popularity of the democratic machinery of the government. To find out the importance of political pull the question posed was "Do you think that political pull or knowing the right person plays an important part in dealing with the police." An overwhelming majority of the respondents of both the samples were reported to be of the view that "political pull" or "knowing the right person"

1. (a) The police are a friend of the public.
   Yes 21.3%  No 77.3%  Don't know 1.3%
(b) Policemen are helpful
   Yes 24.0%  No 68.6%  Don't know 7.3%

2. P.D. Sharma, op. cit., p. 275.
was an important consideration in getting the work done from the police. An effort has been made to find out the validity of these opinions on 'political pull' by relating it to the personal experiences of the citizens. The question posed was "Have you had any experience which indicated that 'political pull' helps a citizen?" It was discovered that hardly 30 per cent citizens had direct experience of using 'political pull' to get things done. Although the police officials considered 'political pull' as an important factor in dealing with the administration, they would, however, not encourage people to get political intervention. They favour direct contact of the citizens with the police.

When the police were asked: "In general, if you were to advise a citizen who had a problem and needed police help, would you advise him to go personally to the police department or to get the assistance of a person who was on friendly terms with the police official concerned?" About 75 per cent of the police officials were of the view that they would encourage the citizens to contact the police authorities personally without recourse to intermediaries.

The problems of assistance in contacting police officials cannot be viewed in isolation; it has a close relationship with the citizens' confidence to get things done from the police authorities by their own efforts. If this confidence is lacking, citizens tend to approach the
police either through persons known to them who can influence
the police officials or through some organisations, which
specialise in serving the people through their contacts with
the government such as political parties, or occupational
associations or voluntary social service organisations.
This kind of approach also may not be available for all and
as such, some people resort to the offer of money for getting
things done. To ascertain opinion about the role of
contact-persons or organisations, the citizens were asked
if they were to go to the police department for action on
a problem, would they act by themselves or get help from
others. More than 70 per cent of them frankly admitted that
they would seek the help of some person or organisation.

A close examination of the analysis of the attitudes
of the people towards the police and the police towards
the people shows that the relationship is not very friendly
or cooperative. Though in some cases the police sample
showed some variation in response but the overall picture
does not appear to be very encouraging. No effort has been
made in the present study to correlate the attitude of
police towards citizens or vice versa. But the in-depth
interviews gave an indication that non-cooperative attitude
of the police adversely affect the image of the police.

The role and responsibilities of the police have
already been discussed in the earlier chapters. In the
discharge of duties, at times, excessive powers are used,
which cause a lot of heart-burning among the people. Normally it has been seen that the good work done by the police goes unnoticed. There are many occasions when the lapses are magnified beyond proportions and the blame is apportioned to them without any justification. To assess how the citizens evaluate the working of the police officials as also to find out how the police officials themselves perceive their role, questions were posed whether the police are doing a poor, fair, good or very good job.

Table: Evaluation of Job Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Police Sample (in %)</th>
<th>Non-Police Sample (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Good</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Opinion</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300

More than 30 per cent citizens and 80 per cent police officials are of the view that the work which is being done is at the most 'fair'. More than 45 per cent of them regard it as 'poor'. A very insignificant percentage of the police officials regard it as 'very good' but not a single citizen thought that way. Thus, the perception or the role does not
appear to be helpful.

In Eldersveld's study, in the urban areas, 16 per cent of the respondents felt that performance of the police was good, about 20 per cent felt it was fair and only one per cent felt that it was very good. In rural areas 50 per cent felt that the police were doing a good job, 13 per cent felt it was fair and about 4 per cent felt that it was very good. Thus, about one-fourth of the rural and a little over one-third of the urban population had expressed the feeling that the work done by the police was poor. In Professor Bayley's study, people's perspective on the police performance was somewhat different. He inferred that it is generally agreed that the police do a pretty good job in catching criminals. About two-thirds of all the respondents spoke for the efficiency of the police in this regard except in the Tumkur sample, where the percentage of those who held this view was only 37 per cent.

There are widespread grievances against the police inasmuch as they very often stoop to sordid investigations.


2. The proportion of outright negative rates against police efficiency were: Tumkur, 20.7 per cent; Bangalore, 12.7 per cent; Kanpur residents, 28.4 per cent; and Kanpur rural migrants, 20.9 per cent. David H. Bayley, op. cit., p. 199.
Fabricate, rather than discover, evidence and use third degree methods as a routine. No less deplorable is the fact that because of the dilatory tactics of the police in preparing the challans, under-trial prisoners languish in jail without being brought before a Magistrate. People's suspicion of the police appears to be due to their belief that in many instances, the former treat ordinary misdemeanour in much the same manner as hardened recidivists. When citizens were asked about the police investigation of crime, more than 75 per cent were of the view that this was not done properly.

The police functionaries counter the charges levelled against them by ascribing the alleged improprieties in the investigation process to what they call the public's pathological unwillingness to serve as witness. Besides this, incredibly large amount of work thrust upon the investigating officers, vast jurisdiction of police stations; unsatisfactory means of communication, distrust of police by the courts, political and other extraneous influences impel the police to take recourse to irregular and improper methods in their investigation work. During interviews in the field it was observed that Station House Officers at times felt that they must somehow secure some convictions in order to avert the possibility of their performance being discounted or underestimated by their peers and superiors in the force. They appear to operate
in an uncongenial atmosphere.

Same conclusions were supported by Dr. Srivastava's study which brought out that 75.3 per cent of the respondents were reported to be of the opinion that the police did not prevent and investigate crime properly. The prevailing belief among 84.6 per cent of the respondents was that the police were in league with the criminals, which hindered them from proper discharge of their duty. While discussing the role and responsibilities in Chapter VI, it has been mentioned that the performance was not satisfactory. The data in the table below lend support to that view.

Table: Popular Perspectives on Police

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Non-Police Sample (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Have you ever seen a policeman beating an alleged offender?</td>
<td>Yes: 71, No: 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Have you or any of your friends or relations been maltreated by the police?</td>
<td>Yes: 54, No: 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you personally know policemen who flatter the politician?</td>
<td>Yes: 46, No: 54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you think young generation of police officers is better than the senior generation?</td>
<td>Yes: 57, No: 43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in the above table reveal that people had first hand experience of seeing maltreatment and rude

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2. Ibid., p. 256.
and discourteous behaviour of the police. More than seventy per cent of the respondents had seen a policeman beating the alleged offender. In more than fifty per cent cases, either the respondents or their friends or relations had been maltreated by the police. Contrary to the widely spread popular notions about slavish submission of police officials to politicians, 54 per cent respondents of the non-police sample disclosed that they did not know police officials who were engaged in flattering the political masters. The younger generation of police officers enjoy better image than the senior ones (57%). In Professor Bayley’s study, it was found that considerable number of people in India unhesitantly say that they believe the police often do beat the people. The proportion varies from 7 to 37 per cent. Further, the data in the Bayley study show that for majority of the people the police are faceless and nameless creatures with whom they have never had any contact. Their opinions, thus, must be wholly derived from the community’s store house of common knowledge. In Sharma’s study, however, the proportion of people who believe the police often beat the people was 21.6%.

1. This has also been the conclusion of Dr. Sharma’s study on ‘Image of Police’ which has been indicated as under:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(a) Do you personally know policemen who flatter the politician?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28.27</td>
<td>71.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(b) Do you think the young generation of police officers is better than the senior generation?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>92.02</td>
<td>7.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P.D. Sharma, op. cit., p. 276. Also ‘Attitude Problems of Retired Police Officers’ (Syndicate Study), Transactions, XVIII (2), National Police Academy, Mount Abu.

2. The proportions were: Bangalore 12.2%, Tumkur, 7.5%, Kanpur residents, 36.5% and Kanpur rural migrants, 31%. David H. Bayley, op. cit., p. 170.

perceptional configurations of seeing a policeman beating an alleged offender or meeting maltreatment at the hands of the police either by the respondents or their near friends were not substantially rooted in rationality. It was found that those people who knowingly believed that the police in India had been a mechanism of harassment had not suffered much at the hands of the police personally. They openly confessed that their opinion was based mostly on what the other so-called experienced people had communicated to them.  

Improving the Police Image: The Building-up of Inter-Personal Relationships

An effort has also been made to discover the critical areas in order to improve police community relations. The response showed a general awareness of the fact that healthy police community relations could ensure only when they were built on a continuous basis and that also around some kind of inter-personal relationships. The existing position being not very conducive and charged with prejudices, does not allow the relationship to grow. The respondents, both police and non-police sample in unambiguous terms said that in the given context of rural milieu and cultural values, initiative has to be taken if the police in India has to rehabilitate its image of a friend and well-wisher of the people at large. The police-people confrontation or participation or cooperation in the preservation of order and prevention of

crime would raise the question of the roles of both kinds of opinion leaders, who according to them were already making allegations about the behaviour of the police. Consciously as well as unconsciously these leaders were legitimate image-builders and rarely they were questioned about the veracity of their versions. Should police always contact people through these opinion leaders or not? Here are some of the responses.

Table: Police's Contact with People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Should police approach people about problems of police administration?</th>
<th>Police Sample (in %)</th>
<th>Non-Police Sample (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) through direct audience with people at large</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) through elected representatives of that area</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) through traditionally influential people of the place.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300  n = 300

The above figures show that contact through traditionally influential people of the place was not acceptable. Similarly the respondents in police sample and other sample were not in favour of approaching the people about problems of police administration through the elected representatives of that area. Above seventy per cent of them accepted that the
Police should contact people about problems of the administration through direct audience with the people at large. In Sharma's study, the answers revealed that 'direct audience' was not the 'right' and practical approach with the policemen, who would prefer traditionally influential people as middlemen. On the contrary, contact through traditionally influential people was not acceptable to the people, who looked forward to the effective redressal of their grievances in the direct-audience approach. Strikingly enough respondents in both the samples in Sharma's study came quite close to one another in regard to democratic approach through popular representatives.

Admittedly the police cannot solve every difficulty of individual citizens but if they could, by their conduct, create a feeling in the citizens in trouble, that the police were sympathetic and did what they could to help, it would go a long way psychologically to win the citizens respect for the entire police force. However, during interviews, it was gathered that the rough and overbearing behaviour of a policeman and an unsympathetic attitude adopted by the staff of the police station in recording the

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1. P.D. Sharma, op. cit., p. 287.

First Information Report are some of the factors responsible for the unpopularity of the police. When asked what citizens in general think of the police behaviour, respondents in both the samples (92%) were of the view that the present day behaviour of the police was far from being polite and courteous. In Professor Bayley's study, it was found that a majority of urban and rural people in Mysore said the police were courteous and fair. About 15 per cent of them said they were rude and tricky, and slightly over one-third were unable to say anything in this respect. Opinion was much less favourable in Kanpur. Almost half of the urban residents thought the police were rude and tricky; only 33.6 per cent of the rural migrants agreed that they were courteous and fair.¹

With a view to probe further into the causes which have a direct as well as indirect bearing on the behaviour of the Indian police, the respondents were asked about the reasons of rude and discourteous police behaviour. The responses were as follows.

Table: Reasons of Rude and Discourteous Police Behaviour

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Police Sample</th>
<th>Non-Police Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(in %)</td>
<td>(in %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The police people are frustrated because of being low paid.</td>
<td>92 8</td>
<td>57 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The intellectual calibre of the policeman is too low.</td>
<td>82 18</td>
<td>78 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The job is too arduous and dull.</td>
<td>76 24</td>
<td>54 46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The police training is inadequate.</td>
<td>82 18</td>
<td>60 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The seniors are a wrong model.</td>
<td>85 15</td>
<td>80 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300 n = 300

The table shows that more than 57 per cent of the respondents

¹ David H. Bayley, op. cit., p. 159.
in both the samples felt that the police are frustrated because of their low salaries. More than 78 per cent of the respondents in both the samples were not satisfied with the intellectual calibre of the police particularly the Constabulary. Respondents also found the job uncongenial and unchallengeable. More than 60 per cent of the respondents in both the samples felt that inadequate training and authoritative behaviour of the seniors had projected a wrong model for the juniors to emulate and follow. The data in Sharma's study also support these views where it was brought out that the non-police respondents found that policemen's job was arduous and dull for which they were paid salaries commensurate with their educational accomplishments, but not in relation to their responsibilities, dedication and skill required for the job. While the police officials felt that the police had not been adequately trained, the non-police respondents maintained that the seniors had failed to inject a sense of identification among the juniors towards the organisational goals.

In the developing societies the police-citizen relationship depends upon the political system, which the rulers of the

1. Most of the police officers were of the view that our subordinate ranks hardly get a living wage, which acts a strong disincentive. No one can be expected to concentrate on his duties while he is pre-occupied with financial worries about his own and his family's future.
2. P.D. Sharma, op. cit., p. 280.
3. Ibid.
country prefer to practise in relation to the bulk of the citizenry. The operating socio-cultural norms tend to condition the bureaucratic ethos of the administrative structures. Mutual respect, cooperation and understanding between the police and the citizens form an ideal relationship. In reality, however, the idealism contemplated seldom exists. When asked whether the public fear the police or respect them, the responses were as under.

Table: Fear of Police

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Police Sample (in %)</th>
<th>Non-Police Sample (in %)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fear the police</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect them</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not fear them</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

n = 300 n = 300

From the table, it can be seen that 61 per cent of the citizens were of the opinion that public are still afraid of the police. Though the police officials did not favour the same opinion, a minority viewed that the citizens develop a fear complex because of the police uniform. But both of them were in agreement that the police were neither respected nor feared by the citizens. Thus, it appears to be true that the police
and the citizen both have failed to live up to an ideal concept of relationship, which unfortunately was never established between the two in the history of India. In Srivastava's study, it was found that 65.3 per cent of the respondents thought that they were afraid of the police. Fear of the police was negatively, somewhat, correlated with education, the higher the educational level of the respondent, the less afraid was he of police. ¹

The herd-instinct of teenagers, and their sense of solidarity are well recognised characteristics of the student community. Their emotional immaturity makes them easy prey to the mischievous designs of the self-seeking political leaders and clever agitators. This poses a persistent and continuous threat to public peace and tranquillity. The police have to bear the brunt of it without being in a position to remove the causes of the trouble. The problem of student unrest has already been discussed in Chapter III. Whenever the police were called upon to deal with law and order situations following indiscipline by the students, there has been scathing

1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Illiterate</th>
<th>Educated</th>
<th>Highly Educated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) The respondent is generally afraid of the police.</td>
<td>54.5</td>
<td>30.1</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) The respondent is not afraid of the police for any reason.</td>
<td>45.4</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>72.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) No response</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sarasvati Srivastava, op. cit., p. 260.
criticism of the police excesses. It has certainly helped to develop an unsympathetic attitude in the minds of the teenagers/students towards the police.

In the present study, respondents were asked to assess the impression of teenagers towards police. About 93 per cent of the police officials and 97 per cent of the citizens felt that it was unfavourable. When a similar question was posed in Sharma's study, 72 per cent police officials thought that the teenagers/students in India hate the police without any rhyme or reason but the respondents in the non-police sample in majority of the cases registered a negative response to the question. Professor Bayley on the basis of four student samples drawn from the Universities of Delhi, Allahabad, Osmania and Bangalore concluded that university students are certainly not well disposed toward the police. They are cynical and suspicious. They are inclined to doubt the police honesty and impartiality. They are willing to believe the worst in respect of the manner it treats the people. Students do not conceive police as an agency possessing integrity, dedication and a sincere desire to help the citizen in distress.²

Some of the reasons for unfavourable impression of the


police given by the respondents are:

(a) The growing uncertainties among the teenagers/students about their future and their revolt against the established norms and the subsequent role to be played by the police to regulate the law and order have created a sense of unfriendliness towards the police.

(b) To some extent the mothers and teachers of the younger generation have failed to generate a balanced approach in the minds of the teenagers towards the police. Mostly police have not been painted well by them and at the early age wrong type of impressions are formed.

(c) The teenagers hate the police because they stop them from eve-teasing or fighting against the establishment. The social evils are fast spreading specially in the younger age groups. When the police use force to check these tendencies, they become unpopular.

(d) The young people feel that the police are defenders of the status quo. The modernisation trend and westernisation tendencies have made the life so dynamic that the younger generation does not have patience to bear with the existing situation.

(e) The police are mere authority to be hated. The preventive side of the crime control situation is almost unknown in Indian setting. The police machinery moves in only when a crime has been committed.
Loose and unsubstantial allegations made about the police's incompetence, dishonesty, laziness and indifference to the public interest are certainly potent factors in developing an unfavourable impression towards the police.

**Salient Findings of the Present Study**

Some of the salient findings which emerge out of the above discussion about police-citizen relations are:

(a) Both the police officials and the people believe that the present image of the police in India is far from satisfactory and needs to be improved. The respondents, by and large, blame the politicians, businessmen, elites and smugglers for helping the police in being corrupt.

(b) The respondents in the non-police sample think that the behaviour of younger generation of police officers is better than the senior generation. Further indepth interviews reveal that they are not only qualitatively better, but professionally more committed to the goals of the organisation.

(c) Political pull or knowing the right person no doubt plays an important part in dealing with the police but the data show that hardly 30 per cent of the citizens had personal experience of using political pull to get the things done.

(d) The attitude of the people in general and students in particular towards the police is not very friendly.

(e) The rude and discourteous behaviour of the Indian
police, apart from other factors, is due to the ill-paid low status, poor educational calibre, arduous and dull jobs and the authoritarian attitudes of the senior officers.

(f) The police officials and the people perceive the job of the police as 'fair'. More than 75 per cent of the police do not investigate the crime properly.

(g) There are a number of cases where the behaviour of the policemen has not been courteous or dignified. Many people have seen the policemen beating an alleged offender at a number of occasions and in more than 53 per cent of the cases either the respondents or their relatives/friends have been maltreated by the police on one occasion or the other.

(h) Majority of the respondents of the non-police sample feel that they do not know the police officials who are engaged in flattering the politicians.

(i) Respondents are almost unanimous that the police should approach the people about problems of the police administration through direct audience with the people at large and not through elected representatives and traditionally influential people of the place.

(j) The citizen-police relationship shows alienation and lack of respect for each other. Sixty-one per cent of the citizens are afraid of the police.

(k) The respondents showed a general awareness of the
fact that healthy police-citizen relationship could endure only when it is built on a continuous basis.

(1) The trend analysis of the responses of the police and the non-police samples shows that there has been some area of disagreement between the police officials and the people in general. Their perspectives differ, yet they seem to agree on certain fundamental issues about the police administration.

(m) The respondents were of the view that there is a need for rethinking on the police problems and modernisation of the police force and a well conceived policy of reform and innovative planning is essential.

(n) Any basic structural innovation within the given politico-cultural milieu of the Indian society is hardly possible. There is, however, a broad agreement that police have a key role to perform in the functioning of the system.

Suggestions for Improvement

In order that the relationship of the police with the citizens may improve, the police will have to be service-oriented in the discharge of various functions as agents of the law. In the last few decades some effort has been made to improve the quality of this relationship but
much needs to be done to achieve the desired goal. It is true that willing cooperation of the people is indispensable for the success of the police work. Lack of communication between the police and the public creates different barriers and people generally do not take into consideration the environmental factors which influence police performance. In the ultimate analysis, the basis of authority of the police in a democratic country is the public trust. The maintenance of public order and peace is fundamental but it is only with the sanction of support from the people that the police can successfully maintain order to enable the achievement of targets of all developmental programmes.

Any point of contact becomes a potential source of positive or negative experience. Any programme to improve the behavioural orientation of the police has to be directed at making the police agency more responsive to the needs and demands of the people. Accessibility of the police and accountability for their performance have to become the watchwords of the agency. The insularity of the police has to be penetrated and the citizen's lack of understanding of the role and responsibilities of the police has to be remedied. A system of police community relations which ignores the real issues of the need for increased and constant understanding between the police and the citizens may degenerate and reflect poor image of the
police. Below are some of the suggestions for improving the relationship between the police and the citizens:

(a) The Inspector-General of Police should ensure that he and his organisation remain readily accessible to the citizens for their needs. No tapping of phones or bureaucratic gauntlets for the citizens should be allowed. Direct, constant and open access must be encouraged.

(b) The police buildings and installations should become centres of community life. Groups should be invited to meet in these installations, and every effort should be made to defeat the isolation mentality.

(c) The police should not think of themselves as a body apart from the public and try as far as possible to deal with the situations without the use of force.

(d) An effort should be made to re-orient the attitude of the policemen in tune with the changed tenor of life in society. Steps should also be taken to re-orient the attitudes of the people towards the police.

(e) The police should be made to feel involved in the socio-economic life of the community. Steps may be taken to make the officer-in-charge of a police station and his senior ex-officio members of the civic bodies.
Besides this, the police officers should take an active part in the social and cultural life of the community. Similarly the public participation should be ensured in various police functions as frequently as possible.

(f) The gazetted police officers should come forward for a relentless campaign against corruption prevalent at various levels of the police hierarchy. It is imperative that a stern action is taken against an officer found to have indulged in corruption and malpractices.

(g) Efforts should be made to remove impression of indiscriminate arrests, connivance with the criminals, etc.

(h) It is essential to rationalise the workload of the police by increasing the strength of the police station staff as to enable them to carry out their duties promptly and with due interest. They should have some spare time to attend to personal necessities of their family as also to follow some creative pursuits occasionally for mental sustenance and recreation.

Other studies relating to the police-citizen
relationship have also revealed some useful suggestions. For example, Dr. P. D. Sharma thinks that the following measures can go a long way to improve the police image:

1. The police service should be declared a 'public service' under Sec. 23 of the Police Act 1861.

2. Crimes reported to the police should be registered, and response time should be cut down to the minimum.

3. Courtesy combined with firmness should be made the watchword of the police behaviour at the police station level.

4. Police stations should wear a neat and clean look. If the small police stations cannot afford a reception room, they should be able to offer at least a seat and a glass of water to the visitors.

5. Non-cognisable offences against human body defined by sections 323, 504, 506, 507, 508, and 510 of the IPC should be made cognisable to impart human dignity orientations to the Indian Penal Code.

6. Investigating officers should not be below the rank of ASIs. They should eschew third degree methods and behave like civilian policemen using modus operandi and fingerprint system for investigation purposes.

7. Legislations like the SE Act, gambling and prohibition laws, etc., should be scrapped from the statute book.

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8. The circle Inspectors should be vested with the powers of a Probation Officer under the Probation of Offenders Act.

9. School text-books should contain lessons on police work. Press, radio, TV and posters should project achievements of the police and awards must be instituted for the best full-length documentary film on the various facets of the police.

10. The police should be associated with the working of the Panchayati Raj institutions in rural areas. Rural Home Guards and civilian rifle training programmes may be activised.

(i) The police should be courteous and sympathetic and discharge their duties faithfully and honestly.

(j) There is a need for strict supervision by the senior officers and for prompt and effective action on all complaints of misbehaviour, discourtesy, abuse of authority received against their subordinates. An appropriate disciplinary action should be taken on cases where the complaint is substantiated and the action taken is communicated to the complainant concerned.

(k) The senior officers should not lay undue emphasis on crime statistics to assess the work and performance of police officers or units. This may lead to undesirable practices like non-registration and or minimisation of crime.
and implication of innocent persons in false cases.

(1) The police should be responsible for the enforcement of social legislation with a sense of commitment to promote the welfare of the weaker sections of the community. This may be helpful in projecting a good image of the police.

(m) The police officers who deal with the students' agitations should be specially selected and trained. They should develop close contacts both with the university faculty and the student community.

(n) There should be free and frank communication to minimise misunderstandings between the police and the press. Besides, in the Press more space should be provided for the good work done by the police to mould public opinion.

Police-citizen relationship has acquired new dimensions in the working of democratic decentralised political system. Smooth and harmonious relationship would undoubtedly be an asset but the problems of unfavourable image, the lack of appreciation to correct and improve police organisation pose innumerable challenges. It is not merely a question of bringing about some
piece-meal reforms but the entire field is beset with
political and professional problems having wide
repurcussions. It is ultimately the police organisation
alone which has to come forward and undertake upon itself
the task of community education in police problems. The
method of communications, the public relations approach,
change in orientation and administrative behavour are some
of the issues which require urgent and sympathetic
consideration. Police-citizen relationship cannot be
locked in isolation and unless the philosophy and
organisation of the police set-up is streamlined, the change
would be only marginal. Some of the suggestions to improve
law and order administration at the district level will be
discussed in the next chapter.